

Immigration Raid Breeds Fear

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and passed out bilingual cards designed to assert Fifth Amendment rights.

Possibly no one has lost more sleep than Diana Ruiz of Oregon's Catholic Charities. She has been helping organize emergency services to address fear in the undocumented community, fear which seeped into the

greater community, as exhibited by the large, non-Hispanic majorities that showed up to the services.

People like Ruiz couldn't do anything without a central location and powerful allies like Northeast Alberta's St. Andrew Church, headed by Pastor Chuck Lienert.

Ask Ruiz why immigrants insist on entering the country illegally, and she argues that the federal govern-

ment is partly to blame because it has taken no action to reform a broken system.

"A lot of people tell you to come legally," says Ruiz. "We'd really love to come legally, but they have no idea what it takes to come here to the United States; it's almost impossible unless you have a political friend or someone who has a lot of money."

Many city leaders joined advo-

cacy organizations in speaking out against the action by federal immigration officers, but the attending national-media blitz divided the country. It's no surprise then that the community's intensifying mixed emotions include anger and anguish, with a little hope.

The restrictive effects of a global economy have galvanized support for immigrant amnesty. "You used be able to survive in Mexico with your crops and your hens," Ruiz says, "but you cannot do that anymore."

Nonetheless, Ruiz expects that America will remain an accepting melting pot for hardworking, poor foreigners, especially in progressive cities like Portland.

"There are always going to be people who are going to tell you to go back, but there are many more people who will tell you welcome, or thank you for the job you do, thank you for helping the economy, thank you for just sharing your culture," she said.

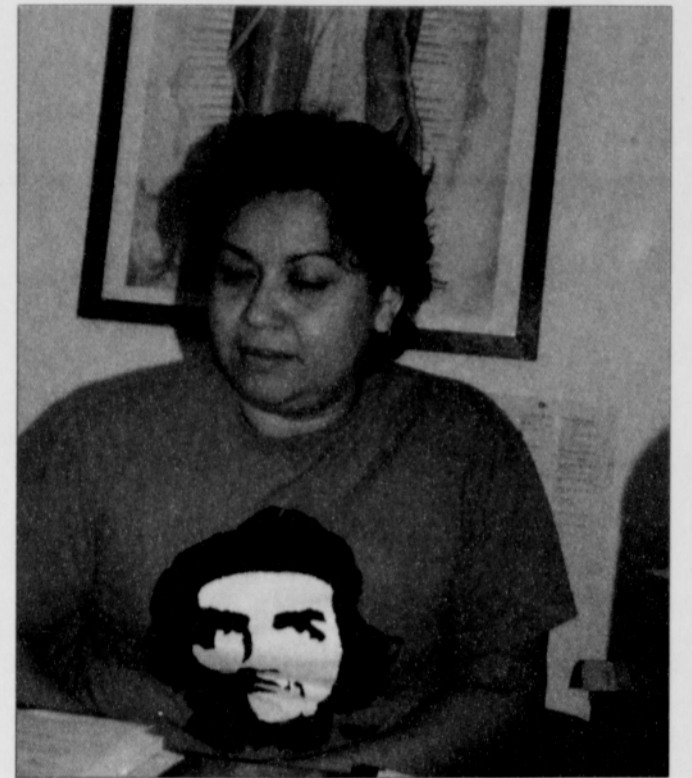


PHOTO BY RAYMOND RENDELMAN/THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

Hispanic-advocate Diana Ruiz works out of the St. Andrew Church Parish Hall in northeast Portland. She has been losing a lot of sleep lately working on behalf of people caught up in the battle over immigration.

Faith Leaders Condemn Worker Raid

Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon condemned last week's raid at the Del Monte plant in north Portland by the federal government's Immigration and Customs Enforcement agency.

The group said it was "deeply saddened by this inhumane and unnecessary action, which has torn apart families and caused a great deal of unnecessary suffering to

children and their parents.

"To summarily arrest large numbers of mothers and fathers who are working hard to support their families (leaving their children without their parents) is unacceptable. As well as violating the basic principles of compassion and justice, these actions are inhumane and tear at the fabric of our community," said an

Ecumenical Ministries statement.

The group said while there are many legitimate concerns about immigration issues, low wage undocumented workers are not responsible for, and have no power over, the grand political and economic policies that have left them with few options for a decent life for themselves and their children.

Mixed Bag of Properties Along Interstate

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rican American community.

"The PDC is good at trying to force things because they have the money, property and wherewithal to do it," Brown said. "But it doesn't mean it's right for the community. They have their usual suspects around the table, but nobody chooses to listen to cultural differences."

Brown says much of the neighborhood didn't want light rail along Interstate, a sentiment echoed by Portland voters who shot down the MAX proposal in the 1990s, prompting the city to create an Urban Renewal Area which, which made them eligible for federal funds for light rail construction.

"MAX acted much like the median put along Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.," Brown explained. "It took away parking and killed business."

Brown said he has met with City Commissioner Erik Sten about af-



PHOTO BY SARAH BLOUNT/THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

New apartments and condominiums in the Interstate Avenue Corridor, like this one on North Montana Avenue, are becoming increasingly common among the single-family neighborhoods of north Portland.

fordable housing in the region, or the lack of it.

"At this point I want to ask City Council to request rent control in northeast Portland because it's outrageous," he said.

Housing advocates at the Community Development Network recognize PDC's efforts in affordability.

"There haven't been enough projects or resources dedicated to affordable housing, but I think the PDC and City Council have made the commitment, said Sam Chase, the network's executive director.

He said his group was instrumental last year in getting a City Council vote to set aside 30 percent of urban renewal funds for affordable housing and increased access for people of color.

The money will help those who fall between 0 and 30 percent of the median family income, capping out with a family of four that earns no more than \$20,350 a year.

It may be hard to imagine a family getting by on so little in the Interstate neighborhood as property values soar, and for the most part low-income households have been priced out of the area.

"I think [the city] has taken a historic step with this 30 percent," Chase said. "But there's going to be as much of a challenge to make sure these dollars get spent on the

right kinds of project and are effective and efficient."

Several members of the community advisory board, including Michelle Haynes of REACH Community Development, bring to the group concerns of shutting out low-income residents.

REACH is collaborating with the PDC and TriMet in one of the first efforts to fight displacement because of gentrification by bringing affordable rental units to the old Crown Motel site and an adjacent lot near North Killingsworth Street. The mixed-use building, opening late next year, will include more than 50 units for those living below 50 percent of the Median Family Income, and will offer Section 8 certificates for families in the three-bedroom units.

The PDC is helping fund REACH's construction and land costs, which Haynes says has rapidly risen over the past decade.

We're looking for more opportunities [along Interstate], but the question is when will there be money available to develop more housing?" Haynes said.

The PDC invites the public to weigh in on the future of the Interstate Corridor Urban Renewal Area through a series of meetings taking place over the next few months. Visit www.pdc.us for a schedule or more information.

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School Ends with Field Day Fun

To celebrate the beginning of summer vacation, Jefferson High School students line up Friday for airbrush tattoos dispensed by hired event staff during a field day on the last day of school.