

# Worker-Friendly Era Dawns

## Labor Urges Economic Patriotism

A new "spirit of economic patriotism" to create American jobs and keep jobs in America was urged by Secretary-Treasurer Thomas R. Donahue of the AFL-CIO during President-elect Bill Clinton's economic conference this week.

Owen Bieber, president of the Auto Workers, and Ron Carey, president of the Teamsters, also spoke on Monday during the first of two sessions held at Little Rock, Arkansas. Both are AFL-CIO vice presidents and members of the national federation's Executive Council.

Donahue called for the new Clinton-Gore

Administration to give workers "hope of stability, a sense of empowerment...hope of gainsharing as their productivity increases...and some sense of job security."

Clinton responded:

"One of the issues I hope we can discuss...is how we will define security for people who are willing to work hard."

Donahue cited Clinton's campaign remarks about Americans working harder and longer for less.

"I can't think of a better summation of how workers see the economy and what their hopes are for your administration," the AFL-CIO leader said.

"What they see is unemployment. They see 17 million people either totally or partially unemployed and looking for full-time jobs. They see an unemployment insurance system that is badly broken and was paying benefits to only 33 percent of the unemployed during the depths of the recession and now

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## Kirkland: Reich Right For Sec'ty

The selection of Robert Reich as secretary of labor by President-elect Bill Clinton has been hailed by President Lane Kirkland of the AFL-CIO.

"We welcome the choice of Robert Reich as secretary of labor and look forward to working with him to strengthen worker rights and improve the standard of living of working people," Kirkland declared following Clinton's announcement last Friday.

Reich, 46, is a Harvard University economics professor. He is credited with influencing Clinton's economic themes during the

election campaign, especially the idea of improving the economy over the long-term by investment in the infrastructure and in worker training and education.

He was a Rhodes scholar with Clinton at Oxford, and the two have been close ever since.

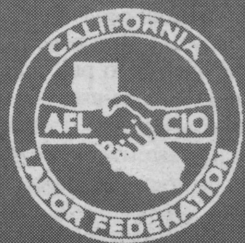
"Reich's experience and writing in the field of workplace economics mark him as exceptionally well qualified to participate as a full partner in the economic decision-making of the new administration," Kirkland said.

The AFL-CIO leader praised Reich's qualifications even as the news media pointed out that the appointee lacks a history of long involvement in labor-management relations.

"In naming Reich, President-elect Clinton has chosen someone who recognizes the primary role of the labor of human beings in economic progress," Kirkland declared.

"We pledge our continued cooperation in finding ways for the federal government to

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## NAFTA Draws Protests as Bush Signs

George Bush went ahead and signed his North American Free Trade Agreement yesterday to the accompaniment of a crescendo of protests from organizations representing a cross section of American society.

President Lane Kirkland of the AFL-CIO called yesterday's ceremonial signing "a George Bush mistake."

Kirkland declared:

"It is a last chapter in 'trickle down' economics, (Bush's) failed policy that has meant fewer good jobs, inadequate income distribution, declining investment and environmental neglect.

"The AFL-CIO believes that the current structure of trade with Mexico—the maquiladora system—has served to exploit the border environ-

ment and workers on both sides of the border. We are convinced President Bush's version of NAFTA will increase that exploitation.

"We think that any agreement must address the current problems of trade with Mexico, clean up the awful border pollution caused by U.S. corporations in Mexico, include environmental, worker rights and health and safety standards and strong enforcement of those standards," Kirkland added.

"The Bush NAFTA agreement will achieve none of those goals."

Sixteen organizations joined hands with organized labor in a nationwide protest against NAFTA yesterday.

Groups representing environmentalists, human rights activists, consumer advocates, churches, fair trade advocates and others took out ads in regional editions of the New York Times and in other publica-

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Photo by John Ravnik

## Honoring the Memory of John F. Shelley

Participating in the dedication of a bust of John F. Shelley last Friday at San Francisco City Hall are, from left, Albin J. Gruhn, president of the California Labor Federation; Walter Johnson, secretary-treasurer of the San Francisco Labor Council; Jack Henning, executive secretary-treasurer of the state AFL-CIO federation and chair of the Shelley Memo-

rial Committee, and James San Jule, coordinator of the memorial committee. Shelley, who died in 1974, was a leader of the Teamster Bakery Drivers, president of the California State Federation of Labor, president of the S.F. Labor Council, as well as S.F. Mayor, state senator and member of Congress.

• Labor wins key NLRB case. Page 2

• Health benefit tax resurfaces. Page 4

## COPE Computer Fuels Vote Victories

Here are some statistics that illustrate the impact the AFL-CIO's Committee on Political Education on California election campaigns that ended with labor victories on Nov. 3:

- More than 500 orders for voter information from California central labor councils were filled with the help of national COPE's computer files in Washington, D.C.

- More than 2.5 million names of California trade unionists together with phone numbers and registration status were provided.

- The central labor council COPE volunteers used 1,406,487 mailing labels generated by the

main computer.

- Those same volunteers used up

341,198 three-by-five-inch cards to record data for phone bank use.

- More than 200,000 of the AFL-CIO's special phone bank cards were used in contacting voters in targeted areas.

"These numbers are impressive, and they are even more meaningful when one bears in mind that they represent thousands of calls and uncounted hours of volunteer time by our volunteers," said Jack Henning, executive secretary-treasurer of the California Labor Federation and head of state COPE.

"The work of union members in their local communities made all the difference in this election," added Bill Camp, assistant state COPE director, who compiled the statistics.

### Season's Greetings

From the officers and staff of the California Labor Federation

John F. Henning, Executive Secretary-Treasurer

Albin J. Gruhn, President

This is the final edition of California AFL-CIO News for 1992. As in years past, we will suspend publication during Christmas and New Year's. Your next issue will be dated Friday, Jan. 15, 1993.



# Labor Wins Key NLRB Decision

Using management-dominated committees to set pay scales and work rules rather than to consider product quality and efficiency of production violates the Wagner Act, the National Labor Relations Board ruled yesterday.

The ruling was praised by the AFL-CIO.

The NLRB ruled on a 1989 complaint by a Teamsters local trying to organize workers at Electromation Co. of Elkhart, Indiana.

The company set up workplace committees dominated by managers, and the union charged that the committees were acting illegally

in the role of labor unions. The Wagner Act prohibits employers from establishing, dominating or interfering with labor unions.

The AFL-CIO issued this statement today:

"The National Labor Relations Act provides in the clearest terms that employees have the right to choose their workplace representatives and that employers have no right to select such representatives for their employees.

"All that the National Labor Relations Board's Electromation decision does is to faithfully follow what the Act says and what it means. The

fact that this Board — chosen by the Reagan-Bush Administration from the ranks of management lawyers — was unanimous in reaching its conclusion proves as much.

"Contrary to the employer public relations campaign aimed at pressuring the Board to disregard its obligation to enforce the law, the NLRB as it stands furthers the national interest in making American firms more competitive.

"Only companies that are committed to an honest and equal partnership between management and labor can create and sustain the kind of employee participation that is es-

sential if this country is to meet the competitive challenge of a world economy.

"Companies that are committed to managing from the top down and dominating their employees cannot do so. That is true whether a company is open about its management style or disguises it through the pretense of employer-run participation committees."

Three of the four board members signed an opinion ruling that the committees were in violation of the Wagner Act. The fourth member concurred in a separate decision. In the past 20 years, various

types of workforce participation programs have come into vogue, going by such names as worker involvement or empowerment, quality circles and teams.

Many companies, including Motorola Inc. and AT&T, have viewed labor-management cooperation as critical to becoming competitive against industrial powers like Japan, which have used team approaches for decades. Worker involvement has grown in influence as the traditional power of labor has waned. Yesterday's ruling, which has been expected for several weeks, was the board's first on the legality of these types of programs.

## Grad Students Burn Letters

In scenes reminiscent of Vietnam era draft protests, graduate students on strike at University of California-Berkeley this week torched letters and questionnaires demanding information administrators hoped would provide ammunition for union-busting.

The university letters are "a pathetic attempt to find out just which grad students are teaching and research assistants are on strike, so that they can punish us," said Russ Paulsen, spokesperson for Associated Graduate Student Employees (AGSE), newly chartered as Local 2165 of the United Auto Workers.

"They have no idea who has been teaching classes and who has been on strike, and so they are asking the strikers to tell them," Paulsen added. "They are threatening to cut off the pay of any grad student employee who fails to fill out and return the form enclosed with the letters. We don't think they will do this. Our attorneys tell us the

### Breakfast With Mayor

The San Francisco Labor Council has scheduled a breakfast with Mayor Frank Jordan for affiliates and friends at 8 a.m. Tuesday, Dec. 22, at Castagnola's on Fisherman's Wharf. Tickets are \$10. Those planning to attend should phone (415) 826-4550.

university will be subject to treble damages if it relies on the returned forms and then cuts off the pay of somebody who actually crossed the picket line and taught during the strike."

Fires were lit in garbage cans on Sproul Plaza, scene of 1960s and 1970s protests, and grad students tossed the university letters and question forms onto the flames while undergraduate students applauded.

AGSE reported no progress in negotiating sessions with administration representatives yesterday.

The strike issue is AGSE's demand for union recognition and a collective bargaining contract, which it had on the Berkeley campus for three years until administrators refused earlier this year to talk about renewal.

Officials have backed away from earlier arguments that a contract with AGSE would be illegal and have abandoned other arguments as well. Union leaders say this leaves pure union-busting as the only basis for the university's continued stonewalling.

Last week, AGSE members voted overwhelmingly to continue their strike at Berkeley.

There were no reports of progress in negotiations at U.C.-Santa Cruz, where AGSE also is on strike.



Members of Associated Graduate Student Employees keep up picket line pressure at University at California-Berkeley as administrators stonewall on union rights.

## Silicon Valley Workers Await Vote

Silicon Valley workers have ended an apparently unprecedented strike against a high-tech electronics firm and have filed with the National Labor Relations Board for a union representational election.

The strike was called after Versatronic, Inc., a manufacturer of computer circuit boards, fired a worker who stood up and talked about employee concerns during a captive audience meeting called by management.

Workers went back work before last after the NLRB regional office charged Versatronic with unfair labor practices.

A majority of the workers have joined the unaffiliated United Electrical, Radio and Machine Workers of America (UE) and are asking for recognition of the union as their bargaining agent. An election date hasn't been set.

Versatronic has brought in the union-busting law firm of Littler, Mendelson, Fastiff & Tichy. UE Organizer David Bacon said the union expected the company to use every

trick in the book to stall the balloting and to fight the unfair labor practices charge.

Low wages and concern over exposure to hazardous chemicals were the principal concerns of the workers when Versatronic managers first got wind of the move to join the UE.

These still are major issues, but workers now are militant as well over the firing of the leader that brought on the unfair labor practice charge and over "layoffs" of a dozen others that the company justifies on grounds that business

shrank during the strike, Bacon said.

Workers now are saying also that they want respect.

Wages on Versatronic's high-tech assembly line are at or near the legal minimum. There's no medical coverage, and there has been no raise for more than two years.

Concern over hazardous chemicals has been heightened by a U.C.-Davis study showing increased health risks for workers who make computer chips.

The \$3.5 million study, results of

which were announced last week, found higher rates of miscarriage among women and health risks for men as well.

Versatronic workers complain of thick fumes in inadequately ventilated workspaces and of being required to expose their skin to powerful and toxic solvents while cleaning computer boards.

The walkout was highlighted by a four-day hunger strike staged by Versatronic workers at Digital Microwave Corporation, one of the struck firm's most important customers.

Strikers got short shrift when they sent a delegation to ask Digital Microwave to intercede with Versatronic.

The workers responded with their hunger strike at Digital Microwave's front door. After that, Digital Microwave officials sent Versatronic a letter threatening to find a new supplier for circuit boards if the struck company could not meet quality standards or production schedules.

### Tips for Dealing With the Media

"What to Do When You Get Burned by the Press," a guide to fighting back effectively and winning better coverage of union news, is available at the University of California-Berkeley Center for Labor Research and Education.

Author of the 34-page booklet is Matt Bates, associate editor of The Machinist, a publication of the In-

ternational Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers.

The price is \$6.50 per copy, reduced to \$5.25 for orders of 21 copies or more. Prepayment is required. Checks should be made payable to the U.C. Regents and sent to the Labor Center at 2521 Channing Way, Berkeley 94720. Information can be obtained by phoning (510) 642-0323.

## U.C. Guide Aids Public Employees

Pocket Guide to Public Sector Arbitration, newly published at University of California-Berkeley, is the first attempt to pull together into a single, easy-to-use reference, everything a union officer or employee facing arbitration needs to know about grievance procedures in this state.

The 67-page booklet explains every step of the arbitration process, starting with preparation and presentation of a case, continuing through hearing procedures and rules of evidence and the roles of the courts and the Public Employment Relations Board, and covering standards governing arbitrators' decisions.

The booklet is the latest in the Easy Reference Series published by the Public Employee Relations Project (CPR) at the U.C.-Berkeley Institute of Industrial Relations.

The authors are Bonnie Bogue, director of CPR and a member of the National Academy of Arbitrators, and Frank Silver, arbitrator, labor lawyer and former administrative law judge with the state Public Employment Relations Board.

"We have put everything you need to know into a single, easy-to-use guide," Bogue said.

The price is \$5 per copy, marked down to \$4.50 each for orders of five to 49 copies with further reductions for larger orders.

Orders can be placed with Shizo Okino at (510) 643-7092. Information about the booklet can be obtained from Stefanie Kalmin at (510) 643-7069.

### Datebook

**Western Workers Labor Heritage Festival:** Friday through Sunday, Jan. 15-17, Concord Holiday Inn, Concord.  
**A. Philip Randolph California State 1993 Conference:** April 1-4, Sheraton Concord, Concord.

### Publisher's Notice

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Song, Art and Comedy Set for Jan. 15-17 at Concord

# Workers Festival Announces Agenda

Diane Amos, actor, improv artist and stand-up comic, has been named master of ceremonies for the benefit concert that will conclude the Seventh Annual Western Workers Labor Heritage Festival the weekend of Jan. 15-17.

The festival opens at 6 p.m. Friday, Jan. 15, at the Concord Holiday Inn. It will continue at the hotel all day Saturday, Saturday evening, and Sunday morning and afternoon, moving a short distance to the Pleasant Hill Community Center for the benefit concert at 7 p.m. Sunday evening.

Labor songs will be featured at the Friday night session, which is scheduled to get under way at 7 p.m., an hour after opening of registration. The Friday evening program also will feature poetry readings.

Saturday's session will open at 9 a.m. with an hour of songswaps. This will be followed by a day-long program of workshops.

Saturday also will see the start of a labor mural painting project under the direction of Scott Sayre whose wall paintings adorn union halls from Burlingame to Washington, D.C.

Festival participants will be invited to help plan the mural on Saturday morning and then to lend a hand with the painting as Sayre imparts his skills and artistry through the balance of the three-day program.

The workshop schedule includes Pat Wynn and Carma Berglund with excerpts from their presentation piece, "Working Woman's Stories and Songs," which was commissioned by the Labor Archives and Research Center at San Fran-



Comic Diane Amos is Heritage Festival master of ceremonies.

cisco State University.

Wynn will sing and Berglund will read materials drawn from the archives. Discussions will follow. Wynn and Berglund will conduct a separate song swap.

Also included among the festival workshops are Songs of the Civil Rights Movement, led by Freedom Song Network; Puppet Making and Skit Development, Bob and Jill Owen; Labor Storytelling, Elise Bryant; Communicating Ideas Through Music, Greg Landau; Writing Stories from Family History, Aurora Levins-Morales and Rap and Labor, Jon Fromer.

A panel discussion on Military Conversion will include Lee Shore, James Wright and Susan Strong,

with Shelley Kessler as moderator.

There will be two sessions dealing with the World War II disaster and mutiny at Port Chicago, near Concord, where black sailors assigned as stevedores were killed in the explosion of a munitions ship they were loading.

The Jewish Folk Chorus will perform immediately after lunch on Saturday. Also on the program will be readings by Levins-Morales.

A theater workshop will start Saturday evening and will continue Sunday under the direction of Augustin Lira and Patricia Wells-Solorzano of Teatro de la Tierra. Also continuing Sunday will be the puppeteering and storytelling workshops.

There is to be a major musical session Saturday evening at the hotel with performances by a number of singers and musicians.

Another session of songs will start at 9 a.m. Sunday and continue until noon.

Visual arts on display throughout the festival will include paintings by muralist Sayre, posters by Doug Minkler, photographs by David Bacon, and works by Irving Fromer.

There will be a tribute at 1 p.m. Sunday to Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., on whose birthday holiday weekend the festival has been held since its inception in 1987.

The balance of Sunday afternoon will be given over to preparations for the Sunday night benefit concert by festival participants.

Vukani Mawethu Choir will open the Sunday night concert, which will close with a singalong led by Jimmy Collier.

Diane Amos in the role of master of ceremonies adds a new dimension



Photo by Nina Youkelson

Carma Muir Berglund, left, and Pat Wynn will present 'Working Women's Stories and Songs' during the Western Workers Labor Heritage Festival Jan. 15-17 at Concord.

sion to the concert. She is a member of Screen Actors Guild and American Federation of Television and Radio Artists with many stage and TV credits in addition to improv performances and numerous appearances in comedy clubs and on college and university campuses.

This year's concert proceeds will go to members of Teamsters Local 601 on strike against Diamond Walnut at Stockton and to members of Hospital and Healthcare Local 250 of the Service Employees on strike against Casa San Miguel convalescent home in Contra Costa County.

This is the first time in its seven years that the festival has been held at a hotel. Concord Inn is offering special rates of \$55 for rooms with two queen-size beds. Advance registrations are required. The hotel phones are (510) 687-5500 or (800) 465-4329. Concord Holiday Inn is at 1050 Burnet Ave. near the Concord Avenue Exit from I-680.

The hotel also is offering banquet-style lunches and dinners on Saturday and Sunday. Lunches will

be \$8 and dinners \$12.

The Contra Costa County Labor Council is host for this year's festival, which has the sponsorship of a long list of unions, councils and other labor organizations including the California Labor Federation and the AFL-CIO's Washington-based Labor Heritage Foundation.

The event was founded by California trade unionists inspired by the Labor Heritage Foundation's Great Labor Song Exchange—since renamed Arts Exchange—which is held annually at the George Meany Center.

It started in Santa Cruz and was held in subsequent years in Cupertino, Burlingame, San Francisco, Santa Cruz again, and Oakland.

The festival director, David Winters of Musicians Local 346, can be reached at (408) 426-4940. The address is P. O. Box 7184, Santa Cruz 95061.

Unions are being encouraged to buy festival registrations at \$35 apiece.

## Wal-Mart TV Exposé Due Tuesday on NBC

Wal-Mart's predatory, profits-before-people policies are scheduled to be exposed to a national TV audience by NBC's "Dateline" program on Tuesday night, Dec. 22.

"Dateline" ordinarily is aired at 9 p.m. on Tuesdays by NBC affiliates in California. Local listings should be checked.

Although Wal-Mart's slogan is "Bring It Home to America," the company's house labels are stitched into and stuck onto goods manufactured by underpaid workers in Third World countries. This includes the People's Republic of China, where export goods are produced with forced labor of prisoners, thousands of whom have been imprisoned since the uprising in Tiananmen Square.

Wal-Mart and its Sam's Club "wholesale" outlet stores were placed on the California Labor Federation's state boycott list earlier this year.

That action was taken at the request of the

United Food and Commercial Workers with the support of other unions concerned with Wal-Mart's entrance into California with its history of union-bashing and manipulation of local agencies.

The UFCW charges Wal-Mart with devastating the economies of hundreds of communities by syphoning retail trade off into its own monopolistic shopping malls, which frequently are located just outside town limits and often are built on sites and with subsidies obtained through coercion and manipulation of local governmental agencies.

Erosion of family living standards follows closely behind Wal-Mart expansions, proponents of the boycott contend. Low wages and rapid turnover of the Wal-Mart workforce mean there is little chance that workers displaced from boarded-up businesses ruined by Wal-Mart ever will regain any degree of job security, they point out.

## Scholarship Plea For Labor Studies

A drive to bolster the Labor Studies scholarship fund at San Francisco City College has been launched in an effort to offset huge new tuition increases.

The City College spring semester opens Thursday, Jan. 14, with a curriculum that includes two new classes. Added are a six-week course for shop stewards and others on the basics of safety and health legislation and shop floor practice, and a semester-long course on issues of race in the labor movement.

The tuition hikes are being imposed because of the state budget crisis. The charge for most students jumps from \$6 to \$10 per unit, or \$30 for each semester-long class. For those who already hold bachelor's degrees, the tuition cost goes from \$6 to \$50 per unit—\$150 for each semester-long class.

Scholarships are intended to help

students pay the additional tuition.

The fund appeal was announced by the Labor Studies Advisory Committee, which estimated that as many as a fourth of those currently enrolled will be forced to drop out if increased financial aid is not available.

The target is \$6,000 in new contributions, according to Barbara Byrd, Labor Studies coordinator.

Checks should be made payable to CCSF Foundation and mailed to the Labor Studies Department 801 Mission St., Room 321, San Francisco, CA 94103. Contributions are tax-deductible, Byrd pointed out.

The Advisory Committee that sounded the fund appeal includes educators, community representatives, some two dozen labor organization leaders and activists including Jack Henning, executive secretary-treasurer of the California Labor Federation.

### Union Yes Dinner At Merced-Mariposa

The Merced-Mariposa Central Labor Council has scheduled its Fourth Annual Union Yes Fund Raiser Dinner for Friday, Feb. 26, at the Italo-American Lodge in Merced.

Proceeds will be used to support a Union Yes campaign throughout the two-county area, according to Jerry Martin, president. A souvenir program is being prepared, Martin said.

## Mazzocchi to Speak on Labor Party

Tony Mazzocchi, former secretary-treasurer of the Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers and founder of Labor Party Advocates, will bring his campaign for a new economic, social and political agenda to the San Francisco Bay Area next month.

Interested trade unionists are invited to a reception for Mazzocchi at 7 p.m. Monday, Jan. 18, at Machinists Lodge 1781 at 1511 Rollins Rd. in Burlingame.

It will be the first event of a five-day visit by Mazzocchi that will be coordinated by Carl Finamore, chair of the Shop Stewards Commit-

tee of Lodge 1781.

Meetings are being arranged with groups of members of the Machinists, Service Employees, Interna-

### AFL-CIO Offers Reviews of Issues

Four new "Reviews of the Issues" papers are available from the Publications and Materials office of the AFL-CIO Economic Research Department, (202) 637-5041.

The topics are "The Rich Get Richer," number 62; "Executive

Pay Reforms Needed," no. 63; "Hispanic Workers," no. 64; and "Higher Minimum Wage... Needed," no. 65.

Up to 50 copies are available free.

tional Longshoremen and Warehousemen, Electrical Workers, Mazzocchi's own OCAW, and other unions, Finamore said.

Mazzocchi is scheduled to participate also in a panel discussion of third-party alternatives that has been set for 7:30 p.m. Friday, Jan. 22, at Hotel and Restaurant Employees Local 28 in Oakland under the sponsorship of the Bay Area Committees of Correspondence.



# Health Benefit Tax Resurfaces

Making workers pay income tax on health care benefits—an old idea that's getting lots of new attention—was blasted this week by labor's main lobbyist in Washington.

"There is no rhyme nor reason to taxing health care benefits," said Robert McGlotten, director of legislation for the national AFL-CIO. "We essentially realized a long time ago that it was important for employers to help employees."

Labor has fought the idea for years, condemning it as a new tax on those

who can afford it least.

It crops up now as the centerpiece of a health-care reform scheme called "managed competition." Supporters of the idea argue health care costs will decline if people are given an incentive to choose the least expensive plan. You give them incentive by making them pay taxes on the money their employers pay for their health care.

It is perceived as a major rip-off by workers.

Backers include the insurance industry, the ultra-conservative Heritage

Foundation, the Governors' Conference, and Business Roundtable, which speaks for corporate America.

Insurance Commissioner John Garamendi of California has been identified with the "managed competition" idea.

President-elect Bill Clinton has supported it in broad terms but so far has not commented on proposals to tax workers' benefits.

Labor is getting support from health care experts, including Prof. David Himmelstein of Harvard Medical

School, a strong advocate of government-run health insurance systems like Canada's.

"It is one of those ideas that go over great with the policy wonks," a top Democratic Party strategist told the New York Times this week.

"But people in the middle class believe they are being done in by big insurance companies and the medical bureaucracy," added the Democratic strategist, who insisted on anonymity. "It is going to be pretty hard to tell them the solution is to tax them."

## Bush Signs NAFTA...

(Continued from page 1)

tions decrying the impact of the Bush agreement.

Included, in addition to 20 labor organizations, are the Sierra Club, National Consumers League, Rainbow Coalition, Friends of the Earth, Greenpeace, Americans for Democratic Action, and the Women's Division of the United Methodist Church General Board of Global Ministries.

Others participating in the protest are the National Farmers Union, National Family Farm Coalition, Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy, Farmworker Justice Fund, Alliance for Responsible Trade, Citizen Trade Campaign, Fair Trade Campaign, Public Citizen, and Interfaith Impact for Justice and Peace.

"As this agreement is signed today by Mr. Bush, Prime Minister Mulroney and President Salinas, thousands of citizens of all three countries will voice their opposition to this decision that has been taken

without regard to its human impact," the protest ad declares.

"Mr. Bush's NAFTA must not pass," the joint statement declares. "Here in the United States we will do everything in our power to assure that Congress and President Clinton keep their faith with the American people."

The ad is headlined with a quote from Bill Clinton: "Without regard to the human impact of their decisions."

It states, "If Congress approves this agreement, in its present form, the consequences will be devastating. As Governor Clinton said on Oct. 4, 'There is some reason to fear that there are people in this world and in our country who would take advantage of any provisions insuring more investment opportunities simply to look for lower wages without regard to the human impact of their decision.'"

The sponsoring organizations warn that Bush's NAFTA would undermine labor, environmental and

other social standards, including fundamental democratic and human rights, in the United States, Canada and Mexico by encouraging competition based on the lowest available standards.

"The European Community has taken the opposite approach, insisting that all its member nations respect relatively high standards and enabling poorer countries to meet them," it states.

The agreement also threatens environmental devastation, the ad warns.

"NAFTA allows U.S. companies to move into Mexico to exploit that nation's lax enforcement of environmental standards," they state.

"Existing environmental chaos on the U.S.-Mexican border will become a nightmare, and many U.S. environmental, health and safety standards will become vulnerable to new legal and political attacks."

On the question of job loss, they state:

"NAFTA pits U.S. and Canadian

workers against Mexican workers in a contest that all will lose as jobs move toward the lowest wage locations, depressing wages and working conditions in all three countries. Hardest hit will be lower-skilled, poorer, minority, immigrant and women workers."

Destruction of family farms is another point:

"NAFTA will displace millions of family farmers in all three countries, adding to unemployment and forcing hundreds of thousands of Mexicans to migrate north."

There's a strong warning also about denial of democratic process:

"NAFTA is the result of what one member of Congress called 'fifteen months of the most secretive trade negotiations I've ever monitored.' Many citizen groups offered suggestions to Bush Administration negotiators but were largely ignored."

### S.F. Suit Alleges Census Was Rigged

The City of San Francisco is party to a lawsuit charging that the U.S. Census Bureau rigged the 1990 census to exclude "major segments of the homeless population."

The suit contends that because of this the federal government must not rely on census figures for public policy purposes, including determination of funding for programs intended to benefit the homeless.

Other plaintiffs include the U.S. Conference of Mayors, the National Law Center, and the City of Baltimore.

## Video Depicts Maquiladora Poisoning

A new video that presents a stark warning of the dangers of George Bush's North American Free Trade Agreement is being offered by the Coalition for Justice in the Maquiladoras.

"Stephan Chemical: The Poisoning of a Mexican Community," chronicles the efforts of the citizens of Matamoros, Mexico, and the Texas-based coalition to force a cleanup of the festering toxic pollution spewing out of a plant operated

by Stephan Chemical Co. just across the border in Mexico.

Thomas Donahue, secretary treasurer of the AFL-CIO, has called the video "a powerful indictment of the devastation caused by unregulated free trade," Donahue added, "I highly recommend it."

Ralph Nader said of the video: "a sobering story about a chemical nightmare building up on the the border... Remember it when the Free Trade Agreement reaches

Congress."

Lois Gibbs of Citizens Clearinghouse on Toxic Waste called it "a moving account of citizens demanding their basic right to a clean environment."

The 18-minute video is available in either Spanish or English versions. The cost is \$20, postpaid, in the U.S. It can be obtained from CJM, 3120 West Ashby, San Antonio, TX 78228. The phone is (512) 732-8957.

## Economy...

(Continued from page 1)

pays benefits to only marginally better than 50 percent of the unemployed," Donahue continued.

"They see a minimum wage that is a buck an hour below any standard of decency that we have adhered to in the past.

"They see a trade deficit and they think the trade policies under which we operate aren't fair. They see now what you, Mr. President-elect, styled as an 'unusual agreement,' a North American Free Trade Agreement that will encourage Americans to invest in Mexico to import products back into the United States."

Donahue cited union members' concern over law that enables employers to permanently replace anybody who exercises his or her right to withhold labor during a collective bargaining dispute.

"They see a system of labor law that simply doesn't work, which is destructive of their rights and frustrates any of their efforts to organize together and to work together," Donahue continued.

"And they see that if they are forced to go out on strike they will be replaced and the law will say that's a desirable result.

"They're asked now to participate in an experiment to make the nation more competitive, and no one is offering them a great deal

of a stake in that because no one is offering them any assurances of security."

Donahue pointed out that other conference speakers had talked about the need to improve competitiveness by improving efficiency.

"But nobody has talked about sharing the gains of that productivity with the people," Donahue declared. "We have talked about improving that productivity as if it were the only way of improving the lives of people. We need to talk about changing investment patterns or changing tax ratios in order to improve lives. There are a variety of ways, quite beyond improving productivity, in which we could assure some better distribution of the income and the wealth of this nation."

He pointed to charts showing that worker productivity rose in the 1980s with no sharing of the gain through growth of real wages. He called for a shared vision of the workplace and of the workforce.

"...a vision in which you hopefully will talk about government, labor and management working together in creating that kind of partnership so that people can have productive work and we can move toward some sort of full employment economy..."

Donahue continued:

"We heard the figure cited that the biotech

industry has added 78,000 jobs. Well, General Motors will cut 78,000 jobs in the next few years. The Postal Service will cut another 42,000 and the list, of course, goes on. The elimination of employment has become the weapon of choice to solve all corporate problems.

"I think you need to try to engender a new spirit of cooperation—labor, management and government—and to engender a kind of economic patriotism that talks about creating American jobs and keeping jobs in America.

"People here spoke about the creation of

communications networks and of improved railroad and other infrastructure improvements that we need. If we improve those by buying trains in Sweden and importing them, or if we improve them by importing European aircraft, we are not going to improve the job situation in the United States," Donahue concluded.

"I know that has been a principal focus of yours and Senator Gore's and I think it ought to be a principal focus that we have an effort to improve things for the plain people of this country."

## Labor Secretary...

(Continued from page 1)

assist working people in their daily struggles and to give them hope for the future," Kirkland added. "Robert Reich will make an important contribution to that effort."

Reich was one of four Clinton appointments announced on Friday. Laura D'Andrea Tyson, a U.C. Berkeley economics professor, was named to chair the White House Council of Economic Advisers.

Named as Health and Human Services

Secretary was Donna Shala, chancellor of the University of Wisconsin. Named as administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency was Carol Browner, Florida environmental regulation secretary.

Reich, appearing with the president-elect during a news conference at Little Rock, Ark., said he was "excited about this job because there is the possibility of working with a president who understands the importance of investing in people as a means of achieving economic growth."

## Campaign Targets Office Workers

A new outreach campaign in the San Francisco Bay Area has resulted in several dozen white collar organizing leads for Service Employees Local 790-A, the public service arm of Public Employees Local 790 of the SEIU.

In the week preceding Halloween, union members and staff handed 10,000 orange and black cards, each with a trick-or-treat candy attached, to passengers entering Bay Area Rapid Transit stations during commuter rush hours.

The covers of the folded-over cards displayed a witch, a jack o'lantern, and the message:

"What's goblin up your wages?"

Inside is a succinct message pointing out that wages in 1992 buy 7.2 percent less than in 1980, that 18 million fulltime American workers now are below the poverty line, and that average pay for corporate executives has tripled in the past 12 years.

It pointed out also that union workers are averaging \$6 to \$9 per hour more in total compensation than non-union workers, and that union workers earn more than twice as much in benefits alone, including pensions, health insurance, vacations, holidays and life insurance.

A tear-off, pre-addressed, postage-paid post card invited workers to obtain information about Local 790-A and about how to form unions in their own workplaces.