

The L.A. Writers Collective is a diverse grouping of young revolutionary minded writers, photographers, artists, and bilingual translators working together to provide an alternative voice in a time of censorship and lies.

Our hearts belong to the people. We stand at the forefront reporting on their lives and struggles. The Collective's experiences have been very rich. Our trip to Fresno helped to uncover the tremendous obstacles and challenges faced by farm workers trying to stay a step ahead of hunger. Through our interviews we were able to put a human face to the numbers and statistics on hunger and we gave voice to the people who pick our fruits and vegetables under the unbearable heat of the sun.

Our journalists and photographers have also traveled around the world to report from the front-lines of the people's struggles. Some of our journalists traveled to Mexico to report on the rebel peasants fighting against an unjust expropriation of their land in San Salvador Atenco, Mexico and also went to Palestine to bring back the voices of the youth courageously resisting an unjust occupation. Journalists from our Collective traveled to Cancun, Mexico in the fall of 2003 to document a firsthand account of the protests against the World Trade Organization (WTO). Our articles have been published in the *Revolutionary Worker/Obrero Revolucionario*, a weekly newspaper published in English and Spanish that is packed with news the powerful don't want you to know. We also seek to be published in other progressive and radical publications.

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Old men and women sharpened machetes on the pavement. Peasants on horses rode through the streets of Mexico City. The

government wanted to take their land, pave it over, build an airport over it-- but the peasants rose up and said "NO!" We had to go there and talk with those rebel campesinos and campesinas. But we're not funded by corporations. We don't have sugar daddies. But we did need funds to fly to Mexico, buy film, and recording discs. So, we went to East L.A. and South Central with pictures of the peasants in struggle and aluminum coffee cans that read: "DONACIONES" on one side and "DONATIONS" on the other.



Workers under the hot sun in a Fresno garlic field.

A woman selling mangos along Cesar Chavez Avenue in East L.A. said, "I'm here in the U.S. because I have to work, but my heart is still in Mexico and with the struggle of my people. I want to know what's going on-- take this" and she put a fistful of her day's earnings into our donation can.

--Luciente Zamora, at a presentation after writing a four part series "Reporter's Notebook from Atenco, Mexico" (RW, Nov. 10, 2002)

The support we have received from fruit vendors in East L.A., garment workers in Downtown L.A., and people enjoying a warm Sunday afternoon at the Alameda Swapmeet in South Central fills us with responsibility and a sense of duty to our readers.

We plan to reach out to our audience with diverse forms of journalism, including written and photographic essays, illustrations, and innovative layouts-- but to do this we need your support. If you have a desire to see this type of journalism flourish-- sponsor the L.A. Writers Collective.

Our Collective needs very basic tools to maintain its existence. We have recently opened an office where the writers can meet and discuss writing plans, where the photographers and artists can discuss layout plans, and where our translators can work on translating every article we write. We need to keep our lights on, our computers going, and we need our phone line working to communicate with contacts. We want to be able to continue to function as we have been, but we also want to develop and grow. Our layout team needs computers and layout software. Our translators need transcribing equipment to facilitate their important task. Our writers would like to start a travel fund to allow them to travel

and cover the struggles of the people in different parts of the world.

We are asking for your help because we believe that our work belongs to the people and needs to be supported by progressive and radical minded people with whatever contribution is possible--whether big or small. The greater your contribution, the greater our ability to provide an alternative voice that speaks the truth in a time of lies.

"Some of the most productive and fertile agricultural land in the U.S. is in the Central Valley of California. After reading a report and learning that people living in this part of California suffer from the highest rates of "food insecurity" and hunger in the state, we asked ourselves: how is it possible that people living in a "breadbasket" are hungry?"

"We wanted to go there to listen and learn from the stories of the women and men who are responsible for aisles and aisles full of fruits and vegetables. So, we got a van, packed it with cameras, tape recorders, notebooks and young revolutionary journalists and photographers and drove towards Fresno. Our trip took us to a field of garlic as large as a football stadium, to cottonfields with long green stalks that reached past our waists, to a farm full of ripe melons and to a day labor corner where people arrived before dawn to wait and see if anyone would offer them work. Under the same hot bright sun as the workers, we tried to capture a glimpse into their lives-- inside and outside the fields."

--From the article, "Fields of Hunger," by the L.A. Writers Collective (RW, Sep. 21, 2003)



In the cotton fields of Fresno.



A demonstrator at the anti-WTO protest in Cancun poses with a shield he "confiscated" from riot police.

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All photographs were taken by members of the L.A. Writers Collective.

Support the L.A. Writers Collective



Women hammer away at a fence that separates protesters from the WTO conference in Cancun, Mexico.