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Funding social change since 1967

RESIST

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A Call to Resist Illegitimate Authority

October, 1994

NAFTA and the Environment:

The Rush to Integrate

BY MARY E. KELLY

The border town of Matamoros, located in northeastern Mexico across the river from Brownsville, Texas, was once a quiet ranching and agricultural community. Over the last decade, however, it has undergone a startling transformation. Under Mexico's border industrialization program, which provides incentives to U.S.-based companies to set up manufacturing operations along Mexico's northern border, Matamoros now has over 90 maquiladora factories, many of which are owned by U.S. corporate giants such as General Motors, AT&T and Zenith. Matamoros, of course, is not alone—there are now over 1800 maquiladora plants along the border, compared with fewer than 500 in 1982, the year Mexico's peso was greatly devalued in the midst of the country's economic and debt crisis. The maquiladora plants at the border and throughout Mexico now employ about 400,000 people, and have become Mexico's largest source of foreign exchange, eclipsed only by oil export revenues.

But despite the increased employment, the industrialization of the Mexi-



In Matamoros, Mexico, parents and children waded through calcium sulfate mud on the way to the school bus. Calcium sulfate is a by-product of hydrofluoric acid production and is irritating to all mucous membranes.

can border has had very negative consequences for many local communities on both sides. The Brownsville/Matamoros case is again illustrative. Mexico's woefully under-funded and politically weak environmental regulatory program was not able to keep up with the rapid industrialization brought on by U.S. investment in the border. Plants sprang up and operated in the middle of Matamoros residential neighborhoods, without even the most basic environmental scrutiny from government regulators.

Matamoros grew from 238,000 in 1980 to over 400,000 people in a decade, according to 1990 figures which are widely believed to under-estimate the actual population. Yet, despite the increased U.S. investment in industrial plants, the city still lacks any centralized sewage treatment. Raw municipal and industrial waste flows through a long canal into the estuarine areas bordering the Gulf of Mexico.

On the other side of the border, in

continued on page three

Photo: Alan Pogue.

We Thought You Might be Interested...

In each issue of the newsletter, we try to let readers in on some of the many useful resources that come through our office. In most cases we try to review the book or film or manual before we include it here, but occasionally we'll print something that just looks good based on the PR sent with it, so please call the groups listed below for more info before making a purchase. And if you've got a resource you think other RESIST readers should know about, please write and let us know. THANKS!

Booklet on American Interests in Asian Rim

The Course of Empire: The United States in the Pacific, by Frank Brodhead and Christine Wing of the American Friends Service Committee provides background on why American economic interests so pointedly and publicly started redefining power relationships with Asian and Pacific Rim nations the day after the North American Free Trade Agreement passed muster in the House of Representatives. Single copies available for \$2.00; and \$1.50 for ten or more, plus postage of \$.50 for single copies and \$.25 for up to three copies. AFSC Literature Resources, 1501 Cherry St., Philadelphia, PA 19102.

New Index on Censorship

This summer, *Index on Censorship* launched a new magazine under the direction of editor Ursula Owen. The revamped *Index* builds on its distinguished history of publishing banned literature and reporting on the silenced and the censored when no one else would. *Index* first appeared in 1972, when British poet Stephen Spender responded to an urgent appeal by a Russian physicist whose two friends—both writers—were ensnared in a show trial in Moscow and in desperate need of support from the West. Spender organized leading writers, artists, and scholars to protest the trial. Together they founded *Index on Censorship* to provide an outlet for the censored writings of victims of oppressive regimes, and a forum to address the free speech issues of the day.

The new magazine features writers and commentators from around the world who broaden the free speech debate by offering first hand perspectives on a range of controversial topics. The new *Index* is in a paperback journal format and appears six times a year. The first re-launch issue included the first excerpt to be published (with a critical introduction) in the West of a new book by Russian demagogue Vladimir Zhirinovsy, revealing his dreams for a new Russian empire. Also included are Salman Rushdie's meditation on the destruction of the Muslim community in Sarajevo, Umberto Eco on Europe's rabid new nationalism, poetry, cartoons, television criticism and more. Subscriptions are \$48.00 for six issues. For info, write c/o Human Rights Watch, 485 5th Avenue, New York, NY 10017. Or phone, (212) 972-0905.

Living Media Project

G/W Associates offers media training for individuals who travel to Third World nations on peace-keeping, fact-finding, educational, environmental, sister city, or human rights work who are themselves "news stories" when they return home. For a descriptive tape, contact Peter Wirth, G/W Associates, 702 South Beech, Syracuse, NY 13210.

Resources for this issue compiled by Frank Adams and Tatiana Schreiber.

**Women's Work
Brigade to Nicaragua**
*Hard work
Simple food - Rich rewards*
January 3-24, 1995

NICCA
2140 Shattuck Avenue,
Box 2063
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Peace and Democracy

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IN THIS ISSUE—SPECIAL HAITI SECTION: **John-Canham Clyne** on Aristide's Human Rights Record, **Joanne Landy** on Intervention in Haiti, Letter to Clinton, Action Alert on Rape PLUS articles on Russia, the Czech Republic, the Middle East with **Nubar Hovsepian** and **Mark Rosenblum**, and roundtable on Intervention: Bosnia and Beyond with **Stephen Shalom**, **Branka Magas**, **Michael Randle**, **Richard Falk**, **Thomas Harrison**, and **Lynne Jones**.

Subscriptions: \$7/year (2 issues)/\$15 foreign and inst. Checks payable to Campaign for Peace and Democracy.

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ILLEGITIMATE AUTHORITY

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For information and grant guidelines write to:
Resist, One Summer St., Somerville, MA 02143

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Brownsville, the population grew from 209,000 to 260,000 in the same period, and over 24,000 people now live in *colonias* (neighborhoods) without basic water and wastewater services. The economy of the Lower Rio Grande Valley has shifted from an agricultural base to dependency on retail, service and government jobs. And while the local tourist industry has flourished, the small remaining pockets of habitat and biodiversity which attract these visitors are rapidly disappearing, replaced by new highways, strip malls, warehouses or international bridge crossings, all built with the hope that increased U.S./Mexico economic integration would feed a boom atmosphere in some of the poorest counties in the entire U.S.

As if these changes were not enough for the region to absorb, the early 1990s brought the advent of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA). While the NAFTA debate awakened many organizations in the United States to the realities of trade and economic integration on the North American continent, many people in the border region viewed NAFTA as the best hope of instituting some controls on the damage caused by the integration that had already taken place and which has changed forever the face of their communities.

Unprecedented grassroots response

These border residents worked hard to document and publicize the conditions they were facing, in an attempt to convince government officials in both the U.S. and Mexico that business as usual would only spell disaster for the border region. For example, Matamoros residents who had been living with pollution from U.S. company operations for several years began to develop links with environmental, labor and church activists in the United States. In cooperation with these groups, the Matamoros residents hosted innumerable print and television journalists, labor delegations and several U.S. Congressional visitors, showing them first-hand the environmental and health problems that had resulted from the unchecked and

unregulated industrial development over the last decade. Along with their counterparts in Brownsville, they worked to publicize unexplained high rates of anencephaly and other birth defects that many believe are linked in some way to the heavy pollution from some maquiladora plants. They also documented the high rates of intestinal and other diseases related to the lack of clean drinking water.

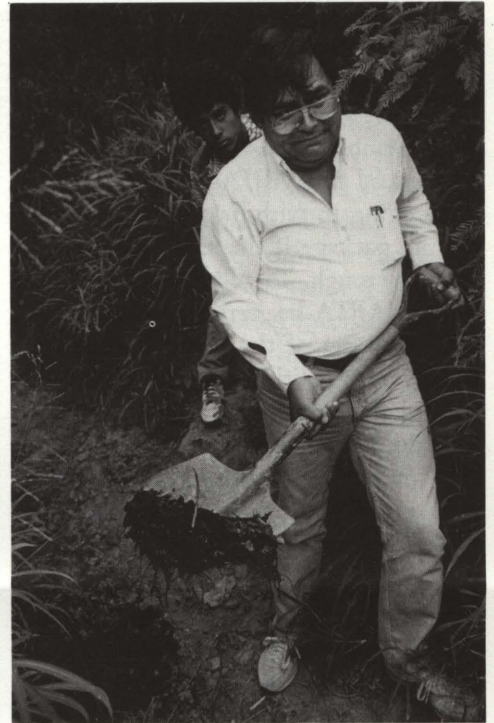
These unprecedented citizen efforts, which also occurred in many other parts of the U.S./Mexico border, had two substantial results. First, on a local basis, some of the worst environmental offenders in cities like Matamoros have been shut down or are being cleaned up. Attention to factory pollution by Mexican environmental regulators has increased not only in the border, but throughout the country, although many deficiencies still remain. And stronger local and regional citizen organizations have grown out of this grassroots activism.

On a wider scale, the early efforts of border residents helped to force environmental issues into the NAFTA discussion, in a way that may have helped permanently change the debate about trade and development. These changes are manifested, in part, in the environmental side agreement to NAFTA, but they are also evident in the new tri-national citizen alliances that have outlasted the NAFTA vote.

But lingering questions remain when we consider how the new institutions and legal framework created during the NAFTA fight will work in practice.

NAFTA's Environmental Side Agreement

In late August 1993, U.S., Mexican and Canadian negotiators announced that they had completed "side agreements" to the proposed NAFTA that were designed to address environmental and labor issues that had been raised by NAFTA opponents in all three countries. In initiating the NAFTA discussions, the Bush administration had refused to deal with environmental and labor issues in the context of NAFTA.



Domingo Gonzalez is an environmentalist from Brownsville, Texas. He holds a shovel full of zylene soaked earth from a ditch behind the industrial plants on "chemical row" in Matamoros. Gonzalez says the amount of zylene was 53,000 times the limit set by the EPA for zylene contamination in the U.S. Photographer Alan Pogue says "the smell was so intense, we left immediately."

Bush's successor, however, took a different view. As a candidate Bill Clinton had called for the negotiation of both environmental and labor side agreements. In an attempt to fulfill this campaign promise, the new administration brought Canada and Mexico back to the negotiating table.

Before examining the specifics of the environmental side agreement, as well as the later U.S./Mexico agreement on the financing of a basic infrastructure for preserving the environment of the the border region, it is useful to recall that the side agreements were negotiated over a very short time frame (about four months for the environmental side agreement) and in a very politically charged atmosphere. While NAFTA was the new administration's first major legislative initiative, there was widespread opposition to it in the U.S. Congress. Key Democrats like House Majority Leader Richard Gephardt and Montana Senator Max Baucus made it clear to President Clinton that their position on NAFTA

would depend on the degree to which the side agreements would deal with environmental and labor issues.

At the same time, however, Republican members of Congress, whose vote was crucial to NAFTA's approval, were threatening to withdraw their support for the package if the side agreements were too tough. To add fuel to the fire, some NAFTA backers began arguing that rejection of the trade agreement would mean political upheaval in Mexico and the possibility that the ruling Partido Revolucionario Institucional (PRI) would face defeat by the presumably more protectionist left in the August 1994 Mexican presidential elections. The latter seems ironically prophetic, since it has been, in part, NAFTA's *passage* that has triggered the indigenous revolt in the southern state of Chiapas which led, ultimately, to the most unstable atmosphere for Mexican elections in almost a century.

The environmental side agreement does contain some of the basic elements that had been at the center of proposals by U.S., Mexican and Canadian environmental organizations involved in the NAFTA debate. The agreement establishes a new trinational Commission for Environmental Cooperation (CEC), which is composed of the environmental ministers from each of the three countries. The CEC has a staff, which will be directed by Victor Lichtinger, an attorney from Mexico, and a Joint Public Advisory Board with 5 members from each of the three countries.¹

The CEC has authority to receive complaints from citizens in each country about inadequate enforcement of environmental laws, and, under certain very limited circumstances, to impose monetary sanctions on a NAFTA country that persistently fails to undertake adequate enforcement measures. This authority and other provisions of the environmental side agreement were sufficient to convince several major U.S. national environmental organizations to endorse NAFTA (even before the U.S.

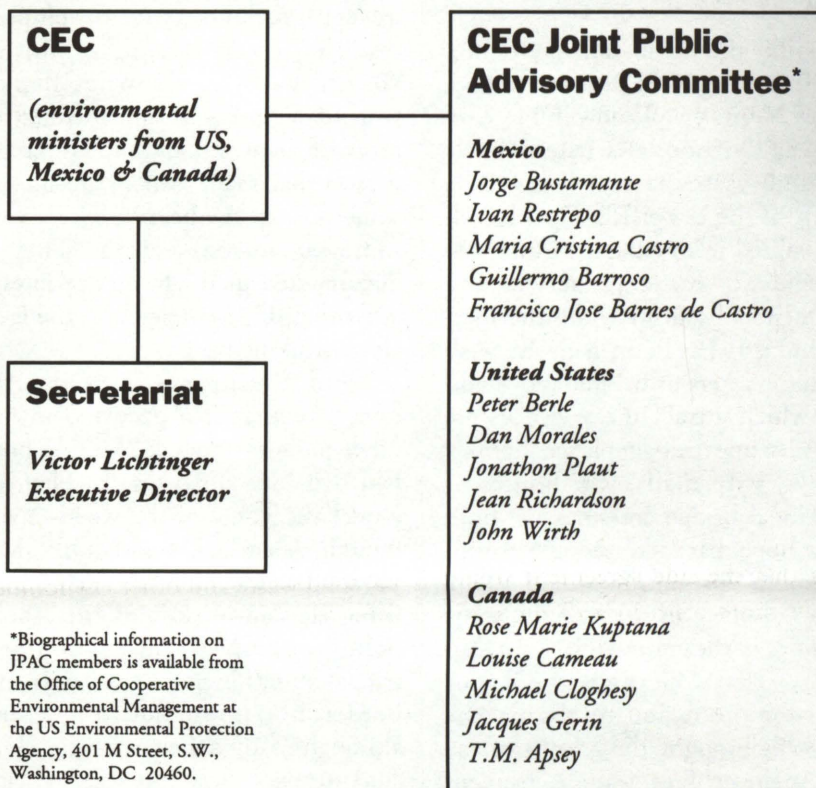


Figure 1
North American Commission on Environmental Cooperation

and Mexico reached any formal agreement on dealing with border infrastructure issues).

Other organizations, such as the Sierra Club, Public Citizen, the Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy, the Citizens Trade Campaign, a broad multi-sectoral alliance of citizen groups, and several border groups did not endorse the side agreement or NAFTA. These groups believed that the incorporation of complex procedural and legal roadblocks will greatly undermine any ability of the new CEC to deal effectively and swiftly with environmental problems linked to increased North American trade. They were also concerned that while the governments' rhetoric expressed commitment to public participation, the actual text of the side agreement severely limits public access to the workings and documents of the CEC.

Another concern has been that the side agreement does not address the need to develop a sustained source of funding for Mexico's environmental regulatory programs. Mexico's environmental programs have traditionally

been severely under-funded, especially relative to U.S. environmental programs. Yet, there is no plan in place, such as enacting a system of permit fees to be paid by industry, that would ensure the needed funds for Mexico's regulatory programs. Such a "permit fee" funding system is not uncommon. For example, in Texas well over 50% of the state's environmental regulatory activities are funded through various fees imposed on industry.

Even with the best of intentions a lack of on-going resources will severely hamper the Mexican government's ability to keep up with the new industrial investment projected to occur under NAFTA. Already burdened by a foreign debt of nearly \$100 million, Mexico continues to borrow heavily from the World Bank to finance environmental regulatory and infrastructure programs. For example, in June 1994, the World Bank approved a \$918 million loan to Mexico for environmental regulation and infrastructure development.

The Right to Know

With regard to access to informa-

1. The CEC held its first formal meeting in Washington, DC in late July, 1994. The CEC staff will be housed in Montreal, Quebec. The members of the Joint Public Advisory Board are listed in Figure 1.

tion, the environmental side agreement does provide that the CEC can develop recommendations to improve public access to environmental data for specific factories. However, there is no binding timetable for these recommendations to be put forth, nor is there any requirement that the governments actually follow the recommendations of the CEC. Because they are denied access to information about the environmental effects of U.S.-based corporations and other factories operating in their country, Mexico's residents have few tools with which to defend their communities and their health. Many Mexican and U.S. border organizations, in particular, were hoping that the side agreement would have put more teeth in a community's ability to learn what pollutants are affecting them.

Finally, a number of the organizations that ultimately opposed NAFTA believed that the environmental side agreement did not sufficiently address key issues, such as the effect of various NAFTA provisions on domestic environmental laws that are more stringent than international norms. These organizations also pointed out provisions of

NAFTA that promote increased use of fossil fuels and potentially undermine government programs to promote sustainable agriculture were not addressed in the side agreement.²

A few months after the environmental side agreement was announced, and just weeks before the U.S. Congressional vote on NAFTA, the U.S. and Mexico announced an agreement on the creation of a new Border Environmental Cooperation Commission (BECC) and the North American Development Bank (NADBank). This new pair of institutions is designed to provide additional funding for the construction of water, wastewater, municipal solid waste and other environmental infrastructure in the U.S./Mexico border region.

The BECC, which has a binational board of directors that includes public members, is charged with accepting proposals for their environmental infrastructure efforts. These proposals are to be submitted by border communities. The BECC will then review these proposed projects against a set of environmental and social criteria and decide whether to certify the project for possi-

ble NADBank funding. The NADBank is a binational development bank, capitalized by a \$225 million contribution from each of the two governments. Proponents of NADBank estimate that the initial capitalization could leverage almost three billion in additional capital resources for border projects through the use of loan guarantees, credit enhancements and other mechanisms.

Unlike the CEC, the BECC does provide fairly strong mechanisms for citizen participation. The BECC is also designed to strengthen local and state government involvement in solving the region's infrastructure problems. The Board Members of the BECC and NADBank institutions are listed in Figure 2.³

Early Implementation and Outlook

At this point, it is too early to tell if the new institutions created during the NAFTA debate will be able to fulfill even what some view as their limited promise. The CEC had its first formal meeting in July 1994, and adopted a work plan for the rest of the year. It was to meet in Canada this month to adopt a plan for 1995.

After much delay, the binational board of directors for the BECC was appointed in July. However, the BECC board's first meeting, which had been scheduled for August 18, 1994 in Juarez, Mexico was cancelled by the Mexican government. Reportedly, the government felt that there were too many differences with the U.S. on how this innovative new institution would be implemented. The NADBank, which will put together financing packages for environmental infrastructure projects certified by the BECC, has received \$56 million of its authorized \$225 million capitalization from the U.S. The status of Mexico's contribution to the capitalization of NADBank is unclear at this time.

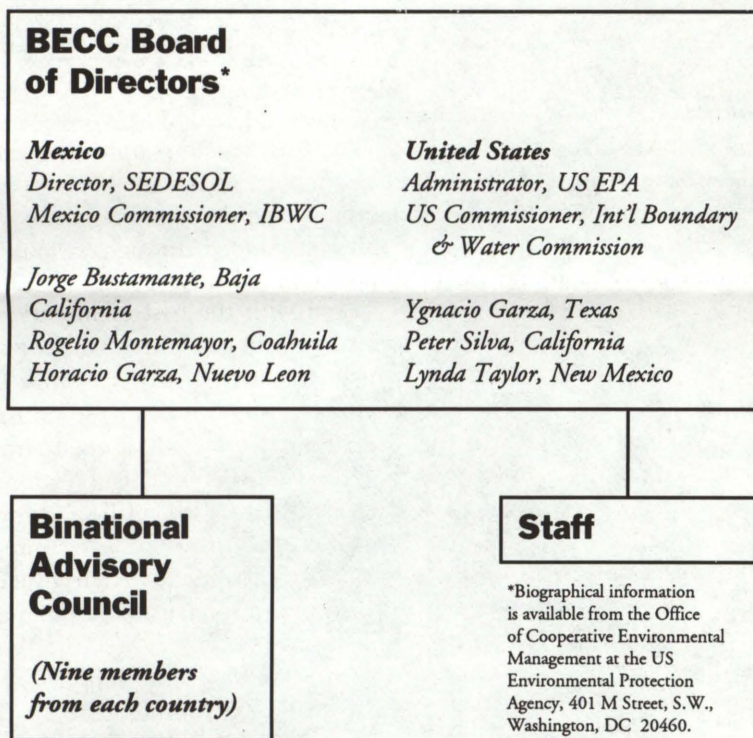


Figure 2
Border Environmental Cooperation Commission

2. A more detailed analysis of NAFTA's environmental side agreement is available from the Texas Center for Policy Studies, the Sierra Club, Public Citizen, and other groups.

3. A more detailed report on the BECC and the NADBank is also available from the Texas Center for Policy Studies.

Whether these new institutions can be used to alleviate some of the most pressing problems caused by increased economic integration in North America remains a central question. On the one hand, pressure from environmental and other organizations, both those who supported NAFTA and those who did not, will be required to ensure that the governments put full force and effect into the side agreement. Whether that pressure can be successful will largely depend on resources available to grassroots groups and the level of attention from media organizations and the U.S. Congress.

On the other hand, the new institutions cannot and will not be the only focus of citizen action. Maintaining the strong binational and trilateral links that developed among a wide variety of environmental, labor, agriculture and other groups during the NAFTA debate will be an important challenge. The early signs are promising: several organizations from the three countries who were involved in the NAFTA debate met in Mexico in late July to reinforce their common objective of bringing about a more just and sustainable form of North American integration and local and regional organizations in the U.S./Mexico border are continuing to work together to address specific environmental and health problems.

Looming over all of these challenges, however, is the ability of Mexico to make a transition from decades of authoritarian, one-party rule to a truly democratic system. While official results show that the ruling Partido Revolucionario Institucional (PRI) has won the recent presidential elections in Mexico, allegations of fraud and unfair election practices persist. These challenges will be played out over the next few months. If Mexico begins to make a successful transition to democratic rule, border communities in Mexico may begin to enjoy more autonomy, and those concerned about environmental issues may be able to carve out the political space to demand cleaner and safer communities. ◇

Mary E. Kelly is the Executive Director of the Texas Center for Policy Studies, a non-profit research and policy organization based in Austin, Texas. An environmental lawyer, Kelly specializes in Texas/Mexico border region issues. She was recently named by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to chair a National Advisory Committee on NAFTA and the environment. For more information, contact the Texas Center for Policy Studies, P.O. Box 2618, Austin, TX, 78768, or call (512) 474-0811.

Local Action

Red Sun Press Celebrates 20 Years!

On November 4th, Red Sun Press will celebrate twenty years of printing for the progressive movement by hosting the national opening of an exhibit of political posters produced by movement printers from the 1960s to the present. "Freedom of the Press" is the result of a collaboration between the Center for the Study of Political Graphics in Los Angeles (which works to collect and preserve political poster art) and the Progressive Printers Network, a national organization of printshops working for social justice.

Red Sun Press, founded in Boston in 1974, is one of many printshops nationally - and internationally - organized to provide high quality printing to movements for social, political, and economic change, by people who were themselves part of those movements.

Since the 19th century, political posters have played an increasingly important role in public art, yet because of their partisan content, they have often suffered deliberate destruction, suppression, or neglect. Though frequently the only record of important political events, these artworks have been culturally overlooked. The printshops which produced these works are even more invisible, yet without them many progressive groups would have had little or no access to

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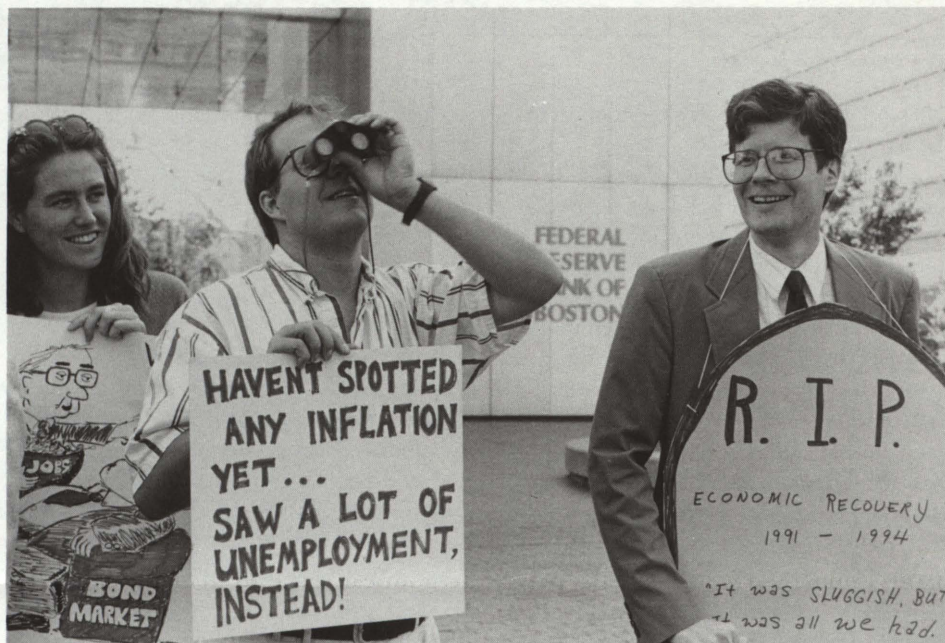
This community of maquiladora workers is built on a lagoon on the southern edge of Reynosa (near Hidalgo, Mexico). The outhouses are on the lagoon, which is full of stagnant water and waste. There is one municipal water tap. Photo: Alan Pogue.

printing. Most of the shops that still exist were founded in the 1970s, out of organizing efforts around the Vietnam War and the women's movement. Some shops began as volunteer groups, others as collectives. Many have become worker-owned co-ops, and many have branched out into commercial printing in order to survive as viable businesses. Some shops have folded, their archives (if they were kept) dispersed. The integral role of this network of printers in organizing opposition to the status quo and strengthening the right to dissent is too often forgotten.

Red Sun Press, which began with a start-up fund of \$350 and a volunteer workforce, is now a self-supporting business, yet has no "owner." The company is incorporated as a not-for-profit corporation, paying taxes but owned by no individuals. The workers do, however, control the business, filling management as well as production roles. Red Sun workers are organized with the UAW. In recent years, the press has expanded its commercial sales, printing not only for the progressive movement, but also for the non-profit sector and socially responsible businesses in the New England region.

In 1988, five progressive printshops (Red Sun, Orange Blossom in Cleveland, Omega in Philadelphia, Salsedo in Chicago, and Commonwealth in Hadley, MA) convened a meeting in Cleveland. Fifteen shops attended and formed the Progressive Printers Network (PPN). The Network allows member shops to share experience and knowledge, to support and assist each other, and to take on larger projects as a group.

For the past year the PPN has been working with the Center for the Study of Political Graphics to produce an exhibit which honors the historic role of the political printer and the causes and issues which they have helped to make visible. These shops have produced brochures, posters, and newsletters for groups in solidarity with Chile, Mozambique, El Salvador, Nicaragua, Cuba, the Palestinian people, Haiti, and South Africa; for local schools, housing, and youth issues and celebrations; for anti-nuclear and environmental groups; for organizations addressing homelessness, violence, racism, and AIDS; for prisoners' rights groups, the women's movement, the gay, lesbian, and bisexual movement, and (often overnight) for spontaneous demonstrations. The show documents the graphic expression of political issues and opinions, and also examines the progressive printshops' approach to organizing for social change through collective or cooperative work.



Progressive economists rally outside the Federal Reserve Building in Boston in August to protest misplaced economic priorities. Photo: Hilary Marcus/IMPACT VISUALS

"Freedom of the Press" will be on exhibit at the United South End Settlements — Harriet Tubman House Gallery, 566 Columbus Avenue in Boston from October 31-November 10, 1994. The building is open weeknights until 9:00 PM, and is closed weekends. The opening reception will be Friday, November 4th from 5:30 - 8:30 PM. From Boston, the show travels to western Massachusetts, New Haven, New York, South Carolina, Chicago, Madison, Toronto, Michigan, and Berkeley and Santa Cruz in California. Info: RSP, (617) 524-6822.

-Maggie Cohn, Red Sun Press



Economists Protest Federal Anti-Jobs Policies...

Dollars and Sense, the feisty left-wing

economics journal, (with offices next to RESIST in Somerville) is also celebrating twenty years of supporting progressive movements for social change. Last month the magazine sponsored a protest against the Federal Reserve's decision to increase interest rates. The protesters declared that creating jobs, not curbing a negligible inflation rate, should be the nation's top priority. On August 16th, while the Federal Reserve's Open Market Committee met in Washington to raise interest rates for the fifth time since February, the demonstrators, primarily Boston area progressive economists, rallied at the Boston Federal Reserve Building. They made the point that joblessness, continued layoffs at large corporations, workers being forced into part-time jobs, and deteriorating purchasing power for workers and families are the real problems.

The activists said that raising interest rates would slow economic growth and make all these problems worse; that working families would pay the cost while the well-to-do (bankers, bondholders, and wealthy investors) would be the chief beneficiaries; that the Federal Reserve's single-minded obsession with wiping out a minuscule inflation rate, while the shadow of recession still looms, would have tragic implications for the nation's workforce; and they insisted that it is time to fight the real problem — unemployment. For more information read the July/August 1994 issue of *Dollars and Sense* which has a cover story critical of the Fed's "anti-inflation" policies. Info, D & S, (617) 628-8411.

-Marc Breslow, D & S

GRANTS

continued from page ten

also work to build visibility and support in the Bay Area.

The group writes: "FU's struggle is about women of color fighting a huge corporation with an annual income of \$5 billion. The PLDP serves as the organization's crucible for empowering women workers to build a movement with other communities struggling for justice. *La Mujer luchando, el mundo va cambiando.*" RESIST's recent grant was for the Promotora project.

North American Worker-to-Worker Network

P.O. Box 1943,
Rocky Mount, NC 27802-1943

The North American Worker-to-Worker Network (NAWWN) was formed in August, 1992, from what had been up to that time a loose network of union locals and grassroots organizations working to build international ties around economic issues. The Network was established as a way to coordinate and expand efforts such as worker exchanges, tri-national conferences, and cross-border campaigns. In 1993 NAWWN produced two informational packets (Free Trade Mailings, published and distributed quarterly) that included upcoming anti-NAFTA events, tours, forums, resources, and news from Canada and Mexico. The Network also helped organize a tour of North American labor activists to Irapuato, Mexico; supported links between auto, telephone, and garment workers; established an office and hired a national organizer.

NAWWN's purpose is to support actions which pressure transnational corporations and policy makers in the U.S., Canada, and Mexico to follow a humane standard of conduct in the world market. The Network focuses on living and working conditions, job security, environmental and occupational health, women's rights, immigrants' rights, and economic and political democracy.

NAWWN hopes to encourage by example other creative worker-to-worker campaigns and is prepared to assist local organizations in these efforts.

In 1994 NAWWN concentrated on direct actions in all three countries around the same or related campaigns, or the same employer. The group also assisted U.S. locals to financially support an organizer in Mexico in a sister relationship. The group

also activated an Emergency Response Network to respond with faxes, telegrams, and ads when workers are harassed or fired for organizing. NAWWN writes: "Given the undemocratic structure of the international trade commissions that will come with NAFTA, we feel that grassroots, direct action organizing is going to be the only way for workers and citizens to have a say about economic forces affecting us. By reaching out and building tri-national alliances...we can strengthen our organizing at home as well as in Mexico and Canada, and send a message to transnationals that 'You may run but you cannot hide. We will be there, too!'"

RESIST's recent grant was used for a computer with desktop capabilities to publish the Free Trade Mailings.

Washington State Jobs with Justice

P.O. Box 9662, Seattle, WA 98109

The Washington State chapter of Jobs with Justice (JWJ) is a coalition of labor, community, and religious groups formed to support workers' rights. During its first year, the group mobilized rallies to support Alaska Airlines flight attendants in their recent contract dispute; organized a series of public educational events about Sen. Slade Gorton's opposition to basic workers' rights; co-sponsored with others a "Fair Trade" rally

during last November's Asian Pacific Economic Cooperation summit in Seattle; helped organize a Martin Luther King Day march focusing on turning out a large labor delegation; and organized an international protest against a Seattle trade show promoting NAFTA.

Jobs with Justice works with the assumption that all people should have the right to a job and security; the right to unionize and collectively bargain; the right to strike; and the right to a decent standard of living. The group opposes all forms of discrimination and its members pledge "to be there" at least five times a year for someone else's fight. That means joining picket lines, attending contract rallies, and participating in other actions or demonstrations in support of workers' rights. Recently the group organized a sit-in to support homeless people in downtown Seattle, demonstrating to the city that a wide range of people from union to community groups stand with their sisters and brothers in the streets.

In 1994, the group focused on challenging the corporate agenda, particularly as espoused by Senator Gorton. JWJ worked to expose Gorton's opposition to comprehensive health care reform, the right to strike, and economic opportunity for all. The group is fighting the erosion of family-wage jobs and working for meaningful job training. JWJ is also committed to support-

continued on next page



Members of WA Jobs with Justice demonstrate in Seattle to support flight attendants at Alaska Airlines, who were facing massive concession demands. Two dozen people were arrested during the civil disobedience action. Photo: Lisa Karl.

continued from page eight

ing all workers who are victims of unfair trade policies. JWJ believes the government should provide progressively financed public education and services, and that state and national budget priorities should reflect community needs.

In an effort to build a stronger coalition, Washington State JWJ has implemented an outreach plan to recruit community, women's, civil rights, and ecumenical organizations to join the coalition with the aim of doubling the coalition's size by mid-1995. The plan centers on involving specific organizations in the planning and execution of actions around social and economic justice. The Outreach Committee of JWJ is concentrating on establishing a plan for approaching each targeted group, monitoring the results of ongoing recruitment with attention to diversity goals; and adjusting the plan as needed. RESIST's recent grant was used for the Outreach Project.

Rhode Island Coalition of Labor Union Women

194 Smith Street
Providence, RI 02908

The Rhode Island chapter of the Coalition of Labor Union Women (CLUW) was first established shortly after the national organization in 1974. However, tension between blue collar women leaders and professional women was never resolved and the organization folded. A new chapter was officially chartered in 1990. Learning from the past, the group is organizing in response to changes in both the women's and labor movements over the years. The group is focused (as is the national group) on expanding the participation of women in their unions; promoting affirmative action in the workplace; political action and legislation on behalf of women workers; and organizing unorganized women. The Rhode Island chapter has consistently participated in demonstrations of support for women workers, workers of color, and gay and lesbian workers. The group wants to expand the labor movement's definition of political activity beyond electoral and legislative events to include working closely with community organizations and supporting them financially.

In 1992, RI CLUW conducted the "Color Me Union" campaign drawing many women who had never participated in labor education events before in a four-part series of workshops to improve women's leadership skills and strategic abilities. The group

plans to run the program again next year, and is now focused on attracting new members and building resources to produce the series. The group's Action Committee is responsible for seeking out and responding to requests for assistance around the state. In the last year the committee assisted the UFCW in leafleting a non-union supermarket; wrote letters to the state Senator who is blocking national health care reform; worked as peacekeepers at a Teamster strike rally; and worked to bridge the labor-community gap.

RI CLUW has run a Coffee program since 1992 to recruit new members. These are Saturday morning coffee hours co-produced by CLUW and local unions in a specific region of the state. Because these meetings are separate from regular union meetings, more women are likely to attend and feel comfortable speaking up about themselves, their struggles at work, and their union. Many of the attendees are rank and file members of their unions who have never before met activists from other unions. The Coffee program is a chance for them to share experiences and strategies with women from other industries. RESIST's recent grant was used to operate the program and print new brochures.

BEQUESTS

If you are in the process of writing or amending your Will, you might think about leaving a set sum or a percentage to RESIST, Inc. Over the last year a number of you have contacted us directly or through a lawyer, informing us of your decision to include us in your Will. For all of you who took that difficult but important step of writing a Will, and including RESIST in it, we are most appreciative. Wills can be a significant way of making sure the work you support today will be around for decades to come. And because RESIST, Inc. is a non-profit, tax-exempt corporation, including us in your Will can help lower or eliminate estate taxes.

When including RESIST in your Will, please identify us as follows: "RESIST, Inc., a Massachusetts non-profit corporation whose principal place of business is located in Somerville, Massachusetts." If you have any questions about including RESIST in your Will, or if you need a copy of our tax exempt IRS letter, please feel free to write or call the office.

Decoding the News

—Book Review

Beyond Hypocrisy: Decoding the News in an Age of Propaganda, including the Doublespeak Dictionary. By Edward S. Herman. Illustrated by Matt Wuerker. [Boston: South End Press. 1992]. 239 pp. \$13 paper/\$40 cloth.

Edward S. Herman's book is timely for many reasons. Since the Soviet Union unilaterally withdrew from the arms race, new declarations that capitalism triumphed surface daily, accompanied by dark warnings that other equally serious dangers lurk in Somalia, or Cuba. The war department's budget must remain safe from *any* hint of a "peace dividend." And then, too, the nation's political elites have appropriated a once useful, defining word — *empowerment* — even going so far as to start a cable television channel to promote that concept and to form a nonprofit advocacy group to push empowerment.

The wise may want an update on contemporary doublespeak. Along with an analysis of today's political deceptions, Herman offers a satirical look at the U.S. government's current favorites. Take *democracy* for instance: "A system that allows the people to vote for their leaders from among a set cleared by the political investment community. In application to the Third World, it means rule by an elite that understands our interests and needs." Or *empowerment*: "Formerly, giving people greater authority and resources; now, allowing people to deal with a problem previously dealt with by the government, without the burden of any federal assistance."

Strangely, however, Herman's cross-referenced lexicon of doublespeak does not include a definition of *capitalism*. Perhaps he considers it synonymous with *free enterprise*: "The use of privately or publicly-owned property for private profit." The book is also enlivened by Matt Wuerker's illustrations. Newsletter editors should know there are great graphic possibilities here.

— Frank Adams

GRANTS

In each issue of the newsletter we highlight a few recent grants made to groups around the country. In this issue we feature grants to groups working with labor. The information in these brief reports is provided to us by the groups themselves. For more details, please write to them at the addresses included here.

Women's Institute for Leadership Development

*c/o AFSCME, 555 Amory Street
Jamaica Plain, MA 02130*

The Women's Institute for Leadership Development (WILD) was organized in 1987 by women labor activists and labor educators in Massachusetts with the purpose of empowering women to become effective activists and leaders in their unions. Unions are facing disintegration of their traditional industrial base and have begun to organize in the service sector where women are often concentrated, and more and more women are joining unions. WILD was formed with the explicit goal of developing more women leaders and more diverse women leaders. Since 1987, WILD has offered seven week-end-long Summer Institutes attended by over 600 women, representing more than 70 local unions. In 1993, the curriculum was offered in Spanish. In addition WILD has created shorter programs and workshops for unions and women's committees; provided strategic advice and support for individual women as well as groups within unions; initiated dialogue with male union leadership; and conducted a state-wide survey on the demographics of union leadership in Massachusetts.

WILD is run by a multicultural group of women, all volunteers except the director. The goals of the organization are to increase democratic participation in the labor movement, especially among women and people of color; to build multicultural educational programs; and to build awareness and stimulate debate about issues of sexism, racism, heterosexism, and other oppression issues within the labor movement.

WILD has focused on helping women move into positions of power within unions, and to use that power effectively. At the same time, the group sees the need to challenge and change the culture of unionism through dialogue with male members and leaders. The group believes unions should be part of a broader movement for social change and works closely with community-based organizations to that end.

WILD's most recent project is an effort to organize and train immigrant women and non-native speakers to become leaders and activists in the labor movement, within unions, and in organizing drives. In collaboration with the Amalgamated Textile and Clothing Workers Union in the New Bedford area, WILD provided a leadership training workshop in Portuguese. Nineteen women attended. In addition, the outreach materials and Summer Institute brochure were translated into Spanish and Portuguese and widely distributed through the Immigrant Workers' Resource Center and other groups with Latina and Portuguese members. The Summer Institute curriculum was offered in Spanish and Portuguese as well as English. RESIST's recent grant was used to develop this project.

Fuerza Unida, Inc.

*3946 Zarzamora Street
San Antonio, TX 78225-2120*

Fuerza Unida (FU) was formed in 1990 after Levi Strauss & Company closed their San Antonio plant, which had employed 1150 primarily Mexican-American women. FU has worked with various national and international labor groups trying to develop alternative and humane workplaces which will offer education and opportunities for these displaced workers. FU has become an example of determination and courage for its membership, their families, and the broader community.

In the last four years, through demonstrations and public education, FU brought Levi's to the table twice and has pressured the company to provide displaced workers with GED training. Approximately 700 workers have completed their GEDs. Other workers in the area, including those at San Antonio Dress and Krogers, have sought FU's assistance with their own struggles. Workers have survived and have gained strength as they learn to ask questions and defend their rights. FU is still trying to reach a just settlement with Levi's through an international boycott. In addition, the organization operates a Women's Worker Center and is working to develop FU as a permanent advocacy group for social, environmental, and economic justice.

The long range goal of the group is to develop a core of working class women leaders who will be directly linked to their communities. As part of this work, FU is working with international worker, environmental, immigration, and refugee defense movements to demonstrate the negative consequences of the North American Free Trade Agreement, and to develop alternative industrial and economic policies for a sustainable economy consistent with human health, safety, and economic needs.

FU's Promotora Leadership Development Project (PLDP) is a program to develop a new generation of FU leaders. For one year, groups of Promotoras (former garment workers from Levi's) will travel in pairs of two to participate in a six week hands-on training at the FU San Francisco office. The training will include fundraising, organizing, strategic planning, house meetings, media relations, public presentations, technical skills development, etc. The Promotoras will

Join the Resist Pledge Program

We'd like you to consider becoming a Resist Pledge. Pledges account for over 25% of our income. By becoming a pledge, you help guarantee Resist a fixed and dependable source of income on which we can build our grant making program. In return, we will send you a monthly pledge letter and reminder, along with your newsletter. We will keep you up-to-date on the groups we have funded, and the other work being done at Resist. So take the plunge and become a Resist Pledge! We count on you, and the groups we fund count on us.

☐ **Yes! I would like to become a Resist Pledge. I'd like to pledge \$ _____ (monthly, bi-monthly, quarterly, 2x a year, yearly).**

☐ **Enclosed is my pledge contribution of \$ _____.**

☐ **I can't join the pledge program just now, but here's a contribution to support your work. \$ _____**

Name _____

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

Resist

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