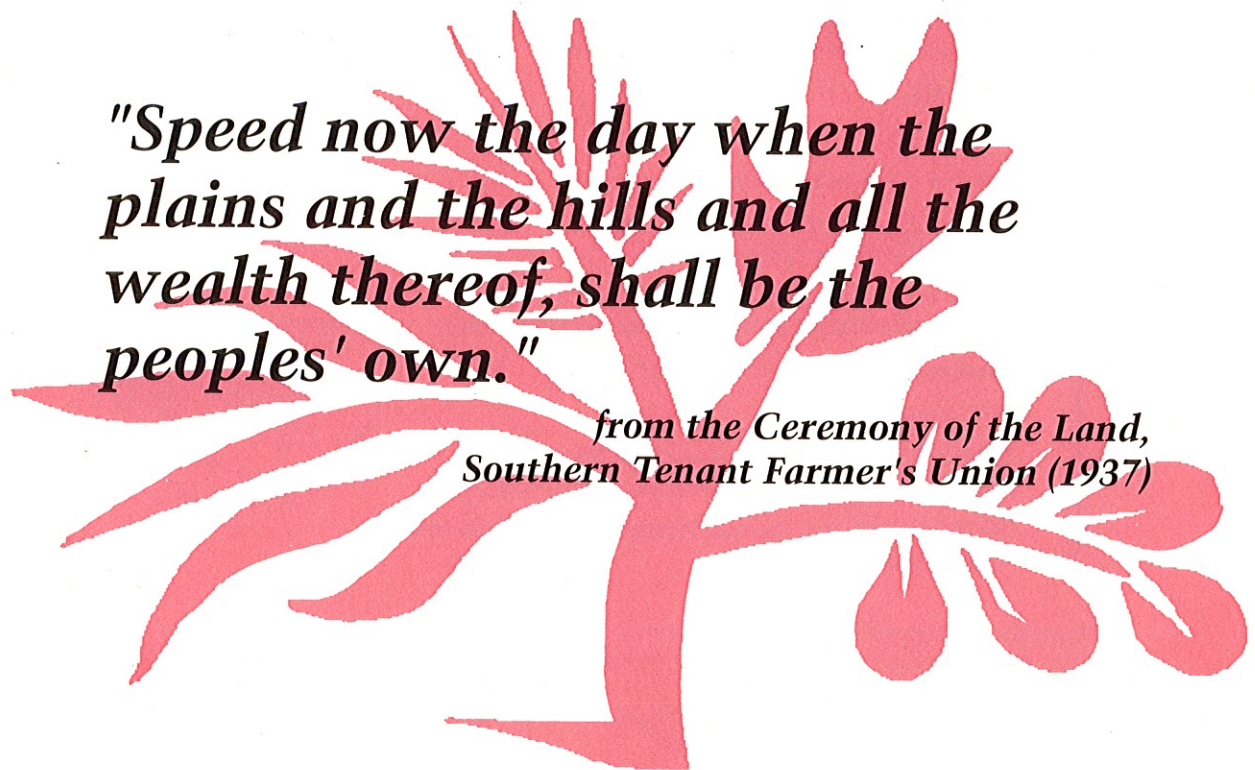


*"Speed now the day when the
plains and the hills and all the
wealth thereof, shall be the
peoples' own."*

*from the Ceremony of the Land,
Southern Tenant Farmer's Union (1937)*



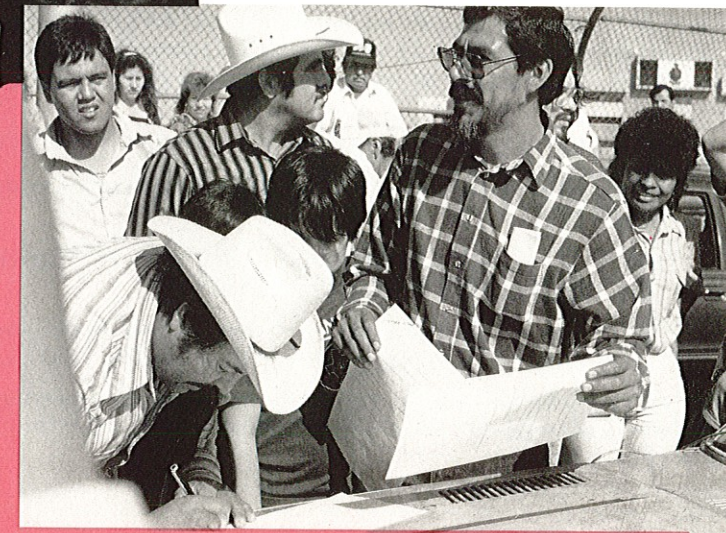
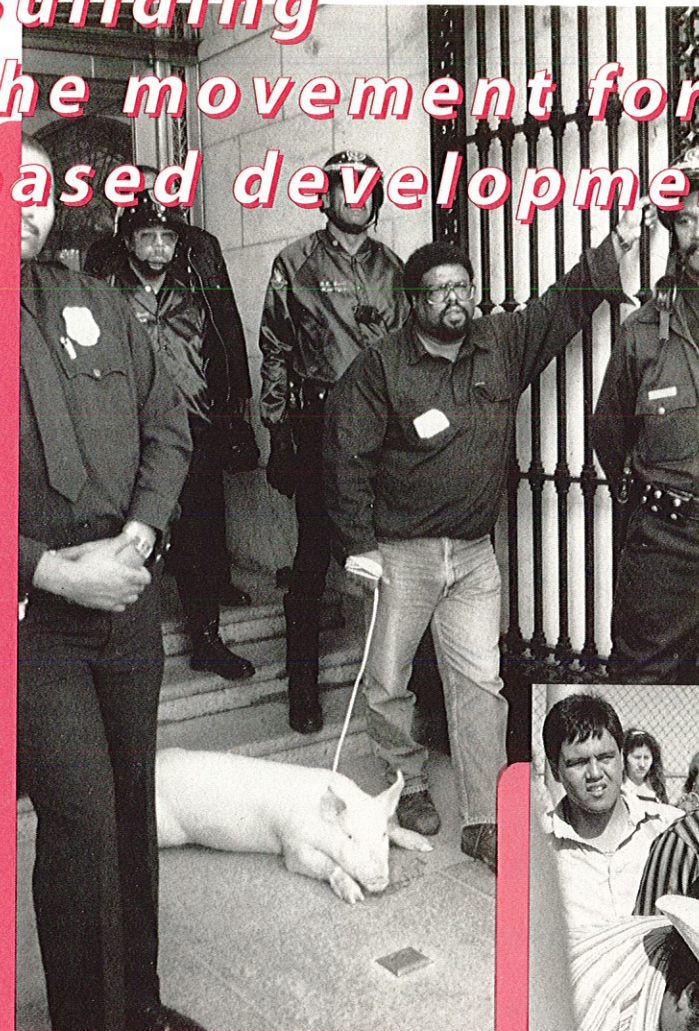
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phone/fax 703/534-1845



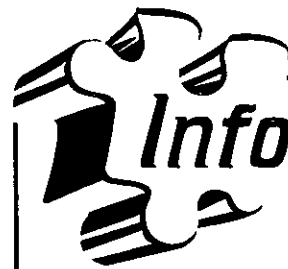
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Rural Coalition Resolution for Support of Leonard Peltier's Nomination for the Human Rights Prize,

Whereas: The International Indian Treaty Council has nominated Leonard Peltier for the 1993 Human Rights Prize offered by the United Nations Center for Human Rights;

Whereas: In spite of Leonard Peltier's incarceration, he continues to demonstrate his advocacy for Human Rights, he champions the furtherance of the rights of his people through solidarity, friendship, advice and education; and

Whereas: In a solidarity message sent to the 15th International Indian Treaty Council Conference held August 1993, on Kualoa, Hawaii, Leonard Peltier called for unity amongst all people;

Therefore Be It Resolved: That the Rural Coalition supports the nomination of Leonard Peltier for the Human Rights Prize offered by the United Nations Center for Human Rights.

Adopted by the board of directors of the Rural Coalition on September 27, 1993

Rural Coalition Supports the Passage of S.578, the Religious Freedom Restoration Act without the Prison Amendment

Whereas: The Rural Coalition fully supports the Religious Freedom Restoration Act, S.578, which will assure the equal protection rights of Native American prisoners; and

Whereas: The amendment of S.578, being offered by Senator Reid of Nevada, which will, for all practical purposes, mean that prison officials could justify virtually any restriction on a prisoner's exercise of religion; and

Whereas: Native American prisoners would suffer accordingly;

Therefore Be It Resolved: That the Rural Coalition opposes the prison amendment to S.578, the Religious Freedom Restoration Act, and supports the passage of S.578 without the prison amendment.

Adopted by the board of directors of the Rural Coalition on September 27, 1993

Rural Coalition's Support that the United Nations Declare a Decade of Indigenous Peoples of the World

Whereas: 1993 has been designated by the United Nations as the Year of Indigenous Peoples of the World; and

Whereas: Rigoberta Menchu Tum a Guatemalan indigenous woman, dedicated to fighting for human rights for her people and for the human rights of all peoples of the world, was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize; and

Whereas: Rigoberta Menchu Tum, an executive board member of the International Indian Treaty Council, has called for a Decade of Indigenous Peoples of the World in order to better document human rights issues;

Therefore Be It Resolved: That the Rural Coalition is in full support that the United Nations designate a Decade of Indigenous Peoples of the World.

Adopted by the board of directors of the Rural Coalition on September 27, 1993

North American Free Trade Agreement

Rural Coalition board chairperson Carlos Marentes testified on behalf of the Rural Coalition at the Congressional Trade Briefing on NAFTA held on March 25, 1993. He also represented the coalition at a tri-national trade meeting on NAFTA held following the briefing where he made progress toward increasing farmer support for farmworker issues and in increasing general awareness of agriculture and rural development as significant problems with NAFTA.

Rural Coalition positions on the NAFTA issue relate to the striking impact the agreement will have not only in the United States, but also on the agriculture and rural sector in Mexico. The coalition's efforts focused on educating policy



1992 Assembly participants gather with farmworkers in a New Mexico chili field.

makers and the public in general of the negative impact the agreement will have on family farmers and the environment in the United States and Canada and of the Mexican government's abandonment of land tenure rights and agriculture supports for small and indigenous producers in Mexico, the huge number of people being displaced from the land, and the reluctance of both governments to consider farmworker and indigenous rights and immigration issues in the agreement.

In late September, the Rural Coalition continued exchanges begun in 1992 among producers from both nations by bringing leaders of several Mexican farm organizations to Washington, DC, to underscore the growing crisis of rural and indigenous people in Mexico. Two weeks later, the House of Representatives Government Operations Committee rerouted a planned trip and stopped in the state of Chihuahua, Mexico, to conduct the first congressional investigation of the rural crisis in Mexico. The Rural Coalition and its colleagues with the Frente Democrático Campesino arranged the itinerary and joined the six members of Congress during their visit. In late-October, the coalition assisted the committee in holding a Washington, DC, hearing

on the subject.

The coalition also prepared situation reports during November on the growing government repression of farm protests, marches and tractorcades — including the murder of five rural activists — in

"We deeply regret that NAFTA has been passed by the House [of Representatives]. But we think, Bernie, that every one of us fought from his trench: you in the House, we in the street or the bridge...most of all, this battle against NAFTA brought something that we hadn't even imagined: the closeness, the cooperation, the solidarity between the people who love and struggle for democracy on both sides of the border. If the NAFTA struggle hadn't taken place, you and your wonderful people, [and] the Rural Coalition wouldn't have had the chance to work, to meet, to fight and to hope together..." — from letter by V. Quintana to U.S. Representative Bernard Sanders, November 18, 1993



Rev. Camilo Daniel & Victor Quintana Presenting testimony to the U.S. Congress.

Mexico prior to the U.S. congressional vote on NAFTA. Rural Coalition members and staff were active in a number of national and local coalitions on the issue and prepared numerous background pieces on the issue.

In the aftermath of the vote, the coalition is arranging a continued series of exchanges between U.S. and Mexican farmers on the many mutual areas of interest identified during the debate. The Federation of Southern Cooperatives/LAF has pledged to provide training to rural groups from Mexico in cooperative and credit union development which the producers feel is essential if they are to retain their land.

The Rural Coalition also articulated the concerns of farmworkers in the NAFTA debate and raised the great problems with the last-minute side deals that allow the continued use of dangerous pesticides on fresh fruits and vegetables in Florida, harvested by farmworkers. A meeting with the administration was requested for early 1994 on the issue.



U.S. Representatives Collin Peterson (Minn), Gary Condit (Calif), Bill Zeff (NH), and Bernard Sanders (Vt) greet the mayor of Santa Isabel, Chihuahua, "Paco" Martinez (center), on a congressional fact-finding mission in October 1993. The visit to rural Mexico — the first by members of Congress — was coordinated by the Rural Coalition.

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Women and Trade

The Rural Coalition focused during the NAFTA debate on the particular impact of the agreement on women in agricultural and rural areas. The coalition provided testimony and participated in several news conferences organized by women members of Congress on the issue. The Rural Coalition provided the rural section of a pamphlet on NAFTA and women, entitled *Breaking Boundaries*, produced Alter-native Women in Development (Alt-WID). In the exchanges with Mexico, the coalition contacted several rural women's groups and cooperatives, who will send representatives to the 1994 Assembly.

Marla Painter

Rural Alliance for Military Accountability

Marla Painter is a former Rural Coalition staff member and a long time activist on rural issues. She helped found Citizen Alert and is the founder and director of the Rural Alliance for Military Accountability.

Hubert Sapp

Hubert Sapp is the director of U.S. programs for Oxfam America. Prior to this, he served as faculty member and academic coordinator at Springfield College in Springfield, Massachusetts. He chaired the Rural Coalition for four years.

Marge Townsend, secretary* North American Farm Alliance

Marge Townsend operates a diversified and sustainable feeder pig farm in Ohio with her daughter. She is president of the North American Farm Alliance.

John Zippert, treasurer* Federation of Southern Cooperatives/Land Assistance Fund

John Zippert is the director of program operations for the Federation of Southern Cooperatives/LAF at their Rural Training Center near Epes, Alabama. He and his spouse, Carol Zippert, co-publish the *Green County Democrat*.

John Bloch*

Learning in the North Country

John Bloch is program coordinator at the School of Human Services for its St. Johnsbury, Vermont, site. It is an adult college serving rural areas of northern New England. John has worked in rural housing and consumer coops and works with a telecommunications taskforce in Vermont.

Jeff Tracy

Jeff Tracy has been a board member of the Rural Coalition since 1987 and has worked with various organizations in California and Nebraska on rural community development.



(left to right) John Zippert, Mary Lee Johns, Marge Townsend, and John Bloch confer.

Mary Lee Johns

Oyati Zani (Healthy People)

Mary Lee Johns, a member of the Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe, is presently a full-time student who directs Oyati Zani (Healthy People). Formerly, she worked as the Tribal Health Administrator for the Cheyenne River Sioux tribe.

Calvin Waln

Intertribal Agriculture Council

Calvin Waln is secretary of the Intertribal Agriculture Council, which represents three-quarters of all Indian tribes involved in agriculture and advocates policies and programs to support Indian agriculture. He is a rancher and enrolled member of the Rosebud Sioux tribe.

Starry Krueger*

Rural Development Leadership Network

Starry Krueger is the founding president of the Rural Development Leadership Network (RDLN), a national, multicultural program which supports community-based development in poor rural areas through hands-on projects, education, leadership development and networking.

* member of Executive Committee



Pat Bellanger

Pat Bellanger

American Indian Movement

Pat Bellanger has been with the American Indian Movement since 1968 and represents it within the International Indian Treaty Council and American Indian Opportunities Industrial Center. She is Ojibway; her name is Ah-Whan-Equay.



Starry Krueger (left) and Jeff Tracy (right).

Meet the Board of Directors

Carlos Marentes, chair*
Sin Fronteras Organizing Project

Carlos Marentes is a political cartoonist and has been a farm labor organizer since 1977. He founded and directs the Sin Fronteras Organizing Project and is president of the Union de Trabajadores Agrícolas Fronterizos. He has organized and participated in many other farmworkers and human rights organizations on both sides of the border, and has testified before the Helsinki commission on migrant farm issues.



Connie White

Connie White, vice chair*

Save Our Cumberland Mountains
Connie White lives on her family's farm in Roane County, Tennessee, raising vegetables and cattle. She is past president of Save Our Cumberland Mountains and is a current member of the Highlander Center's board of directors.

New Leadership for the Rural Coalition

The 1993 Rural Coalition board of directors, elected by an enthusiastic membership at the 1992 Assembly in El Paso, Texas, gathered in Washington, DC, in February for their first full meeting. Led by chairperson Carlos Marentes, the group hosted a congressional reception, deliberated on health and environmental policy, and participated in a meeting with Secretary of Agriculture Mike Espy.

Marentes, a leader of the Border Agriculture Workers Union which organizes workers in the chili industry, told board members that his organization supported his new role, stating that "the future of the Rural Coalition is our future."

Marentes assumed the leadership role after long-time chairperson Hubert Sapp stepped down in conjunction with his decision to accept a new position as Director of U.S. Programs for Oxfam America. On behalf of the board, Marentes presented a special award to Sapp for his leadership of the Rural Coalition through challenging times.

The contributions of former board members Pablo Eisenberg, Elizabeth Martin, and Charles Kamasaki were also recognized.

At the February meeting, board members reviewed and praised the accomplishments of the coalition in the past year and reaffirmed the need for an organization which brings together and represents the diversity of rural communities in the United States. A complete profile of the 1993 board of directors is here.

Georgia Good
Rural Advancement Fund

Georgia Good currently directs the Rural Advancement Fund where she assists small farmers with land loss, marketing cooperatives and fundraising. In the 1970s, she was also appointed by President Carter to serve on a panel of migrant and seasonal farmworkers.

Moises Loza
Housing Assistance Council

Moises Loza is the executive director of the Housing Assistance Council, a national nonprofit corporation that works to increase the availability of decent housing for rural low-income people.

Isaiah Madison
Institute for Southern Studies

Isaiah Madison is executive director of the Institute for Southern Studies, a southern regional research organization in Durham, North Carolina. He has served as pastor in both United Methodist and Baptist churches and formerly coordinated economic programs for the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC).



Outgoing chairperson Hubert Sapp signs agreement of cooperation with Mexican rural community as new chairperson Carlos Marentes looks on.

During 1993, the Rural Coalition and its members built upon the relationships with Mexican colleagues begun during the 1992 Assembly. In early 1994, 30 Mexican representatives will join 15 border agricultural workers for a bus trip to the 1994 Assembly.



The Frente Democrático Campesino leads march on November 16, 1993 — the day before the U.S. House of Representatives' vote on NAFTA — to meet U.S. delegation on the Santa Fe International Bridge. The march was later violently suppressed by Mexican police.

The Mexican Peasant Movement After NAFTA

by Victor M. Quintana S.
(translated by Carlos Marentes),
Frente Democrático Campesino, a
member of the Rural Coalition

Salinas de Gortari never imagined that the same day of the inauguration of NAFTA would also be the beginning of the death of NAFTA. This point was made very clear by the weapons of the "Zapatista" Army who, at the sunrise of New Year's Day, emerged from four corners of the most abandoned place of México, and from the balcony used in other times to officially celebrate Independence, shouted: "NAFTA is the death sentence for the indigenous people."

Modesty aside, what the Zapatistas brothers proclaimed with their death and fire was the same thing that a month and a half before, three organizational members of the Rural Coalition asserted. On the 16th of November, on the Santa Fe International Bridge between Ciudad Juárez and El Paso, the Unión de Trabajadores Agrícolas Fronterizos, La Mujer Obrera and the Frente Democrático Campesino, along with other farmers' organiza-

tions from Chihuahua, held a protest against NAFTA the day before its approval by the U.S. Congress. But the government not only was satisfied with ignoring our demands, it also sent the anti-riot squad to violently dissolve our protest. If they had listened to us and if they had listened to all the voices from all over México against NAFTA, maybe the uprising in Chiapas, México, would have been avoided.

And now Chiapas is a heavy burden for NAFTA. Without the First of January, without the Zapatistas, without the great social movement which has now been originated, we will be at this moment saying that the peasants' organizations are preparing to die in peace.

Because NAFTA without the peasant opposition, would be now destroying production and the lifestyles and the peasant culture, in the same way that the neoliberal policies of the Salinas administration have been doing slowly.

NAFTA without Chiapas, without social opposition, without the peasant protest movement is the "land lost," the abandonment of the

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staple production, the disappearance of the guaranteed prices, the loss of self-sufficiency in our basic food products: corn and beans. It is the lack of public investment in farming and the end of technical assistance for small producers.

NAFTA without Chiapas is also the importation of all types of farm products to México without any control and displacement of our own products.

NAFTA without the peasant protest movement is the burden of farm debt, the seizures, the foreclosures and the greater enrichment of banks.

NAFTA without the peasant protest is the immigration of whole families to the cities, the selling of the land which was won and was worked by their grandparents, the end of the traditions, like the pilgrimage with Saint Isidro — the annual fair to celebrate the official Saint of the village — in exchange for the colorful trademarks of agribusiness.

But the Zapatistas uprising served to strengthen the peasant protest which grew all over the country in 1993. The uprising reaffirmed

our causes and our reasons. They also gave new breath to a struggle which has seen the jailing of the leaders from "El Barzón" from Jalisco and Zacatecas and the repression against the peasants from Chihuahua. On January 16, 1994, a first and highly successful national gathering of farm producers in Aguascalientes to coordinate actions and demands and to call for an end to the massacre in Chiapas.

On February 24-25, producer organizations from 10 states of the republic held the first simultaneous national mobilization, taking over banks and public offices, and blocking highways and ending with a national summit in Zacatecas. At this important reunion, the "20 Compromises for Social Justice" was written to be presented by the Mexican civil society to all candidates and all political parties so this country can begin to change from the roots up.

The peasant organizations of México will not sit idle to see how NAFTA will affect them. Their current struggle to change the neoliberal farm policies and move the country into social justice means, in fact, a profound revision of the content, the pace, the time and the form of NAFTA.

After Chiapas and after the peasant and civic mobilizations of these days something has become clear. The way NAFTA stands now will only be imposed through blood, fire and death. Social peace in México will only be established if, among several things, the agreement negotiated by the powerful and the corporations is transformed into an agreement so that it provides the majority of our three countries with jobs, corn, beans, food and a more dignified life for all.

Statement of Solidarity to the Ejiditarios of Chihuahua

To our fellow Ejiditarios from Chihuahua:

We, the undersigned representatives of family farm groups, rural communities and activists — including those who met recently in Ames, Iowa, to participate in Farm Aid VI — make public our support for the small producers (ejiditarios) from the State of Chihuahua, Mexico, who have initiated a series of protests to call attention to the severe debt crisis affecting their rural communities.

We are in full support because family farmers and poor rural communities in this country are suffering the same problems caused by a legacy of bad governmental policies that favors profits for a few corporations over the needs of farmers, small producers and poor communities. Our farmers, too, have used our tractors to protest government policies which hurt farmers and destroy communities.

The proposed North American Free Trade Agreement, the effects of which you are already suffering, will only aggravate the situation for the ejiditarios, family farmers, and rural people on both sides of the border. As you say, it will bring hunger and poverty to Mexico. For these reasons, we are in support of your struggle and we will be in touch to join in working together to bring dignity and justice to our people and our communities.

First issued at Ames, Iowa, April 24, 1993

Black America is losing over 1,000 acres of land each day. This represents a loss of over 3.5 million dollars per week. If the trend is not reversed, Black America will be landless by the year 2000.



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Board member Pat Bellanger hosted the Minneapolis, Minnesota, visit of Nobel Laureate Rigoberta Menchu Tum in May 1993. In her speech, Menchu stressed the importance of listening to indigenous people, women and others "who have much to contribute to world society." She called for the United Nations Year of Indigenous People to be extended into a decade of indigenous people. Bellanger and coalition chairperson Marentes serve with Menchu on the International Indian Treaty Council. The Rural Coalition endorsed her call for a decade of indigenous people.

Rigoberta Menchu Tum

The Rural Coalition congratulates Rigoberta on this long deserved honor and on her exceptional courage and the long struggle which brought her to world attention. We endorse her call for extending the United Nations 1993 Year of Indigenous People for a full decade. Below are excerpts from her Nobel acceptance speech.

"When evaluating the overall significance of the Peace Prize, I would like to say some words on behalf of all those whose voices cannot be heard or who have been repressed for having spoken in the manner of an opinion, of all those who have been marginalized... discriminated, who live in poverty... who are the victims of repression and the violation of human rights. Those who, nevertheless, have endured through centuries, who have not lost their conscience, the quality of determination and hope..."

"It represents a sign of the growing interest for and understanding of the original rights of the people, of the future of more than 60 million Indians who live in our America, and their uproar because of the 500 years of oppression that they have endured, for the genocide beyond comparison that they have had to suffer for all these years, and from which other countries and the elite of the Americas have profited and taken advantage.

"Let there be freedom for the Indians, wherever they may be in the American continent or elsewhere in the world because, while they are alive, a glow of hope will be alive as well as the real concept of hope.

"The expression of great happiness by the Indian organizations in the entire continent and the worldwide congratulations for the award of the Nobel Peace Prize clearly indicate the great importance of this decision. It is the recognition of the European debt to the American indigenous people, it is an appeal to the conscience of humanity so that those conditions of marginalization that condemned them to colonialism and exploitation may be eradicated; it is a cry for life, peace, justice, equality and fraternity between human beings.

"I think it is necessary that the Indian people, of which I am a member, should contribute with its science, and its knowledge of human development because we have enormous potential and we could articu-

late our very ancient heritage with the achievements of civilization as well as other parts of the world...

"At a time when the commemoration of the fifth century of the arrival of Columbus has repercussions all over the world, the revival of hopes for the Indian people claims that we reassert to the world our existence and the value of our cultural identity. It demands that we endeavor to actively participate in the decisions that concern our destiny in the building up of our nations... This is why I dream of the day when the relationship between indigenous people and other people is strengthened, a day when they can join their potentialities and their capabilities can contribute to make life on this planet less unequal..."

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on Religion in
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(CORA)**

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Health and the Environment

The members of the Rural Coalition have articulated their concern that as the nation debates national health care policy, the needs of low-income populations, particularly women and children, must be addressed. Because of the prevalence of toxic hazards in poor and minority-populated communities, the coalition believes that any preventative health care model must include a plan to research and document hazards and must develop measures to address health needs arising from these hazards. Of particular concern are farmworkers in the United States, who, with an average life span of 49 years and an infant mortality rate triple the national average, are a shameful example of the combined impact of inadequate health services and high prevalence of poverty and environmental hazards.

The coalition is currently seeking funds to implement a community assessment process enabling low-income communities to document key health concerns in their communities, and, together with their counterparts in other communities, to develop strategies on how

A letter outlining the Rural Coalition's views on national health policy was sent in May to Hillary Rodham Clinton, chair of the President's Taskforce on Health Care Policy. The board of directors authorized the letter which focused on the concerns of low-income rural communities related to health and the environment. The policy proposals of the committee were shared widely with groups working at the national level on health care, including the National Religious Health Care Initiative.



Surgeon General Jocelyn Elders (right center) with husband Oliver (right), brother Rev. Chester Jones (left), and Rural Coalition executive director Lorette Picciano-Hanson (left center) at a General Board of Church and Society, United Methodist Church, reception celebrating her Senate confirmation earlier that day.

Support Your Elders

The General Board of Church and Society of The United Methodist Church, a Rural Coalition member, helped coordinate a campaign in support of the Senate confirmation of Surgeon General Jocelyn Elders. Elders, a pediatrician and outspoken advocate for the welfare of children and the health needs of poor communities, faced stiff opposition from the religious right.

The Rural Coalition endorsed the confirmation of Elders, who as the daughter of share croppers and former director of the Arkansas State Health Department has an extraordinary familiarity with and commitment to addressing the health needs of rural people and communities.

they want to deliver services and promote health in their community.

The Rural Coalition's Health and Environment Committee, chaired by board member Patricia Bellanger, met in February to establish criteria for selection of sites and to review plans for the project. In September, criteria for site selection were established, and a draft of requests for community proposals was developed. Other accomplishments are detailed below:

National Institute of Environmental & Health Sciences

The National Institute of Environmental and Health Sciences approached the Rural Coalition for

assistance as it seeks to build more partnerships with community-based groups. As a first step, community-based organization leaders were invited to participate in the development of a national conference on health research and environmental justice, which was held in February 1994. Dr. Jerry Poje of the National Institute met regularly with the Rural Coalition's Health and Environment Committee. A letter requesting further dialogue on health research was sent to Institute Director Dr. Ken Olden. A continuing dialogue has ensued.

continued on page 20

Directory of Rural Organizations

AFGE Local 3354

Address: PO Box 366, St. Louis, Missouri 63166; 314/241-6652. Rural Coalition member organization, represented by Steve Hollis.

Alabama Council on Human Relations, Inc.

Address: PO Box 49, Auburn, Alabama 36830; 205/821-8336 (fax 205/826-6397). Rural Coalition member organization, represented by Nancy Spears.

American Indian Movement

The American Indian Movement works to restore the civil and human rights of indigenous peoples throughout the hemisphere. AIM was born in the late 1960s, when people of color were still separated from White America by many barriers. Today, through survival schools and the International Indian Treaty Council, AIM unites people of color in struggles to fight environmental racism and reeducate the Americas to the rights of indigenous peoples and their lands, resources and families.

1993, the International Year of Indigenous Peoples of the World brings new hope to people of color and a renewed conviction and dedication of AIM to protect the civil, human and environmental rights for the next seven generations.

Address: 1925 South 7th Street, Minneapolis, Minnesota 55454; 612/332-1259. Rural Coalition member organization, represented by Pat Bellanger.

Appalachian Community Fund

The Appalachian Community Fund, formed in 1986 as a partner-

ship of community activists and donors, supports progressive social change in the central Appalachian states, where recent economic trends and the recession have brought new levels of poverty. "The core of poverty counties in central Appalachia have moved beyond distress," says a 1992 report by Richard A. Couto. Organizations funded by ACF are at work in many of those counties.

ACF works to build a new source of capital for rural community-based groups and to leverage money and resources to the region. Board members are all community activists who live and work in central Appalachia and who represent the region's diversity in terms of race, sex, class, age and sexual orientation. In the past six years, ACF has given away more than \$1.11 million to social change groups.

ACF exists to be a source of new money for social justice movements in the region, to leverage money into the region for organizations addressing the root causes of social problems, and to provide technical assistance to grassroots organizations.

Address: 517 Union Avenue, Knoxville, Tennessee 37902; 615/523-5783. Rural Coalition member organization, represented by Wendy Johnson.

Arkansas Land & Farm Development Corporation

ALFDC includes 700 individuals and organizational members, primarily small family farmers and rural residents. A much larger constituency supports ALFDC efforts through consensus building, referrals, and policy development.

ALFDC works with individual farmers and landowners, particularly minorities, women and youth-rural people who have not traditionally been involved in commu-

nity development. ALFDC believes in partnerships and creates integrated programs that help public and private organizations coordinate their resources and better serve the people. ALFDC serves as a foundation to rural partnerships that give all people a voice in their communities.

Address: Rt. 2, Box 291, Brinkley, Arkansas 72021; 501/734-1140. Rural Coalition member organization, represented by Marvin Schwartz.

Association for Community Based Education

Address: 1805 Florida Avenue NW, Washington, DC 20009; 202/462-6333. Rural Coalition member organization, represented by C.P. Zachariades.



Boggs Rural Life Center, Inc.

The Boggs Center is a year-round camp, conference and retreat facility owned and operated by the Boggs Rural Life Center, an educational and rural development institution serving the Central Savannah River Area of Georgia and South Carolina since 1906. The institution was established as Boggs Academy, a Presbyterian preparatory high school for African American youth. The academy closed in 1984 and reopened in 1990 as the Boggs Rural Life Center.

Address: 4729 Quaker Road, Keyville, Georgia 30816; 706/554-0110 (fax 706/554-0989). Rural Coalition member organization, represented by Franklin Williams.



California Rural Legal Assistance Fund

Address: 2000 "O" Street #240, Sacramento, California 95814; 916/446-7904. Rural Coalition member organization, represented by Richard Garcia.

Center for Community Change

Address: 1000 Wisconsin Avenue NW, Washington, DC 20007 (representative 202/342-0519). Rural Coalition member organization, represented by Pablo Eisenberg.

Center for Democratic Renewal

Founded in 1979 as the National Anti-Klan Network, the Center for Democratic Renewal is a multi-racial organization that advances the vision of a democratic, diverse and just society free of racism and bigotry. It helps communicate combat groups, movements and government practices that promote hatred and bigotry and is committed to public policies and justice.

Address: PO Box 50469, At-

lanta, Georgia 30302; 404/221-0025. Rural Coalition member organization, represented by Loretta Ross.

Christian Children's Fund, Inc.

Address: 2821 Emerywood Parkway, Richmond, Virginia 23261; 804/756-2700 (fax 804/756-2718). Rural Coalition member organization, represented by Thomas Rhodenbaugh.

Citizen Alert

Address: PO Box 5391, Reno, Nevada 89513; 702/827-4200. Rural Coalition member organization, represented by Bob Fulkerson.

Commission on Religion in Appalachia

CORA is a partnership of 18 denominations, 10 State Councils of Churches, over 50 community groups and many congregations whose mission is to express God's love in the empowerment of the people of Appalachia by working for justice. Since 1965, this coalition has worked effectively together to address pressing needs of the region

and focus the churches energy and resources at the causes, not the symptoms of Appalachia's problems.

Address: PO Box 52910, Knoxville, Tennessee 37950-2910; 615/584-6133. Rural Coalition member organization, represented by Tena Willemsma.

Community Alliance for Family Farmers Foundation

The CAFF Foundations was former in 1992 from the merger of two statewide organizations, each with almost 15 years of experience, the California Action Network and the California Association of Family Farmers. CAFF uses a variety of techniques including public education, advocacy, research and demonstration programs to reach out to rural Californians around issues of sustainability and building economic opportunities.

Address: PO Box 363, Davis, California 95617; 916/756-8518. Rural Coalition member organization, represented by Elizabeth Martin.

Community Enterprise Development Corporation of Alaska

Address: 1577 C Street, Suite 304, Anchorage, Alaska 99501; 907/274-5400. Rural Coalition member organization, represented by Perry R. Eaton and Ann Campbell.

Community Transportation Association of America

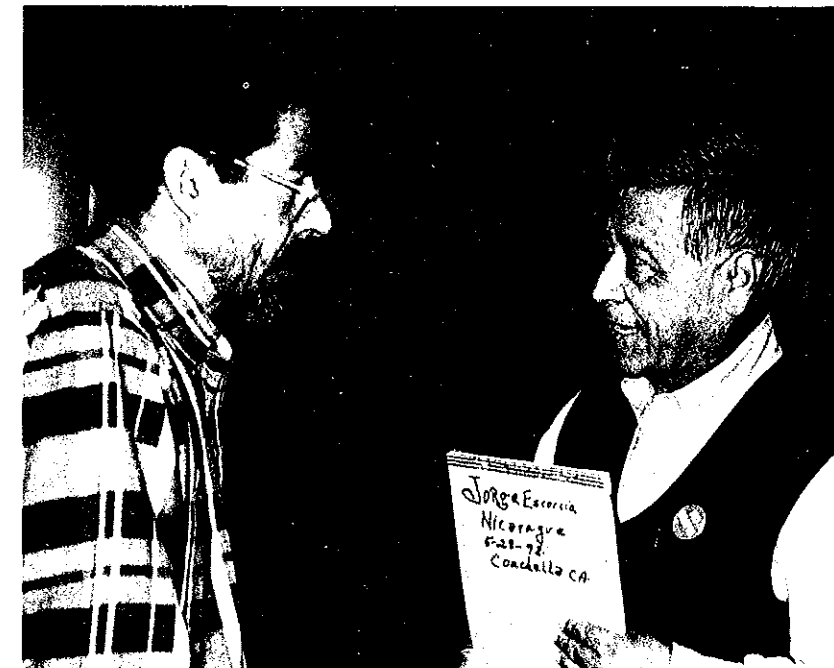
Address: 725 - 15th Street, Suite 900, Washington, DC 20005; 202/628-1480. Rural Coalition member organization, represented by Dave Raphael.

Cornucopia Network of New Jersey, Inc.

Cornucopia Networks promotes urban gardening, direct marketing, family farm agriculture and eco-justice.

Address: 12 Terrace Avenue, Nutley, New Jersey 07110; 201/667-0079. Rural Coalition member organization, represented by Donald B. Clark.

Crossroads Resource Center



Rural Coalition chairperson Carlos Marentes (left) discusses farm labor organizing strategies with Cesar Chavez (right) in El Paso, Texas, in March 1993.



Remembering Cesar Chavez

Farmworker leader Cesar Chavez died in San Luis, Arizona, on April 23, 1993, at the age of 66. His funeral at Forty Acres in Delano, California, on April 29 was attended by more than 40,000 people including Rural Coalition chairperson Carlos Marentes.

The Union de Trabajadores Agricolas (UTAF), led by Marentes, held a large march in El Paso, Texas, in late May in memory of the work of Chavez and in support of the continuing struggles of the workers.

UTAF launched an education campaign to support the chili workers they represent. They are asking the public who consume chili products to directly contribute to the workers the additional 5¢ per processed item the growers have been unwilling to provide. The workers calculated that an additional nickel per jar of salsa would allow growers to double worker wages and meet minimum employment standards set by the government.

Statement of the Rural Coalition on the Life and Work of Cesar Chavez (March 31, 1927 - April 23, 1993)

To Our Brothers and Sisters of the United Farmworkers of America,

On behalf of the 50 member organizations of the Rural Coalition we offer our sincere condolences at the sudden passing of our comrade and friend, Cesar Chavez. He built a movement which brought hope to millions of people in an important and vital sector of society that had been neglected too long. We speak of the more than 4 million women, men and children of the migrant and farm labor force.

Through his work, he brought justice and dignity to farmworkers. He inspired us to challenge the growing power of agribusiness and convinced small farmers and consumers throughout the nation that pesticides were a danger we all shared.

Our members understand that no real, just and sustainable rural community development can be achieved if we fail to support farmworkers' efforts taking place all over the country, if we fail to support the important struggle of you, our brothers and sisters of California, initiated by our late leader, against the poisoning of farmworkers and their families by the greedy and irresponsible table grape industry, and if, in general we do not cry out for the protection and extension of the legal and human rights of all farmworkers.

The diverse members of the Rural Coalition, representing many sectors of rural society, voted their full endorsement of the grape boycott called by the UFW under Cesar's leadership. We resolve to stand with you always in the continuing struggle for justice, which he, through his untiring efforts, inspired.

The members of the Rural Coalition in every region of this nation have learned from your work. We pledge to remember always Cesar Chavez. We offer our deepest condolences to his family, and those with whom he worked for so many years.

April 28, 1993

Greetings from the Institute for Southern Studies and Southern Exposure



Research, publications and organizing programs that combine "information power" with "people power."

Contact us for a new report on community-based economic development and material on other southern rural issues.

PO Box 531, Durham, North Carolina 27702; 919/419-8311

Farm Aid Concert and Related Events

Marentes and Picciano-Hanson attended the Farm Aid concert and events in Ames, Iowa, on April 23-24, 1993. Marentes testified on rural communities and the impact of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) at a USDA town meeting on April 24, 1993. Federation of Southern Cooperatives/LAF director, Ralph Paige, presented testimony on minority farm issues at a congressional hearing on USDA reorganization in Ames the same morning.

During the concert, a Farm Aid moment featured the work of the federation through taped and live interviews. Merle Hansen and Barbara Ross of Rural Coalition-member North American Farm Alliance were among the many farm group representatives in attendance. The Rural Coalition issued a statement in support of Mexican farmers pro-



testing NAFTA and the growing Mexican farm debt crisis during the concert. A large number of Mid-western farm group members pledged their solidarity.

During the visit Marentes met with the PrairieFire Rural Action organizer Lorenzo Quinitar who organizes Mexican workers at the meat packing plants in Iowa.

Indian Agriculture

The Intertribal Agriculture Council spearheaded a successful effort to gain congressional passage of Indian Agriculture Resources Management Act. The Rural Coalition joined the council in seeking the support of members of Congress and progressive farm groups for the legislation, which was passed by both houses of Congress in the Fall and has been signed into law.

Sustainable Agriculture

Sandy New of the Sin Fronteras Organizing Project represented the Rural Coalition at the National Dialogue on Sustainable Agriculture held February 26-28, 1993. The coalition's executive director, Lorette Picciano-Hanson, and staff members of the Federation of Southern Cooperatives/LAF also attended. The meeting raised awareness within the Rural Coalition of the need to work much more on educating sustainable agriculture groups on farmworker and minority farm issues. Board member Mary Lee Johns also attended briefly.

Saving Family Land

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Free Legal Assistance -- to limited resource landowners and farmers facing the loss of their land.

Ten Ways to Save Your Land -- a free handbook which provides important information about landownership.

Toll Free Hotline -- call LLPP from anywhere in the country if you have a problem or question about landownership.

Community Education -- LLPP staff attorneys are available as speakers or to hold workshops for community groups, professional associations, and churches at no cost to address topics like: writing a will, federal farm loans, landowner rights, government taking of land, and others.

1-800-672-5839

P. O. Box 179
Durham, NC 27702

Address: PO Box 1994, Minneapolis, Minnesota 55407; 612/869-8664. **Rural Coalition member** organization represented by Ken Meter.



Earthwise Education Center

Earthwise serves as a model of how people can live on the earth wisely.

Address: PO Box 91, Camden, New York 13316; 315/675-84948. **Rural Coalition member** organization, represented by Winston I. Gordon.

Endometriosis Society

Highly significant new research has linked endometriosis, a painful disease affecting five million U.S. women, to hormonally active toxins, including dioxin. For more information on our groundbreaking research--recently covered by Science magazine and others--contact the Endometriosis Association.

Address: 8585 N. 76th Place, Milwaukee, MN 53223; 414/355-2200. Contact Mary Lou Ballweg.



Farm and Wilderness Foundation, Inc.

Farm and Wilderness has provided summer camp experiences in Plymouth, Vermont, to a diverse community for more than 50 years. Outdoor adventure, work projects and Quaker values combine for a challenging, confidence building, competence based, fun and thoughtful time for nine- to 17-year-olds, for four or eight weeks. There are two-week sessions for three- to ten-year-olds at a day camp and a week-long family camp in late summer. Rustic retreat facilities and outdoor education programs are available the rest of the year.

Address: HCR 70, Box 27, Plymouth, Vermont 05056; 802/422-3761. **Rural Coalition member** organization, represented by Daphne Makinson.

Federation of Southern Cooperatives/Land Assistance Fund

The Federation of Southern Cooperatives/Land Assistance Fund is a resource and advocacy association involving 25,000 low-income rural families, organized into 100 cooperatives, credit unions and community-based economic development groups across the South. Organized in 1967, the federation has a quarter century of direct, cutting edge experience working with rural poor people who are trying to help themselves end the cycle of poverty. Members learn the skills of farming, business, and working together in cooperatives at the federation's Rural Training Center on 850 acres near Epes, Alabama.

Since the mid 1980s, the federation has worked in coalition with other progressive farm groups for better prices, more accessible credit and special rights for farmers of color to compensate for decades of discrimination and neglect by USDA and other government agencies. We are currently working with the Rural Coalition and its members for more humane, inclusive and accessible rural development policies for all rural people and communities.

Address: Rural Training Center, PO Box 95, Epes, Alabama 35460. **Rural Coalition member** organization, represented by John Zippert.

Frente Democratico Campesino

The Frente Democratico Campesino was formed in 1988 as a result of the small producers' movement for better prices for corn and beans. The FDC, based in Chihuahua City, Mexico, represents more than 50 rural and farming communities.

Chihuahua, Mexico. **Rural Coalition member** organization.



GEO

GEO, the Grassroots Economic Organizing Newsletter, provides a bimonthly forum and news on worker ownership, environmental justice, community-based funding,

micro-enterprise development, and other initiatives aimed at building a just, democratic and ecological society. Featured departments include Linking Globally, Canadian Cooperatives, Funding and Financing.

Past issues have focused on environmental-labor-community coalitions, national regional support organizations for local initiatives, and grassroots organizing in different regions of the United States. Upcoming themes include religious support for grassroots organizing and Seikatsu -- the Japanese network of feminist, ecological and democratic collectives. Subscriptions are \$15 per year for individuals and \$30 per year for libraries and organizations. Two books by GEO staff on grassroots economic organizing are both available for \$26: *From the Ground Up* (South End Press) and *When Workers Decide* (New Society Publishers). For information or subscriptions contact GEO.

Address: PO Box 5065, New Haven, Connecticut 06560; 203/389-6194 (fax 203/486-0387). **Rural Coalition member** organization, represented by Len Krimmerman.

General Board of Church and Society, The United Methodist Church

The General Board of Church and Society is one of four general program boards of The United Methodist Church. It challenges the members of The United Methodist Church to work through their own local churches, through ecumenical and secular channels, through public and private institutions, and through personal advocacy and action to ensure the rights and access of all people -- in their communities and in the worlds -- to peace and social justice.

Because The United Methodist Church is spread across rural USA with at least one church in all but about 100 counties, it has reaffirmed its historic commitment to rural ministry and agricultural concerns. Of particular concern is the nature of three intertwined crises -- the farm crisis, the crisis of rural community, and the global ecological crisis affecting rural areas.

Address: 100 Maryland Avenue NE, Washington, DC 20002; 202/

488-5600 (202/488-5619). **Rural Coalition** member organization, represented by Mark Harrison.

Gulf Coast Tenants Organization

Address: PO Box 56101, New Orleans, Louisiana 70156; 504/949-4919. **Rural Coalition** member organization, represented by Pat Bryant.



Heartwood

Heartwood is a regional coalition of groups, individuals and businesses working to protect the heartland hardwood forest from the Appalachians to the Ozarks, and the Great Lakes to the deep South. Heartwood believes that public forests represent the best opportunity for regrowth of the native hardwood forest and are often the only chance for survival for forest-dependent plant and animal species.

Protecting public forests from logging and other destructive practices is Heartwood's highest priority, but it also works to reduce waste, promote the use of alternative fiber sources, and promote responsible forest stewardship on private lands.

Address: PO Box 402, Paoli, Indiana 47454; 812/723-2430. **Rural Coalition** member organization, represented by Andy Mahler.

Henry A. Wallace Institute for Alternative Agriculture, Inc.

The Institute for Alternative

Agriculture, Inc. is a non-profit, tax-exempt, membership research and education organization established in 1983 to facilitate adoption of low-cost, resource-conserving, economically-viable and environmentally-sound farming systems. It works directly with government agencies, education institutions, producer groups and other organizations that provide agricultural research, education and information services. These efforts are aimed at advancing the scientific and educational goals of alternative agriculture.

Address: 9200 Edmonston Road, Suite 117, Greenbelt, Maryland 20770-1551; 301/441-8777 (fax 301/220-0164). **Rural Coalition** member organization Dr. I. Garth Youngberg

Highlander Research and Education Center

The Highlander Research and Education Center, located on a 105-acre farm in east Tennessee, is a private, non-profit organization which for almost 60 years has carried out a unique program of adult education and leadership training among communities in Appalachia and the South. Highlander provided education for workers in the 1930s and 1940s, citizenship schools for Black southerners desiring to vote in the 1950s, and training for building community organizations in the 1960s and 1970s.

Highlander has always been committed to assuring that its services reach areas overlooked by more mainstream programs. The current program global education links the experiences of U.S. grassroots com-

munities and other countries through international exchanges and workshops.

Address: 1959 Highlander Way, New Market, Tennessee 37820, 615/933-3443. **Rural Coalition** member organization, represented by Jim Sessions.

H.O.M.E., Inc.

H.O.M.E. is a cooperative community dedicated to economic and social reconstruction. It began in 1970 in rural Maine as an outlet for home workers' crafts and has expanded to include a health clinic, soup kitchen and homeless shelters; a learning center with day care, literacy, alternative high school and college-level programs; job and craft training, pottery, leather, and weaving shops; recovery barn, greenhouse and farmers' market; sawmill and shingle mill; and a garage. H.O.M.E. is part of the World EMMAUS Movement.

Address: PO Box 10, Orland, Maine 04472; 702/469-7961. **Rural Coalition** member organization, represented by Karen Saum.

Housing Assistance Council

The Housing Assistance Council (HAC) is a national non-profit corporation created to increase the availability of decent housing for rural low-income people throughout the United States.

Established in 1971, HAC provides seed money loans, technical assistance, program and policy analysis, research and demonstration projects, training, and information services to public, non-profit and private organizations. These activities have stimulated the development of rural housing programs at the national, state and local levels.

Address: 1025 Vermont Avenue NW, Washington, DC 20005; 202/842-8600. **Rural Coalition** member organization, represented by Moises Loza.



Minority Farmers Rights

Five years of organizing and advocacy efforts on behalf of the African American and indigenous farmers bore fruit in 1993. Congress appropriated for fiscal year 1994, \$3 million of the \$10 million dollars authorized for the Outreach and Education Program for Socially Disadvantaged Farmers and Ranchers. An additional \$1 million allocated for fiscal year 1993 was distributed in September to minority farm organizations and Indian Tribal Colleges.

A substantial number of the recipients of these grants — the first made since the program was authorized in 1990 — were Rural Coalition member groups, including the Federation of Southern Cooperatives/Land Assistance Fund, the Arkansas Land and Farm Development Corporation, the Association for Community-Based Education, and a number of Indian Tribal Colleges working with the Intertribal Agriculture Council.

The Rural Coalition and its members worked closely with the five new Congressional Black Caucus members assigned to the House of Representatives Agriculture Committee to assist them in spearheading the move to increase the



Frente Democratico Campesino staff member, Ignacio Galacia, illustrates Mexican agriculture production statistics for Rep. Peterson.



Rep. Cynthia McKinney of Georgia and Ralph Paige, executive director of the Federation of Southern Cooperatives/Land Assistance Fund, at the congressional reception.

appropriation and to defeat a House floor amendment to remove the money.

The Rural Coalition also held a February briefing to familiarize their agriculture aides with issues affecting all family farmers to assist them in developing positions on the agriculture budget and a range of other farm policy issues.

The coalition assisted the Federation of Southern Cooperatives / LAF in preparing an agenda for future action on minority farmers rights. The agenda was presented to rural members of the Congressional Black Caucus at a reception in July.

Agriculture Budget

The coalition and its members cooperated with the religious community and other progressive farm organizations in a marginally successful effort to forestall cuts in the agriculture budget which would most directly hurt family farmers. A series of sign-on letters to the administration and Congress were

coordinated through the Rural Coalition. Several meetings relating to budget cuts were also held with the USDA.

Disaster Response

The Rural Coalition joined other groups in calling for emergency disaster assistance to the flood-ravaged Midwest and the drought-afflicted Southeast. Under contract with Oxfam America, the Rural Coalition's executive director completed a study on the initial disaster response. In conjunction with this research, she made six trips to the region and attended numerous meetings, including those sponsored by Church World Service and the Farmers Legal Action Group, to assess what worked best and what was needed by producers and communities.

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A Tale of Two Visits

In September 1992, 250 African American and Indian farmers and ranchers came to Washington seeking immediate action to address the discrimination and neglect which threatens to eliminate their livelihood. Frustrated with inattention and the refusal of the Reagan and Bush administrations to meet with them and hear their concerns, they held a rally at the Capitol and then gathered at the Department of Agriculture to demand a meeting. Five armed guards were sent to barr their entry. After negotiations, five representatives were allowed in to meet with Secretary Madigan's aide.

Two months later, Arkansas Governor Bill Clinton was elected President. He chose as his Secretary of Agriculture, Representative Mike Espy. As a representative from Mississippi, Espy worked with low-income and minority groups in authoring the 1990 Minority Farmers Rights Act. On February 4, 1993, a week after his confirmation, he met *inside* the Department with a group of rural advocates including executive director Lorette Picciano-Hanson, chairperson Carlos Marentes and board member John Zippert.

Espy heard from the Federation of Southern Cooperatives/LAF, the



Rev. Jesse Jackson addresses minority farm rally on U.S. Capitol steps



In September 1992, FSC/LAF staff member Cleo Askew holds "Caravan" the pig at USDA entrance in Washington, DC, as 250 minority and indigenous farmers were denied entry.

Intertribal Agriculture Council, Sin Fronteras Organizing Project, Rural Advancement Fund, and the Arkansas Land and Farm Development Corporation. Picciano-Hanson shared with the Secretary the Rural Coalition's community-based development plan "We Haven't a Community to Waste." She stated the firm belief of the Rural Coalition that recovery for the rural economy will not occur until recovery comes to the poorest populations in the poorest areas.

Secretary Espy responded favorably to Carlos Marentes' invitation to visit El Paso and observe firsthand the situation of the farmworkers there. Marentes spoke eloquently about of farmworkers' concerns including nutrition, health care, and just and safe working con-

ditions. USDA coordination with the Labor Department and EPA on migrant farmworker issues was suggested.

Calvin Waln of the Intertribal Agriculture Council stressed the importance of the Indian Agriculture Resources Management Act, as agriculture is a primary economic activity for many Indian people and tribes. Waln requested Department support.

Secretary Espy shared his idea for regional conferences where his staff could hear proposals and discuss ideas with agriculture and rural constituents in the field. Numerous meetings have been held since, but the challenges for the rural United States remain great in an era of shrinking federal resources.

Institute for Local Self-Reliance

Founded in 1974, the Institute for Local Self-Reliance is a non-profit research and education organization that provides technical assistance and information to citizen organizations, city and state governments, and small businesses to promote community-based and environmentally sound economic development. The institute involves citizens, government and private enterprise in the development of a comprehensive materials policy oriented toward efficiency, recycling and maximum utilization of renewable resources, including plant matter.

Address: 2425 - 18th Street NW, Washington, DC 20009; 202/232-4108 (fax 202/332-0463). **Rural Coalition member** organization, represented by Robin James.

Institute for Southern Studies

Founded in 1970, the Institute sponsors research, education and organizing programs to empower

grassroots organizations and communities with strong local leadership and well-informed strategies, provide the information, ideas and historical understanding of Southern social struggles necessary to long-term fundamental change, and nourish communication, cooperation and understanding among diverse cultural groups.

Address: PO Box 531, Durham, North Carolina 27702; 919/419-8315 (fax 919/419-8315). **Rural Coalition member** organization, represented by Isaiah Madison.

Intertribal Agriculture Council

The Intertribal Agriculture Council (IAC) is a non-profit corporation of member Tribes who together control 79 percent of the 54 million acres held in trust by the United States for Indian people. Founded in 1987, IAC promotes improvement in Native American and Alaskan Native agriculture. Governed by an elected board of directors of Tribal representatives from each of the 12 regions of Indian Country, IAC reflects the diverse character of Indian agriculture.

Address: 100 N. 27th Street, Suite 500, Billings, Montana 59101; 406/259-3525 (fax 406/256-9980). **Rural Coalition member** organization, represented by Anderson Morgan.



Junior Achievement Inc.

Junior Achievement, Inc. provides economic education programs for youth K-12.

Address: One Education Way, Colorado Springs, Colorado 80906; 719/540-8000. **Rural Coalition member** organization, represented by Coy Satterfield.



La Mujer Obrera

Address: 114 Poplar, PO Box 3975, El Paso, Texas 79923; 915/533-9110. **Rural Coalition member** organization, represented by Carmen Ibarra Dominguez.

Land Loss Prevention Project

The Land Loss Prevention Project (LLPP) is a non-profit law firm based in North Carolina that addresses legal and economic problems associated with the trend of land loss among small farmers and minority landowners. LLPP provides legal assistance to family farmers and rural landowners who are in danger of losing their homes and businesses because of massive debt and economic burdens and discrimination and encroaching development, and works with other organizations to improve the economic health of rural communities.

Address: PO Box 179, Durham, North Carolina 27702; 919/682-5969 or 1-800-672-5839. **Rural Coalition member** organization, represented by David Harris.



Markham Center

The Markham Center is a non-profit organization established in 1965 to carry out educational research and programs and collect funds for scholarships. The Center is now works on the application of telecommunication for rural communities and establishing skill centers in rural communities on telecommunications link-ups.

Address: West Hill, Worcester, VT. 05682, e mail Blochvt@aol.com. **Rural Coalition member** organization represented by John Bloch.

Bert and Mary Meyer Foundation

The Bert and Mary Meyer Foundation, a family foundation established in 1984, supports rural community organizations striving to implant institutional change in 14 Southeastern states. From the onset, a majority of the board members have been grassroots representatives from the communities in which the foundation funds.

The foundation supports a process occurring throughout the South in which African Americans, Native Americans, Latinos, and left-out Whites are confronting and over-

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 • Self-Reliance Development

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For a lot of people seeds are just something you plant in the ground and incubators are where chickens hatch. But if you're someone working to spark economic development in rural areas, those words get used a lot differently. Down in Red Springs, North Carolina, and any of a number of other places, rural electric co-ops find seed money or low-interest loans for promising local enterprises. Other co-ops support

small business incubators that hatch jobs for their communities. Still more call in "resource teams" to help their communities get a jump on prosperity. Why all this from rural electric co-ops? So the children of families that grew up with us can find a future close to home. Jobs and economic growth. If we didn't care so much, we wouldn't be a co-op. (We've got real seeds, too. For a wildflower packet, call (202) 857-9539; they grow most anywhere.)



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Congressional Reception Co-Sponsors

- Rural Coalition
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- Federation of Southern Cooperatives/Land Assistance Fund
- National Family Farm Coalition
- American Agriculture Movement
- Arkansas Land and Farm Development Corporation
- Appalachian Community Fund
- Center for Democratic Renewal
- Commission on Religion in Appalachia
- Cornucopia Network of New Jersey, Inc.
- Episcopal Church - Washington Office
- Episcopal Church - Rural and Small Church Ministries
- Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
- Lutheran Office for Governmental Affairs
- Farmers Legal Action Group
- Fund of the Four Directions
- Housing Assistance Council
- Intertribal Agriculture Council
- Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy
- Institute for Alternative Agriculture, Inc.
- Institute for Local Self-Reliance
- The Honorable Jim Jontz
- Marcia Kingslow and Associates
- Land Loss Prevention Project
- Larry Mitchell
- Morning Star Foundation
- National Catholic Rural Life Conference
- National Coop Business Association
- National Farmers Union
- National Rural Electric Cooperative Association
- North American Farm Alliance
- Larry Parachini
- Pennsylvania Farmers Union
- PrairieFire Rural Action
- Rural Advancement Fund
- Rural Alliance for Military Accountability
- Rural Development Leadership Network
- Rural Southern Voice for Peace
- Save Our Cumberland Mountains
- Senter and Associates
- Sin Fronteras Organizing Project
- Southern Rural Development Initiative
- Springfield College School of Human Services
- United Methodist Church
- General Board of Church and Society
- United Methodist Church - Office of Public Policy
- Women's Division, General Board of Global Ministries

Executive Director Lorette Picciano-Hanson joins RC board members in February 1994.



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Our Staff

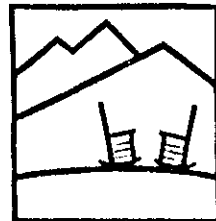


RC Administrative Coordinator Catherine Anderson embracing the future with her niece Rachel.

in development. The coalition participated in numerous panels and taskforces designed to educate policy makers and others on the key role community-based organizations can play in development. In several instances, the work involved assisting member organizations to seek grants from federal and other sources for work they already perform.

Congressional Reception

With the support of a coalition of progressive farm and rural groups, the Rural Coalition organized in February 1993 a reception for new members of Congress attended by more than 250 people. A directory of rural organizations was circulated to all members of Congress. Many new congressional and administration relationships emerged from the event, which provided Congress members a rare glimpse of the real diversity of rural areas.



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Reps. Tim Johnson (SD), left and Jill Long (Ind) 2nd from right, attend congressional reception with RC director Picciano-Hanson and chair Marentes

Welcomed on the Hill

In February, the Rural Coalition returned in full force to Washington, DC. On February 4, the coalition and its board of directors, joined by 30 other rural organizations, hosted an inspiring reception on Capitol Hill honoring new members of Congress from rural areas.

The event, themed *We Haven't Got A Community to Waste*, was attended by more than 250 people. Blackfeet Nation Chief Earl Oldperson, Federation of Southern Cooperatives/Land Assistance Fund director Ralph Paige, Intertribal Agriculture Council secretary Calvin Waln, and National Family Farm Coalition president Curt Rohland were among those who joined Rural Coalition chairperson Carlos Marentes in welcoming the group.

Congressional sponsors of the event included Senator Tom Harkin (Iowa), Senator Ben Nighthorse Campbell (Colo), Senator Daniel Inouye (Hawaii) and Senator Patrick Leahy (Vt). Members of Congress who addressed the assembled included congressional Rural Caucus co-chairs Jill Long (Ind) and Tom Ewing (Ill), freshman class president Eva Clayton (NC) and secre-

tary Cynthia McKinney (Ga), and Representatives Tim Johnson (SD), Bernard Sanders (Vt), Collin Peterson (Minn) and Ron Coleman (Texas).

The Congresspersons and their staff members were witnesses to one of the most diverse groups of rural people ever assembled in the House Agriculture Caucus Room.

Board member Pat Bellanger's own genuine Indian fry bread and wild rice were featured along with the catered fare. House Agriculture Committee Chairman Kika de la Garza (Texas) dropped by for a brief visit.

The *Directory of Key Rural Organizations* prepared for this event was distributed to all new rural members of Congress with welcoming messages from cosponsoring organizations.

The Rural Coalition offered special thanks to Reps. Tim Johnson and Jill Long for their support and logistical assistance, to the National Family Farm Coalition and the other cosponsoring organizations, and to the congressional hosts. We look forward to working together to build a just and sustainable future for all rural communities.

Rural Virginia, Inc.

Address: PO Box 105, Richmond, Virginia 23201-0105. Rural Coalition member organization, represented by Linda Wilson.



Save Our Cumberland Mountains

Address: PO Box 479, Lake City, Tennessee 37769; 615/426-9955. Contact (representative): Rt. 3 Cave Creek Road, Loudon, Tennessee 37774; 615/974-4109. Rural Coalition member organization, represented by Connie White.

Save Sierra Blanca

Address: PO Box 218, Sierra Blanca, Texas 79851-0218; 915/369-2541. Rural Coalition member organization, represented by Bill Addington.

School of Human Services, Springfield College

Address: PO Box 66, Rt. #2 Emerson Falls Road, St. Johnsbury, Vermont 05819; 802/748-5402. Rural Coalition member organization, represented by John Bloch.

Sin Fronteras Organizing Project

Sin Fronteras was founded in 1983 by farmworkers and activists to fight injustices and inequalities faced by agriculture laborers in west Texas and southern New Mexico. Sin Fronteras is directed by and for farmworkers and promotes the advancement of the Border Agricultural Workers Union to support their struggle and hope for a better life.

Address: 514 S. Kansas Street, El Paso, Texas 79901; 915/532-0921. Rural Coalition member organization, represented by Carlos Marentes.

Solidarity Committee of the Capital District

Address: Troy Labor Center, PO Box 1269, Troy, New York 12181; 518/271-6148. Rural Coalition member organization, represented by John Funciello.

Stueben Churchpeople Against Poverty

Address: 108 Liberty Street, Bath, New York 14810; 607/776-7664. Rural Coalition member organization, represented by Lynn Reid Perkins.



Union Sin Fronteras

Address: PO Box 66, Coachella, Ca 92236, 619/398-5183. Rural Coalition member organization represented by Ventura Guitierrez.

United Church Board for Homeland Ministries Division of the American Missionary Society

UCBHM promotes economic justice and rural communities through ecumenical coalitions and in partnership with community-based organizations working with the people of rural communities.

Address: 700 Prospect Street, Cleveland, Ohio, 44115; 216/736-3273. Rural Coalition member organization represented by Paul Peters and James McDaniel.

University of Arizona - Rural Health Office

Address: 2501 E. Elm, Tucson, Arizona 85716; 602/626-7946 (602/326-6429). Rural Coalition member organization, represented by Lee Rosenthal and Phil Lopes.



Vermonters Organized for Clean Up

Address: PO Box 120, E. Calais, Vermont 05650; 802/476-8835. Rural Coalition member organization, represented by Theresa Freeman.

Virginia Water Project, Inc.

Address: PO Box 6659, 1314 Peters Creek Road, Suite 210, Roanoke, Virginia 24017; 703/345-1184. Rural Coalition member organization, represented by Mary C. Terry.



GEO

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GEO is a forum for exchange among community-based organizations, labor and environmental activists, worker-owners, social entrepreneurs, and technical assistance providers.

GEO subscriptions cost \$15 (individuals), \$30 (organizations and libraries); sample copies cost \$2.

GEO also distributes — at discount prices — two books on the practice and theory of grassroots economic democracy: *When Workers Decide* (\$12) and *From the Ground Up* (\$16). Both books are available for \$26; shipping is included in all price quotes.

*The Board And Staff Of The
BOGGS RURAL LIFE CENTER Joins
You In Honoring Those Who Are A "Voice"
In The Struggle For Racial Justice.*

BOGGS CENTER



The BOGGS CENTER is a year-round camp, conference and retreat facility owned and operated by the Boggs Rural Life Center, an educational and rural development institution serving the Central Savannah River Area (CSRA) of Georgia and South Carolina since 1906. The institution was established as Boggs Academy, a Presbyterian preparatory high school for African American youth. The Academy closed in 1984 and reopened in 1990 as the Boggs Rural Life Center.

Located near Keysville, Georgia, the BOGGS CENTER is used by religious, community, educational, human service, cultural and other nonprofit organizations, public agencies and private businesses with priority given to organizations serving residents of the CSRA. All persons, organized non profit groups, public agencies, or families and private business wishing to use the center's facilities must make prior reservations for use of the BOGGS CENTER.

The BOGGS CENTER provides lodging, meals and program resources for conferences, adult education and training, agricultural, energy and environmental education, day and overnight camping, family camps and reunions, adult and youth leadership development, community gardening and foodshare programs, cultural festival activities, and research and demonstration programs conducted in cooperation with others.

The BOGGS CENTER consists of 1,250 acres of hardwood and pine forest, farm land and campus. One large lake, a beaver-dam pond and several small Grady Ponds (wetlands created by meteorites millions of years ago) are on the property, and nearly two-thirds of its area is set aside for and will be kept in a natural state for hiking and environmental education. A portion of the property has been set aside for development of a working sustainable farm. An outdoor team-building course, nature walks and hiking trails, and an agricultural, energy and environmental educational program will be developed over the next five years. Other resources include an olympic-sized heated pool, tennis courts, basketball court and a baseball field.

The BOGGS CENTER's all-season facilities include three lodging units designed to accommodate groups from 6 to 128 persons in a campus setting. Friendship Cottage, a self-contained retreat, can house 3 individuals or couples. Teachersage Cottage, another self-contained retreat, can house 16 individuals. Our largest facility, Harbison Hall is a self-contained conference center that can house 82 adults or 92 children and 14 adults. Other camp, conference and retreat facilities include: the Student Center, a meeting and social function building that can accommodate up to 75 persons; the John I. Blackburn Presbyterian Church which can seat 300 with 3 classrooms and a fellowship hall; and Kansas Cottage which houses the office support services. All facilities are being retro-fitted for energy efficiency with special attention to comfort and accessibility for all persons.

A professional staff is available to assist in planning and implementing camps, conferences and retreats at the Center. Boggs is a place for learning and demonstrating creative approaches to human and community development. For more information, please call or write.

Franklin D. Williams, Director or Alberta Anderson, Administrator
THE BOGGS CENTER
Boggs Rural Life Center, Inc.
4729 Quaker Road
Keysville, Georgia 30816
Phone: (706) 554-0110 or Fax: (706) 554-0989

The Year in Review

During 1993, the Rural Coalition reassumed its role in Washington, DC, as a crucial voice for low-income and minority rural communities. A congressional reception and early meetings with the administration attracted the attention of policy makers to long-neglected rural concerns. Since then, the Coalition has received many requests for policy input and field contacts from a wide range of government agencies.

1993 was a year of growth for the Rural Coalition. Membership expanded from approximately 30 grassroots organizations to 65 members. Members were increasingly active in the governance and program of the coalition. A substantial number made direct and in-kind contributions far in excess of their required dues.

The Coalition redefined its goals based on board expertise and the urgency of issues facing member groups. Three committees address member concerns: Community-Based Development (see below), Workers on the Land (see page 11), and Health and Environment (see page 16).



Mexico tractorcade protest in the town square in Chihuahua.

Community-Based Development "We Haven't Got a Community to Waste"

The Rural Coalition adopted the issue of community-based development as a major new priority for 1993. Coalition members in every region of the nation felt new ideas and proposals were clearly needed in the much-neglected area of rural development. They also believed that community-based organizations have made significant accomplishments in their work with the poorest communities, but that their achievements were little recognized and were accomplished despite the significant barriers they faced.

Throughout the year, the Rural Coalition and its members also responded to frequent calls to articulate the role, function and potential of community-based organizations

In response to these concerns, the Rural Coalition is devoting the 1994 Assembly to defining and envisioning a longer-term action agenda on the subject. Recognizing that the strength of the coalition is closely linked to the strength of its members, the coalition membership is seeking not only to construct a general vision of development that is sustainable and just, but also to focus on precisely how the Coalition can collectively strengthen each member by building skills and capacity, sharing technical assistance, networking on policy and advocacy, and resource development.

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Historical Notes and Past Assemblies

➤ The late **Charles Bannerman** (executive director of Mississippi Action for Community Education and the Delta Foundation — after whom the Charles Bannerman Memorial Awards were named) was the first chairperson of the Rural Coalition.

➤ At the first Rural Coalition gathering, held in a large white house in West Virginia, **John Zippert** was overheard to say of the newly elected **Ronald Reagan**, "He's 70 and I'll be 35 tomorrow," signaling the optimism and staying power of community-based activists.

➤ At the assembly in Green Bay, Wisconsin, held at a hotel owned by the Oneida Nation, **Larry Parachini** received many tributes and was wrapped in a blanket presented by a delegation from Pine Ridge.

➤ Serious business has been conducted in whirlpool spas, over meals of a great range of ethnic origins, in jam-packed hallways, around tables and on the floors of innumerable hotels — but never in a single, smoke-filled room!

➤ Inspiring moments of past Rural Coalition assemblies include the songs of **Jane Sapp**, the analysis of **Hank Sanders**, the oratory of **Baldemar Velasquez**, and the process of many minds and hearts hammering out "The Rural Agenda" with intensity and conviction.

➤ **Izzy Martin** led us in "De Colores" and other songs outside after a barbecue at Catholic University in Washington, DC, where a small group played bilingual pictionary late into the night.

➤ As the Rural Coalition struggled in 1992 to grow once more, four board members and the new direc-

tor traveled to seek new members. **Pat Bellanger** enticed the group to add a three-hour journey in a deluge to the Pow Wow of the Indigenous Environmental Network in Lac Courte Oreilles, Wisconsin. On the road back to Minneapolis, a triple rainbow portended good things to come.

➤ On the bus from El Paso to Chihuahua, trays of tamales appeared in the overhead racks of the bus. The exhausted Alabama delegation arrived only hours earlier from a 24-hour journey and joined a

spirited discussion on the viability of corn production under NAFTA and the principles of coop management.

We learned a great deal about beneficial insects. Simultaneous translation was the order of the day. Soft Mariachi music serenaded us at an outdoor lunch where people-to-people trade agreements were negotiated in huddles beneath the trees.

by *Starry Krueger*, with contributions from others



Rural Coalition members and Mexican hosts negotiate people-to-people trade agreements while listening to Mariachi music at the September 1992 Assembly in Chihuahua.



Community-Based Development: Development with Dignity

by *Isaiah Madison*

The Institute for Southern Studies will soon release its two-year assessment of community-based development (CBD) in the South. It is based on a survey of 50 Southern-based CBD Projects including small farms and rural coops, rural health and micro enterprise programs, farmworker groups, arts and craft coops, child care services, etc. The assessment concludes, based on feedback from respondents, that CBD is **development with dignity**, embodying three levels of community development; (a) **development of community**; (b) **development by community** and (c) **development for community**.

Key findings of the assessment:

- **The community-based political development movement operates in a racially and politically hostile climate:** *Racism and political hostility* were ranked among the top three impediments most frequently encountered by CBD organizations at the local level. Racism and political hostility were also ranked among the three "biggest external obstacles" to CBD.

- **Community organizing and political empowerment are essential to effectively counter racial and political hostility:** *Organizing the community to fight back and becoming politically active* were cited as being among the top three strategies employed to "overcome external obstacles." Community advocacy groups were cited as the "most helpful community institutions" to CBD work.

- **Developing the capacity to "create development opportunity" is the principal objective of CBD organizations:** Respondents ranked their reasons for doing CBD work as follows: (a) *developing human and community resources*; (b) *increasing individual and institutional capacity and skills*; (c) *promoting democratic decision-making*; and (d) *meeting local community needs*. "Creating economic development opportunity" includes *human, social and political infrastructure* as well as *business, technical and physical infrastructure*. Other important elements of development opportunity are strong traditions of land ownership, community self-reliance and entrepreneurship.

- **CBD organizations themselves are the most important sources of technical assistance to each other:** *Other groups like us and face-to-face networks* were cited as the most important sources of technical assistance, followed by *foundations and training institutes*.

Copies of the CBD Assessment Report can be obtained from the Institute for Southern Studies later this year. The report will contain: important "lessons" from the CBD movement, factors bearing on the "success" or "failure" of ventures, a resource listing capacity development strategies, profiles of "successful" and "unsuccessful" models, and important funding, resource and policy needs. For information, call or write the Institute, PO Box 531, Durham, NC, 27702; 919/419-8311.

The National Federation of Community Development Credit Unions Congratulates Mr. John Zippert and the Rural Coalition for their tireless efforts to support the rural communities of the South.

N.F.C.D.C.U.
120 Wall Street
NY NY 10005

Thank you to Dave Martin and Kutztown Publishing Co. for their patience and professionalism.

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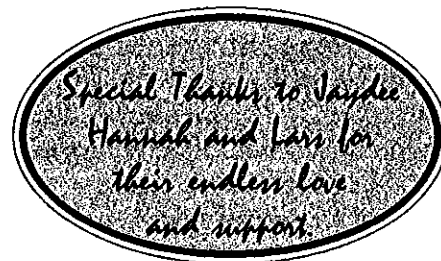
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Development by the Community: Preparing the Venture

Accessing and developing the skills and resources we need to do community-based development: fundraising, technology, skills, marketing, cooperatives, networking.

Saturday, March 26

- 7:30 Breakfast Dialogue: Partnerships between CBO's and State Rural Dev. Councils, with Bob Lovan, Nat'l Rural Dev. Partnership
- 8:30 Regathering/Music/Spanish for Busy People
- 8:45 Youth speak
- 9:00 Morning Plenary: Preparing Our Venture: Development By the Community
- 9:00-10:30 Panel Discussion: The Resource Question: A Dialogue with Funding Communities and Funders in Development
Moderator — Hubert Sapp
— Walt Coward, director of Rural Programs, Ford Foundation
— Judy Hatcher, program director, Funding Exchange
— Alan McGregor, director, Sapelo Island Research Foundation
Community response — John Zippert, RC board member
- 10:30-12:00 The Resource Question cont'd: A Dialogue with Government Officials
Moderator — Curtis Inabinett, SC State Legislator
— Bob Nash*, undersecretary for rural and small community development, USDA
— Dr. Ken Olden, director, National Institute of Environmental and Health Sciences
Community response — Georgia Good, RC board member
- 2:00-3:30 Preparing the Venture: Workshops on Marshaling and Developing Resources
Marketing Community-Based Products
— Ben Burkett, Federation of Southern Cooperatives/LAF
Foundations and Grassroots Fundraising
— Judy Hatcher, Funding Exchange and Frank Williams, Boggs Rural Life Ctr.
Community Reinvestment Act — Irvin Henderson, President, National Community Reinvestment Coalition
Partnerships with Communities — Dave Gibson, staff, Empowerment Zones/

Enterprise Communities, Robert Lovan, National Rural Development Partnership
Telecommunication Resources — John Bloch, RC Board
Health and Environment — Jerry Poje, NIEHS and Ron Nixon, Institute for Southern Studies

- 4:00-5:30 Building the Vessel: Workshops on Strategizing for Organizing, Capacity Building and Skills Development
Capacity Building and Leadership Development — Isaiah Madison
Farm Bill and Sustainable Agriculture — Georgia Good and Marge Townsend, RC Board members
Worker Organizing — Ventura Gutierrez, Union Sin Fronteras
Marketing Community-Based Products and Services: Trade among Communities — Rev. Camilo Daniel and John Zippert
Health and Environment — Patricia Bellanger, RC Board
Building the Future: Bringing Youth into the Movement — Catherine Anderson, RC staff and Youth Caucus

- 5:30-6:00 Plenary Reports and Youth Speak
7:00-10:00 Low Country Boil, Sea Islands Cultural Program, Jazz Band and Open Mike
10:00 Youth Caucus

Sunday, March 27

- 8:00-9:00 Our Vision: Development for the Community — Ceremony and Celebration of the Land
— Organizaciones Campesinas Indigenas, Chiapas, Mexico, and rural and indigenous peoples of the Sea Islands and beyond.
- 9:30-10:30 Building Connections and Unity: The Struggle in Mexico
- 11:00-12:00 Closing Plenary: Strategies for our Shared Success, Youth Speak, Membership Meeting

* Invited

Development of the Community: Building the Vessel

Building our shared struggle — Nurturing and developing our shared capacity to do community based development: land, values, culture, and community institutions.

Building the Movement for Community-Based Development

1994 Annual Rural Coalition Assembly Agenda

Wednesday, March 23

4:00-10:00 Registration (continued all day Thursday)
7:00 Resource Fair

Thursday, March 24

7:30 Breakfast and Dafuski Briefing
9:00 **Departure for Hilton Head and Dafuski Immersion Experience**
Evening Board Reception, Resource Fair & Computer Telecom Lab, Youth Caucus

Friday, March 25

7:30 Breakfast Dialogue: "In Search of the Way that Works: Fighting Poverty or Developing Communities with Franklin Williams, Co-coordinator, SRDI, Vivian Wynn, Franklinton Ctr, and Emory Campbell.

8:30 **Welcome and Intro to Spanish for Busy People**
— Carlos Marentes, chairperson, Rural Coalition

9:00-10:30 **Land and Culture: The Struggle in the Sea Islands**
— Emory Campbell, executive director, Penn Center

10:40-12:30 **Opening Plenary**
Laying Out the Challenge — Carlos Marentes
Litany of the Land — Lorette Picciano-Hanson, RC director
Keynote Address: *Rebuilding the Movement: The Struggle for the Land*
— Rev. Isaiah Madison, executive director, Institute for Southern Studies
Plenary Reaction and Dialogue

2:00-3:30 **Building the Vessel**
Plenary Panel *The Struggle for the Land on Four Fronts/Development of the Community*
Moderator — Starry Krueger, president, Rural Development Leadership Network
The Federation's Struggle to Survive
— Ralph Paige, executive director

Federation of Southern Cooperatives/
Land Assistance Fund

How Opposing NAFTA Built New Alliances: a View from Mexico
— Victor Quintana, advisor, Frente Democratico Campesino
Appalachia and the Land — Barbara Green* Mt. Women's Exchange
The Earth is Sacred - Impact of Los Alamos on Tribal Life
— Gilbert Sanchez*, Pueblo

4:00-5:30 **Seeing the Vision: Workshops Models of Community-Based Development**

Base Communities Model
— Rev. Camilo Daniel and Mercedes Mendoza, Frente Democratico Campesino, Anahuac, Chihuahua
Entrepreneurial Model — John Gadson, director, Small Business Development Center, South Carolina State University, Orangeburg, South Carolina
Service Delivery Model — Margarita Romo*, Farmworker Self Help
Community Development Corporation Model — Gerald Shanklin, Hayti Development Corp.

Rural Farmer Cooperative Model — John Zippert, director of program, Federation of Southern Cooperatives, Epes Alabama

5:30-6:00 **Plenary Reports and Resolutions**

7:00-10:00 **Banquet/Auction**
Emcee — Georgia Good, director, Rural Advancement Fund
Invocation — Bishop Joseph Bethea*
Keynote Address *The Political Climate for Community-Based Development* — Alabama State Senator Hank Sanders*
Auctioneer — John Bloch, Learning in the North Country

Development for the Community: Seeing the Vision
Development with dignity — Searching for a common vision and overcoming systemic hostility and impediments to community-based development.

Special Awards

"The Persistence of John Zippert Caravan the Pig" Award

is established as an annual award recognizing outstanding contributions by an individual possessing the fortitude and persistence to build communities despite insurmountable obstacles. In this first year, we recognize John Zippert of the Federation of Southern Cooperatives/Land Assistance Fund, for his exceptional courage and efforts in



Pat Bellanger with her daughter and four grandchildren.



John Zippert joins toast with Rural Coalition colleagues in September 1993.

helping communities build agriculture and housing cooperatives and credit unions for poor people over the resistance of political, economic and social institutions. Others receive awards when they leave. John is always here, nurturing the larger vision of justice and cultural diversity within the Rural Coalition and other groups which would not exist without him. In 1992, even his own colleagues did not believe he would bring livestock to demonstrate outside the closed doors of the Department of Agriculture in Washington DC. Caravan the Pig is testament to his efforts.

"Binaishee Quaynce Building the Future" Award -

Some activists have an extraordinary vision of the struggle as linking the past and the future.

This new award, named in honor of Pat's granddaughter whose name means "young bird woman," recognizes outstanding efforts by an individual dedicated to inspiring young people and protecting the earth which nurtures them. Pat Bellanger has, from Wounded Knee to Prairie Island, been not only a voice of resistance for indigenous people throughout the world. She has distinguished herself by continuing to train and nurture young people and to bring them into the movement. Pat and her colleagues founded the Heart of the Earth School to educate indigenous children threatened with removal from their parents because the schools of the larger society did not respect their culture and meet their needs she helped establish the American Indian OIC in Minneapolis which now works to return youth to the land in agricultural production.

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The Rural Coalition Says Farewell...

Wendy Johnson is executive director of the Appalachian Community Fund, a community-based foundation supporting social and economic justice organizations and projects across the central Appalachian region. Prior to this, she was executive director of the Southeast Women's Employment Coalition. She has also served as executive director of the Bowling Green Human Rights Commission in Bowl-

ing Green, Kentucky. Johnson held the office of secretary on the Rural Coalition board of directors.

Steve Pittman has worked on rural and environmental issues for many years with organizations including the Citizen's Coal Council and the Illinois Stewardship Alliance. He had served on the Rural Coalition board since 1987 and co-chaired the membership/nominations committee and the program committee's health/environment

subcommittee.


Chavez John is a Native American Navajo Indian from the Four Corners region in northwest New Mexico. He was born and raised in this rural area and as, director of community services, works for the Tribe in community and rural development. For the past five years he has served on the Intertribal Agriculture Council and is its vice president and was its representative to the Rural Coalition.



Thanks, Jennifer!

Jennifer Cude served as administrative coordinator and research assistant for the Rural Coalition from May 1992 through May 1993. A recent graduate of Emory University, Jennifer brought an air of calm, good humor and organization to the office in the difficult days of rebuilding. Since leaving the Rural Coalition, Jennifer spent two weeks travelling around Hungary and the Czech Republic and then moved to Williamsburg, Virginia, where she works at the College of William and Mary. She hopes to begin a graduate program in School Psychology this Summer (1994).

Jennifer says that her tenure at the Rural Coalition was a time of tremendous learning and growth. She learned most from the amazing people she met who work so selflessly and effectively to promote the welfare and dignity of rural peoples.



BEST WISHES!

From the Rural Advancement Fund

Compañeras and Compañeros:

We have successfully concluded an intensive period of activities in our struggle for a better life for rural people. In this special publication by the Rural Coalition you will find a detailed report of our work. Read it and, please, let us know what you think about our work and what you think about us.

In our 1993 report (page 7) you will find that despite the fact that we are engaged in a battle under the least favorable conditions, against powerful adversaries, with the frequent indifference of the public institutions and with modest resources, we did very important work. We are especially very proud about our work around minority rights initiatives and Indigenous issues. Our intensive activity to bring the issue of rural communities into the NAFTA debate helped us continue the relationship created during our 1992 Annual Assembly between Mexican small producers and U.S. rural organizations. This activity also served to establish the presence of our coalition in the international rural community. Our work around farmworkers and health and environmental issues have opened many doors and many possibilities for our member organizations. And we continue to develop and work to establish the principles for a true and just community-based development.

We have accomplished all this thanks to the hard work and the endless sacrifices of our leadership and our board members. We also recognize with great gratitude all the support we have received from individuals and institutions who have faith in us and who believe in our cause. But we have to recognize, as a matter of basic honesty, that we have made great accomplishments thanks to the work and understanding of our staff, and especially of our executive director.

In general, the Rural Coalition is a fighting and hard-working organization. Everything we do requires the contribution of everybody. I guess for all this, we love and have special affection for our Rural Coalition.

But we must realize that even though we have made progress, we are still far from our objectives. Rural communities continue to lose the control of the land and the natural resources. Racism and other forms of discrimination continue to plague the life of America. The suffering created by poverty and lack of answers to immediate needs continues to grow. More of our kind are losing hope of one day being able to fulfill their dreams. Our government still creates barriers to separate us instead of making possible the unity needed to deal with common giant problems.

We have a phenomenal challenge before us. The indigenous rural uprising in Chiapas, México, is a clear indication that our people and our communities want changes to the current system of institutionalized misery and discrimination. The Rural Coalition then needs to be the instrument to publicize and strengthen those efforts to create changes. We are confident that we can do it. In the historic South, during our 1994 Annual Assembly we will discuss the way to make this possible.

But we need you.

To all our members and our friends we ask you to continue your work and continue to expand your support. To the individuals and organizations who have not become members of the Rural Coalition but who are now ready to join us in the struggle, we ask you to become members today.

Sincerely,

Carlos Marentes
Rural Coalition Chairperson



Marentes at work organizing the Santa Fe International Bridge at El Paso.

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