

These four words describe nearly every farm transaction that takes place.

The National Farmers Organization, with competent business management and adequate participation, could quickly raise farm prices.

The national media have missed the boat completely in discussing the trade (so-called free-trade) issue. The issue that is generally at stake is whether sovereign countries have the right to regulate multinational corporations and prices, or whether these corporations rule the world.

There is no need for our government to be at odds with countries that believe in supporting their farmers and protecting their domestic food supply.

Although our ag programs have many problems, raising the price supports on basic farm commodities to profitable levels will solve over 90% of them. Raise the price supports to profitable levels and use the tools of government to work for fair prices in all commodities. If inventories of farm commodities get costly, supply management should be used. Let the government be a partner with family farmers rather than the multinationals.

There are many ways of improving the farm program, but raising the farm prices to profitable levels is at least ten times more important than all of the others.

Homeless: The Human 'Canaries' Are Dying

by Terri Bishop

Ms. Bishop is the executive director of the Community for Creative Non-Violence, the largest homeless shelter in Washington, D.C.

"It's clear that our country's in better shape than it was eight years ago; that we are moving in the right direction; that we not only have the longest economic expansion in history and the lowest unemployment rate in 30 years, we've got declining poverty, declining inequality, the lowest minority unemployment rates we've ever recorded. We have the highest home ownership in history. We've got the lowest crime rate in over a quarter-century—eight years of decline in a row; welfare rolls about half the size they were seven and a half years ago. Ninety percent of our kids are immunized against childhood disease, with over 2 million kids with health insurance that didn't have it before. And I could go on and on. . . .

"What are we going to do with this moment of prosperity? Most of us have never seen anything like it in our lifetime. Something like this comes along once in a lifetime. What is it that we proposed to do with it? And I hope the answer is,

we're not going to squander it, we're not going to indulge ourselves with it; we're going to take on the big challenges and seize the big opportunities so that we can build the future of our dreams for our children."

These statements were taken from a speech given by President Clinton on May 19 of this year at City Hall in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. If these statements are true, why, then, are the canaries dying? Yes, I said canaries.

Let me explain: Coal miners once used canaries to indicate the presence of methane gas in the mines. If the birds died, methane concentrations were at dangerous levels. This nation



The homeless on the streets and in the shelters around the country are like the canaries in the mines, they're saying, "All is not well!" So I say to all those who would be President, listen to our human canaries and take note!—Terri Bishop

has human canaries. They're the homeless. Whenever you walk or ride through the cities of this country and see homeless persons, regardless of what the President, Congress, political analysts, or think-tanks say, the nation is dying.

What does the presence of these human canaries indicate?

1. It indicates a lack of affordable housing. In D.C. alone, Federal housing assistance has decreased by 75% in the past ten years. In D.C. alone, according to the Department of Public and Assisted Housing, 45,000 families who qualify for public housing are unable to receive such housing because there are no units available.

2. It indicates there are penalizing changes in welfare assistance to the poor. In D.C. alone, welfare grants have been cut by 10% in the last three years, although the cost of living has increased. As families lose welfare assistance, the number of families who become homeless is likely to grow. In addition, according to the Fair Budget Coalition, D.C. has cut programs that support low-income residents, including General Public Assistance and the Tenant Assistance Program.

3. It indicates poverty and lack of employment. In D.C. alone, according to the Fair Budget Coalition, the unemployment rate is approximately 10%, far higher than in surround-

ing areas and much of the rest of the United States. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, 1 in 3 of the District's residents lives in a poverty area, and 1 in 25 lives in an area where there is extreme poverty.

Now Mr. President—and those who would be President—can you smell the methane?

Of course you can't—neither could the miners. That is why they used canaries. But the human canaries, the homeless, are trying to tell us that there is something seriously wrong in the mine.

How serious is it?

In D.C. alone, according to the Community Partnership, approximately 15,000 people become homeless over the course of a year, and on any given day, 9,000 people are homeless, half of whom are women and children.

In D.C. alone, according to a Fannie Mae [Federal National Mortgage Association] report, 1 out of every 200 families requested emergency shelter assistance between May 1996 and June 1997; and 40% of homeless families in the D.C. area have been homeless more than once.

In D.C. alone, according to the Community Partnership, 1,406 families with 3,367 children applied for emergency shelter in 1996, and because emergency shelters for families remain full, most of the families had an average wait of six months for emergency shelter.

In D.C. alone, according to the Women's Service Providers Report, on any night, there are over 250 women in the D.C. singles shelter system. Sixty-five to 80% of the women do not have their children with them. Eleven to 16% of these women report their children as being in foster care.

An extrapolation of these data across the nation would be most revealing! Need I say more? Of course not. The homeless on the streets and in the shelters around the country are like the canaries in the mines, they're saying, "All is not well!" So I say to all those who would be President, listen to our human canaries and take note!

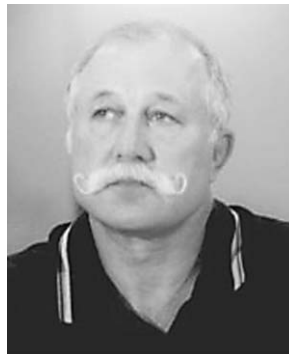
Dump Free Trade, Adopt Fair Trade Policies

by Robert Cebina

I am Robert Cebina, vice president of UAW [United Auto Workers] Local 723 in Monroe, Michigan. I would like to thank this panel for the opportunity to testify this morning, and hope that the results of this proceeding succeed in changing the policy both of the Democratic Party and the government.

First, I would like to address the problem of NAFTA, the North American Free Trade Agreement, and its impact on the

UAW. According to a recent UAW release, supporters of NAFTA claimed it would create 200,000 jobs in the U.S. But, the AFL-CIO now estimates that up to 400,000 jobs have been lost to Mexico alone under NAFTA; 90% of the companies that promised to create jobs in 1993 have failed to do so. Forty percent of U.S. so-called exports to Mexico under NAFTA are, in fact, parts that are assembled at low-wage U.S.-owned plants and returned as finished products for sale! The U.S. now has a shocking \$13.2 billion trade deficit with Mexico, and in Mexico, their wages have fallen 29%. What a disaster!



The big auto makers have been outsourcing for years, to earn large profits and destroy the workforce. . . .

Globalization, as endorsed by the Democratic Party, has created slave-labor conditions worldwide. This must be halted.

—Robert Cebina

Taking the case of General Motors as an example: The impact has been devastating. Over the period 1978-97, General Motors slashed its hourly labor force from 520,000 workers to 224,000, laying off nearly 300,000 workers. While some of the layoffs were due to technological improvements, the vast bulk was due to "outsourcing" to slave-labor work sites in Mexico and other nations.

Of the 296,000 workers that GM fired in North America, 81,400 jobs, or 28%, are now in Mexico alone.

Many tens of thousands of additional workers, paid below subsistence wages, have replaced the 300,000 fired workers. GM has Delphi Automotive divisions around the world, from Brazil to Malaysia to South Korea. In 1997, South Korea's Delphi Division had almost \$1 billion worth of parts sales.

This process has not stopped, it has accelerated. According to one UAW official in Detroit, the UAW has lost over 500,000 members in this time frame. Ford Motor Co., like GM, has been both outsourcing and spinning off divisions into private companies, to cut costs and increase profits for shareholders.

Like GM's Delphi Division, Ford has now created