



# BORDER BRIEFS

## NEWS AND UPDATES ON MIGRATION AND IMMIGRATION

Issue No. 1 July, 1984.

As Mexico's economic crises has deepened (its worst since the 1920's), migration to the U.S. has jumped dramatically. During the year ending last September 30, the INS apprehended 1.03 million people crossing the Mexican border "illegally." INS officials predict that the first half of this year they will have apprehended more "illegal" immigrants than they did in all of 1981-82. About 40% of the border crossers caught last year along the 2,000 mile U.S. border were arrested in the Tijuana, Mexico and San Ysidro, California area, which is less than 30 miles long and stretches inland from the Pacific Ocean. (Christian Science Monitor 6/24/84; Rocky Mountain News 5/26/84; Parade Magazine 4/29/84)

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The largest single portion of the Justice Department's 1985 budget is a request for 1,000 new Border Patrol officers to be stationed between El Paso, Texas and Chula Vista, California. The INS estimates first year costs of \$100-150 million to beef up the Border Patrol in this area. INS Commissioner Alan Nelson said the flow of "illegal" non-Mexican immigrants across the southern border is increasing. He said non-Mexican crossings now average 12% and at some border crossings they are as high as 40%. (Rocky Mountain News 5/26/84)

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Fourteen year old Mario Moreno-Lopez, who is in the U.S. "legally" on a green card, was deported twice within a few days after a team of U.S. INS agents caught him in a grocery store parking lot in Santa Ana, California. Top INS officials began an investigation into whether their agents had violated agency and court orders on handling minors after his ordeal was over. Last week a federal judge temporarily halted all deportations of unaccompanied minors, filling detention centers with some 200 youngsters. (Time, 5/5/84)

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The Supreme Court ruled 7 to 2 that immigration officials may conduct unannounced raids on factories and businesses to look for "undocumented workers." (Wall Street Journal, 6/11/84)

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A vacant industrial building near East 33rd Avenue and Nome Street in Aurora may soon be converted to a detention facility to house and process "undocumented workers." Aurora officials met with representatives of Behavioral Systems Southwest, a California based firm that operates facilities under a contract with the INS, to approve the request to convert the building. (Rocky Mountain News, 5/9/84)

A new INS detention center in Aurora, scheduled to be completed in June will mean the apprehension of more "undocumented workers" in metropolitan Denver, an INS official said. The INS in Denver has been forced to transport people to jails as far away as Pueblo because of lack of jail space. The new center will house up to 100 people. (Rocky Mountain News, 5/10/84)

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On June 20, 1984, the House approved its version of the Simpson-Mazolli bill by a vote of 216-211. The Senate passed its bill 76-18 last year. For the bill to become law, negotiators from the House and Senate must work out the differences, some of which are substantial. The compromise version must then be passed again by the House and Senate, and signed by the President. (Denver Post 6/24/84)

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Former President Ford, Williard Butcher, chief executive officer of Chase Manhattan Bank, and A.W. Clausen, president of the World Bank, endorsed the Simpson-Mazzoli immigration bill. They were among 50 corporate leaders attending Ford's World Forum, jointly sponsored by the American Enterprise Institute and the Vail Foundation. (Rocky Mountain News, 6/25/84)

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California agriculture groups, which fought vigorously for the guest worker provision, were pleased by the House approval of Simpson-Mazzoli. They said the bill was a needed step toward assuring they will have an ample labor supply at peak harvest. (San Francisco Chronicle 6/21/84)

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Mexico City newspapers have been reporting the latest developments in the Simpson-Mazzoli bill with banner headlines. An editorial called the measure "intense and antagonistic" and a "racist type" law. The newspaper, El Norte, in the northern industrial city of Monterrey said, "The law is crucial for Mexico because in one of its points it declares hiring undocumented workers a crime. This escape valve of unemployment that has been working in our country for ages will be completely closed if this law is approved. Members of Congress are being pressured to approve inhuman laws like the Simpson-Mazzoli..." (Rocky Mountain News, 6/17/84)

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Mexican workers send dollars back home. They are one of the chief sources of foreign exchange for the Mexican economy, estimated by U.S. officials at \$3 billion a year. Enforcement of the Simpson-Mazzoli immigra-

tion bill would cause Mexico to lose nearly \$1 billion in revenue from "undocumented workers" each year the Bank of Mexico said. Money sent back to Mexico by "undocumented workers" is the third largest source of dollar revenue in the country, after petroleum sales and tourism. (Rocky Mountain News, 6/21/84)

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Mexico will relocate 46,000 Guatemalan refugees from jungle camps along its southern border to refugee centers farther inside the country, an Interior Ministry official said Wednesday. The decision seemed to resolve a long-standing conflict between the Interior and Foreign ministries about what to do with the Guatemalan refugees. Foreign Ministry officials wanted to grant the refugees status as political exiles while the Interior Ministry preferred to treat them as illegal migrants, either sending them back to Guatemala or issuing them temporary visas. (New York Times, 5/3/84)

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Stacey Lynn Merkt, a layworker at Casa Oscar Romero, was convicted May 14, 1984 of "illegally" conspiring to transport two people from El Salvador to the U.S. Casa Romero, operated by the Catholic Diocese of Brownsville, Texas, has provided temporary housing, food, clothing, and travel assistance to Central American refugees since 1982. Merkt was sentenced to two years of probation on June 27. (Rocky Mountain News, 5/15/84; Guardian, 7/11/84)

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Churches, synagogues and monasteries around the country are defying U.S. law by providing sanctuary to Central American refugees. The Weston Priory, a residence of 12 Benedictine monks in Weston, Vermont, became the 100th religious community in the U.S. to join the sanctuary movement. (Guardian, 5/2/84)

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New York City's Riverside Church recently became the 137th church in the country to provide sanctuary to Central American refugees. (Guardian, 7/11/84)

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The Supreme Court reversed a lower court ruling that immigrants seeking refuge in this country need only prove a "well-founded fear of persecution" to avoid deportation. Instead, they must demonstrate a "clear probability" they will be persecuted if they are

deported to their homelands. Shelley Dodge, a lawyer specializing in immigration cases said the Supreme Court's decision "is going to make it much more difficult for people to be granted political asylum. Many refugees flee their countries without the proof they would need." (Rocky Mountain News, 6/6/84)

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About 30 Ku Klux Klan members marched on the Texas Capitol Saturday to protest immigration policies, while 600 lawmen protected them from chanting demonstrators along the parade route... The Klan members carried signs saying: "Equal Rights for Whites", "Racial Purity is America's Security" and "Stop Illegal Immigration; Close Our Borders Now." (Rocky Mountain News, 4/15/84)

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The trip across the border between Tijuana, Mexico and San Diego California is short, but it's highly dangerous because gangs roam the Canyons and mesas, attacking and robbing border crossers. "We've had cases where the bandits will shoot the victims first, or stab them, or hit them with rocks before they rob them, and in most cases they'll only get several dollars. They steal watches and shoes -- just about anything of value," said a Border Patrol agent. Last year, four homicides, 41 robberies and six rapes were reported in this border area -- a small percentage of the actual amount of crime because of the border crossers' fear of deportation. (Rocky Mountain News, 6/4/84)

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A recent analysis by Dr. Donald Huddle, a Rice University economics professor estimated that nonpayment of taxes by employers hiring "undocumented immigrants" amounted to \$11 billion a year, and that all told \$18 billion a year was "being siphoned off into the pockets of greedy employers" through failure to pay taxes and provide benefits and through payment of substandard wages. (Denver Post, 6/24/84)

The Denver Post/Monday, June 18, 1984



#### AN EDITORIAL NOTE:

During the Mexican-American War of 1846-48, the U.S., in its expansionist drive for more land, resources, and profits, invaded a sovereign Mexican nation which had included the current states of Texas, Arizona, New Mexico, California, Nevada, Utah and part of Colorado. Through the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo (1848) and the Gadsden Purchase of 1853, the U.S. established the current U.S.-Mexico border at the point of a gun, and completed its occupation of 51% of Mexico's national territory.

The militarily imposed border has helped to perpetuate the colonization of 90 million Mexican people on both sides. To the south, most Mexicans live in extreme poverty, while their labor and vast resources have gone to enrich the corrupt and repressive Mexican ruling class, as well as U.S. and other foreign corporations. North of the border, 20 million Mexicans face unemployment, poverty and police terror in their communities. At the same time, the U.S. has been trying for 135 years to break Mexican resistance in the occupied territories, and to destroy their identity as one Mexican people by suppressing their language, history and traditions.

**Border Briefs** is a publication of the New Movement in Solidarity with the Mexican Revolution. We organize Northamericans to support the revolutionary struggle of Mexicans on both sides of the border, a border which we do not recognize as legitimate. We agree with the position of the Movimiento de Liberacion Nacional Mexicano (MLNM) which says that the Mexican people have the right to migrate freely anywhere from the South to the occupied northern territories (the current U.S. southwest), as well as the right to reunify their occupied homeland into a socialist Republic of Mexico. This involves a struggle against the oppressive governments of both Mexico and the U.S.

Most of the wording for **Border Briefs** comes directly from the original sources, but certain terms have been changed or put in quotation marks: "legal", "illegal", "alien", "migration (migrant)", "immigration (immigrant)".

While the U.S. government considers the theft of northern Mexico completely "legal" and protected by U.S. law, they complain that Mexican workers "illegally" cross the border "to steal our jobs." Throughout **Border Briefs**, "legal" and "illegal" are in quotation marks because we do not recognize any right of the U.S. government to establish a "legality" based on the conquest of nations and peoples.

"Immigration" refers to the movement of a people across a border into another country, as for example from Central American nations into the U.S. However, Mexicans who cross the militarily imposed border into the U.S. do not cross into another country, but into their occupied homelands. Therefore, we use "migration" and "migrants" in referring to Mexicans moving to the occupied territories, since migration is the movement within one given country.

The term "alien" is not used in **Border Briefs**. "Aliens" usually conjure up visions of monsters invading from outer space. Used in reference to Mexicans and other Third World people, this term reinforces the white supremacist ideology which encourages Northamericans to see Third World people as the source of their problems--at the same time that it turns U.S. history upside-down.