

Fed: Intervene in Chiapas

LCLAA Leaders Support Call for Justice in Mexico

A call for U.S. intervention in negotiations to end the NAFTA-linked uprising in the Mexican State of Chiapas was issued this week by the California Labor Federation, AFL-CIO.

It is contained in a message to Secretary of State Warren Christopher signed by Executive Secretary-Treasurer Jack Henning of the state federation and 21 union leaders and members who are activists in the AFL-CIO's Labor Council for Latin American Advancement (LCLAA).

The action comes amid reports that Mexican federal authorities continue to kill, torture, and abduct persons suspected of involvement in the armed revolt even as the Mexican government contends that negotiations are progressing with leaders of the Chiapas Indians.

Here is the text of the message to Secretary Christopher:

"The price of NAFTA is already being paid in the Mexican State of Chiapas where Indians have been in armed revolt to save their farm

lands from the economic encroachments of the United States.

"On the very day NAFTA was signed into law by President Clinton, the flag of rebellion was raised in Chiapas.

"Although protests from across the globe compelled the Mexican government to abandon the military executions and the air bombings of civilians, the United States stood silent during the worst of the assaults.

"Our nation, which has found economic interests to defend in the

Middle East, Bosnia and Somalia, among other places, looks away from government tyranny below the border.

"The Indians of Chiapas have a knowing fear that the sophisticated farming processes of United States agriculture will mean their obliteration.

"NAFTA has opened all of Mexican agriculture and industry to the advanced technology of the Colossus of the North. All at the expense of Mexican and American

workers.

"Mr. Secretary, we of American labor ask that you intervene in the current negotiations between the government of Mexico and the Indians of Chiapas to the end of assuring a fair and democratic solution to the crisis.

"Our country, which enacted NAFTA at the demand of American and Mexican capital, can do nothing less than assure a just and last-

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Coalition Calls for OSHA Reform

Spokespersons for health, environmental, civil rights and church organizations joined the AFL-CIO this week in calling upon Congress for early passage of the Comprehensive Occupational Safety and Health Act — OSHA reform.

The occasion was a Capitol Hill news conference called Wednesday by the Coalition for Safe Jobs.

Joining AFL-CIO President Lane Kirkland were Jane Perkins, president of Friends of the Earth; Dr. Alfred Munzer, president, American Lung Association; Donna Lenhoff, general counsel, Women's Legal Defense Fund; Mark Harrison, United Methodist Church, and Ralph Neas, executive director, Leadership Conference on Civil Rights.

In all, more than 45 organizations are participating in the Safe Jobs Coalition campaign for passage of OSHA reform. Their spokespersons were at the Dirksen Senate Office Building to hear Secretary of Labor Robert B. Reich testify in favor of the reform measure before the Senate Committee on Labor and Human Resources.

Reich told the senators that "some enduring problems, along with a new set of workplace hazards," demand that the 1970 Occupational Safety and Health Act be revised.

Quake Aid at Work

A new appeal for contributions to labor's Los Angeles Disaster Relief Fund went out this week as uncounted additional union members faced financial crises because of the L.A. earthquake and its aftershocks.

Jack Henning, executive secretary-treasurer of the California Labor Federation, sent the new appeal to the more than 1,200 AFL-CIO unions and councils in this state and to trade unionists across the country.

The fund is administered by Jim Wood, executive secretary-treasurer of the Los Angeles County Federation of Labor. The address is 2130 West 9th St., Los Angeles, CA 90006.

"The earthquake tragedy fell with particular devastation on thou-

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Dennis Gluckman of ATU Local 277, center, receives check to pay his mortgage from Armando Olivas, left, and Peggy Robinson, right, director and senior representative respectively, at AFL-CIO Services in Los Angeles.



Members of union families whose homes are damaged and whose paychecks are cut off because of earthquake damage fill grocery bags at food distribution center operated by AFL-CIO Community Services at L.A.

Labor Pushes Health Care

California's local central labor bodies completed plans this week to aim intensive, grass-roots lobbying in favor of President Clinton's Health Security Act at representatives who are due home during the upcoming congressional recess.

Plans were laid as the health care and insurance industries cranked up multi-million-dollar advertising campaigns aimed at turning public opinion against the president's plan.

Executive Secretary-Treasurer Jack Henning of the California Labor Federation, meanwhile, reminded leaders of the state's 1,200 local unions that the national AFL-CIO remains firmly in favor of the president's plan. Henning distributed to affiliates new data comparing all health care reform proposals currently before Congress.

Only two meet the AFL-CIO's criteria for acceptable health care reform, AFL-CIO President Lane Kirkland declared last week. These are Clinton's Health Security Act and the single-payer health care plan patterned after the Canadian system. Only the president's plan appears to have a chance of winning congressional approval, the AFL-CIO leader said.

And, he noted, the Health Security Act provides states with the option of establishing their own single-payer plans if their voters so choose.

Clinton, addressing several thousand members of the United Auto Workers in person at Shreveport, Louisiana, and tens of thousands more via television, on Tuesday blasted the high-spending opponents of health care reform. He

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Endorsing Convention April 13

The official call to the convention that will determine state AFL-CIO endorsements in the June 7 Primary Election went out this week to affiliates of the California Labor Federation.

Delegates from local unions and councils will be called to order at 10 a.m. Wednesday, April 13, at the Cathedral Hill Hotel in San Francisco, Executive Secretary-Treasurer Jack Henning announced in the convention call.

They will decide which candidates carry the endorsements of the state AFL-CIO's Committee on Po-

litical Education (COPE) in Primary Election contests for:

- Congress.
- Governor and other statewide offices.
- The Legislature.

Also to be decided are labor's recommendations on statewide ballot propositions.

Endorsements—and the volunteer campaign support that goes with COPE backing—will be decided for all members of the House of Representatives. U.S. Sen. Diane Feinstein again will be seeking COPE support.

Statewide offices to be acted upon are governor, lieutenant governor, secretary of state, controller, treasurer, attorney general, superintendent of public instruction, insurance commissioner, and State Board of Equalization.

Endorsements will be considered for races in half the State Senate districts and for all of the Assembly seats.

The Executive Council of the state federation will be in session at the Cathedral Hill Hotel Sunday, April 10, through Tuesday, April 13, to consider recommendations

from local central labor bodies and to shape its own recommendations for presentation to the delegates starting Wednesday morning.

Delegate registration will start at 2 p.m. Tuesday in the hotel's Golden Gate Room, Henning said. Registration will resume at 8 a.m. Wednesday outside the El Dorado Room, where the convention will be called to order at 10 a.m.

Accommodations at the Cathedral Hill at \$79, single or double, plus tax. Delegates should make their own reservations by March 20 by phoning the hotel toll-free at (800) 622-0355.

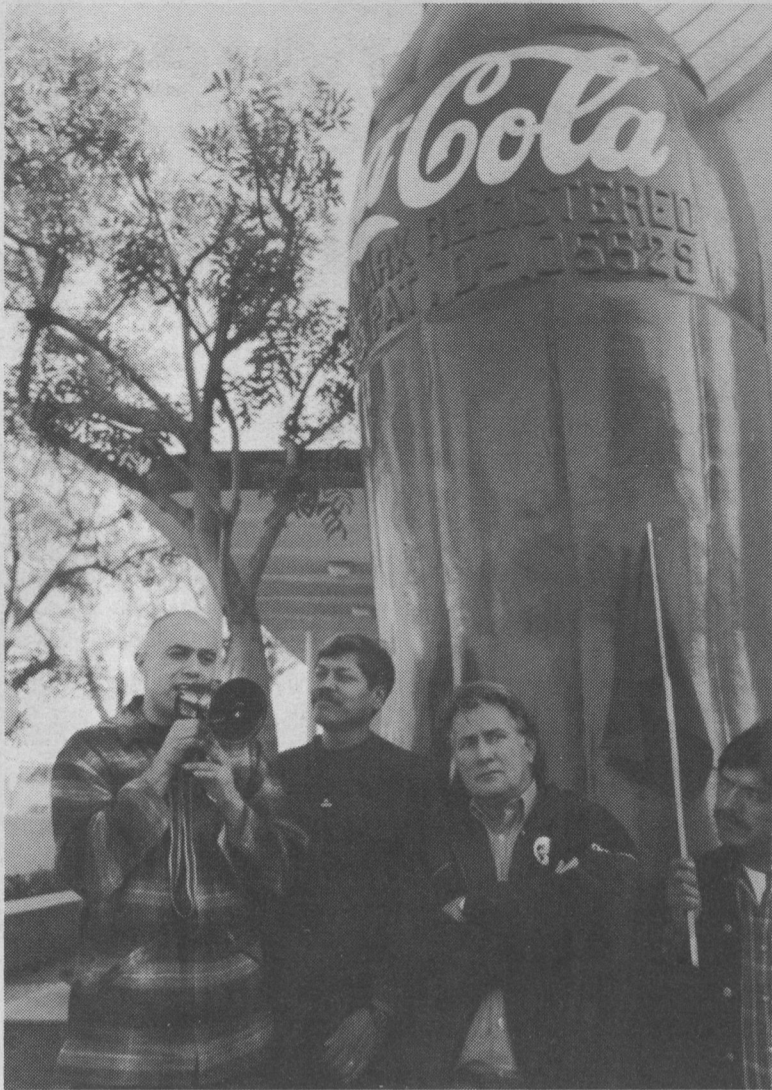


Photo by Jocelyn Sherman, UFW

Actor Herbert Siguenza of Culture Clash addresses rally at Coca-Cola's corporate offices in Los Angeles. With him are UFW Secretary-Treasurer David Martinez, actor Martin Sheen, and an unidentified UFW member.

UFW Says Coca-Cola Hides Facts in Florida

Coca-Cola's responses to persons and organizations complaining about the corporation's abandonment of 600 Florida farm workers who have given Coke's Minute Maid orange juice operation more than 20 years of uninterrupted profits are full of misinformation, President Arturo Rodriguez of the United Farm Workers charged this week.

The rich and powerful Coca-Cola, based in Atlanta, has sold its 16,000 acres of Florida citrus groves to King Ranch of Texas, another multi-billion-dollar corporation. King Ranch in turn has set up a subsidiary called Running W Citrus to operate the same orchards with the same equipment and supervisors producing fruit that will continue to be used in Coca-Cola's Minute Maid, the number 1 fruit juice drink.

Coke and the new orchard owners say their corporate shuffle terminated as of Jan. 1 the UFW collective bargaining agreement covering the 600 workers on the 16,000 acres formerly owned by Coca-Cola's Minute Maid.

The contract, originally negotiated in 1972 by Cesar Chavez, has provided the Minute Maid workers with decent wages, health care, job security and dignity while Coca-

Cola profited from their labors with two decades of uninterrupted profits at Minute Maid.

An overwhelming majority of the 600 workers have signed cards declaring that they want the UFW to continue as their collective bargaining agent but the two corporations are stonewalling.

A national protest against this corporate shuffle — launched with simultaneous demonstrations in 15 cities — has generated thousands of letters urging Coca-Cola to reconsider or face a national boycott of its best-selling Minute Maid.

The corporation's responses have misrepresented the facts, Rodriguez declared.

The typical Coca-Cola response says the corporation was "pleased to learn" that the new owner was using all 600 of the affected employees "at the same wages they received previously which are an estimated 30 percent higher than the average for Florida citrus workers."

The point is that neither Running W nor Coca-Cola will make any commitment not to cut wages back, Rodriguez pointed out.

Coca-Cola and Running W also refuse to talk about maintaining health benefits for any length of time, Rodriguez said.

With the new arrangement only

days old, the workers got a clear picture of their non-union future.

First, the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. holiday was taken away. Workers were told they would be fired if they failed to show up for work for any reason that day.

Sick leave and vacation time were quickly cut. There was a swift demonstration of what it means to lose contract grievance procedures when a worker was demoted after a public dressing-down for reporting on the job late because of an auto mishap, which he had reported by phone.

Wages and benefits under the UFW contract at Minute Maid helped raise and maintain wages for farm workers throughout Florida and across the southwest, Rodriguez said.

And even at 30 percent above the average for Florida citrus workers, the UFW employees at Minute Maid were earning only about \$10,000 a year for a seven-month season of intensive labor.

This reveals another likely motive. Minute Maid uses huge quantities of oranges from other growers in addition to the fruit produced on the 16,000 acres that used to be under UFW contract.

First Vice President Dolores Huerta of the UFW, speaking at Atlanta where she led a protest, said she suspected Coca-Cola saw Cesar Chavez' death as an opportunity to dump the union and embark on a wage-cutting campaign.

"They think that when Cesar Chavez passed away, that was the end of the union," Huerta told the Atlanta Constitution.

"They are wrong."

Datebook

Women-in-the-Workforce Conference: Feb. 24-26, Biltmore Hotel, Los Angeles.

Labor Archives Annual Program: Friday evening, Feb. 25, S.F. State University. Reception, 6 pm; program, 7.

Executive Council California Labor Federation: March 8-9, Sacramento Hilton Inn.

A. Philip Randolph Institute State Conference: March 17-20, Queen Mary, Long Beach.

Joadie Awards Benefit for We Do The Work: March 25, Sheraton Palace Hotel, San Francisco.

Executive Council, California Labor Federation: April 10-12, Cathedral Hill Hotel, S.F.

Pre-Primary COPE Convention: April 13, Cathedral Hill Hotel, S.F.

Joint Legislative Conference: May 23-25, Radisson Hotel, Sacramento.

Biennial Convention of the California Labor Federation: July 25-29, Radisson Hotel, Sacramento.

Publisher's Notice

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Teamsters Target Sam's Club

Another protest against the Walmart Corporation's poverty wage-maximum profit strategy has been launched in the Los Angeles area.

Teamsters Local 572 at Carson is targeting Sam's Club, a division of Walmart, with a "Public Awareness" handbilling campaign aimed at telling people just what it means to a community as well as directly affected workers when the giant retailer moves in and takes advantage of high unemployment to start driving down wages and working conditions.

"Sam's Club and Walmart are a direct threat to the security of thousands of union members in Southern California who currently are employed in the organized food industry," Jack Cox, secretary-treasurer of Teamsters Local 572, declared this week.

"Unlike their unionized competitors, Sam's Club and Walmart impose low wages, minimal to non-existent medical coverage, and other substandard conditions on their unrepresented workers to minimize labor costs while maximizing corporate," Cox said.

Walmart was beaten back in the San Fernando Valley on the opposite side of Los Angeles when the corporation tried to obtain special zoning and land use consideration—another of its favorite tactics—to obtain a site designated for other uses. Unions and community activists combined their efforts and persuaded local authorities not to grant Walmart any special deals.

Local 572 handbillers are working to persuade shoppers that their dollars would

be better spent at stores paying union wages with decent benefits than at Walmart.

Cox called upon other unions to urge their members to set an example for the rest of the community by staying out of the targeted Sam's Club and to shop instead at union stores where comparable products are available at competitive prices.

He listed Ralphs, Food 4 Less, Hughes, Fedco, Albertsons, Lucky, Stater Bros., Alpha Beta, Smiths, Vons and Price Club.

"Only through educating the consumer can we hope to protect our members employed in the Southern California food industry," Cox said. "And what better consumer to begin with than the union consumer?"

Nationwide Unfair List

Here is the list of national boycotts officially sanctioned by the AFL-CIO Executive Council.

Ace Drill Corp.: Wire, jobber and letter drills, routers and steel bars.
United Auto Workers

Acme Boot Company: Western-style boots: Acme, Dan Post, Dingo labels.
United Rubber Workers

Alitalia Airlines: Passenger and freight services.
Machinists

Brown & Sharpe Mfg. Co.: Measuring, cutting and machine tools and pumps.
Machinists

Bruce Church, Inc.: Iceberg Lettuce, including Red Coach, Friendly, Green Valley Farms, and Lucky brands.
United Farm Workers

California Table Grapes: Table grapes that do not bear the UFW union label on the carton or crate.
United Farm Workers

Deckers Corp.: Sandals for men, women and children: Teva, Deckers and Sansi labels.
Machinists

Diamond Walnut Co.: Canned and bagged walnuts and walnut pieces.
Teamsters

Goody's Family Clothing, Inc.: Retail clothing stores.
Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers

Holly Farms: Chickens and processed poultry products.
Teamsters

Kawasaki Rolling Stock, U.S.A.: Motorcycles.
Transport Workers Union

Lakewood Engineering & Mfg., Inc.: Electric fans and heaters for homes.
Teamsters

Louisiana-Pacific Corp.: Brand name wood products including: L-P Wolmanized, Cedartone, Waferwood, Fibrepine, Oro-Bord, Redex, Sidex, Ketchikan, Pabco, Xonolite.
Carpenters & Joiners and Intl. Woodworkers

Mohawk Liqueur Corp.: Mohawk labeled gin, rum, peppermint schnapps, and cordials.
Distillery, Wine and Allied Workers

R. J. Reynolds Tobacco Co.: Camel, Winston, Salem, Doral, Vantage, More, Now, Real, Bright, Century, Sterling, YSL/Ritz cigarettes.

Prince Albert, George Washington, Carter Hall, Apple, Madeira Mixture, Royal Comfort, Top, Our Advertiser smoking tobaccos.
Winchester little cigars.
Bakery, Confectionary & Tobacco Workers

Rome Cable Corp.: Cables used in mining and construction industry.
Machinists

Silo, Inc.: National retailers of electronic equipment and appliances.
Teamsters

Southwire Co.: Commercial and Industrial wire and cable; Do-It-Yourself brand Homewire.
International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers

Star Dental Products: Dental hand tools.
Machinists

EL Thorpe & Co.: Black Hills Gold Jewelry.
United Steelworkers

United States Playing Card Co.: Cards with brand names Bee, Bicycle, Tally Ho, Aviator and Congress.
Retail, Wholesale, Department Store Union

Kourpias, Hightower Joady Honorees

Jim Hightower, the Texas populist and radio commentator, and George Kourpias, president of the International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers, are among those who will be honored at the Fifth Annual Joady Awards on Friday, March 25, at the Sheraton Palace Hotel in San Francisco.

Honorees were announced this week by the Film Arts Foundation, sponsor of *We Do The Work*, the independently produced Public Television show about workers and their issues.

The Joady Awards is a major fund-raiser for *We Do The Work*. Joady statuettes are presented for bringing the voices and images of working people to the American public in the spirit exemplified by Tom Joad in John Steinbeck's *"The Grapes of Wrath."*

This year's "Joadies" will go to:

- Hightower, for bringing working people's viewpoints to the airwaves with his nationally syndicated radio commentaries. (A Hightower radio script appears on Page 4 today.)

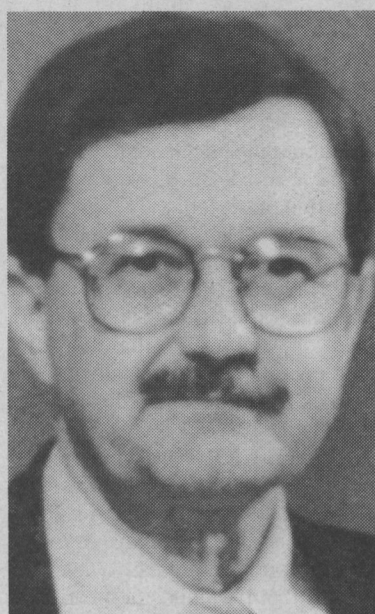
- Blackside, Inc., producer of the television series *"The Great Depression,"* which accurately and faithfully recounted the pain that the Depression years inflicted upon workers and their families.

- The Women's Network of the United Food and Commercial Workers for its "No Gain From Childhood Pain" campaign that exposed sales by Walmart Stores of imported clothing produced with child labor, often bearing Walmart labels falsely implying that the garments were American-made.

- International Association of Technical and Stage Employees for the role of IATSE members behind the scenes in movies carrying labor's message.

Also to be honored is the International Association of Machinists and Aerospace workers, which will receive the Founders Award that is bestowed annually to recognize individuals and organizations who have helped inspire and support development of *We Do The Work* from a local show into a national service.

Kourpias is to accept the Founders Award on behalf of his union.



Jim Hightower



George Kourpias

Comedian Will Durst will be Master of Ceremonies.

The evening will open with a reception at 6 p.m. followed by the program at 7 p.m. in the Grand Ballroom of the Sheraton Palace, 2 New Montgomery St. at Market Street in S.F.

Tickets are \$100, with tables of 10 receiving special recognition in the program book. Seventy percent of all contributions are tax deductible. Checks should be made payable to Film Arts Foundation, 346 Ninth St., San Francisco, CA 94103, attention Rhian Miller.

When Airline Jobs Fly Away

"Taking Off," an examination of what will happen to travel safety if the airline industry shifts high-tech maintenance jobs to foreign countries, is the focus of the February production of *"We Do The Work,"* the series on worker issues privately produced for Public Television.

Showings scheduled in California include:

Sacramento Cable 7, Tuesday, Feb. 15, at 9:30 p.m., and Wednesday, Feb. 16, at 2:30 a.m.

San Francisco, Channel 9, Sunday, Feb. 20, at 3:30 p.m.

Los Angeles, Channel 28, Saturday, Feb. 26, at 1:30 p.m. and midnight.

Eureka, Channel 13 airs *"We Do The Work"* weekly on Tuesdays at 7:30 p.m. Local PBS stations should be contacted for additional broadcast times.



Photo by International Photographers Guild, IATSE Local 659

Members of a score of Los Angeles area unions join picket line at Steven's in City of Commerce, the restaurant once a favorite locale for labor events whose management now is attempting to bust its long-time agreement with HERE Local 11. At front left is Rudy Montalvo of the Los Angeles County Federation of Labor.

Unions at L.A. Picket Former Favorite Spot

Trade unionists and friends of labor are being asked to stay away from Steven's Steak House in City of Commerce, which for years has been a favorite spot for union events.

The reason is that management at Steven's is trying to bust Local 11 of the Hotel Employees and Restaurant Employees, which has represented its staff for 30 years.

Charges that the East Los Angeles area eatery's anti-union campaign has violated federal laws are pending before the National Labor Relations Board.

While the NLRB process grinds on, Steven's management is refusing to continue recognizing the union.

In the meantime, President Maria Elena Durazo of Local 11 is asking

people to take their trade elsewhere.

"Few restaurants in East Los Angeles have received as much business from Latino organizations, labor unions and political activists over the years as Steven's Steak House," Durazo said.

"Many Latino labor leaders and organizations, in particular, have booked business meetings, Christmas parties, retirement celebrations and other events at Steven's precisely because it was a union restaurant," she added.

"For this reason we urge you to support this boycott and to write a letter to the management of the restaurant informing them that you won't return until it is a union house again."

The affected workers are mostly Latino.

"Given the current climate of attacks against Latino workers and unions in this state, we ask that you not patronize Steven's Steak House until the owners agree to recognize the union once again," Durazo stated in letters to unions throughout the L.A. area.

Organizations that have booked functions at Steven's should cancel and get their deposits returned, Durazo said.

If Steven's union-bashers try to give anybody a hard time about deposit refunds, help is available from Madeline Janis-Aparicio, Local 11's community relations director, at (213) 481-8530, extension 323.

Letters of protest should be sent to James Filipan, Steven's Steak House, 5332 Stevens Place, City of Commerce, CA 90040. Durazo asks that copies of the letters be sent to her at Local 11, 321 South Bixel St., L.A. 90017.

"During these difficult times of immigrant-bashing and racism, we need to support those who take a stand for the dignity and rights of all working people," Durazo declared.

"We also know from experience that the only guarantee of long-term job security and decent health insurance for our community comes through union representation."

Ex-Gov. to Confront 'His' Court

Insurance Commissioner John Garamendi says he expects the California Supreme Court will refuse to yield to political pressure for reinstatement of a law sponsored by the insurance industry that was struck down by the Court of Appeals last month.

Political pressures in the case became apparent when former Gov. George Deukmejian was named as the attorney who will represent one of the involved insurance companies before the Supreme Court.

Five of the seven justices who will decide the case were named to the Supreme Court by Deukmejian.

The biggest contributor of Deukmejian's 1982 gubernatorial election campaign is the owner and president of Surety Company of the Pacific, the Northridge-based firm that the ex-governor will represent.

The bill in question was signed into law by Deukmejian in 1990 before he turned the governorship over to Pete Wilson and went back to his private law practice. It exempts surety companies from the insurance rate rollbacks mandated by passage of Proposition 103, which was approved by the voters in 1988. The initiative was backed by the state AFL-CIO's Committee

on Political Education (COPE).

It is estimated that surety firms have to pay back some \$100 million in premiums if the Court of Appeals decision stands and they ultimately lose the exemption from Proposition 103 rate rollbacks.

"I have high regard for the California Supreme Court," Garamendi declared last week. "Despite the shameless machinations of the insurance industry, our system depends upon the justices of the Supreme Court being professionals who can and will ignore the high-powered political pressure of the insurance companies and will instead decide the case upon the merits."

Harvey Rosenfield, the author of

Proposition 103, said this would be the first instance of a former California governor representing a law client before the Supreme Court.

"I don't see how the court can properly face a guy who's been either a law partner, an employer or a benefactor of five of them," Rosenfield declared.

Deukmejian filled three Supreme Court seats with his own appointees immediately after Chief Justice Rose Bird and two justices who were supported by labor failed to win reaffirmation in an election in which Deukmejian led the opposition.

Deukmejian's appointees on the current court are Chief Justice Mal-

colm Lucas and Justices Edward A. Panelli, Joyce L. Kennard, Armand Arabian and Marvin R. Baxter. Lucas is a former law partner of Deukmejian. Baxter is a former aide to the ex-governor.

Justice Stanley Mosk was appointed by Gov. Edmund G. (Pat) Brown, Justice Ronald M. George was appointed by Pete Wilson.

Surety's owner and president, William Erwin, contributed \$203,000 to Deukmejian's first gubernatorial campaign. In addition, Surety Co. contributed \$243,457 to campaign committees controlled by Deukmejian between 1978 and 1979, according to the Fair Employment Practices Commission records reported in the Los Angeles Times.

Three Union Leaders on Training Council

Three trade unionists are among the 22 persons named to the State Job Training Coordinating Council last week by Gov. Pete Wilson.

They are:

- Charles H. Center, Sacramento, director of the Legislative Department of the California State Council of Laborers.

- Henry Gonsales, South Gate,

assistant director of United Auto Workers Region 6.

- Paul Varacalli, Hayward, executive director, United Public Employees, Local 790 of the Service Employees.

Wilson named Phillip L. Williams, retired vice chair of the board of the Times-Mirror Co. of Los Angeles as council chair.

Health...

(Continued from Page 1)

cited TV commercials sponsored by the anti-reform Health Insurance Association of America that attempt to depict Americans as being opposed to any change in the current health care system.

"...you just have to ask yourself if we can afford to continue to spend 40 percent more than other countries and not cover everybody," Clinton told the audience at a General Motors truck assembly plant in Shreveport.

He was highly critical of the plan proposed by Rep. Jim Cooper, D-Tenn., that is gaining big business support.

The Cooper plan does not provide universal coverage, one of the essentials that the AFL-CIO says must be contained in any health care reform plan.

Instead, Cooper's plan talks about "universal access" to health care.

"We've got universal access right now, if you've got \$10,000 or \$15,000," he said.

Clinton pointed to a gleaming new GM pickup truck ready to roll off the factory assembly line.

"There's universal access to this truck, but only if you've got the money to pay for it," he said.

The president pointed out that the rate of inflation of medical care costs slows down every time there is a serious attempt to reform the health care system.

But, he warned, if his bill is rejected, the rate of inflation of medical costs "will go right back up again, just like it has every time in the past 50 years."

Clinton praised General Motors and the United Auto Workers for supporting his plan.

He called GM "enlightened" in contrast to corporations represented by the National Association of Manufacturers, the Business Roundtable, and the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, all of which declined last week to endorse the Clinton reform plan.

The AFL-CIO is warning trade unionists to watch for attempts to impose amendments weakening key provisions as the Health Care Act moves through Congress.

Points that the opposition can be expected to attack include universal coverage, employer mandate, comprehensive benefits, tax treatment of benefits, genuine cost-containment, and the threshold at which employers could opt out.

Labor must attempt to secure 100 percent payment of premiums, co-payments and deductibles, documents distributed to local unions this week by Henning point out. There's also the challenge of securing benefits beyond the minimums prescribed in the Health Security Act and finding a way to assure that savings under the plan would go into wages, not profits.

Health care continues to undermine collective bargaining, Henning pointed out. The most recent

Health Industry Dollars Block Meaningful Reform

Here's how commentator Jim Hightower viewed the insurance and health care industries' campaign to block health care reform on his radio show last month:

I'm telling you, someday I think instead of "reading" the paper, it'd be less punishment if someone would just (whack, whack) beat me over the head with it 'til I passed out.

Did you see this news item on how various lobbyists for the health industry have been hauling wheelbarrows-full of money up to Capitol Hill?

Sure enough, the biggest share of their cash, checks and money orders is crossing the palms of a handful of lawmakers who'll play key roles in overhauling America's health-care system.

Jim Hightower pointing out that you don't need 20/20 vision to know when you've stumbled over a skunk. Get a whiff of this!

Citizen Action, a consumer watchdog group, reports that last year — a NON-election year — the doctors, hospitals, insurance giants and others jacked up their usual level of congressional campaign donations by more than a fourth — a total of more than "eight million bucks."

Senator Pat Moynihan, chair of the key Sen-

ate committee on health reform, accepted 140,000 smackers in 1993 from the very lobbyists looking for favorable treatment from him. Sen. Orrin Hatch, a known political hack and member of two pivotal committees, pocketed \$130,000. Representative Jim Cooper, sponsor of an industry-backed bill in the House, raked in \$113,000.

And that's just foreplay for 1994 — How many pieces of silver will change hands "this" year, when the bill will actually be written and voted on?

Now, the lobbyists claim they're not trying to buy votes, just "access" to our legislators. Excuse me...when did we amend the Constitution to put access up for sale? This buys the special interests a front-row seat in the legislative process — and shuts people out.

This is Jim Hightower saying...It's time to stop this hijacking of democracy. Join Citizen Action in asking our ethically-challenged lawmakers not to take "any" contributions from the industry they're supposed to be reforming. Call Citizen Action to find out how much your own members have pocketed — and what you can do stop it: 202-775-1580.

figures indicate that health care is the major issue in 83 percent of contract negotiations, and that more than two in three permanently replaced strikers originally struck over health care.

If the proportion of the wage-benefit package going for health care had remained constant since 1975, the average American worker would be earning \$1,000 a year more, the figures indicate.

The indictments pile up. For example, administrative costs amount to 25 percent of health care spending in the United States, far more than anywhere else in the world, and are continuing to rise rapidly.

Chiapas Appeal...

(Continued from page 1)

ing solution.

"It may not be evident in the pomp and affluence of official Washington, but the heart of Mexico beats with the Indians.

"Appreciating the liberalism that has always identified your career, we trust that you will act in accord with both conscience and political reality.

"I am signing this letter in my official capacity as Executive Secretary-Treasurer of our Federation. I am also signing for the below listed leaders of the Labor Council for Latin American Advancement.

"All are in agreement on the necessity and morality of the Clinton Administration supporting the purposes of the policy herein stated."

Signed:

Jack Henning, executive secretary-treasurer, California Labor Federation, AFL-CIO;

Henry J. Lacayo, Western States field director, Labor Council for Latin American Advancement; Armando Vergara, president of California LCLAA, international vice-president of the United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners and vice-president of the California Labor Federation; Rick Icaza, national vice-president of LCLAA, president of Los Angeles Local 770 of the

United Food and Commercial Workers, and president, Los Angeles County Federation of Labor;

Ignacio De La Fuente, international representative of the Glass, Molders, Pottery, Plastics and Allied Workers (GMP), member of the Oakland City Council, and member, Greater East Bay LCLAA; Rose Rangel-Hodges, secretary-treasurer of Service Employees Local 399 of Los Angeles and first

vice-president, California LCLAA; Clifford F. Valenciana, executive director, California LCLAA and retired international vice-president, GMP;

Pete Espudo, president, Teamsters Hispanic Caucus and secretary-treasurer, Teamsters Local 166, San Bernardino; Mike Garcia, president, Santa Clara LCLAA and president, Service Employees, Local 1877; Frank Martin Del Campo,

president, San Francisco LCLAA and field representative, Service Employees, Local 790, San Francisco and Oakland;

Rudy Meraz, parliamentarian of California LCLAA and vice-president, Graphic Communications Local 583, San Francisco; Vince Ruiz, president, Ventura County LCLAA, and retired business manager, Laborers Local 585, Ventura; Fernando Flores, Jr., president of Los

Angeles County LCLAA and field representative, Plumbers Local 78, Los Angeles; Ruben Gomez, president, Orange County LCLAA and secretary-treasurer, Laborers Local 652, Santa Ana;

Eddie Peralta, Sacramento County LCLAA, and retired business agent, Teamsters Local 986, Los Angeles; Pete Peralaz, executive secretary-treasurer, Napa-Solano Central Labor Council; Agustin Ramirez, Sonoma, Lake, Mendocino LCLAA and Organizer, International Ladies' Garment Workers Union; Richard Gonzalez, president, Alameda County LCLAA, and board member, Auto Workers Local 2244, Fremont;

Leo Valenzuela, Ventura LCLAA, business manager, Laborers Local 585, Ventura; Antonio Abarca, Greater East Bay LCLAA, field representative, Service Employees Local 1877; Tom Luna, secretary-treasurer, California LCLAA and secretary-treasurer, Laundry Workers Local 52, Los Angeles;

Arturo Rodriguez, president, United Farm Workers of America; Dolores Huerta, first vice-president, United Farm Workers of America; Maria Elena Durazo, president, Hotel Employees and Restaurant Employees Local 11, of Los Angeles.

Chiapas Bishop to Speak in L.A.

Bishop Samuel Ruiz Garcia of the Mexican State of Chiapas, Mexico, will address a symposium on Mexico and NAFTA after the Chiapas Rebellion on Monday afternoon, Feb. 14, at Loyola Law School in Los Angeles.

Bishop Ruiz is one of the Catholic leaders upon whom the Mexican government attempted to focus blame for the uprising by Chiapas Indians.

He'll keynote the conference along with Gustavo de la Rosa Hickerson, attorney and vice president of the San Diego-based Coalition for Justice in the Maquiladoras.

The event is scheduled for 1 to 5 p.m. at the law school, 1440 West Ninth St., under spon-

sorship of Region VI of the national AFL-CIO, Loyola-Marymount University, and a number of additional organizations.

Dave Sickler, Region VI director, said the symposium offered an excellent opportunity for labor activists to obtain first-hand reports on the status of Mexico's indigenous peoples, workers, and human rights movement as NAFTA takes hold.

Admission is free, and there will be open seating, Sickler said.

More information can be obtained from Victor Munoz at AFL-CIO Region VI, (213) 387-1974, or Professor Robert Benson at Loyola, (213) 736-1094.

Quake Aid...

(Continued from page 1)

sands of our AFL-CIO sisters and brothers in the loss of housing, personal property and employment," Henning said.

"In quick response, the Los Angeles County Federation established a program of relief in cooperation with United Way, Red Cross and the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

"The program involves case-by-case review of every union member who presents a claim to the Los Angeles County Federation of Labor," Henning continued. "Trained community service professionals pro-

cess the claims for review by the federation.

"A most effective operation has been developed. But since this is basically a financial assistance program, it dies without money," the state AFL-CIO leader pointed out.

"Please act now to answer this desperate requirement for funding," Henning said. "Our sisters and brothers in need are depending on your assistance."

An example of the sort of crises that are afflicting tens of thousands of union members in the quake area was cited by Armando Olivas, di-

rector of community services for the L.A. county federation.

Dennis Gluckman, a member of Amalgamated Transit Union Local 277 employed by Metropolitan Transit Authority, tapped out his financial reserves to pay for emergency repairs needed to keep his family's home from collapsing and to make it secure during the torrential rains that followed the big temblor.

Then his mortgage payment came due.

Community Services was able to hand Gluckman a check payable to

his lender for the amount of his house payment.

"Multiply this case hundreds of times and you begin to see the dimensions of the catastrophe confronting us," Olivas said.

Meanwhile, the needs keep rising, according to Jan Borunda, quake aid coordinator at the L.A. County fed.

"Every day we are getting more calls than we processed the day before," Borunda said. "We have passed 200 calls for help per day, and there is no indicated of any slackening off."

One reason for the increasing volume of pleas for help is the fact that many union members desperate for assistance are just learning that it is available through the county federation, she pointed out.

In addition to checks to keep workers and their families afloat, the labor effort includes distributions of food and other essential supplies.

Such assistance is particularly important for workers' whose paychecks are cut off because their places of employment are shut down.