

CARTON 6136

STRONG IN THE STRUGGLE

COMMUNIST PARTY, CALIFORNIA

1991-1997

2017/193

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Dear Friends:

November 5, 1997

Although the tour our two California locals have worked up for Sarah is less than half over at the moment we are writing this letter, it has got off to such a great start that we didn't want to wait to share the news so far. For Sarah's talks actually began, not in LA as she expected, but in San Diego where it was arranged for her to speak on a panel with maquiladora workers, and where her speech was warmly received. She had the opportunity to also talk with two groups in Tijuana who are trying to organize a union. On Tuesday she was to speak in the afternoon at Cal State, and in the evening in South Central LA, in the church where the LA+4 group has been meeting. On Thursday she will be speaking at San Jose University together with Georgiana on "From the South to South Central," and on Saturday in San Francisco at the Negro History Society building on "From the Mississippi Delta." John Alan is preparing to video tape the northern California meetings. We know the LA and BA locals will be sending us their full reports quickly.

While you will have to read for yourselves the reports of all our other diverse and important "ongoing activities and correspondence" for this week in the enclosed REB minutes, we have to single out the news about the Website which Tom in the BA has just worked up and which we are hoping to launch with material from the November issue, which you will have in hand at the time you will be reading this letter. We are sending you a xerox copy of what the logo and contents listing of the home page would look like (although it could not be reproduced in the colors we will be using). That our November issue will be truly a uniquely Marxist-Humanist celebration of the 80th anniversary of the Russian Revolution you already knew from the selection we chose for the archives column (Raya's PPL on "The Two Russian Revolutions and Once Again, the Theory of Permanent Revolution") and on the page facing it a "sampling" of the reviews of Kevin's book Lenin, Hegel and Western Marxism. We didn't know until the copy came in that John Alan was also addressing the anniversary in a very different way, with a look at how Nov. 1917 impacted Black radicals and brought about what Alan shows was "a sharp historical break with the past."

What is related to our excitement about finally having our own Marxist-Humanist homepage, to introduce our ideas to new internet users with new material from N&L each month, is the challenge one of our friends has issued to us by pledging \$1000 toward obtaining the equipment we will need to now get Raya's full archives onto the internet. The challenge is that we will need to match the \$1000 to get that work underway. (We are asking the NEB to find out who among our other friends--or members-- might be able to contribute to that special effort, no matter how large or small the amount, so we can proceed with purchasing the equipment needed, since it cannot be taken from the Sustaining Fund, every penny of which will be needed for our regular work.)

Yet, no matter how exciting getting a homepage circulation of our ideas is, it is the many in-person ways to reach out with N&L that remains our life-line. Which is why, with the enclosed REB discussion on the paper and the November issue now in hand, we look forward to each local's discussion of how we, individually and collectively, can extend the distribution our unique revolutionary journal demands.

Yours, Olga

WILSON'S 1992-93 BUDGET PROPOSAL SUMMARY

Taxpayer's Protection Act of 1992 -- Initiative filed in December.

This initiative is central to Wilson's racist-David-Duke policies which attempt to blame the poor and immigrants for California's \$6.6 billion deficit. In brief, the initiative would:

- * cut benefits for 2.2 million recipients by 10 percent initially and another 15 percent if they remain on welfare beyond six months.
- * increase the share of Medi-Cal costs paid by seniors and the disabled because their shares of costs are based on AFDC grant levels.
- * severely curtail benefits for welfare recipients moving here from other states.
- * result in no grant increase for a family that has an additional child while on welfare.
- * require teen parents who receive AFDC to live at home with their parents.
- * eliminate all aid to pregnant women.
- * repeal the statutory SSI and IHSS COLA for aged, blind and disabled.
- * provide the governor with unprecedented budgetary power, allowing him to call a state of fiscal emergency and make additional cut budget cuts.

(Poverty law groups argue that the initiative violates a federal law prohibiting states from reducing AFDC grants below May 188 levels. They are confident that the initiative, if it were to qualify and pass, would face a legal challenge.)

Education:

Higher Education:

The Board of Trustees of the CSU and the Regents of UC have both been quick to approve Wilson's proposed fee increases which, coupled with the economy and an increase in the number of students applying to entry into California's four-year colleges, will make higher education unattainable for thousands of students.

Specifically, the proposed fee increases would result in:

- a 24% increase for UC students or \$3036 annually. This is a total of a 67% increase in fees during Wilson's brief term in office.
- a 40% increase for the CSU students or \$1310 annually. This is a 58% increase during Wilson's term.

Wilson's Budget -- page 2

Education, continued:

Choice Initiative:

Wilson has endorsed the "Parental Choice in Education Initiative" which is being circulated in Southern California (any evidence of it up North?). The

initiative would:

- * use state revenues to set up scholarships for any student to attend a private or religious school that agrees to redeem the scholarship. The amount of the scholarship would be at least half of the funding state and local governments provide for public schools.
- * allow current public schools to convert into scholarship schools.
- * allow private scholarship schools to be "free from unnecessary, burdensome or onerous regulation."

The California Parent and Teacher's Association (PTA), the CTA and AFT launched a campaign on 1/21/92 urging Californians not to sign the petition.

AIDS Budget:

- no increase in funding despite an anticipated 20% increase in the number of AIDS cases next year.

Renter's tax credit:

- elimination of the renter's tax credit for lower-income renters

State workers:

- no increases in wages or benefits. In addition, Wilson is expected to continue his raid on the Public Employee Retirement Fund. As a result, a coalition of State Employee unions and senior organizations is launching an initiative to prohibit such raids.

Sales - tax:

- makes the "temporary" 1-1/4 cent sales tax increase "temporary" for another 2 years.

Prisons:

- increased by \$.2 billion

"Tax the Rich, Relieve the Middle"
California Tax Reform Association's (CTRA)
Response to Wilson's Budget Proposals

Initiative filed 2/4/92: requires 384,974 signatures by April 24

The CTRA has launched an initiative drive as part of its larger fair tax program which has focused on closing tax loopholes for corporations and taxing the rich. According the CTRA, the initiative plan would increase State revenues by \$700 million annually. Key provisions of the initiative include:

- * elimination of the "temporary" 1/4 cent sales tax that Wilson proposes to make permanent
- * full restoration of the renters' tax credit
- * increasing to 11% rate the income tax on single taxpayers making more than \$175,000 (\$350,000 for couples) and increase to 12% the income tax on single taxpayers making more than \$250,000 (\$500,000 for couples.)
- * raising the bank and corporation tax rate from 9.3 to 10.3%
- * elimination of the ability of foreign corporations to choose which method of taxation applies to them
- * institution of a 3% oil company severance tax
- * increasing gross premiums tax on insurance companies
- * elimination of corporation deductions as expenses for those executive compensation packages that total more than 25 times the average compensation for employees

Save Our State (S.O.S.) Coalition

A large coalition of organizations and existing coalitions based in San Francisco has been quick to respond to Governor's proposed budget and initiative with a voter registration campaign and several proposed media events, including an initial press conference on 2/3/92. Initial SOS organizers include the Income Rights Project, Coalition for the Homeless, Gray Panthers, and individuals from labor unions and public school coalitions. The Coalition has endorsed the Campaign for a Fair Share program which demands no more cuts, restoration of programs, closing loopholes (CTRA's proposal) and reprioritizing current spending.

Neither the CTRA nor Campaign for a Fair Share are action coalitions. They see their roles as think tanks and lobbyists. Therefore, it is critical that local coalitions such as S.O.S. be formed in various communities and that special attempts be made to involve labor, people of color, immigrants and youth.

Suggestions for Letters to State Legislatures
in response to the "Taxpayer's Protection Initiative" --

Reasons for opposing the initiative:

1. Effects on poor, especially women and children:
 - * over 1.5 million children in California depend on AFDC for basic needs
 - * families on welfare already live well below the poverty line
2. Not really saving money -- will cost more money in the long run than is saved:
 - * AFDC is only 6% of the \$43.8 billion state budget
 - * hundreds of studies show the long-lasting effects of homelessness on families including chronic health problems, malnutrition and emotional problems which are far more expensive for society
3. The initiative gives the governor dictatorial powers over the budget crisis which allows him to call a state of fiscal emergency, making additional budget cuts and reducing wages for state employees.
4. Diverts attention from the real sources of California's budgetary crisis by attempting to stir up David-Duke racist and anti-immigrant sentiment:
 - * families do not move to California because of its welfare benefits
 - * undocumented households contribute more in tax revenues than they receive in other social services.
 - * the stereotype of heavy welfare dependence being routinely passed from mother to child is false

We need real solutions to the budget crisis:

1. Support the CTRA's "Tax the Rich, Relieve the Middle" initiative which would increase state revenues by closing tax loopholes for corporations and increasing the state income tax for individuals earning more than \$175,000 a year or \$350,000 for couples.
2. Reprioritize spending priorities: cut the prison budget.
3. Join with others in state government in demanding that Congress make big cuts in military spending.
4. Lobby your fellow legislators in opposition to the Governor's initiative and in support of real solutions to the budget crisis.

Demand that the legislator write to you and state specifically how he or she stands on the Governor's initiative and on the CTRA initiative plan.

NORTHERN CALIFORNIA PRESS WORK

1988-1992

FUND DRIVE - MONIES RAISED

1988	-	\$72,554
1989	-	77,517
1990	-	65,671
1991	-	66,800

Holiday Market

1988	-	\$8660
1989	-	5767
1990		5084

Banquets & Major Events

1988	-	Langer/Zayyad	-	\$16,000
1989	-	African American Agenda/New Thinking for the 90s-		\$6000
1990	-	A Tapestry of Many Cultures	-	\$7200
1991	-	Chris Hani banquet	-	\$22,000

PWW Staff Tours

1989	-	Carl Bloice
1990	-	Marc Frank
1991	-	Tim Wheeler

CIRCULATION

Bundles (PDW No CA goal - 10,000)

pre 1986 (PW)	-	1100-1700
3/30/87	-	4864
4/8/88	-	5505
3/30/89	-	5153
10/17/90	-	3807
8/91	-	2620

Subs

pre 1986 (PW)	-	1400
1991	-	1000 (No CA subs have been approx 1000 since 1989)

REVIEW OF NO CA PRESS WORK 1988-1992

As the National Fundraiser and also responsible for our district's press work, it is difficult for me to separate national policies from the district's problems regarding our work around the press, but, of course, they are interrelated.

With the exception of Judy who is on maternity we have all been fired. It is a sad moment in history with the loss of the paper and subsequently the wonderful activities we organized for its support together. The work around the paper was an area of collective club work and sometimes the only work done collectively. The Bolshevik Cafe for my club combined our political work with artists with the work around our press. The chart of money raised and circulation can't begin to show all we did to reach the goals.

For six months of the year much of our clubs' work and discussion was taken up with organizing fundraising activities for the paper. This past year the Fund Drive was started in January collecting day's pay and did not end until mid-October. In our district we held Holiday Markets in December of each year until 1991 to help us reach our goal. This meant that the entire year was spent in some aspect of fundraising for the paper. It is no wonder that the circulation drives in September-December got little attention and rarely met their goals.

The only successful circulation drive was in the fall of 1988. It was closely tied to our election work and achieved over 1000 new subs nationally. However, 90% were free trials which in a great majority did not turn over to regular subs in spite of organized phoning to do so.

The slogan out of the 1987 national convention was "The Press as centerpiece of the club's work". This slogan I now see as sectarian and a misguidance of the Party. It was based primarily on one experience in Connecticut where a successful neighborhood organizing effort using the paper developed. However, in describing that experience it was not mentioned that Brian was a full-time organizer of that neighborhood and organized it around community issues so that the evaluation was incomplete. But this experience became proof that all clubs in the country should focus on press work. The Robeson club in the Oakland community tried for two years to follow that example of concentrating press distribution in an Oakland neighborhood from "roll and throw" to "door-to-door" work. This effort consumed the energy of some the best mass activists of the club and after two years when they were no longer able to devote Saturday to distributing the paper, there were few, if any, ongoing subscribers.

Another miscalculation was the projecting of a PDW circulation of 100,000/10,000 in No CA. As you can see from the chart, in spite of a concerted effort in our district we were never able to come near these goals. I believe another miscalculation was projecting the PDW as a "mass paper". Although it has always been difficult to get precise statistics regarding circulation, the turnover rate of renewals is not high, very few trial subscribers become regular subscribers, and we lost over 2000 of the 3000 People's World subscribers we started with. In my view this was a "left paper" not a "mass paper" and if we had discussed it, we would have directed our work in circulation in quite a different way.

In the area of financing we have made so many mistakes. First, dissolving the PW into a national daily with no evaluation of the size of the Party, no projected budget of a daily, no projection of ongoing income of the Party, or of the circulation of the papers - and these were questions raised in our district at the time with only hostile response. A Party of 2500 and a subscriber base of 6000 cannot support a \$3 million and then \$2 million budget.

The result was that the national Party leadership was constantly cutting costs. At several points staff in the northern CA office were threatened with layoffs. We saved Judy's job last year by turning it into a national advertising manager which ended a position responsible for circulation in NO CA. Never having enough money also kept us from creatively pursuing circulation and promotion. We did a few mailing to progressive trade unionists but we never had the money for more.

On a club level, Billie Holiday in its review of work concluded that all the time and energy we spent on fundraising for the paper prevented us from organizing broad activities like Art Works for People (a project we started our club with and recruited many in the process) and became sectarian in our approach over the last four years.

Press Evaluation - page 2

In evaluating circulation in our district - we never reached the 10,000 goal in bundles and in the last two years we have decreased considerably. The subs have stayed at approximately 1000 which doesn't mean there has not been sub work as there is considerable turnover. While we have continued to have club press directors their work has been primarily fundraising. Over the last two years there has been no operating press apparatus for circulation. There has, however, been consistent press work of individuals and a few clubs like Marin, which has continued to focus on the paper, and Watsonville and San Jose where they have integrated the paper with their mass work.

Regarding industrial concentration and other regular distributions, where older comrades have been unable to continue we have had to drop many distributions for example NUMMI and Pittsburg Steel. At Longshore Urho continued after Archie died, Manny and Walt have done SF Social Services since Lou can't, Willis has continued at the Labor Council, and others; but we have not been able to involve younger comrades consistently even on a rotating basis nor have we widely achieved younger comrades using the paper in mass work. We owe our veteran comrades great respect and appreciation for their unswerving dedication to the press.

On special events we have had more success, the Mandela distribution being a highlight with many comrades helping in the distribution which included the special greeting section to which we have always made major contributions in breadth of outreach and funds raised.

What did we need in our circulation efforts?

First of all, we needed new ideas. So much has changed in the world. We needed thorough and far-reaching discussion about "What is a left press?" "How do we use it?" "Are factory gate distributions alone valuable?" "What modern techniques of circulation and promotion should we adopt?" "Is the content of our paper attracting and holding new readers?"

At two points, when the paper was arbitrarily changed from a daily to a weekly and in the pre-convention discussion we strongly requested a full discussion of the character of a new paper. But the national Party's stifling of new thinking and our own (and I say this very self-critically) bureaucratic style of adopting decisions nationally and agitating or ordering the clubs to carry them out - much of this in the name of speed and expediency and not being negative or demoralizing - has prevented the important discussions from happening and kept the ranks of our Party from full participation in the decision making and has prevented us all from realistically assessing the problems.

Finally, in spite of this rather negative report, it certainly has not been all bad. The PWW developed into a paper we were all very proud of and the writers and editors in our district and across the country gave so much time and quality of work for so little remuneration for so many years, they deserve our deepest appreciation.

We've organized wonderful club, county and district events in No Ca including runs and markets, barbecues and breakfasts, forums, so many birthday parties, cultural events and great banquets - the climax being the Chris Hani banquet which after a two year hiatus was maybe our best ever. I think I can speak for all the PWW ex staff members in thanking this District Committee and our whole district for working so hard in supporting our paper. For the past twelve years I have concentrated my energies on the Party's press. In that process of mistakes and successes I have learned so much from our district. All this experience will carry into what is ahead of us, but we must also carry with us a new approach to full participation in all decision-making as well as in the work.

Mary Idosidis

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ASIAN PACIFIC ISLAND COMMISSION CPUSA

DISTRICT CONVENTION FEBRUARY 1992

The Asian Pacific Island commission of the Northern California district is the only commission of its kind in the party. The commission was initiated following the 20th convention of the CPUSA in 1972.

For all of the 19 years in our district we have never had more than 7 Asian American members in our commission, which constitutes our present membership today. Although our numbers have been small, we have made considerable contributions to the mass movement, our peoples struggles, and the party.

As Communist and as individuals we have participated in the following: Free Angela Davis Campaign, Justice for Narciso and Perez, Manzanar, Tule Lake Committees, SF's Manilatown struggle for the International Hotel, National Redress and Reparations Committees, Founding members of Asian American Federation of Union members (AAFOUM) Justice for slain ILWU # 37 activist Domingo and Viernes, ILWU, Ironworkers For Union Democracy, Anti Philippine Martial Law committees, Asians For Jessie Jackson, Filipinos For Jessie Jackson, Asian Americans for Justice, Break the Silence Coalition, Vietnam Friendship Association, Central American/Middle East Solidarity work, Artist Against Apartheid.

Our commission has been responsible for the preparation of materials analysis, proposals and approaches in understanding the complexity of respective communities. As part of the US working class we have attempted to share with the party specific sensitivities and realities of language, culture and class nature of the Asian Pacific communities. From our direct experience. Who they are, their problems and concerns as part of the Multi national multi racial working class.

From the beginning our commission has struggled to include the growing numbers of Asian Pacific peoples into the party's class analysis. There have been times when we have raised instructive questions relative to the class content of our communities. We were accused by Gus Hall of being petty bourgeois nationalist !

Since the formation of our commission in 1972, through 1986 we have attempted to bring to the party the work of our commission and to share with it the rich history and struggle of Asian Pacific people in the USA.

We have exhausted all channels with the National Center for communication and dialogue. With the exceptions of comrades Henry Winston and John Pittman the National center has showed no interest in our work and struggle. We have written countless times to the center, Party publications etc. About the consistent omission of Asian Pacific peoples as part of the multi national multi racial working class. After all the correspondence and request. To add insult to injury, the National center did not include Asian Pacific people in the partys 16 page document on a " National Plan of Work" January 1986.

In preparation for the 25th National Convention our commission prepared the resolution on an apology to the Japanese Americans from the CPUSA for not speaking out against their internment in WW II. This resolution was overwhelmingly passed by the clubs of our district and at our Northern California District Convention. It is now apparent that our resolution was considered propaganda and like other resolutions from our district, garbage. According to Gus.

Like other comrades that signed the Initiative, Asian comrades were also rejected and prevented from addressing the convention. The comrades of our commission have been extremely patient and disciplined in staying the course over these years. We are of the opinion that the present illegally elected leadership of the CPUSA does not represent our individual or collective aspirations nor the struggles of our people.

However we do share many of the same concerns of other comrades in our district that support the resolution calling for the Communist Party of Northern California to secede from and declare political independence from the CPUSA.

Kathy
Roger
Willis
Steve
Bill

Brief summary of political action activities in the District since the beginning of 1988. Report is based on individual telephone conversations with leading activists in each county, many of them members of the District's political action commission.

Alameda (Berkeley, Oakland, Hayward) Throughout the county, comrades participated in JJ'88 campaign, and to a lesser degree in the Oakland-Berkeley Rainbow Coalition. Oakland-Berkeley comrades also played significant role in campaign of Keith Carson for County Supervisor in 1990 (progressive aide to Congressman Dellums lost by 26 votes among 51,000 ballots cast).

In Berkeley, our comrade who ran for Rent Board in 1988 got more votes than George Bush, and came in eighth in a field of eight! Comrades participated in progressive campaigns for City Council, Rent Board and School Board.

However, our efforts have been unable to prevent BCA from sinking into increasing inertia, largely resulting from the difficulties and controversies of wielding state power in one city. (This is a phenomenon we should examine closely at some point in time.) Comrades have been appointed to various city commissions, including Planning, Labor, Peace & Justice and Housing Appeals Advisory Board.

Progressives defeated major initiative attack on rent control in 1990, but also lost control of rent board to conservatives.

The Berkeley community club developed a focus area in the African American community of South Berkeley, where redevelopment and housing issues became the primary battleground.

In Oakland, comrades made significant contribution to 1990 Riles for Mayor campaign, including comrade who was campaign manager. Our participation helped Riles get into the runoff. Some comrades were active in Russo for Council insurgency.

Other comrades continued to devote themselves to school board issues, during a period of ongoing crises for Oakland public schools.

A few comrades were also active in their neighborhood associations.

Comrades organized and led the Rainbow's Oakland City Council Watch Committee during 1988, '89 and '90.

In Hayward, ongoing leadership of local Democratic Party

organization, including newsletter editorship. Initiated involvement of Dem Party club in anti-racist organizing, including multi-cultural awareness, protesting hate crimes; also led club in Gulf War protests, including financial support for Gulf War C.O.'s.

Very active in JJ'88 campaign, and elected one delegate from the area.

Active with slow-growth and anti-development forces around city council; participated in various campaigns. Participated in unsuccessful fightback against closing of high school in chicano neighborhood, and elected one school board member in the aftermath.

Butte Comrades have devoted ongoing leadership to Democratic Party organizations in Paradise and Oroville; participated in JJ'88 campaign and various local campaigns.

Contra Costa Comrades have played ongoing leadership role in county's Rainbow Coalition; participated in JJ'88 campaign. Elected comrade to City Council in one city in 1988.

In 1991, helped organize fightback against state trusteeship for Richmond Unified School District, including march on Sacramento.

Fresno Active in Rainbow Coalition, JJ'88 and local Democratic politics.

P.2

Marin Comrade ran for 9th Assembly District in Marin/Sonoma on P&F ticket in 1990, won 3% of the vote based on a platform which emphasized military-peacetime conversion. Same comrade ran for San Rafael City Council in 1991 and won 10% with essentially the same platform. In the course of the campaign, other candidates adopted major portions of P&F program.

San Francisco Helped with JJ'88. YCL spearheaded Youth for Jackson and held successful fundraiser featuring MC Hammer (before he got legit).

With YCL, Graziano for SF Supervisor in 1988 won 15,000 votes with highly credible open YCL campaign.

Participated in struggle against homeporting Missouri, narrowly lost Measure S, but Congress pulled plug of Big Mo in early '89.

In 1990, comrades sought to broaden participation of Jose Medina for Supervisor campaign, and played important role in providing troops for GOTV. Jose Medina came in 6th, but failed to win a seat.

1990 significant leadership role in Coalition for Civil Rights Act of 1990.
Santa Clara Some participation in JJ'88 campaign, but L.R.S.S.

2

* Humboldt helped lead campaign for JJ'88.
In 1991, 3 members have been active in rebuilding P&F locally; and have initiated coalition with Green Party and progressive Democrats, laying the basis for future cooperation on electoral/legislative issues.

control locally, plus lack of decisive direction on JJ'88 from national office blunted this thrust.

County focus on housing issue and Latino community has defined political action activity. Major involvement in 1990 Carrillo City Council (SJ) campaign emerged from commitment to mobilizing grassroots base in SJ Latino community; comrades played influential role in campaign, and candidate lost by only 300 votes.

Struggle against gentrification has involved political activity to save low income housing, provide homeless shelters, counter NIMBYism among neighborhood organizations, etc. Tenant organizing preserved low income housing at Rancho Verde after HUD mandate expired, and made significant contribution to fight for National Housing Act of 1990.

Common Agenda has suffered from our lack of participation, and has turned into a coalition of peace groups formally pushing cuts in the military budget, but without directly taking up the struggle for social needs or against Pete Wilson's budget proposals.

On every issue where we have established an effective local base, we have been thwarted by the absence of effective policy and coordination at the national level of our Party. This has hampered our work enormously.

Santa Cruz Ran one comrade for Mayor and two for City Council in Watsonville. Full written report sent to District office.

Sonoma In 1988, initiated Eric Fried for Congress on P&F ticket. Expanded labor content of campaign, which built on P&F's achievements in 1986. Eric won just under 10% of the vote, and challenged incumbent Doug Bosco on labor, peace and environmental issues. This campaign was closely related to county focus on organizing industrial workers. EF received controversial SCOPE endorsement.

Also helped organize JJ'88 Santa Rosa rally during Presidential primaries; however, comrades lost fight to broaden Rainbow politically, and did not participate fully in JJ'88 campaign as the result.

In 1990, comrades moved away from a single collective focus, but some worked on Commingore campaign (Darlene Commingore '90 campaign garnered 15% of the vote, and contributed to defeat of incumbent Bosco), and others concentrated on Sonoma County School Board, where our candidates won by large margin.

Also helped liberal/progressive Thompson defeat ultra-conservative Neilsen for State Senate in 1990.

After Commingore campaign, participated in Progressive Electoral Alliance, which has sponsored public forums on question of DP v. 3P, bringing together progressive activists from various persuasions.

Currently struggling for District elections in Santa Rosa, playing a role in Sonoma Supervisors' campaigns, and trying to bring labor into Common Agenda coalition.

Political Action Commission Provided limited leadership on specific electoral and legislative issues through summer of 1990, when Chair went to work for the Union and could no longer devote necessary time to PolAc Cmsn.

However, did not succeed in pulling together conference of Party political action activists from around the district, as had been projected.

Also, must do better at organizing discussion and resolution of strategic issues and differences.

② Common Themes JJ'88 was a focus in just about every county. However, our participation in many areas was curtailed due to effects of domination by L.R.S., which maintained control by discouraging participation of broader forces.

④ Education and housing issues

⑤ Electoral insurgencies which narrowly lost; some which won

③ Ongoing leadership in local Democratic Party clubs, PFF Party and Rainbow Coalition.

① focus of polac clubs almost entirely based in clubs and counties. Little or no activity coordinated nationally or statewide.

⑥ Seniors throughout the District have been consistently active in struggle for Health Care.

Notes on District Meeting to oppose Welfare Cuts
Prepared by Ellen S.
January 22, 1992

Report from Research Committee

Dodie presented a packet of information containing:

A) An editorial entitled "Governor to children: Suffer" from the S.F. Bay Guardian of 1/1/92 which analyzed the proposed welfare cuts as intending to make the poor scapegoats for the state's economic struggles. It further characterized the proposals as an attack specifically on women and children, and added, "Don't expect the neglect of children to stop with welfare. There are many indications that public schools are next." (The moves toward privatization of education through the voucher system). The editorial does not identify the Wilson proposals as racist, but points out the "in Wilson's most recent verbal broadside against immigrants, his main accusation was that too many of them were children and therefore required public schooling - a major expense." The editorial pointed out that the assumption behind this is that support and education of children is simply a cost to be borne by the state, a drain on the budget, rather than an investment in society's future. Finally, the article points out that there is plenty of money available to fund that investment, if the tax loopholes identified by the California Tax Reform Association are closed and the rich required to pay their "fair share". Closing the loopholes alone, according to the editorial, would provide enough money to fund "many needed programs, b. But there's more. Enormous wealth is poured into this country's military program, which eats up a larger share of public funds than in any other industrialized country." The editorial closed with a demand for a "peace dividend" used to "invest in human needs, environmental restoration, and rebuilding economic health."

B) A summary and analysis of Wilson's "State of the State" speech from the S.F. Chronicle of 1/8/92. This described the welfare cuts and other proposals to be embodied in the "Taxpayer Protection Act" - the cynical and manipulative name for the ballot proposition planned for this November. The speech also contained planks of his anti-education platform (merit pay for teachers, and the so-called "Choice" initiative, which would allow parents to choose the school their children attend, and would provide, Dodie adds, a 50% scholarship for children to attend private school), his anti-environment plans (ending "environmental obstructionism", changes to Worker's Compensation, and criminal "justice" proposals increasing sentences for rapists and other felons - adding to the spiraling cost of prison construction and maintenance which contribute far more to the budget deficit than does welfare. The analysis did not point out the disproportionate number of people of color who are the victims of our state's and nation's compulsion to build jails and fill them.

C) A discussion on the "Voucher/Choice" education proposals from the California Teacher's Association newsletter of December 1991.

D) A Dec. 10, 1991 press release from the California Tax Reform Association describing in particular the need to reform Proposition 13. A major finding was that of the over \$100 billion in Prop. 13 property tax savings, over \$60 billion went to businesses. However, among homeowners, the property tax has become somewhat more progressive, with individual property tax payers in the top 20% paying a larger share than previously (63% up from 58% in 1978).

E) A CTRA press release of Nov. 20, 1991 describing nearly \$5 billion in "loopholes, preferences, tax avoidance and tax expenditures that benefit the few."

F) A description of a "Fair Tax Program" from March, 1991, and list of various legislative bills designed to implement it. (Editor's note: I think the program is also from CTRA.)

G) An article from the S.F. Chronicle of 1/8/92 on the Children's Roundtable, an advocacy coalition of more than 50 children's groups in California, whose campaign was formulated with assistance from the CTRA and which works closely with CTRA. They call upon Wilson to eliminate the \$5 billion in tax loopholes for the rich and to use the money to finance welfare programs targeted for cuts.

Dodie's report pointed out that Wilson's education proposals include a small increase in K-12 funding, not enough to restore previous cuts, and for higher education, includes a 40% tuition increase in addition to the 25% increase imposed last year.

The Welfare Initiative, and the Voucher/Choice initiative will both be placed on the ballot by petitions. No date known yet when signature gathering will start, but probably it will be soon. This gives us little time to prepare opposition to the signature gathering.

SPEAKERS

Mike said that the (San Fran) Central Labor Council has no plans yet, per Walter Johnson. They are waiting for input from the public employees locals affected by the Wilson proposals as to what they want the Council to do. The Council does not usually initiate actions, but coordinates among unions. Johnson has met with the Coalition for the Homeless, and Mike got from their office some of the petitions to recall Gov. Wilson. They needed to be returned by Tuesday, Jan 14. The reason for the short time for circulation of the recall petitions is that they were started last August 8, after Wilson failed to sign the Gay/Lesbian Rights bill, and there are only 160 days after start to gather the required signatures. (Someone who did not have the floor muttered something to the effect that we had brought this upon ourselves by not supporting the recall petition when it was just for Gay and Lesbian rights. Mike also added that many of the proposals in the Wilson Initiative are also going before the legislature, so we must fight there also.

Report on Political Framework

Billie reported that we need to not view the Wilson efforts as "just another budget proposal." They pose a special threat. These measures arise as a result of difficulties faced by both the Republicans and Democrats as a result of the worsening economy. This can be seen as a trial run for a basic Republican strategy to shift the blame from themselves to the poor and people of color. The Democrats' response has been wavering. The San Jose Mercury-News said that Lt. Gov. McCarthy has endorsed the Initiative.

Billie went to the Monday, Jan 8 demonstration in Sacramento, which was attended by 300-400 people, with good composition. The Campaign for a Fair Share has lots of contacts and sponsors for the fightback, but few from labor (and a later speaker pointed out that NAACP, MAPA and LULAC are among the organizations missing from the campaign endorser list). The Campaign seems to be encouraging individual organizations to act, rather than developing a unified program. The Communist Labor Party is doing a good job of organizing the victims of the budget cuts. Billie sees a need for a coalition which will unite the victims and their supporters, and for this the strength of the labor movement is needed.

Organizations currently involved in the fightback are mostly single issue groups. We need to find their common points and develop unity among them. Within the party, it was added, we have no agreed upon position on the 1992 elections. At our last (District) convention, we agreed on the necessity or desirability of encouraging independent politics. This will have to come from existing organizations and movements.

Our Program of Fightback Must Stress:

1. Effect on the Poor
2. The Wilson proposals are a sham, do not save money, will cost more.
3. Will give the Governor dictatorial powers over the budget.
4. Attack on Wages and Benefits
5. Renter's Credit threatened.
6. This is a specific electoral ploy designed to guarantee a large turnout of rightwing voters.
7. Attack on welfare is an attack on people of color, related to Wilson's view that the budget crisis is caused by immigrants.

SPEAKERS

Kendra asked how we should deal with all the other issues: unemployment, attack on the schools, fight for health care? Wilson's proposals on welfare are not much different from those of David Duke in Louisiana; it is part of a national movement and if successful, will have national implications like Prop. 13 did.

Carl (the Elder) noted that the Congress of California Seniors voted to permit coalition affiliation for fightback.

Jack said that his union (university professors) is directly affected by tuition raises and the State Employees Retirement Fund Initiative (currently being circulated: would prevent Wilson from raiding the State Employees pension funds). He said that to focus on just one issue or set of related issues would be a hindrance. He'd like to be kept abreast of all the issues and actions so he can see where his organization can best fit in. **Bill** said our impact will have to be in numbers. A letter from Cecil Williams and Walter Johnson inviting many people would be a basis for bringing people together to find points of unity. We need to avoid having things like a Health organization and a Schools organization fighting for a share of the pie.

John H: the Republicans are working from a position of weakness, because the Recession and budget crisis are a result of 12 years of their economic policies. We should focus on "fighting back against the Budget Crisis", not on any one particular issue. To the extent that the Initiative contains all these issues, it makes the fightback organizing easier. Important questions to consider: Tax Loopholes; Prison Budget is the state equivalent of the federal Military Budget; To what extent can we mention the Military Budget itself? In '92 a reduction of it would not yield any money to the states. Also, the Health Care initiative is not an issue for the '92 budget, and would not be seen as a money-saver in any case.

Fran: Welfare is the 1992 "Willie Horton" issue. The Initiative provides an issue for diverse groups to coalesce around. But it does not explicitly target all the issues, so our fightback should be on "The Budget". It also gives us an opportunity to show what has been happening in California in the last 10 years - "who has been walking away with the icing on the cake".

Mike: The Vietnam anti-war movement did not ask organizations to abandon their own focus and agenda, but rather to work together on common points. It is too narrow for us to just look at the terms of the Initiative; we'd be letting "them" define our political terrain. We should offer an alternative vision, not just reactive. If we don't give people an alternative option, cynicism and demoralization are at such levels that they will just drop out. The CTRA proposals are good but they are a research group primarily, and will not mobilize the masses. Regarding the perspective that the crisis is the fault of the GOP, if people don't see the Democrats as an alternative, they'll just drop out. It's the system that's not working, not the GOP.

Carl (the younger): We should focus on the welfare cuts. Last year Wilson pitted education against welfare to cut education. This year he's doing the same to cut welfare. Last year groups did come together, but too late.

Lee stressed the need for a united fightback. He offered as resources, "The State of Black America, 1990" published by the National Urban League, and also "Theory and Practice of the Communist Party". We won't accomplish anything by just going to meetings. We need to get together and fight for the future of our children.

Kendra: It is a mistake to just see this in relation to the Republican Party and the ultra right. The last 12 years have seen a systematic shift of wealth to the top echelons. Republicans have had this as a program but it is the system which must protect the corporations. Concurrent with this, an ideological offensive was launched earlier, describing a permanent "underclass". The current legislative proposals are the programmatic manifestation of that ideology. We never fought the ideological attack adequately, so it has taken root in the minds of workers that the "shift of wealth" has been from them to the poor on welfare. The Wilson initiative will be

defeated or passed by workers. The coalition should bring together all forces (labor, state employees, students, etc.) first and then pose the question of the initiative as the centerpiece after finding areas of commonality. She added that it is difficult to integrate the fight for health care as the health issue is a "positive" action, while the anti-initiative fight is "defensive". The education K-12 issue embodies some of each. Keith: We need a shortrange and a longrange view. Historically, policies nationally have taken money from the states. It is hard to point a finger at one person and say "This is a result of your policies." The coalition we build may be larger than we predict, more and more people are becoming dissatisfied, are waiting for an organization to express it. We can build a coalition of all interest groups we've mentioned, plus small businesses, which are failing in great numbers.

Maudelle: We should include the peace groups and bring in the military budget. This is also a class struggle, and workers have absorbed the ruling class ideology, thinking that people on welfare "don't want to work." Regarding racism, Jesse Jackson spoke directly to women, but white women didn't think he was speaking for them. We need to consider how to educate the masses of people. Wilson is bent on confusing them. When they see the truth, "they will change this mess."

Coleman: When contacting other organizations, have them start writing or calling their state assembly persons. Organize delegations to visit them, and to visit City Councils and County Supervisors, to get them to pass resolutions to Wilson and the State legislature. Most of the Wilson proposals are coming before the legislature (including provisions of the Initiative).

Bob: Two points: first, a new feature is the attack on immigrants, who are also involved in union organizing drives. Second, in the Party, we have had a tendency to avoid decisions on focus, trying to work on everything, saying "all things are related." We should focus on the initiative and make the attack on welfare a centerpiece of our electoral work.

Sam: We have to project a positive solution. The Tax Loophole proposals are key in this regard; we can't just oppose things. Sam proposes an initiative petition of our own to fill the loopholes. Mayor's march will be in May. We should be raising the question of getting money from the military budget for the states and cities: the mayors will just ask for money from "the federal government." We should identify a core of people to bring together to reach out and build a much larger coalition.

John H: Action proposals from the organizing and research committees are:

1. Delegations to State Legislators.
2. Circulate pledge cards (voters pledge not to sign or vote for the initiative)
3. Local demonstrations, maybe time them with the Mayor's march.
4. City and County level resolutions
5. Voter registration activities.

We should not choose among these, but start moves to develop a Statewide coalition. Go home and contact groups, network through them.

Huli: January 22 there will be a meeting of the Welfare Income Rights Coalition. They have skills and contacts to move this campaign. There will be a state Omnibus Civil Rights Act of 1992. They are going to pull together a coalition - she (Huli) is involved.

Betsy: We should focus on the initiative and we should contact all possible interested groups. Regarding the Health issue, SB36, the connection is to the State Budget and fears of what the health plan will cost.

Bea: An alternative budget must be put forth in our fightback to show that the money is actually available. Dodie proposed a leaflet for 'us' and forces in mass organizations (that is, not for distribution on street corners). We need to keep focus on the ideological struggle, specifically focus on the initiative. The leaflet should say what issues we as communists should raise which may not be the perspective of the broader coalition. Our leaflet should enumerate our ideological analysis; the coalition organizations will be well able to list the specific practical objections to the initiative.

The following proposals were put to the people in attendance (about 30 people, not all comrades):

We should build a broad coalition to fight on:

- A) All budget issues, including health and schools. (This would also permit bringing in the Federal Military Budget)
- B) The State budget question with special emphasis on the Initiative.
- C) Just the Welfare Initiative.

Option 'B' received the majority of the votes (but perhaps it should be noted that Maudelle was among the few who voted for Option 'A').

It was recommended that we build the coalition by designating specific people responsible for different geographical areas (e.g., 2 per county).

A proposal was made and accepted that we continue the organizing committee with the addition of any who volunteer for it. Committee will develop concrete proposals for the convention and for carrying out our decisions. Meanwhile we should not wait to write our legislators opposing the budget cuts - before the full coalition effort is in place. The next full meeting would be after the convention, probably late in February.

For more details on this and other CTRA proposals, write to CTRA, 926 J Street, Suit 710, Sacramento, CA 95814. Phone is (916)446-4300 or call the Campaign for a Fair Share in San Francisco at (415)346-3740.

(Editor's Note: As of 1/22/92, the relationship between the CTRA and Campaign for a Fair share is not clear. I called the San Francisco number, and it is the Coalition on Homelessness. The person I talked to said that they are working on Fair Share, but are planning to start their own campaign soon. He didn't know the relationship between Fair Share and CTRA. Be that as it may, the Coalition on Homelessness does have a detailed packet of information on the Initiative.)

Minutes of District Organizing Committee on Opposing Wilson Budget Cuts
January 26, 1992

Agenda: Roundup of Current Activities/ New information on the Initiative
Preparation for District Convention

*** Betsy reported that she, Huli, Kim and Sam attended the meeting of the Income Rights Project on Jan 22, which was called to organize opposition to the initiative and budget cuts. The resulting organization is called "Save Our State" (SOS). The attendance was large and the room overflowing. Many groups were represented: Gray Panthers, YWCA, Voter registration groups, Coalition on Homelessness, Unified School District, labor reps, NOW, African American groups, AFDC recipients, many others. They broke into 'teams' of interest groups (e.g., labor, education). Betsy went with the Labor team.

Actions Planned: They developed a draft resolution to go before the SF Labor Council, opposing the initiative. If passed, it requires the SF Labor Council to urge the other bay area councils to pass similar resolutions. Also, there will be a Press Conference on Feb. 3 at 9:30 AM at City Hall. Milton Marks and Jack Henning maybe will be there. A Voter Registration project is planned. Next meeting is Feb. 5, 4:30 PM, 225 Valencia St.

Betsy handed out packets with information from Fair Share and suggested action items for consideration.

It was noted that most of the provisions of the Initiative are being presented to the Legislature as part of the Budget, on which proceedings can start in February and should be complete by April, but may take until July. It was felt that the Initiative may have been planned as a 'club' to force the Legislature to accept the Wilson proposals, and, indeed, there are rumors that the Democratic legislators are not planning to fight. In any case, we cannot wait for the November ballot to organize!

***Billie noted that Fair Share does not see its role as organizing the opposition. They are lobbyists and are willing to coordinate among existing organizations. Billie asks people to write to Campaign For A Fair Share in Sacramento and ask to be put on their mailing list. They have good info, and will help people get in touch with others from their same area (when San Joseans inquired, they were referred to Billie). The address is:

Campaign for a Fair Share

926 J Street, Suite 422

Sacramento, CA 95814. (phone 916) 447-0390

In San Jose, The South Bay Mobilization for Peace and Justice is a group of "organized and independent leftists". Billie has been having discussions with two members of the Mobe. They are calling a list of people to feel out whether they are interested in pulling together a wider San Jose anti-Wilson meeting. Response on this has been very positive. The Mobe has also sent a letter to 30 California legislators. Common Agenda and WILPF are each sending anti-Welfare Cut letters to the Santa Clara County State Legislators.

***Dodie said there is no coalition activity to report on in the East Bay. A statewide coalition of the PTA and Teacher's Union has launched a campaign to not sign the Choice initiative on school privatization. However, the California Faculty Association (CFA) Executive Board members were resistant to the Wilson Initiative campaign, seeing "Opposition to an Initiative" as a negative tactic. Dodie was told that the CFA lobbyist has said that the Democrats were going to *hand Wilson his budget on March 1*, without a struggle. However, Nick Petris and, it is said, Al Alquist, are opposed to the Welfare cuts.

***John said that Tom Bates's office refers people who call about the initiative to Campaign for a Fair Share. Not such a good response from other assembly persons.

The Women's Economic Agenda had a meeting on Jan 25 to train speakers for an *Anti-initiative Speaker's Bureau*.

We need to identify who we are trying to reach, and also consider the timings involved. Because the Wilson proposals are also going before the legislature, we can fail if we wait for the November ballot. It is important to reach legislators who will be *Swing Votes* on this issue. So we need to identify these legislators and reach their constituents. Later, if the Initiative reaches the ballot, we must pressure every state candidate to place prominently on every piece of campaign literature that they oppose Proposition 'x' (whatever number is assigned).

***Billie proposed a two-pronged strategy:

1) *Concentrate on Legislators* between now and June 30 (end of budget period). Try to get a core group of democratic legislators who would agree to organize their fellow democrats to oppose the budget cuts. During the demonstrations in Sacto earlier this month, Billie visited Dan McCorquodale's office, asked his position on this issue, and got a completely ambiguous answer. However, Barbara Lee, Petris, maybe Alquist might work on this.

2) Organize direct *opposition to the circulation of the Initiative*, using pledge cards and other activities reaching the public directly.

Billie also proposed a membership meeting in every county following our District Convention. We need to raise the political issues in the packets we give to members.

***Kendra felt there was not much hope of elected officials organizing each other. They can, however, give us their names to use for support, and the names of those who we need to pressure. She proposed a postcard or letter campaign to Willie Brown and Pete Wilson to begin immediately, with a set goal of so many letters sent by March 1. For our internal use, we need to address the questions we will be asked, such as the objection that this is a 'negative campaign', and whether we can trust the Democrats.

Others suggested that we get the names of interested people while circulating the postcards. The East bay, Sonoma and Sacramento need to develop action coalitions. Carl suggested that our letters to the state legislators pressure them to send out "Dear Colleague" letters opposing the cuts. John suggested contacting local groups (labor, welfare rights, etc) before starting the local campaigns, after the county membership discussions.

Decisions:

We will start a campaign with *four postcards*, to be sent to

- Willie Brown
- The signer's own Assemblyman
- The signer's own Senator
- Gov. Pete Wilson.

They will be identical (fill in the recipient's name - we'll need a list of who represents which areas). The text should request a response from the recipient, and demand that they lobby against the welfare cuts, university fee increases, and State employee pay cuts.

We will circulate 5000 sets of 4 postcards in Northern California, to start with. They will be ready by the Convention (Feb. 8). The postcards will not have any organizational attribution, and circulation can begin right away, concurrently with coalition development. Coalitions as they develop can use these or produce other postcards. (It's expensive to print them, so coordination of effort is desirable.)

Each county should designate a county coordinator responsible for following up on the postcard campaign. Points of concentration for circulation are: Labor Movement, Peoples of Color, Youth.

Responsibilities:

1) Preparation of *Memo to Comrades* on Strategy and Goals (Billie & Kendra)

2) *Resolution* to be presented to Central Labor Councils (Betsy)

3) *Production of Postcards* (John & Dodie)

4) *Packet* to be given out at the District Convention (Dodie)

Memo (#1 above)?

Draft of the Initiative

Budget Proposal Summary

Some information on CTRA/Fair Share analysis

Sample letter to legislators covering points including reducing prison budget, demanding diversion of money from the federal military budget, and closing tax loopholes,

5) *Contact Students* (Carl)

6) *Make report to the Convention*: It will be done at the Saturday Session, but not decided who will do it! Billie said she would if given 1/2 hour. Possibility of two-part presentation, Billie on political context, John on specifics of recommended campaign. Editor's note: I personally think the impact of the Wilson proposals can be outlined very simplistically in a few minutes - the packet will give all the details. More time should be given to describing the proposed plan of action, i.e., the four postcards, how to use them, what happens next.

Next meeting: Saturday, February 22, 10 am - Noon, 522 Valencia.
Every interested person welcome, regardless of membership status.

Notes on Latino focus in Santa Clara County
January 20, 1992

The County has focused activity on the Latino community since approximately 1984 or 1985. This focus was intensified following the 1988 District convention.

San Jose's population is approximately 25% Hispanic or Latino, yet there has never been a Latino directly elected to the City Council. The two Latinos who have served on the council were first appointed to fill vacant seats.

A Latino political machine emerged in the mid 80's. This machine helped elect the first Latino to the County Board of Supervisors in 1988, and came within 300 votes of getting Pete Carrillo elected to the SJ Council in 1990. The emergence of this coordinated political effort by local Latinos (a sharp contrast to previous fractured Latino politics) was a very important part of the political landscape we were working in from 1988 to 1992.

The affect of the economic crisis on the Latino community (loss of union jobs, loss of educational opportunities, blaming the victim police response to "gang" activity, housing crisis, redevelopment efforts to tear down low income Latino neighborhoods, etc.) and their response ("Justice for Janitors," battles with the INS, battles over bussing, confronting Redevelopment Agency bull dozers, City Council elections, etc.) are the other significant features of this past period.

OUR WORK

We held many discussions on how to focus our work so as to change our relationship to the Latino community. Neither our discussions nor our work were perfect, but changing our relationship was a major goal; one which we have achieved with some success.

We focused in two major areas:

- Tenant organizing in El Rancho Verde (threatened HUD apartments)
- Neighborhood organizing in the Jackson-Taylor area of central San Jose

We later developed a minor focus (minor in terms of resources) on the Justice for Janitors union organizing campaign.

In both Rancho Verde and Jackson-Taylor the work was initiated, organized, and developed by our forces. In both areas the work was a product of the club and county collective. In both areas the activities had multiple foci that were inter linked with all of our activity.

In Rancho Verde the main question was saving the housing. This was linked to the overall housing movement, to City Council elections, and specific labor struggles (closing the local International Paper plant, closing the adjacent Frito-Lay plant, Justice for Janitors). Rancho Verde was chosen both because

of the immanent housing threat and because of the concentration of lower income Latino families.

In Jackson-Taylor the main question became gentrification, but our work started around electoral action. The fight against gentrification has been effectively linked to the need for more homeless shelters, the need to counter NIMBYism, City council elections, and the Justice for Janitors campaign.

In both areas our efforts have been to find local leaders and to develop real grass roots political power, not just lead campaigns.

In Jackson-Taylor we also developed a special focus on Carrillo's 1990 council campaign. This was in response to the emergence of the new Latino political efforts. Again our goal was to develop new political relationships with these emerging Latino leaders.

We have had many successes. Much of our success is due to the objective conditions, but much is also due to our collective analysis and activity.

Rancho Verde has been saved, and the tenants made a significant contribution to the national fight for the Housing Act of 1990.

Gentrification has become a major issue in local politics, largely as a result of the activities of the neighborhood association. Homes have been saved, new low income housing is now being planned, and an independent grass roots

over

We have not recruited any Latinos from these efforts. The role of the Party is known, however, to many; and the base has expanded. Several of us are now well recognized by leading Latino activists and politicians. Many white activists in the housing movement now have a much different view of the importance of Latino politics to economic issues.

In the Carrillo campaign we eventually worked directly with Pete on questions of strategy and political line. We were not always in agreement! Our relationship has qualitatively changed over the last two years.

Only one person has been focused on the Justice for Janitor's campaign, so our role has been less than that described above. Others have supported specific picket lines, and we have built recognition for the campaign in the Housing Network and our other areas of concentration.

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REVIEW OF WORK by NORTHERN CALIFORNIA COMMISSION ON WOMEN'S EQUALITY, January 1992

We attempted to bring issues of women's equality into the District's work with the following projects:

1. Three educational outlines prepared for all clubs:
 women in the work force
 sexism in the party
 the family
2. Members of the Commission attended meetings of 3-4 different clubs to facilitate educationals on women's equality, focussing on the three areas above.
3. We lead a District meeting on women's equality and the necessity to struggle against male supremacy in the party.
4. We participated in a District meeting panel on labor, emphasizing the importance of women in the work force, superexploitation, the changing nature of the work force, etc.
5. In Commission meetings we have also discussed reproductive issues and there is a work-in-progress document on this topic.
6. We prepared a 1991 Resolution on Women's Equality for the District and National Conventions and a supporting discussion document. There was apparently no time for it to be considered at the District Convention, which forwarded it to the National office. The discussion document ("Thelma and Louise Look at the Party") was printed in Dialog and was included ~~in~~ in the District Convention packet for delegates.

Weaknesses

We have too few members, without enough representation from different areas of work. A MAJOR weakness is that we currently have no women of color on the Commission. We also have no men.

There has been support and response from the District leadership and some of the membership to our work. But issues of women's equality still remain tangential to the major work of the District, rather than being integrated into the work.

Instead of a constant effort by a small number of comrades to move the Party to get on track concerning women's equality, we should be participating fully and equally in the women's movement, both on the level of activist work AND in the enrichment of analysis and theory regarding women.

N.B.P. and J.S.

Review of areas of work/Humboldt County

1-92

Economic Fightback - chronologically.

PART ONE.

- #1 The first step was formation of a homeless coalition composed of concerned people, church leaders, homeless people and the local food bank.
- #2 The Coalition asked the County Board of Supervisors to appoint a County Homeless Task Force to study the local situation and report back.
- #3 The Task Force report on the county homeless was so graphic that a request was granted to hire a full-time Homeless Coordinator for one year.
- #4 A real break-through is the coordination of county and city officials through a contractual agreement to provide Winter Emergency Shelter at the Municipal Auditorium from 6:00 pm to 8:00 am. Food is provided by church and volunteers.
Approximately 75 homeless men and a few women use the shelter every night.

PART TWO.

II

- a. Our local Redwood Coast Seniors have continued to write letters, lobby, and phone National and State legislators for a National Health Care program.
- b. At monthly Senior meetings "Legislative Update" information from the Washington, D. C. office of the National Council of Senior Citizens is discussed and

c. The seniors donate food on a weekly basis to the Winter Emergency Shelter along with donations of blankets, sleeping bags and warm clothes.

Political Action.

Three members involved in re-building local P & F locally.

Initiated Coalition with the Greens Party and Progressive Democrats.

Peace & Solidarity

Supported progressive majority of Arcata City Council who declared the city a sanctuary for Gulf War soldiers.

AFRICAN AMERICAN EQUALITY and ASIAN EQUALITY

Working on NAACP programs. Public ceremony for Dr. King Holiday with a dozen community speakers sponsored by local NAACP. A multi-cultural group initiated a committee to discuss local hate/violence in schools and community.

LABOR - maintain contact with Afro-American pulp workers and Longshore and Teamsters Hall

PARTY - Two recruits since the 1987 Convention with one death and one dropped. Preliminary steps on a new member

PRESS - Distributed bundle of 100 and reduced to 50 after Greyhound strike. Dropped bundle after Cleveland Convention

WOMENS EQUALITY

Distributed WREE newsletter. Majority of on-hands homeless advocates, volunteers and activist are mostly women helping single homeless men.

Economic Fightback - chronologically.

PART ONE.

- #1 The first step was formation of a homeless coalition composed of concerned people, church leaders, homeless people and the local food bank.
- #2 The Coalition asked the County Board of Supervisors to appoint a County Homeless Task Force to study the local situation and report back.
- #3 The Task Force report on the county homeless was so graphic that a request was granted to hire a full-time Homeless Coordinator for one year.
- #4 A real break-through is the coordination of county and city officials through a contractual agreement to provide Winter Emergency Shelter at the Municipal Auditorium from 6:00 pm to 8:00 am. Food is provided by church and volunteers.
Approximately 75 homeless men and a few women use the shelter every night.

PART TWO.

II

- a. Our local Redwood Coast Seniors have continued to write letters, lobby, and phone National and State legislators for a National Health Care program.
- b. at monthly Senior meetings "Legislative Update" information from the Washington, D. C. office of the National Council of Senior Citizens is discussed and

c. The Seniors donate food on a weekly basis to the Winter Emergency Shelter along with donations of blankets, sleeping bags and warm clothes.

Political Action.

Three members involved in re-building local P & F locally.

Initiated Coalition with the Greens Party and Progressive Democrats.

Peace & Solidarity

Supported progressive majority of Arcata City Council who declared the city a sanctuary for Gulf War shelterers.

AFRICAN AMERICAN EQUALITY and ASIAN EQUALITY

Working on NAACP programs. Public ceremony for Dr. King Holiday with a dozen community speakers sponsored by local NAACP. a multi-cultural group initiated a committee to discuss local hate violence in schools and community.

LABOR -

maintain contact with Afro-American pulp workers and Longshore and Teamsters Hall

PARTY -

Two recruits since the 1987 Convention with one death and one dropped. Preliminary steps on a new member

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It was resolved that comrades should work in whatever their mass organizations were to build the Spring Mobilizations for Peace, Jobs and Justice in 1988, which happened to be two demonstrations that year, a march and rally for peace in Central America in April, and a march and rally to coincide with the New York mobilization greeting the UN's Third Special Session on Disarmament in June. We helped to build the April action, but more importantly, on our initiative the coalition brought representatives of the Soviet Peace Committee and of the Japanese Peace Movements to San Francisco for the June peace rally. We also We also were instrumental in assuring that a sizeable contingent of schoolchildren led the march and participated in the rally. The Peace Council, at our initiative, issued a mass flier joining the peace demonstration with the California primary election, calling for people to "take two steps for peace," voting for Jesse Jackson in the primary and marching in the demonstration.

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The Peace Council did successfully dedicate a large amount of work to building a tribute to Paul Robeson, Peacemaker, that was a first successful attempt in reaching out to the Black community, but that success was not translated into further consistent mass work for peace in the community. Similarly, while many comrades

were members of the Peace Council, and played a role especially in criticizing the functioning of the Peace Council, they were reluctant to take more responsibility for the organization or to help with its public presence in other coalitions in which those comrades may have been participating. The District Convention resolved to help build the PC, but this was not translated into much activity, and after the Robeson event, no further assistance was forthcoming. Similarly, appeals to help with the preparation and production of the Peace Council's widely-distributed ACTION ALERT went unanswered, and it ceased publication last April.

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It should be noted that some of the most consistent work on Central America was carried out by comrades active in the Veterans of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade, from the Nicaragua ambulance efforts, to medical aid for El Salvador, and now for health materials for Cuba.

The lack of any national Party policy or initiative on Central America solidarity has hampered our work in this area. Likewise, the lack of any official relations between our Party's International Secretariat and the Communist Party of El Salvador has hamstrung our work with their representation in this area, even though the District leadership and P&S Commission members did have occasional meetings with their representative. The lack of a formal relationship and of consistent follow-up led to no further strengthening of these loose ties and possibilities for mutually advantageous work.

It was resolved that work in connection with Southern Africa would be conducted through the San Francisco Anti-Apartheid Committee and the Bay Area Free South Africa Labor Committee. This has been the area of greatest influence of our comrades and of coordination of work, if that can be so characterized. Our people were very influential in continuing the work of this national mass movement, that likewise has had no leadership from the national center of the Party. Maintenance of sanctions, development of ties with the legalized ANC and the COSATU trade unions, and continued work in support of the SA freedom struggle were the result of consistent work from our comrades. This was evident in the role our comrades played in the tremendous outpouring of support for the historic visit of ANC President Comrade Nelson Mandela, Winnie Mandela and other ANC leaders to the Bay Area, as well as in the response to the PWW sponsored-tour of now SACP General Secretary Chris Hani. Strained relations between our two parties, with the onus on the negligence of the International Department of our Party, have not helped this work, but some comrades have found ways to overcome this obstacle.

While initially a Party collective was set up for the purpose of being more closely in touch with comrades' anti-apartheid work, that has ceased to function in the ensuing years. The comrades active in this work feel that the biggest success of the SFAAC has been the consistent publication of the Anti-Apartheid Alert which reaches about 1500 people on a regular basis and goes all over the country.

Areas not covered separately in the convention resolutions, such as the Middle East, were to be followed in discussions in the Peace Commission. Such was the case with a number of comrades who were representing different organizations in the Middle East Peace Network, where there were tremendous differences on tactics, breadth versus narrowness, etc. There has never been agreement on, for example, working within the Palestine Solidarity Committee, or with other formations, such as the Palestine Aid Society. The successful PDW-sponsored tour of Comrades Tawfiq Zayyad and Felicia Langer was conducted partly with the cooperation of friends in the PAS, but these successes did not likewise translate into continued work by Party members.

The invasion of Panama was met with a mass response from, among other organizations the Peace Council, which continued to follow up the issue for a year, and which involved some key trade unionists, African American and white, and made new contacts in

the African-American community. A broad peace delegation that met with Panamanian patriotic forces just prior to the invasion also included several comrades from our District, who met with our Panamanian comrades. Here, too, the lack of warm fraternal relations between our International Department and their Party hindered any nationally coordinated solidarity work in the U.S. during an entire period of progressive change and U.S. intervention and invasion in that country.

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At least two special meetings open to all comrades were held on the war threat, and it was resolved to concentrate our efforts in the trade unions and the African-American community. We took the initiative in getting resolutions passed, such that all the Bay Area labor councils took a class position against the war and the sending of troops to the Gulf, and even the State Federation of Labor's Executive Council passed such a resolution. This was instrumental in building a large trade union contingent in one of the two massive anti-war marches in San Francisco, with the Alameda Central Labor Council leadership marching with their banner in the lead of the contingent.

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To: All Clubs

From: Adhoc Committee on Cuba, N. CA.
522 Valencia S.F., CA 53701
c/o K.D.

On November 26, 1991 a meeting was held to develop an outline for a Northern CA. district workplan around Cuba. (The minutes are, regrettably, late.) Six clubs were represented.

Comrades were reminded of the two decisions taken at the previous meeting: (1) While as a Communist Party we support and defend socialism, our political work will emphasize non-intervention, affirming Cuba's right to independence; (2) Party members are encouraged to begin (or continue) Cuba work where they are based, e.g., workplace, neighborhood, peace or religious organizations, community coalitions, solidarity groups, etc.; and (3) we support the work of existing organizations: Venceremos Brigade, Hands Off Cuba Coalition, Global Exchange, Cuba Information Project, and the National Network on Cuba. The Center for Cuban Studies was also noted as needing our support.

In relation to #3 above, we noted that a key contribution the Party can make to the work of existing organizations is to develop our labor connections. In this spirit, several comrades volunteered to informally approach local labor leaders to discuss drafting a letter around such issues as the economic embargo and the Torricelli bill.

CLUB MEMBERS ARE URGED TO: (1) begin circulating the enclosed petition from the Cuba Information Project immediately, getting as many non-Party signatures as possible; (2) pass on any contacts you have in churches (in particular, African-American leaders during the Gulf crisis) or in the public schools to our adhoc committee on Cuba; (3) write and mail a letter like the enclosed sample, in conjunction with those you have immediate contact with, to your representatives/senators; and (4) continue to meet with local representatives/senators along with diverse community forces.

ABOUT THE PETITION: in order to assess how well we have done as a Party, comrades are asked to turn in their petitions to the adhoc committee (in lieu of mailing them individually to the Cuba Information Project) by Jan. 25, 1992. (You may want to keep a xerox copy for yourself for future work.) At that time, we will mail them all in together. Comrades are urged to take advantage of the holidays and all Martin Luther King Jr. celebrations to collect signatures.

Anyone who would like information on current or proposed legislation concerning Cuba, speakers for educationals, Cuba video, or assistance of any kind for your work, contact any of the existing organizations (mentioned above) or our adhoc committee.

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

11/27/91

CUBAN DEMOCRACY ACT

Rep. Robert Torricelli (D-NJ), chair of the House Subcommittee on Western Hemisphere Affairs, has finalized this legislation and is expected to introduce it sometime in the next few weeks. Some changes have been made, although the bill is still designed to "seek a peaceful transition to democracy and a resumption of economic growth in Cuba through the careful and sophisticated application of sanctions directed at the Castro government and support for the Cuban people." The bill is clearly a "carrots and stick" approach towards trying to influence change within Cuba. While there are some positive provisions in the bill we believe the entire piece of legislation should be stopped.

We do not yet know exactly when this bill will be introduced. It is important that action be taken immediately to stop it. In addition to pushing your Representative and Senators to oppose the Cuban Democracy Act we hope that you will write to Rep. Torricelli directly. He has started to hear from people within his district and from around the country, and the more people who contact him the better.

Please let us know if you need a copy of the summary of the bill, or a copy of the complete text. It is too long to include in this mailing, but we can send it out upon request.

THE MACK AMENDMENT

The Mack Amendment was part of the Foreign Aid Bill which was not authorized by Congress. Pres. Bush asked Sen. Leahy to delay action on the Foreign Aid Bill until early 1992 due to the issue of the loan guarantees to Israel.

While it is not clear what will happen with The Mack Amendment, it is important to let your Congresspeople know that you oppose this bill which would tighten the economic embargo against Cuba.

THE WEISS BILL FOR MEDICAL SUPPLIES

Several delegations have visited Rep. Ted Weiss and his aides in New York City. He stands behind his bill but it is clear that he would appreciate any support he can get. Specifically, if other Congresspeople would sign on as co-sponsors Rep. Weiss would be in a better position to push on this. Please urge your representative to support this piece of legislation.

WE DO NOT HAVE UPDATES AT THIS POINT ON THE OTHER PIECES OF LEGISLATION, BUT AS WE GET THAT INFORMATION WE WILL PASS IT ALONG TO YOU. IN THE MEANTIME, WE URGE YOU TO KEEP IN TOUCH WITH YOUR ELECTED OFFICIALS.

4

SAMPLE LETTER

Please use this as an example of the type of letter or statement you might want to leave with your representative or senator at the end of your meeting. It can also be used as a model for people who want to send letters individually.

Dear _____,

I/we believe the time has come to treat Cuba as a neighbor, not an enemy. The time has come to realize that the island-nation and its 10 million people represent no threat to our national interests. It is time for the United States to accept a hand of friendship from the Cuban people and restore full diplomatic relations with its current government.

I/we am/are alarmed at a trend emerging in some Washington quarters that argues for strengthening and internationalizing the U.S. embargo against Cuba, a process which will lead to greater tensions. If any of these legislative initiatives becomes law - most notably the Cuban Democracy Act or the Mack Amendment - the victims of this Cold War policy in the Caribbean will be the people of Cuba.

Rep./Sen. _____, I/we appeal to you to be a voice of reason. As a member of the United States Congress, we believe that you can most effectively use your leadership position to help build bridges between our two people. It is time for dialogue with Cuba.

Normalized relations between the U.S. and Cuba can only bring peace and prosperity to our two nations. Please support legislation like the Weiss Bill which exempts medicines from the trade embargo, and please oppose the new legislation being proposed by Rep. Toricelli and Rep. Guarini, as well as the Mack Amendment, which aim to strangle the Cuban government regardless of the suffering it will mean for the Cuban people.

We look forward to further contact with you on these important issues.

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On November 26, 1991 a meeting was held to develop an outline for a Northern CA. district workplan around Cuba. (The minutes are, regrettably, late.) Six clubs were represented.

Comrades were reminded of the two decisions taken at the previous meeting: (1) While as a Communist Party we support and defend socialism, our political work will emphasize non-intervention, affirming Cuba's right to independence; (2) Party members are encouraged to begin (or continue) Cuba work where they are based, e.g., workplace, neighborhood, peace or religious organizations, community coalitions, solidarity groups, etc.; and (3) we support the work of existing organizations: Venceremos Brigade, Hands Off Cuba Coalition, Global Exchange, Cuba Information Project, and the National Network on Cuba. The Center for Cuban Studies was also noted as needing our support.

In relation to #3 above, we noted that a key contribution the Party can make to the work of existing organizations is to develop our labor connections. In this spirit, several comrades volunteered to informally approach local labor leaders to discuss drafting a letter around such issues as the economic embargo and the Torricelli bill.

CLUB MEMBERS ARE URGED TO: (1) begin circulating the enclosed petition from the Cuba Information Project immediately, getting as many non-Party signatures as possible; (2) pass on any contacts you have in churches (in particular, African-American leaders during the Gulf crisis) or in the public schools to our adhoc committee on Cuba; (3) write and mail a letter like the enclosed sample, in conjunction with those you have immediate contact with, to your representatives/senators; and (4) continue to meet with local representatives/senators along with diverse community forces.

ABOUT THE PETITION: in order to assess how well we have done as a Party, comrades are asked to turn in their petitions to the adhoc committee (in lieu of mailing them individually to the Cuba Information Project) by Jan. 25, 1992. (You may want to keep a xerox copy for yourself for future work.) At that time, we will mail them all in together. Comrades are urged to take advantage of the holidays and all Martin Luther King Jr. celebrations to collect signatures.

Anyone who would like information on current or proposed legislation concerning Cuba, speakers for educationals, Cuba video, or assistance of any kind for your work, contact any of the existing organizations (mentioned above) or our adhoc committee.

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

11/27/91

CUBAN DEMOCRACY ACT

Rep. Robert Torricelli (D-NJ), chair of the House Subcommittee on Western Hemisphere Affairs, has finalized this legislation and is expected to introduce it sometime in the next few weeks. Some changes have been made, although the bill is still designed to "seek a peaceful transition to democracy and a resumption of economic growth in Cuba through the careful and sophisticated application of sanctions directed at the Castro government and support for the Cuban people." The bill is clearly a "carrots and stick" approach towards trying to influence change within Cuba. While there are some positive provisions in the bill we believe the entire piece of legislation should be stopped.

We do not yet know exactly when this bill will be introduced. It is important that action be taken immediately to stop it. In addition to pushing your Representative and Senators to oppose the Cuban Democracy Act we hope that you will write to Rep. Torricelli directly. He has started to hear from people within his district and from around the country, and the more people who contact him the better.

Please let us know if you need a copy of the summary of the bill, or a copy of the complete text. It is too long to include in this mailing, but we can send it out upon request.

THE MACK AMENDMENT

The Mack Amendment was part of the Foreign Aid Bill which was not authorized by Congress. Pres. Bush asked Sen. Leahy to delay action on the Foreign Aid Bill until early 1992 due to the issue of the loan guarantees to Israel.

While it is not clear what will happen with The Mack Amendment, it is important to let your Congresspeople know that you oppose this bill which would tighten the economic embargo against Cuba.

THE WEISS BILL FOR MEDICAL SUPPLIES

Several delegations have visited Rep. Ted Weiss and his aides in New York City. He stands behind his bill but it is clear that he would appreciate any support he can get. Specifically, if other Congresspeople would sign on as co-sponsors Rep. Weiss would be in a better position to push on this. Please urge your representative to support this piece of legislation.

WE DO NOT HAVE UPDATES AT THIS POINT ON THE OTHER PIECES OF LEGISLATION, BUT AS WE GET THAT INFORMATION WE WILL PASS IT ALONG TO YOU. IN THE MEANTIME, WE URGE YOU TO KEEP IN TOUCH WITH YOUR ELECTED OFFICIALS.

7

SAMPLE LETTER

Please use this as an example of the type of letter or statement you might want to leave with your representative or senator at the end of your meeting. It can also be used as a model for people who want to send letters individually.

Dear _____,

I/we believe the time has come to treat Cuba as a neighbor, not an enemy. The time has come to realize that the island-nation and its 10 million people represent no threat to our national interests. It is time for the United States to accept a hand of friendship from the Cuban people and restore full diplomatic relations with its current government.

I/we am/are alarmed at a trend emerging in some Washington quarters that argues for strengthening and internationalizing the U.S. embargo against Cuba, a process which will lead to greater tensions. If any of these legislative initiatives becomes law - most notably the Cuban Democracy Act or the Mack Amendment - the victims of this Cold War policy in the Caribbean will be the people of Cuba.

Rep./Sen. _____, I/we appeal to you to be a voice of reason. As a member of the United States Congress, we believe that you can most effectively use your leadership position to help build bridges between our two people. It is time for dialogue with Cuba.

Normalized relations between the U.S. and Cuba can only bring peace and prosperity to our two nations. Please support legislation like the Weiss Bill which exempts medicines from the trade embargo, and please oppose the new legislation being proposed by Rep. Toricelli and Rep. Guarini, as well as the Mack Amendment, which aim to strangle the Cuban government regardless of the suffering it will mean for the Cuban people.

We look forward to further contact with you on these important issues.

January 8, 1992

Dear Comrades,

Just a reminder--Party Activists and other left forces will meet on strategies to oppose Wilson's welfare cuts.

SUNDAY, January 12, 1992
2:00 p.m.
522 Valencia Street
San Francisco, CA 94110

Please be on time, and bring concrete ideas for action.

in struggle,

Kendra Alexander

Kendra Alexander

WILSON'S 1992-93 BUDGET PROPOSAL SUMMARY

Taxpayer's Protection Act of 1992 -- Initiative filed in December.

This initiative is central to Wilson's racist-David-Duke policies which attempt to blame the poor and immigrants for California's \$6.6 billion deficit. In brief, the initiative would:

- * cut benefits for 2.2 million recipients by 10 percent initially and another 15 percent if they remain on welfare beyond six months.
- * increase the share of Medi-Cal costs paid by seniors and the disabled because their shares of costs are based on AFDC grant levels.
- * severely curtail benefits for welfare recipients moving here from other states.
- * result in no grant increase for a family that has an additional child while on welfare.
- * require teen parents who receive AFDC to live at home with their parents.
- * eliminate all aid to pregnant women.
- * repeal the statutory SSI and IHSS COLA for aged, blind and disabled.
- * provide the governor with unprecedented budgetary power, allowing him to call a state of fiscal emergency and make additional cut budget cuts.

(Poverty law groups argue that the initiative violates a federal law prohibiting states from reducing AFDC grants below May 188 levels. They are confident that the initiative, if it were to qualify and pass, would face a legal challenge.)

Education:

Higher Education:

The Board of Trustees of the CSU and the Regents of UC have both been quick to approve Wilson's proposed fee increases which, coupled with the economy and an increase in the number of students applying to entry into California's four-year colleges, will make higher education unattainable for thousands of students.

Specifically, the proposed fee increases would result in:

- a 24% increase for UC students or \$3036 annually. This is a total of a 67% increase in fees during Wilson's brief term in office.
- a 40% increase for the CSU students or \$1310 annually. This is a 58% increase during Wilson's term.

Wilson's Budget -- page 2

Education, continued:

Choice Initiative:

Wilson has endorsed the "Parental Choice in Education Initiative" which is being circulated in Southern California (any evidence of it up North?). The

initiative would:

- * use state revenues to set up scholarships for any student to attend a private or religious school that agrees to redeem the scholarship. The amount of the scholarship would be at least half of the funding state and local governments provide for public schools.
- * allow current public schools to convert into scholarship schools.
- * allow private scholarship schools to be "free from unnecessary, burdensome or onerous regulation."

The California Parent and Teacher's Association (PTA), the CTA and AFT launched a campaign on 1/21/92 urging Californians not to sign the petition.

AIDS Budget:

-- no increase in funding despite an anticipated 20% increase in the number of AIDS cases next year.

Renter's tax credit:

-- elimination of the renter's tax credit for lower-income renters

State workers:

-- no increases in wages or benefits. In addition, Wilson is expected to continue his raid on the Public Employee Retirement Fund. As a result, a coalition of State Employee unions and senior organizations is launching an initiative to prohibit such raids.

Sales - tax:

-- makes the "temporary" 1-1/4 cent sales tax increase "temporary" for another 2 years.

Prisons:

-- increased by \$.2 billion

"Tax the Rich, Relieve the Middle"
California Tax Reform Association's (CTRA)
Response to Wilson's Budget Proposals

Initiative filed 2/4/92: requires 384,974 signatures by April 24

The CTRA has launched an initiative drive as part of its larger fair tax program which has focused on closing tax loopholes for corporations and taxing the rich. According the CTRA, the initiative plan would increase State revenues by \$700 million annually. Key provisions of the initiative include:

- * elimination of the "temporary" 1/4 cent sales tax that Wilson proposes to make permanent
- * full restoration of the renters' tax credit
- * increasing to 11% rate the income tax on single taxpayers making more than \$175,000 (\$350,000 for couples) and increase to 12% the income tax on single taxpayers making more than \$250,000 (\$500,000 for couples.)
- * raising the bank and corporation tax rate from 9.3 to 10.3%
- * elimination of the ability of foreign corporations to choose which method of taxation applies to them
- * institution of a 3% oil company severance tax
- * increasing gross premiums tax on insurance companies
- * elimination of corporation deductions as expenses for those executive compensation packages that total more than 25 times the average compensation for employees

Save Our State (S.O.S.) Coalition

A large coalition of organizations and existing coalitions based in San Francisco has been quick to respond to Governor's proposed budget and initiative with a voter registration campaign and several proposed media events, including an initial press conference on 2/3/92. Initial SOS organizers include the Income Rights Project, Coalition for the Homeless, Gray Panthers, and individuals from labor unions and public school coalitions. The Coalition has endorsed the Campaign for a Fair Share program which demands no more cuts, restoration of programs, closing loopholes (CTRA's proposal) and reprioritizing current spending.

Neither the CTRA nor Campaign for a Fair Share are action coalitions. They see their roles as think tanks and lobbyists. Therefore, it is critical that local coalitions such as S.O.S. be formed in various communities and that special attempts be made to involve labor, people of color, immigrants and youth.

Suggestions for Letters to State Legislatures
in response to the "Taxpayer's Protection Initiative" --

Reasons for opposing the initiative:

1. Effects on poor, especially women and children:
 - * over 1.5 million children in California depend on AFDC for basic needs
 - * families on welfare already live well below the poverty line
2. Not really saving money -- will cost more money in the long run than is saved:
 - * AFDC is only 6% of the \$43.8 billion state budget
 - * hundreds of studies show the long-lasting effects of homelessness on families including chronic health problems, malnutrition and emotional problems which are far more expensive for society
3. The initiative gives the governor dictatorial powers over the budget crisis which allows him to call a state of fiscal emergency, making additional budget cuts and reducing wages for state employees.
4. Diverts attention from the real sources of California's budgetary crisis by attempting to stir up David-Duke racist and anti-immigrant sentiment:
 - * families do not move to California because of its welfare benefits
 - * undocumented households contribute more in tax revenues than they receive in other social services.
 - * the stereotype of heavy welfare dependence being routinely passed from mother to child is false

We need real solutions to the budget crisis:

1. Support the CTRA's "Tax the Rich, Relieve the Middle" initiative which would increase state revenues by closing tax loopholes for corporations and increasing the state income tax for individuals earning more than \$175,000 a year or \$350,000 for couples.
2. Reprioritize spending priorities: cut the prison budget.
3. Join with others in state government in demanding that Congress make big cuts in military spending.
4. Lobby your fellow legislators in opposition to the Governor's initiative and in support of real solutions to the budget crisis.

Demand that the legislator write to you and state specifically how he or she stands on the Governor's initiative and on the CTRA initiative plan.

12/17/91

M E M O

To: All Clubs and all District Committee Members

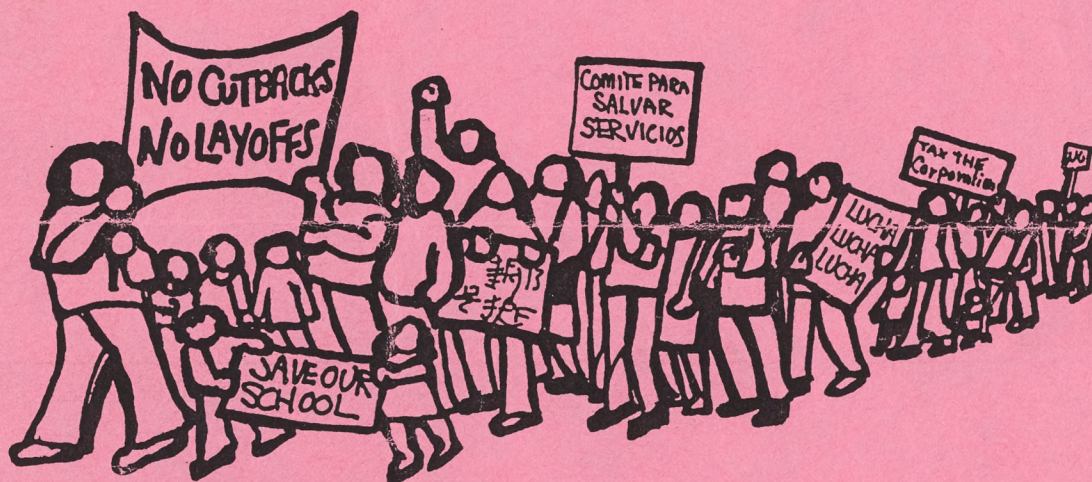
From: Giuliana

Re: Special Meeting

Date: Dec

There will be a special meeting on December 28, 1991, from 2:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. at 522 Valencia Street to discuss Governor Pete Wilson's budget cuts and proposed ballot initiative targetted against welfare recipients, renters and the poor in general.

Please pass word on to your Club to attend, particularly if you are involved in any mass organization or movement. Bring any information to this meeting concerning mass action on this question.



Special State Budget Cuts Meeting

SATURDAY, December 28, 1991

2:00 p.m. - @ 5:00 p.m.

522 Valencia, San Francisco

Be Sure to bring any information you may have on mass action concerning this issue.

A PLAN OF WORK TO FIGHT THE WILSON OFFENSIVE: PROPOSALS

In order to assist clubs in developing a plan of work in building fight-back on the Wilson offensive, the following materials have been prepared by the District.

A PACKET OF INFORMATION

1. A summary of the initiative. Initiators are aiming at a million signatures to ensure qualification for the November ballot.
2. Summaries of Wilson's proposals now being projected in the California state legislature. (The welfare proposals are also being pushed in the legislature at the same time as other cuts.)
3. Summary of proposals to close tax loopholes for the rich and for big business, made by the California Tax Reform Association, widely supported as an alternative to cuts in social services.
4. Postcards to be used to pressure: a) Governor Wilson. b) Willie Brown (to get Democrats to take up an active fight against the Wilson proposals). c) local state senators, and d) assemblypersons.
5. A guide for letters to be sent to the four people indicated above.

SUMMARY OF PROPOSALS FOR PARTY ACTION

With help and participation of district leadership, each county to hold a county-wide membership meeting, in order to help clubs to work out a plan of action:

1. To defeat Wilson's program, with particular emphasis on exposing and opposing its racism.
2. To build unity and strength in the people's over-all fight back on the economic crisis, and
3. To influence electoral tactics and the programs of candidates, thereby laying a basis for the 1992 elections. Particular attention must be given to getting candidates to declare themselves and to take part in action.
4. Our job is to help initiate where necessary, and to build and strengthen, broad coalitions, to participate with others in giving leadership to the development of tactics which include strong united action and coordination of separate activities by various groups. It is not our job to try to formulate blueprints, but to concentrate on building participation in such coalitions by labor, peoples of color, and youth.
5. Through our work and the work of others, to see that 20,000 postcards are signed (4 cards each by 5000 signers), to provide an initial activity for those just getting started, to get the ball rolling, to prevent an early legislative blitz by Wilson.

TO THESE ENDS, A TWO PRONGED STRATEGY SHOULD BE CONSIDERED:

1. Since action on the state budget (including welfare cuts, renters' credit, wage cuts and tuition hikes) could take place between March and July in the state legislature, the emphasis during the initial period must be on getting state legislators to oppose actively all aspects of the program. To mobilize legislative opposition effectively, Democrats must be pressured: to ensure leaders and organizers of a floor flight, to determine who are weak or swing votes on the issue, to guarantee that Democrats do not dare to sit

- out the vote or join the opposition.
2. Once the effort begins to gather signatures and to prepare for a November vote on the initiative, emphasis in fight-back can shift increasingly towards voter registration, pledge cards to refuse to sign and to vote against the initiative, street corner leafleting to expose the initiative, etc.

HOW TO WORK FOR ALTERNATIVE SOLUTIONS TO THE BUDGET CRISIS

Different organizations will respond differently to this question.

1. Campaign for a Fair Share, statewide lobbying organization, is supporting actively proposals of the California Tax Reform Association to close all kinds of loopholes for big business and the rich. They maintain this could raise enough money to solve the crisis.
2. A real offensive can be made around the need to cut military spending and the responsibility of the state government to press for such cuts. At the same time, proposals must be linked with solutions which are immediate and concrete, and intrinsically realizable.
3. Progressive organizations prepared to do so should also talk about the need to cut prison budgets and to oppose the whole effort to "criminalize the poor."
4. The time is ripe for a serious projection: Tax the rich!

KEY POLITICAL CONSIDERATIONS

All aspects of the budget crisis are important and interrelated: the welfare cuts, emergency budget powers for the governor, elimination of the renters' credit, possible further cuts in education and other budget areas; tuition hikes, and (more indirectly) voucher proposals to provide public financing for private schooling--further bankrupting the public schools which serve the poor. However the welfare proposals are central to the fight and we must see this aspect as the critical point of concentration to which all other struggles must be linked, for the following reasons: 1. these cuts are profoundly immoral and victimize those least able to defend themselves; 2. the welfare proposals (like earlier attacks upon immigrant workers) are a blatant injection of David-Duke type racism into the 1992 elections (parallel to the use of the Willie Horton case in 1988); 3. the initiative is designed to organize and get out the maximum right wing vote in the November elections, affecting all issues and candidacies, and 4. these proposals are the target of a growing sense of public outrage, which must be channeled into organized action if it is to be effective.

Work around these issues is an effective lead in to over-all work on the 1992 elections. Presently there is in the mass movement great difference on forms of struggle and particularly on which party channels should be used. The best avenue to unity is around programmatic demands, common program, and joint activity on issues. At the third session of our convention, March __, we will be developing an over-all plan of work, dealing with other issues but also with a broader plan of work for the 1992 elections. In the meantime, we can go to work on this most immediate campaign, which is critically necessary, and will help us and others develop policy for 1992.

IMPORTANT! As an individual send in your name and address, ask for a packet of current information and to be put on the mailing list:
Campaign for a Fair Share; 126 Hyde Street Suite 102; SF 94102. 771-1287

Draft Resolution to present for SFCLC consideration

Whereas, California Governor Pete Wilson's 1992 proposed budget and initiative is an insult to working people, especially women and children who are already victims of the economic crisis in our country.

And whereas, the largest amount of welfare is being shelled out to big business for deduction of meals, travel and entertainment, including yachts and other loopholes for the rich to the tune of over \$700 million dollars, (California Tax Reform Association).

And whereas, Governor Wilson is preparing to cut the Renter's Tax Credit by 8.8%, thereby further threatening seniors and disabled people, in addition to appealing the cost of living adjustments.

And whereas, Governor Wilson's David Duke-like policies are an attempt to pit public assistance monies which basically go to women and children, against funding for the public school system, stating he cannot budget for both.

And whereas, we will not be persuaded by this divide and conquer tactic of Pete Wilson,

And whereas, the proposed budget cuts will particularly victimize people of color,

And whereas, the budget proposal now being presented to the California Legislature also include further cuts in State workers' income and their retirement fund.

Therefore be it resolved, that the SFCLC go on record strongly objecting to Governor Wilson's budget proposals,

And be it further resolved, that SFCLC immediately begin a voter registration drive of our members, their families and friends, etc. so that our collective voices be heard loud and clear by Sacramento legislators, Governor Wilson and Assembly Speaker Willie Brown.

And be it further resolved, that this resolution be sent to all California Labor Councils and to California Secretary of Labor Jack Henning, Governor Wilson and Speaker Brown,

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RESOLUTION ON LESBIAN/GAY/BISEXUAL EQUALITY

Adopted- No Ca Dist Convention, October 20, 1991

In the past our Party has been slow to actively support the rights of Gays, Lesbians and Bisexuals. We now have to improve our active level of support.

The CPUSA abhors and condemns discrimination against Lesbians, Gays and Bisexuals. Discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation is morally reprehensible and contrary to the democratic changes we are fighting to promote in the U.S. Such discrimination only serves the interest of the ruling class and promotes a dangerous climate of fear in which the rights of all are threatened.

The CPUSA condemns violence against and persecution of people because of sexual orientation.

No society is free or democratic while sexual orientation is a basis for discrimination. All laws aimed at regulating the sexual relations of consenting adults in the privacy of their homes are an infringement on basic human rights and should be repealed. Lesbian and Gay domestic partnerships should have legal status and be included in family health plans. Non-discrimination clauses must be added to housing laws and laws regarding adoption and custody. The insurance industry must not be allowed to discriminate because of a false perception of high health risks. Anti-discrimination laws should be passed and be strictly enforced.

The Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual communities have been instrumental in the fight against AIDS. They, along with women's organizations, the African American community, elected officials and community groups have pioneered grassroots organizing dedicated to combatting AIDS and challenging governmental policy. This has played an important role in developing contacts between all communities affected. The government's response to the AIDS epidemic could easily be termed genocidal. We every eight minutes, someone dies of AIDS due to the bigotry of those who hold the purse strings. The present level of funding for AIDS research was gained through fierce organized struggle.

In an effort to justify Gay-bashing and homophobia, the AIDS crisis is presented by some as a "Gay issue" alone. Blaming Gay men for the AIDS crisis (in addition to mendaciousness) allows the devastating effects of the disease in African American Latino and poor communities to be ignored.

AIDS and the many other burdens borne by Lesbians, Gays and Bisexuals in this country exist in the context of an economic system in which a select few have power over the vast majority of Americans. Only in such a system would drug companies engage in the shameless profiteering which has characterized the distribution of AZT.

The solution to the AIDS crisis can only come about with massive research and treatment. (The monies can be found in the peace dividend, and in taxing corporations and the rich). The staggering cost of AIDS treatment and research enhanced by the profiteering of drug and insurance companies make need of a comprehensive, democratically managed, free, national health care program all the more necessary. **Health care is a human right, not a privilege!**

Gays, Lesbians and Bisexuals span every class and the struggle for their rights is properly understood as an all-people's struggle to extend democracy.

Despite the all-class character of the Gay/Lesbian/Bisexual rights struggle, discrimination against Lesbians, Gays and Bisexuals heavily impinges upon the working class and fosters disunity among workers.

United action around issues of common concern is the only way to win. All progressive and democratic-minded people and movements have a responsibility to fight for equal rights for Lesbians, Gays and Bisexuals.

The CPUSA works for the unity of the working class, regardless of sexual orientation, race, gender, national and cultural background, or religious beliefs. Therefore we take a principled stance against ideas and practices which prevent this unity. Homophobia is an obstacle to unity which we are committed to struggle against.

We invite all progressive people to join the CPUSA. A person's sexual orientation has no bearing on one's ability to join. Lesbians, Gays and Bisexuals are full members of the CPUSA and are free to take leadership roles.

The CPUSA, now remembering with deep regret the earlier homophobia that brought it to expel its gay and lesbian members, now offers its long overdue but sincere apologies to the victimized comrades we lost, and extends its hopeful invitation for their return.

The Western Club extends its thanks to the YCL, upon whose statement on the same topic this resolution is based.

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The CPUSA abhors and condemns discrimination against Lesbians, Gays and Bisexuals. Discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation is morally reprehensible and contrary to the democratic changes we are fighting to promote in the U.S. Such discrimination only serves the interest of the ruling class and promotes a dangerous climate of fear in which the rights of all are threatened.

The CPUSA condemns violence against and persecution of people because of sexual orientation.

No society is free or democratic while sexual orientation is a basis for discrimination. All laws aimed at regulating the sexual relations of consenting adults in the privacy of their homes are an infringement on basic human rights and should be repealed. Lesbian and Gay domestic partnerships should have legal status and be included in family health plans. Non-discrimination clauses must be added to housing laws and laws regarding adoption and custody. The insurance industry must not be allowed to discriminate because of a false perception of high health risks. Anti-discrimination laws should be passed and be strictly enforced.

The Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual communities have been instrumental in the fight against AIDS. They, along with women's organizations, the African American community, elected officials and community groups have pioneered grassroots organizing dedicated to combatting AIDS and challenging governmental policy. This has played an important role in developing contacts between all communities affected. The government's response to the AIDS epidemic could easily be termed genocidal. We every eight minutes, someone dies of AIDS due to the bigotry of those who hold the purse strings. The present level of funding for AIDS research was gained through fierce organized struggle.

In an effort to justify Gay-bashing and homophobia, the AIDS crisis is presented by some as a "Gay issue" alone. Blaming Gay men for the AIDS crisis (in addition to mendaciousness) allows the devastating effects of the disease in African American Latino and poor communities to be ignored.

AIDS and the many other burdens borne by Lesbians, Gays and Bisexuals in this country exist in the context of an economic system in which a select few have power over the vast majority of Americans. Only in such a system would drug companies engage in the shameless profiteering which has characterized the distribution of AZT.

The solution to the AIDS crisis can only come about with massive research and treatment. (The monies can be found in the peace dividend, and in taxing corporations and the rich). The staggering cost of AIDS treatment and research enhanced by the profiteering of drug and insurance companies make need of a comprehensive, democratically managed, free, national health care program all the more necessary. Health care is a human right, not a privilege!

Gays, Lesbians and Bisexuals span every class and the struggle for their rights is properly understood as an all-people's struggle to extend democracy.

Despite the all-class character of the Gay/Lesbian/Bisexual rights struggle, discrimination against Lesbians, Gays and Bisexuals heavily impinges upon the working class and fosters disunity among workers.

United action around issues of common concern is the only way to win. All progressive and democratic-minded people and movements have a responsibility to fight for equal rights for Lesbians, Gays and Bisexuals.

The CPUSA works for the unity of the working class, regardless of sexual orientation, race, gender, national and cultural background, or religious beliefs. Therefore we take a principled stance against ideas and practices which prevent this unity. Homophobia is an obstacle to unity which we are committed to struggle against.

We invite all progressive people to join the CPUSA. A person's sexual orientation has no bearing on one's ability to join. Lesbians, Gays and Bisexuals are full members of the CPUSA and are free to take leadership roles.

The CPUSA, now remembering with deep regret the earlier homophobia that brought it to expel its gay and lesbian members, now offers its long overdue but sincere apologies to the victimized comrades we lost, and extends its hopeful invitation for their return.

The Western Club extends its thanks to the YCL, upon whose statement on the same topic this resolution is based.

ADOPTED IN EQUALITY WORKSHOP
No Ca District Convention
October 20, 1991

RESOLUTION ON NATIVE AMERICAN LIBERATION
submitted by the Western Club

The Reagan and Bush administrations formed an alliance between government and monopoly corporations to celebrate Christopher Columbus' invasion of the Americas and the past 500 years of colonialism, imperialism, and the accelerated growth of capitalism from the robbery and enslavement of Native Americans and the kidnapping and enslavement of Africans.

In response, indigenous people from all over this continent have been meeting to organize Resistance 500, a response to the official quincentennial celebrations, to commemorate 500 years of continuing struggle against genocide.

In this context, we feel it is important to reaffirm some of our positions on Native American liberation. We are asking the district convention to take into consideration the following resolution and for district delegates to contribute to bringing forward a resolution at the national convention. Formulation of the following demands is credited to the 1979 "Resolution on the Path to Native American Indian Liberation," adopted at the 22nd Convention, and the "1979 Native American Indian Peoples' Program," drafted by the Native American Commission of Northern California.

We support the right of Native American nations and tribes to be recognized as distinct nationalities, with sovereignty over reservations, including the right to levy taxes on corporate property, to self-government, and judicial control.

We call for the U.S. government to honor all treaties, ratified and unratified, that are recognized by Native Americans in reclaiming jurisdiction over land and resources.

We support the right of Native American to negotiate nationally and internationally as sovereign nations.

We support the right of Native Americans to have full control over Indian affairs and call for the restructuring of the Bureau of Indian Affairs to place it under Native American control.

We support the right of Native Americans to retain and expand their land bases, to control their resources, including water, fishing, and mineral rights, and to reclaim jurisdiction over land and resources.

We call for an immediate end to harassment, repression and hate crimes against Native Americans by federal and state agencies, by the federal, state and local police, and by vigilante groups.

We support the right of Native Americans to receive the full value of all resources taken from their lands and waters, to take over corporations on their reservations and place them under Indian control, and to develop their own industries and resources.

We call for an end to all genocidal practices, such as forced sterilization and medical experimentation, being carried out against Native Americans and we support the right to prenatal care, guaranteed medical care, and free choice of health care providers, including health plan coverage for traditional medicine people.

(over)

We support the right of Native Americans to the use of their languages, religions, customs and traditions and to the sanctity of religious sites and burial grounds.

We call for an end to the desecration of sacred ceremonial sites and burial grounds and for the return of Native American bones and cultural property to the tribes that claim them.

We support the right of Alaskan Natives to towns, lands, and mineral areas necessary to improve the economic viability of their reservations and villages.

We support the right of Native Americans to representation in all levels of government and the right of each reservation to elect a Congressional representative and a state legislator and the right of each nation to elect a U.S. Senator and a state senator.

We support the right of Native Americans to job training and employment, affirmative action, unions, safe working conditions, health care, education, and housing irrespective of place of residence, on or off the reservation.

We support the right of Native American reservations to economic development funds and technical aid from the U.S. government as reparations for centuries of land and resource theft, treaty violations, and genocidal oppression.

We support the right of Native American tribes and nations to full control over economic aid without interference from the Department of the Interior or other government agencies.

We support the right to U.S. government aid to those Native Americans in urban areas who choose to be repatriated to their homelands, and we call for the government to reverse its terminations of Native American tribes.

We support the right of Native Americans to have control over their own schools, have Native American instructors, and have a curriculum that includes their heritage.

We call for the immediate release of Leonard Peltier and all political prisoners incarcerated or standing trial for fighting for the human rights of Native Americans.

We oppose the observance of Columbus Day as a day of honoring Christopher Columbus and his invasion of the Americas.

We support the recognition of 1992 as the "Year of Indigenous People," protests against official quincentennial celebrations of Columbus' invasion, and Resistance 500, demonstrations being organized internationally by indigenous peoples of this continent to commemorate 500 years of struggle against genocide.

Review of labor work
Northern California District - CPUSA
1987-1991
by David Bacon

This is not intended as an exhaustive or detailed review of all the labor work in which comrades have been involved. It is instead a look at the basic policy decisions made on a district level in relation to labor work, how those decisions were implemented, and what some of the problems have been.

The implementation of industrial concentration policy

The last district convention agreed on an industrial concentration policy as the basis of the district's labor work. The district decided to carry out work in the following industries - longshore and transport, electronics, steel, auto, and agriculture. Two comrades, Juan and David, were assigned to the district staff to prepare plans for the work in those areas. Those plans were discussed in the staff, and the district board heard reports about the work in some of the concentration areas, especially longshore, electronics and steel.

In the longshore industry, a series of meetings were held which concentrated on developments in the ILWU in general, and longshore in particular, including comrades in the industry from outside the district. Efforts were made to organize rank-and-file activity in longshore locals to keep pressure on to maintain the hiring hall, and other basic job rights and conditions of longshoremen. The PDW provided consistent coverage of longshore struggles, and was consistently distributed to longshoremen at the payline. The party was respected and had some degree of influence among longshore workers, but the actual number of working comrades has been very small. When the possibility of new registrations entering the local opened up, there was no real organized effort by the party leadership to ensure that a number of comrades applied to work in the industry. Throughout the last four years, one club has been responsible for longshore work, and has taken its responsibility seriously. Because of the increasing age and passing of leading comrades, however, the ongoing distribution of the paper, or communist literature generally, among longshoremen has become impossible to support. By the time the international election of officers took place this year, which resulted in the election of a new, more progressive leadership for the ILWU, the effort to maintain a coordinated district policy in the union had been abandoned. As a result, the party played no significant role in the election.

In the warehouse division, leading comrades were assigned to work with the warehouse club. The club was able to respond, with assistance from Juan, to the possibility of electing new progressive leadership in Local 6. Overall, however, the work in the warehouse industry suffered from the party's inability to maintain an ongoing rank-and-file organization among the local's members. In addition, over the last four years, leading comrades have left the union and industry. The continuation of progressive leadership of the union is in danger, in part at least, as a result of our own shortcomings. The warehouse club had serious problems in organizing itself

and its own activity, and eventually was merged into the East Bay trade union club. There is now no party collective responsible for work in this industry and union, where we have historically had a strong presence, very few comrades, and no policy.

In the electronics industry, party activity was basically paralyzed by the lack of comrades working in the industry. The possibility of building an associate member program in the industry, supported by a major international union, existed in the immediate post-convention period. However, there was disagreement in the district board about the priority which this work should have, and although there was some effort to get party members involved, it was abandoned after a relatively short period. No consistent plan was developed for finding comrades who were willing to take jobs in the industry, and this was not treated as a serious possibility. Distribution of the PDW continued for most of the last four years at National Semiconductor, where party activity was previously concentrated, but has since stopped, and the connection with the workers in that plant has been broken.

Work in the steel industry revolved around the struggle over rebuilding the USS-POSCO steel mill. A number of building trades comrades were actively involved in the rank-and-file movement to oppose the non-union construction job. A collective was organized to discuss policy for their work, both in terms of the direction of the mass struggle, and the involvement of the PDW. There were significant advances made in the influence of the party in the building trades, especially in the northern Contra Costa County area, as a result. Efforts to find contacts and begin doing work in the mill itself, however, were not successful. There was no discussion in the district leadership of the possibility of sending anyone to work in the mill. The PDW was consistently distributed to workers both at USS-POSCO, and at the NUMMI plant, by retired comrades throughout this period.

At NUMMI, contact was made with workers opposed to the class-collaboration team concept administration, through writing articles and distribution of the PDW. Although a few meetings were held, there was no basis for consolidating the connection, and it was eventually broken. The group we had contact with eventually succeeded in defeating the team-concept administration of the local, which received national attention because the plant had been used to promote team-concept programs throughout the industry. We did not play any role in the defeat of team concept at NUMMI. We never tried to get anyone to go to work in the plant, despite the fact that hiring occasionally has gone on throughout this period.

In food processing and agriculture, party activity was concentrated in Watsonville. After the convention, the struggle in Watsonville around job loss and the struggle inside the Teamsters union received attention from the party, and coverage in the PDW. A separate club was organized in Watsonville, and county leadership moved into the community. The Watsonville club has consistently carried out community work around job loss, housing and electoral issues involving food processing workers. Together with the struggle of the Sonoma club, the activity of the Watsonville club has been the main vehicle for party work among Mexican workers, a key section of the workforce in almost all industries in northern California. Initially, the party tried to organize Spanish-language party educational programs to consolidate membership of Mexican workers, but the effort was not immediately successful, and

was discontinued. The only efforts that the party made to support the struggle which led to the election of new leadership in the Teamsters Union, possibly the most important labor event of this period, took place in Watsonville, with no involvement from the district.

Although the work of the Sonoma club doesn't neatly fall into one of the concentration industries, it was clearly the highpoint of industrial concentration activity over the last four years. The club successfully thought through the strategy for the building of an independent, radical union among the Mexican industrial workforce, and implemented that strategy. As a result, the club and the Sonoma County Industrial Union had a profound effect on the politics of the north bay, in terms of providing a vehicle for the struggle against racism and national oppression of Mexican industrial workers, winning a new progressive leadership for the labor movement in the county, and achieving a new level of political unity among nationally oppressed workers and other sections of the working class, especially public workers, as well as peace and community organizations. Aside from meeting with the comrades involved occasionally, however, the district played almost no role in supporting the struggle of the workers to organize their union while it was going on, or thinking through the problems in maintaining an autonomous union which could continue to provide a mass base for the party's activity. As a result, the union was eventually forced into a very disadvantageous merger with the San Francisco janitors union, and its autonomous existence was substantially eroded.

Especially in the immediate post-convention period, there were efforts to meet with comrades consistently in non-concentration industries and unions. Meetings took place among members of HERE Local 2, in order to develop a party base in the hotel and restaurant industry in San Francisco, but were discontinued because of poor participation of comrades involved. Other meetings were held with San Francisco teachers during the period prior to the merger of the AFT and NEA teachers unions. In each case, individual comrades played important roles, but there was never a policy discussed and adopted by the district, which could have led to an ongoing commitment to work in these areas.

Party members in the campus club continued to carry out work on the campus and in their union throughout the last four years. Teachers also maintained a club. But the district was not able to coordinate the work of these two clubs, or the work of comrades in general trade union clubs, with the overall labor work of the district, in part because comrades saw little direct role for themselves in relation to industrial concentration activity. A number of proposals were made in the east bay for forums that would bring together left trade union activists. Some degree of cooperation was achieved among these clubs and comrades on some of these efforts, but they were not continued after the initial meetings. The district labor commission proposed that comrades work on establishing a Jobs with Justice organization in the bay area. While a few comrades worked hard on the effort, this project met with determined opposition by the labor council leadership in the east bay, and most labor comrades did not support the effort. During the Pittston strike, a few comrades tried to set up organized support activities in response both to the national policy of concentrating effort on this strike, and in response to the presence in the area of one of the strikers

and a UMW staffperson, but the majority of comrades active in the labor movement did not participate.

The weakening of industrial concentration policy

Industrial concentration policy was already being questioned by many comrades, even before and during the last district convention. That questioning continued and grew over the last four years. Eventually, almost the entire district leadership, except for Juan and David, declared that it was no longer in support of industrial concentration policy, and that there was no longer a political basis for concentrating party activity on industrial workers. Concentration policy was effectively abandoned as the basis for party labor work without any formal discussion or decision by the district itself. Although there have always been problems in finding comrades able to get jobs in industrial plants, the abandonment of concentration policy was the basic reason for the failure of the party to try to solve the problem of how to increase its presence among industrial workers. Classes in party schools which focussed directly on industrial concentration work were changed to involve general discussions of political economy, in an effort to reinforce a Marxist analysis of exploitation. Eventually, however, party educational classes were discontinued entirely. No policy was offered as a replacement for industrial concentration, so the political basis for labor work was weakened with no effort to find any other.

In an effort to provide a sound, factual basis for the discussion of party work directly among workers, and in various sections of the working class, a survey was proposed by the district staff. County organizations were asked to obtain basic factual information on the composition of the working class in their areas, in terms of race and nationality, industry, union, level of organization, and other questions. Only two counties made serious efforts to supply the information requested, and none of the major county organizations where party membership was concentrated made the slightest effort to take the survey seriously. As a result, the discussion of the composition of the working class, which became a hotly-debated question in the district, proceeded in a vacuum – in the absence of a sound factual basis – and in many cases gross mischaracterizations of the composition of various sections of the working class, especially the industrial working class, were the result.

The two concentrations

Two years ago, realizing that the mass work of the party was becoming increasingly disorganized, the district staff held a retreat to find a new political basis for party work. The staff then recommended to the board, and eventually to the district committee, that the party concentrate its work in two areas – the struggle for equality and the struggle to organize the unorganized.

The struggle to organize the unorganized was proposed at the basis for all labor work in the district. The proposal, however, was never translated into a clear policy for implementation. Instead, a debate took place over whose job it was to organize unorganized workers – the party's or the labor movement's. David made a proposal that the district ask at least the Alameda county party organization to set up a club to concentrate on this work, much as the Sonoma club concentrated on building the

Sonoma County Industrial Union, or the Santa Clara electronics club concentrated on building the UE Electronics Organizing Committee. The proposal was defeated, and the organizing concentration was reduced to encouraging individual comrades to advocate greater organizing activity in their unions. As a result, the policy of concentrating on organizing the unorganized did not result in any concrete party work, no collective was established to organize it and carry it out, or to develop its political basis, and no connection was ever made between the party and any concrete group of workers, organized or unorganized, as a result of the policy.

The political reasons for increasing disorganization of labor work

Clearly many factors have affected the disorganization of the labor work of the district. Labor work has become so disorganized that there really is no labor work carried out on a district level at all, and there has not been since the brief flurry of activity in trying to get unions to oppose the Gulf war. All party comrades have been affected by the crisis in the socialist countries, and the increasingly deep questioning of the political basis for communist work and communist parties in general. It is inevitable that the labor work of the party would suffer along with all other work. There are, however, a number of factors which have contributed specifically to the growing crisis of the labor work in this district.

Few comrades have questioned the workingclass character of the party and its work. But the abandonment of industrial concentration has removed the basic party strategy for generating political motion in the working class in general, and the labor movement in particular, while putting nothing in its place. While organizing the unorganized has been put forward in some ways as an alternative strategy, there was never any effort to look at where in the working class the struggle to organize was concentrated, and where the party ought to begin its work. In effect, there has been a growing abandonment of the idea that the party should base its activity, or at least a good part of it, in the workplace itself. We deal with workers as part of workingclass communities, but not as workers per se. We have no program for activity around the issues which workers face on the job - the struggle against concessions, the effort to defend the right to strike and organize, discrimination and affirmative action on the job. We don't see our role as helping workers to organize themselves to fight against the boss. The major strikes of the last few years have not been priorities for the work of the party as a district organization, and haven't been discussed at our meetings. When comrades have become involved, they have done so because of their political consciousness as individuals, not as the result of a coherent and organized district effort.

Historically, party work among workers on the job, in their unions, in their struggles to organize themselves to fight exploitation, have been a centerpiece of all the party's work. Increasingly in our district, however, this aspect of the party's work has been treated as one aspect among many. What this has meant, in effect, is that we have been unwilling to think through the question of the mass base of the party - who do we expect to mobilize for political activity. Rather than seeing itself as fighting for the leadership of particular groups of workers, in particular workplaces and unions, the party has seen itself as based among left political activists. The labor work of the party has been treated as the concern only of comrades who are union

activists, rather than the district party organization and leadership as a whole, sort of a communist version of a special interest.

Finally, labor work has suffered more than any other area from the disintegration of Leninist principles for the organization of party work in general. Labor work depends on discussing and deciding on a clear policy, establishing collectives which are responsible for implementing it, assigning comrades to that work, and discussing the progress of that work on an ongoing basis at all levels over a prolonged period of time. But efforts to examine the political assignments of party comrades throughout the district were called "Stalinist." Policies were adopted, but no collectives were created to carry them out. No assignments have been made to this work for a long time. No serious attempt at an evaluation of the work on an ongoing basis has been made. Communist work in the labor movement requires a high degree of organization, and consistent activity over a long period of time. It requires a grassroots approach, where we concentrate on our relationships with ordinary workers on the job and in our unions, rather than on a few political activists who think like us.

These problems have been of our own making. We can accuse the national party center of failing to provide a clear direction to pull together our activity on a national level with some justice. But the national party center did not create the problems which have been described in this document. We did. They will not be solved by changing our relationship to the national organization. They will certainly not be solved in a new organization which has an even lesser commitment to a disciplined approach to long-term communist work among workers and unions. The labor work of our district can only be reconstructed by a serious commitment to concentration on workers in their workplaces and unions, especially to industrial workers, and to a willingness to establish collectives to carry out clearly defined party work among them.

TO: Giulianna
FROM: Public Workers Club (formerly Campus Club)
RE: 1991 Review of work

In 1991 several members of the Northern California Public Workers Club maintained active participation in their unions. Two of our members hold statewide and local positions in unions that represent University of California workers. One member is an elected local representative and activist in the State college faculty union. Three more members are union activists and shop stewards in their unions at UC.

One longtime union activist club member passed away in October. We will miss his invaluable experience, friendship, and comradship.

All union activists in the club played active roles in opposing the Gulf War, as did our one labor council delegate in the Alameda Central Labor Council. All club members work in the struggle against racism at their workplaces.

During the 1990 election season, members of our club actively participated in the following electoral campaigns: Keith Carson for Alameda County Supervisor and Berkeley Rent Board and city council campaigns.

One of our members continues to work on the Berkeley sister city Committee that does solidarity work with Leon, Nicaragua. This same member was one of the initiators of the Northern California component of the military conversion committee that begun before the military build up prior to the Persian Gulf War. Another of our members works on Cuban solidarity; another member successfully collected several hundred signatures on a petition calling for peace with Cuba from his colleagues at a state college.

All of our members participated in activities celebrating the release from prison of Nelson Mandela and his subsequent visit to the United States. As well, we have all worked on retaining sanctions on South Africa in our respective unions.

Among the focuses on community, our club has one member who actively participates in a largely African American community

large corporations to keep their community safe from threatening toxic contaminants.

One member serves on the district's Women's Commission; another serves at the district treasurer; and another is a member of the district board.

While all club members are union activists in one way or another, our club has not played a concerted role in organizing the unorganized. Neither has our club participated in the struggle against racism in housing, or the anti-Oakland detention Center campaign. We have not played active roles in the seniors movement nor the struggle against AIDS.

When the central forces of socialism in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe began collapsing, our club conducted two open educationals where we learned with and spoke with our friends close to the Party about the complexities and contradictions of our changing world.

While we may have not participated in the above listed focuses, members of our club have played key and active roles in internal Party struggles. We have tried to analyze the political changes in the socialist world. As a club, we see that the internal problems of the Party stem from a national leadership which has not provided us with a cohesive and sensible analysis of domestic and international issues. The national center's charges of factionalism against Party activists in struggle for real democracy in the organization have served as a diversion from the real issues that face the working class in this country, and have seriously hindered the Party's ability to affect change in this critical period of American and world history. We see the struggle to democratize and renew the Party as key to the Party's very existence.

Our membership has consistently raised money for the PWW. We also raised money to send five of our members to Cleveland and

have maintained valuable ties to those friends close to the party.

political action (A)

Final

Political Action Resolution
Political Action Workshop: NCAL Convention CPUSA (10/19/91) - *Adopted*

The Communist Party views political action as a form and expression of mass struggle. As with all other forms of mass struggle, we are interested in both the immediate needs of masses of people and the development of political and social structures that empower people.

The people of our country who see the need for change approach the 1992 elections with hopes of:

1. enacting measures to ease the effects of the economic crisis;
2. shifting national spending priorities from military to social needs;
3. building political strength in order to change the composition of Congress, so that it becomes responsive to popular demands;
4. reversing the trend which has increasingly limited the power of the people to effect their democratic will through Congressional action;
5. resisting and reversing the growing right wing offensive;
6. dealing effectively with racism and the crisis of the inner cities.

Serious advocates of fundamental social change increasingly understand that a critical strategic necessity for social change is the development of a major political party, able to contest for political power, politically independent of monopoly capital, representing the interests and involving the mass participation of working people, nationally and racially oppressed people, women, and democratic and progressive forces.

The Communist Party, in its 1970 program, characterized the development of such an anti-monopoly party as a necessary step in the process that will lead to socialism in the United States and committed itself to participating in giving leadership to that effort.

We reaffirm that characterization and commitment.

The accumulated experience of mass struggle makes clear that the development of coalition politics and political independence among the organizations and social movements that form the basis for an anti-monopoly party is an extremely complex and difficult problem. Although there is an objective basis for both unity and political independence, there are also real reasons why they do not happen easily or according to some abstract plan. In general, experience in the mass movement indicates that the development of unity around program is a critical part of the

development of unity around candidacies and parties.

The development of high-tech, expensive media election campaigns that confuse the voters and limit access of candidates to the electoral process is a serious obstacle to political independence. Progressive forces must meet this challenge by a deeper commitment to organize unified grass-roots political activity.

Mass organizations depend on legislative bodies in order to achieve real benefits for their constituents. They develop their relationships with both major parties, but particularly the Democratic Party, accordingly. Relationships among mass organizations in the political process have differing dynamics on the local, state, and national levels. All of these organizations and movements are always trying to increase their strength within the existing political process. At the same time, they increasingly feel the limitations of this process and the growing difficulty of making progress within this system, especially at a time of economic crisis.

When voters address election issues and candidates, they evaluate not only the nature of the program, but also the prospects for victory. There is much to indicate that disaffected voters, who are sitting out elections in ever-increasing numbers, will not respond to radical program unless they see the real possibility of winning concrete reforms or changing the balance of power.

* Therefore it is profoundly unrealistic to expect a mass anti-monopoly party to develop either from a sharp break from ongoing mass struggles or from a force outside of the mass movements. Rather, the mainstream that will lead to the formation that we seek will, of necessity, emerge in a most complex and contradictory way from existing politics.

The Jesse Jackson campaigns of 1984 and 1988 and the development of the Rainbow Coalition illuminated some of the outlines of this process. In the current economic crisis, the developing fault line between the conservative Democratic Leadership Council and the Congressional Black Caucus and other progressives also is an indication of these objective processes at work.

The development of mass based left and Communist election campaigns is an essential part of this process.

Part of the complexity of the development of political independence is the call for third party formations from recognized leaders of mass organizations and trade unions. We support these efforts because they sharply and directly raise the issue of political independence from within the mass movement.

As well, we support efforts to get third parties on the ballot

where those parties represent real mass struggle and real challenge to entrenched interests and structures. In California, the Peace and Freedom Party has from time to time afforded such possibilities and the current efforts of the Green Party to get on the ballot are exciting and should be supported. Another stream in the broadening current of political independence is Common Agenda, which seeks to draw together all those whose fight to fund social needs requires united action to cut the military budget.

The fundamental commitment of the Communist Party is to work within this multi-faceted process and struggle to give it leadership. Our leadership should have the effect of broadening and deepening mass unity, of promoting more militant and effective struggles, of developing politically independent forms and structures, of helping coordinate electoral strategies among the independent forces, and of advancing the leadership of the left within the mass movement.

The evolving political program of this coalition, much of which has already been proposed, will include a wide variety of economic, social, political, and structural demands. From our point of view, such a program can develop a coherent structure only when it is placed in relation to the struggle for major reductions in the military and intelligence budgets.

First, such reductions are necessary in order to make social spending possible.

Second, such reductions are necessary in order to decrease the ability of U.S. imperialism.

Third, this struggle is key to defeating the ultra-right and dismantling the Imperial Presidency.

Fourth, such reductions are necessary because the military-industrial complex is the bulwark of political reaction in the United States. In particular, the military-industrial complex is central to the potential development of a domestic police state.

In sum, the Communist party intends to provide the kind of program and leadership that will impart a revolutionary content to these struggles for political independence and social reform.

On all levels we reject an approach to political action on the left and within the Communist Party that has no base in mass movement or in mass struggle; that is, we reject sectarianism.

We believe that it is within the kind of process outlined above that the struggle for socialism can become a reality.

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While all club members are union activists in one way or another, our club has not played a concerted role in organizing the unorganized. Neither has our club participated in the struggle against racism in housing, or the anti-Oakland detention Center campaign. We have not played active roles in the seniors movement nor the struggle against AIDS.

When the central forces of socialism in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe began collapsing, our club conducted two open educationals where we learned with and spoke with our friends close to the Party about the complexities and contradictions of our changing world.

While we may have not participated in the above listed focuses, members of our club have played key and active roles in internal Party struggles. We have tried to analyze the political changes in the socialist world. As a club, we see that the internal problems of the Party stem from a national leadership which has not provided us with a cohesive and sensible analysis of domestic and international issues. The national center's charges of factionalism against Party activists in struggle for real democracy in the organization have served as a diversion from the real issues that face the working class in this country, and have seriously hindered the Party's ability to affect change in this critical period of American and world history. We see the struggle to democratize and renew the Party as key to the Party's very existence.

Our membership has consistently raised money for the PWW. We also raised money to send five of our members to Cleveland and

have maintained valuable ties to those friends close to the party.

To ALL African-American Comrades..
FROM: KENDRA & Franklin

Many comrades have raised the
need to discuss what is going
on in the Party.... AND WHERE
TO GO.

Kendra & Franklin are having a
meeting at their home with all-
African-Americans comrades: ON

JANUARY 28, TUES. 7:30pm
1822- 62nd St: BERKELEY

1/6/91

M E M O

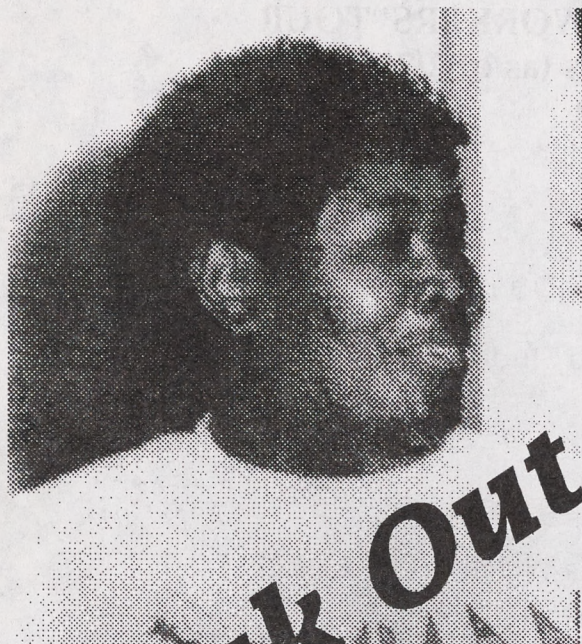
To: All San Francisco Members
From: Giuliana
Re: All-San Francisco Membership Meeting

There will be an all-San Francisco membership meeting on:

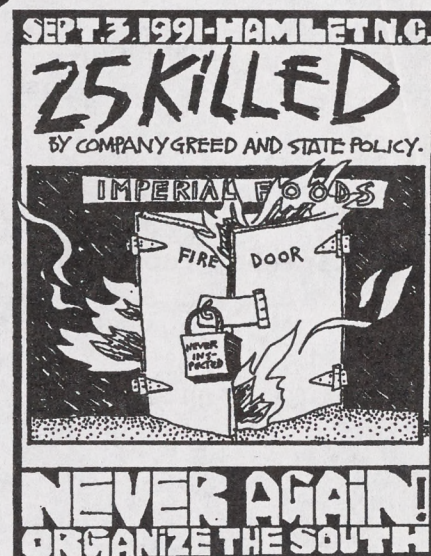
SATURDAY, January 18, 1992
10:00 a.m. - lunchtime
522 Valencia
San Francisco

The agenda will be: What's going on in the CP/PWW? The meeting will be in preparation for our **February 8 & 9** District Convention. See you all on Saturday!

Ina Mae Best Southern Workers' Tour:



Speak Out for Justice!



Join us for an evening with:

- INA MAE BEST, a union activist from the Goldtex textile plant in Goldsboro, North Carolina
- CONSTANCE WILLIAMS, a survivor of the Imperial Foods plant fire which killed 25 workers in Hamlet, North Carolina
- A representative from Black Workers for Justice, an organization working for empowerment of African-Americans in the South
- Music by ENDANGERED SPECIES
- Poetry of LEROY MUSGRAVES

Lakeshore Baptist Church

3534 Lakeshore Ave., Oakland

Sat., February 29, 7pm

\$5 donation

Necesita traducción llame (510) 649-7674

For childcare call (510) 532-7835

Ina Mae Best Southern Workers' Tour Committee (contact: Aggie (510) 532-7835 or Ned (415) 752-5496)
Sponsors (partial list): SEIU Local 616, San Francisco Coalition of Labor Union Women (CLUW),
Associated Students of Laney College, OPEIU Local 29, Stanford Black Students' Association, & others...

INA MAE BEST / SOUTHERN WORKERS' TOUR
Calendar of Bay Area Events (as of 2/7/92)
February 24-29

Monday, Feb. 24:

12:00 Noon **Laney College**
900 Fallen St. rm.401 in the Student Center.
Sponsored by: Associated Students of Laney College
and B.W.O.P.A.

Tuesday, Feb. 25:

6:00 - 9:00 am **Morning Show with Kris Welch -- KPFA 94.1FM**

7:00 - 8:00 pm **San Francisco City College Labor Studies Classes**
downtown campus, 800 Mission St. rm. 419
near 4th St.

Wednesday, Feb. 26:

10:30 - 1:30 pm **Hayward State University classes**
1106 Micklejohn Hall, CSUH, Hayward

7:00 pm **Organize the South! The Struggle Continues...**
I.L.W.U. Local 34, 4 Berry St., San Francisco
Sponsored by: Labor for Peace & Justice

Thursday, Feb. 27: **Events in Sacramento (call for information)**

Friday, Feb. 28:

11:30 - 1:30 pm **Stanford University**
Old Union Building Ballroom
Sponsored by: Stanford Socialist Club,
Black Student Union

Saturday, Feb. 29:

10:00 - 2:00 pm **CLUW Reception**

7:00 pm **Speak Out for Justice!**
Lakeshore Baptist Church
3534 Lakeshore, Oakland