

¡Boycott Forever 21!

My name is Lucy Chavac. I am a garment worker and a member of the Garment Worker Center in Los Angeles, California. I sewed for five years in a Los Angeles garment factory that produced Forever 21 clothing, which is a clothing line for young women. In that factory, I did not get the minimum wage or overtime pay that was owed to me and when I spoke up and asked for a penny raise on what I was paid per piece, I was fired. Since then, I have joined up with other workers who sewed Forever 21 clothing to fight this abuse and win back the wages owed to us. In November 2001, we filed a lawsuit against Forever 21 and launched a national boycott of the popular clothing company. Although Forever 21 profited from our labor and in fact, predicts \$500 million in sales for 2002, they deny any responsibility to us the workers who sewed their clothes! We know that they have over 120 stores throughout the country and decided we had to take our message nationwide. In October, of this year, we began a National Speaking Tour and visited New York, Miami, San Antonio, Austin, San Francisco, and Washington D.C. among other places.

I decided to go on this tour to help promote the Forever 21 campaign; so more people would know what Forever 21 is really about. Through the support of the Garment Worker Center and Sweatshop Watch, our national speaking tour has been very successful and we've had the opportunity to meet and learn from wonderful people.



My participation in the national speaking tour was to go to San Antonio and Austin, Texas. There I met many organizations such as the Southwest Worker's Union, Fuerza Unida, the Coalition for Justice in the Maquiladoras, Esperanza Center, and KOOP Radio. We also met with students and student groups at the University of Texas at Austin and Trinity University. For example, we met with a student group working on fair trade coffee issues. We also spent an entire day giving presentations at San Antonio high schools about the Forever 21 campaign, where many students were surprised to hear about what happens to garment workers in the U.S. Many did not know that sweatshops exist here in the U.S.

From my experiences on this speaking tour, I learned that together we can overcome barriers. I also learned some very helpful organizing strategies. For example, the idea of a sewing cooperative such as the one we saw at Fuerza Unida really

motivated me and I'll be sharing that idea with my compañeros at the Center. At Fuerza Unida, I was also



impressed by the confidence and strength of the women there. That experience reminded me that as women, we cannot allow ourselves to be mistreated in any part of our lives. I think it would be a good idea for our own Center to begin addressing women's issues by giving workshops specifically for the women. It is important that we take away the blinders we have worn for years. We must become aware of our rights and become united.

I also want to say that, after meeting with organizations in Texas that have been working for many years, I see how important it is that we, the workers, never stop supporting each other. We must appreciate that we have learned about our rights and continue to support other workers, even after our own cases are won.

Finally, I want to thank all of the organizations in San Antonio and Austin that shared their time with us and helped to coordinate speaking events and mall actions for us. We hope we can continue to count on your support. You really helped us in our fight to achieve our dream of just wages for garment workers.



**¡¡¡Unidos
Venceremos!!!**

**United We Will
Win!!!**

Support the Workers! Call and Write Forever 21!

Tell them its time to take responsibility!

Do Won Chang, President
2001 S. Alameda St.
Los Angeles, CA 90058
213-747-2121

Take Action!

Forever 21 National Week of Action

December 2- 8, 2002

**Organize leafleting or picketing
at a local Forever 21 store,
letter writing, call-ins, etc.**

www.garmentworkercenter.org
888-449-6115



Domi

"I believe that the people should not allow themselves to be overwhelmed by the sadness. You must paint, dance, do something creative so that you can stay healthy. You must take risks. My work is political. With my painting I speak to everyone. I speak to the Power, rejecting it and I speak to the people, la gente, without Power. I tell them we are brothers and sisters. We must pick up our heads and find out what is good in this life. I feel a special satisfaction inside when I know that my work is being shared in indigenous communities because here in Mexico the indigenous communities are the ones who suffer the most and I am an indigenous woman." - Domitila Dominguez

Domitila Dominguez was born May 12, 1948 in the Mazateca community of San Pedro Ixcatlán, Oaxaca. At a very young age, she watched her aunts create and weave huipiles. During the afternoon, she would take care of the plants, sit at the doorway and weave small pieces of cloth with threads of many colors. In the 1970s she participated in a collective of leftists in Mexico City and painted many murals in the streets. In 1985 she and others, including her family, formed Colectivo Callejero.

When the Zapatistas rose up in arms January 1, 1994, she understood from the beginning that their struggle for liberation/autonomy/ justice was also her struggle, as an indigenous woman and as someone who at an early age was displaced from her family's ejido, removed from her lands. Domi's work has been greatly influenced by zapatismo, a movement that transcends the borders of Mexico. In 1995, she served as one of the advisors to the Zapatistas during the San Andrés Peace Accords. Domitila believes that her paintings, which have been

reproduced in books, calendars, and posters, is one of the ways she supports the demands/needs of indigenous communities.

In the February Voz, you will find a story from el sub Marcos and el Viejo Antonio to commemorate the Ninth Anniversary of the Zapatista Uprising, of January 1st, 1994. In this issue, turn the page and find a traditional Mayan story penned by Pat Mora available with beautiful illustrations by Domi.

**Domitila Dominguez
Exhibit Opening
Saturday, January 25, 2003
Esperanza Peace & Justice Center
922 San Pedro**

If you would like to volunteer to help mount the exhibit, paint walls, or distribute invitations call us at 228-0201. See backpage for ad.