

CURRENT ISSUES

What's Happening with Legislation?

by Linda Chan

Unfortunately our CFT sponsored Rehire Rights bill (AB 1010) after passing the Assembly wound up in the Senate Appropriations Suspense file. A price tag of \$100,000 per district was placed on this bill. The reasoning was that it would cost each district that much to hire staff to implement the rehire rights. Many do not agree and there are a number of campuses that already have a form of rehire rights or due process which did not cost them anything to implement. What we have to show is that it does work. I had an opportunity to speak with CA State Assemblymember Jose Medina and he told me that he is more than ever motivated to get a bill legislated that will protect the rights of full time faculty. In the meantime, Santa Monica College Faculty Association is challenging the ruling of a case that part time faculty are contingent and that any negotiated rehire rights has no meaning and cannot be enforced. This comes from a college that has binding arbitration. The very idea challenges collective bargaining although a district cannot collectively bargain against current law. An amicus brief was filed October 6, 2015 and we are waiting to learn of this outcome.

We are at the end of a two-year legislative cycle and so things are "quieting down". Other bills of interest are AB 1385 (Ting) and

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Mission Statement

Citrus College Adjunct Faculty Federation, (CCAFF), is dedicated to serving its membership by working to:

- Assure a level of professional respect from the District reflected in its policies and practices consistent with the achievement, dedication and professionalism of its adjunct employees.
- Through contract negotiations, maximize members ability to earn a fair wage consistent with education industry standards.
- Work to provide working conditions for adjunct faculty that maximize their effective interactions with students and co-workers.

AB 1397 (Ting). The bills are an attempt to make the accrediting agencies (currently ACCJC) more accountable.



CCAFF President Linda Chan with Assembly member Jose

The Lonely Adjunct

by Laura Wills

As an adjunct for the last six years, I've come to expect and resignedly accept the life of the part-timer. The "perks" of such life typically include using one's car as a dedicated office space, "freeway flying," limited-to-no office hours, lack of storage and work spaces, as well as the not so insubstantial issues such as job security, equitable pay and benefits. As any adjunct instructor knows all too well, these aspects of part-time instruction tend to remain constant wherever one may teach.

Most of my part-time teaching career has been as a night instructor whose classes would begin hours after many of the administrative offices closed and full-time faculty left. During that time, I experienced many of the downsides of part-time teaching listed above, but also something else: isolation. Although this was sometimes ideal as it meant a sense of complete independence, I also felt a sense of disconnect from my department and professional peers. Arriving right before class and leaving right after "like a specter in the night" as one colleague once noted, with almost no contact with other faculty or staff, left almost no room for a sense of community and campus involvement.

When I transitioned to Citrus and earlier classes, I realized that this disconnect from the broader campus environment isn't something that only night instructors grapple

with. Although no longer a “specter in the night,” it became clear that the state of being a “lonely adjunct” as some have come to call it, still occurs while teaching during the day on a campus buzzing with activity from students, faculty and staff.

As I now realize, whether teaching at night or during the day, adjunct faculty all over deal with possibly one of the biggest downsides of part-time instruction: a lack of integration and inclusion. This is apparent in the lack of professional development opportunities, training and access to departmental and division meetings. These barriers impede adjunct instructors’ ability to not only remain informed on educational and administrative policies such as student learning outcomes and course development, but also limit our ability to confer and commiserate with peers, and have a voice.

This lack of integration also harms students as it hinders professional and educational continuity within departments and across campus. The lack of integration however, is somewhat mitigated at Citrus, which unlike many other campuses offers a “Back-to-School” adjunct orientation meeting before each semester. For me, this was the first experience in my community college career where professional development was not only aimed at adjunct faculty, but also where a platform was provided to bring together administrators, adjunct faculty and union representatives. These orientations were enough for me to begin seeking greater involvement and information through one of the only consistent means for adjunct faculty: union participation. Although not quite a substitute for more professional development opportunities for adjuncts, union

participation is one avenue for greater integration and inclusion. For me, greater participation has in part helped shed this “lonely adjunct” role by allowing me greater connection to fellow faculty and a voice on campus.

CAMPUS EQUITY WEEK

by Linda Chan

Campus Equity Week was from October 26 – 30th. CCAFF members had a table near the campus center to talk with students and faculty about part time issues. This is a nation-wide campaign to bring attention to the inequities of being an “adjunct”, “part-timer”, “contingent”, “non-tenured” or any other title that doesn’t give us the same rights as full-time faculty. The same institutions of higher learning require the same job qualifications and yet do not give the same benefits, let alone equal pay for equal work or job security and continue to exploit part-time faculty. The numbers of full-time hires have been going down with an increase of part time hires. The CCAFF has been diligent in trying to get equal pay. Our pay is at 85% of full-time pay which is higher than most campuses.



Bill Zeman and Laura Wills talking to students about Campus Equity Week

Bill's Beef

Good Comes to Political Society Only Through Organization and Agitation Part 2

by Bill Zeman

In my previous article on this topic, I left off with the 10-Hour Day Movement in the mid-1800s. Another fight that occurred at this time was the fight for land grants. Long before the government of the United States gave any poor people welfare, they gave rich corporate welfare to big business. In order to encourage the build out of the train system, in some cases, the country gave six miles of land on each side of the tracks to the railroad companies that would build them. At other times they gave railroad companies cash grants, at others, they gave them low-interest loans.

The people organized and asked for land grants to landless individuals in the West because if the government could give free land to big business, why not to poor farmers? For many decades the politicians in Congress and the presidency blocked this. In 1848, the people formed a third political party to advocate for this and other interests of the common man called the Free Soil Party. They wanted free speech, meaning more open government and less government persecution of public speakers such as abolitionists and union organizers. They wanted free labor, meaning they wanted laws that allowed for collective bargaining and an end to government persecution of labor unions. They also wanted Free Men, meaning they wanted to ban slavery.

Slavery was finally banned during the Civil War by President Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation, but he only did this because the anti-slavery movement was so strong and would not support a war that was being fought only to preserve the union.

Lincoln's government also broke the long denial of land grants to individuals. His party, the Republicans, who owed their rise to the organized people's support, passed the Homestead Act, which allowed people to claim 160 acres of land for free.

After the war, organized people turned their focus to corruption in government. Repeated protests led to the 1883 Pendleton Act, which created a civil service that required education and merit in order to hold many federal jobs instead of political support. It also limited the practice of assessing campaign contributions from U.S. employees and established rules about where and how campaign funds could be raised. This began a long process in campaign finance reform that has recently been reversed to our peril.

Women also began their long struggle for voting rights in the mid-1800s. From 1848 to 1919, they practiced every tactic of organized advocacy from simple meetings to civil disobedience. Finally, fruit was born with the 19th Amendment. Blacks began their movement for equal rights in the period after the Civil War. They had great victories during the Reconstruction Era, and even though Jim Crow darkened the days after 1876, they continued their struggle in a myriad of ways until they settled on the tactics of mass civil disobedience, which Gandhi had shown to be so effective. Farmers were steadily hurt by the process of industrialization that drove productivity up and prices for crops down. They began to organize

Farmer's Alliances in 1877 that practiced everything from sharing supplies, insurance, storage, and equipment to forming third parties. The high price of railroad shipping was a real problem for them. Monopolies would overcharge them for shipping and they advocated for decades before Theodore Roosevelt began a long process of reigning in monopoly abuses.

The farmer's political organ, the Populist Party, was inclusive of blacks and women and advocated for a social security system, direct election of senators, and the 8-hour day. Organized agitation for all this would continue 50 years before all of this would be granted. Their enlightened inclusion of blacks actually hurt them in the dark age of the election of 1892 as Democrats in the South pelted populist candidates with rotten eggs and tomatoes and stuffed ballot boxes against them.

Momentum for reform built steadily in the 1890s. The arch-capitalist system, which benefitted the few at the expense of the many made socialism popular. A utopian book, *Looking Backward*, which envisioned a future in which all the workers served the state in a fair system, was a best seller. Nationalist clubs were formed to share elation over the book and to spread its doctrine. Reporters and scholars detailed the ills of the economy controlled by monopolies. *Cosmopolitan* and *McClures* got their start in the early 1900s as hard hitting investigative journals. This literature was read enthusiastically by the masses.

The big companies also ruthlessly exploited the environment. People formed groups such as the Sierra Club to advocate for reform. All this time in the late 1800s the unions were strong and launched large scale strikes to try to force

change for the working man. Christians who had led the abolition movement advocated a social gospel that branded the system of wage slavery as anti-social and anti-Christian. Women and social gospel folk worked not only for the right to vote, but launched missions to the poor, advocated prison reform, and pushed for municipal housekeeping. We can thank our second and third great grandmothers for parks, clean streets, and limitations on billboards.

The 1890s gave way to the Progressive Era of 1901 to 1920. Politicians who followed the people busted the monopolies, regulated big business, conserved the environment, improved public health and safety, provided social services to the working class, and made government more intellectually based and democratic. None of this was because of the benevolence of our leaders, but in response to a large and robust civil society continually agitating.

The roaring 20's are generally considered a regressive period in politics, but people's groups still made gains. Women built on the momentum of suffrage and birth control became legal thanks to Margaret Sanger and the many groups that supported it. Women also got government funding for pre-natal and early childhood care. Other interest groups forced the government to regulate roads, the airplane industry and radio broadcasting.

The unregulated over expansion of the capitalists system led to another depression, the worst yet, starting in 1930. For two years the government allowed mass starvation and great suffering until the people overwhelmingly elected Franklin Roosevelt on a platform of unprecedented government activism. The New Deal curtailed the famine and created millions of jobs and began

to rebuild the economy. The New Deal realized the dreams of the farmer's alliances by passing the Social Security Act in 1935. By the end of the New Deal, in 1939, the decades of effort on behalf of advocates against child labor and for the 8-hour day won both including a minimum wage with the Fair Labor Standards Act. In 1935, the long-time activism of unions netted the National Labor Relations Act out of the new dealers, which required business to grant collective bargaining rights if half the workers wanted it. When companies rejected the law, laborers in hundreds of workplaces innovated the sit-down strike and forced business compliance with the law. By 1947, the unions were ascendant with 15 million members, 35% of all non-agricultural workers. By the mid-1950s, half of union contracts included cost of living adjustments (COLA), and many other benefits. Many remaining non-union businesses like IBM and DuPont also gave the workers COLA and benefits to stay competitive. The middle class was stronger than ever.

The mid 1950s also yielded results for decades long activism on behalf of black Americans. The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People won desegregation of schools in *Brown v. Board of Education*. When racist white

people resisted this, it sparked a mass movement against all types of desegregation and discrimination that gained tremendous success in just ten years with the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965. The success of the African-American civil rights movement inspired many others and by the mid 1970s women, environmentalists, Native-Americans, and Chicanos also won tremendous achievements. Gay rights activists also started nationwide agitation in 1969 and our generation saw the pinnacle of the movement just this year.

The cascade of gains for the middle class began to dry up in the late 1970s. Alarmed at forty years of high income taxes and the tremendous increase of regulation, business leaders took a page from the people's playbook. They formed their own civil societies such as business round tables and manufacturer's association and they began to advocate strongly for their interest. The Chambers of Commerce became tremendous organs for the business view. They used their tremendous wealth to hire thousands of professional advocates and Congress and the state legislatures were overrun with lobbyists.

Ronald Reagan's election in 1980 began a period called the Conservative Revolution. A war began against unions and by 2014 their membership was down to 11%. Much of the social safety net, built from 1901 to the late 1970s was weakened or dismantled. Wealth disparity increased and by 2007 surpassed the all-time national high of 1929. Both Clinton Democrats and Republicans deregulated the banking industry and this ended the Long Boom and caused the Great Recession. The economy is still sluggish and has not regained the vibrancy of the pre 2008

period. Free public higher education added after World War II became unaffordable to provide tax cuts for the rich and high student debt is an epidemic. Much of this was over-shadowed by continued gains in civil rights; racism became politically incorrect due to a mushrooming of activism for equality, but true equity remains elusive.

Perhaps the biggest problem is the environment. Environmental laws were weakened in the Conservative Revolution and global warming has spiked. Scientists began predicting this in the 1950s. It was well understood by the 1970s, but the Reagan government cut spending on alternative energy by 90%. Both Bushes and Clinton resisted worldwide calls for climate accords. Only Obama has meaningfully addressed the problem, but it may be too little, too late. In the last five years we have seen environmental disasters related to climate change long predicted by science.

Hope is on the horizon. The Occupy Movement of 2010 succeeded in bringing wealth disparity into the mainstream of political conversation. Barack Obama has proposed and repeatedly pushed major reforms to address the problem since 2008. The limits of one enlightened leader have become more apparent and the most liberal in the 2016 presidential race tells us a mass movement is necessary to bring equality to all things that still elude us. People seem to be responding. Our history shows us the way. It may be time for another Progressive Era. Will we do it?

AFFILIATIONS

Citrus College Adjunct Faculty Federation (CCAFF) maintains an affiliation with:

- The American Federation of Teachers (AFT)
- The California Federation of Teachers (CFT)
- AFL-CIO
- The California Labor Federation
- The Los Angeles County Federation of Labor