



## Demonstration and Leafleting at Levi Strauss Headquarters Support the Mexican Workers of Levi's Suppliers

Thursday February 16 at Noon --- 1155 Battery Street, San Francisco

Help us send a message to Levi Strauss that they can't have their Code of Conduct and sweatshops too. Speakers include Fernando Lopez, organizer of the independent Union of Manufacturas Lajat in Gomez Palacio, Durango, Mexico

For over a year jeans workers at Lajat Manufacturing in north central Mexico have been waging a struggle for their livelihoods and the freedom to form their own union. Lajat has tried everything to stop them including closing their plant, firing and blacklisting them, and unleashing dozens of police on them inside the plant to beat and arrest them. Lajat owes workers hundreds of thousands of dollars in severance pay, back wages and overtime, and it has failed to make the required contributions to government benefits funds.

Levi Strauss is a major Lajat customer. The Coalition for Justice in the Maquiladoras and the workers, whose organization is a member of CJM, have since April 2005 been asking that Levi Strauss enforce their Code of Conduct and that Lajat stop violating it. Last May Levi brought effective pressure on Lajat to reinstate fired workers, but they did nothing to stop Lajat's brutal repression of workers in October or the plant closing plant in November. Instead, last month they gave Lajat new contracts. Meanwhile the workers won a very significant victory when a federal labor tribunal ordered the local Gomez Palacio labor board to formally register the independent union. Finally last Friday the labor board complied. This is an opening for the realization of the first independent, democratic union in that part of Mexico.

Whether Lajat complies and respects the law by letting its workers organize is up to Levi Strauss. Levi has the economic clout to make Lajat behave. Now we demand that they do it. That's what we're going to tell them at the demonstration on February 16 and again of February 17 when we have arranged a meeting with them. Help us make the message loud and clear:



### **We Want Jeans With Justice for the Lajat Workers!**

*Organized by The Coalition for Justice in the Maquiladoras in cooperation with our affiliates Sweatshop Watch, Marin Interfaith Task Force and Global Exchange. SF/LCLAA, Campaign for Labor Rights, National Network for Immigrant and Refugee Rights, and Asian Law Caucus.*

For more information, go to [www.coalitionforjustice.net](http://www.coalitionforjustice.net) Contact [jancel@igc.org](mailto:jancel@igc.org)

The Coalition for Justice in the Maquiladoras is a tri national coalition of labor, religious, grassroots, community and woman's organizations from Mexico, the U.S. and Canada. Our offices are in San Antonio Texas. Our efforts are grounded in supporting workers and community struggles for social, economic and environmental justice where the maquiladoras [assembly plants of the multinationals corporations] are located.

**Please have your organization send a letter to Levi Strauss:**

Michael Kobori  
Vice President, Global Code of Conduct  
Levi Strauss & Co.  
[MKobori@levi.com](mailto:MKobori@levi.com)

Dear Michael Kobori:

We are aware of the struggle of Lajat workers in Gomez Palacio, Durango, Mexico for dignified treatment and freedom of association. Lajat has repeatedly violated your Code of Conduct, and we feel that your efforts to get compliance have been insufficient. Now, against the odds, the workers have gotten their independent union officially recognized by the labor board. Either Levi Strauss will stand on the side of ethical and legal rights for these workers or you will condone union busting. You are a major customer of Lajat and you have the economic power to demand that Lajat comply with your Code. It's up to you.

We demand that Levi Strauss secure compliance from Lajat on the following:

- 1) Reinstatement of all fired workers from the Gomez Palacio plant either by reopening the plant or providing jobs at the Torreon plant including transportation
- 2) That Lajat stop its union busting and fully respect the rights of its workers to organize in a union of their own choosing.
- 3) That Lajat remove workers' names from the black list and cease using it.
- 4) That all workers be paid what is owed them including unpaid wages, unpaid overtime, and that they pay all outstanding contributions to government benefits funds including IMSS-Social Security and INFONAVIT-housing funds.
- 5) If Lajat refuse to reinstate the workers Lajat must also pay full severance according with Mexican Law

Sincerely,