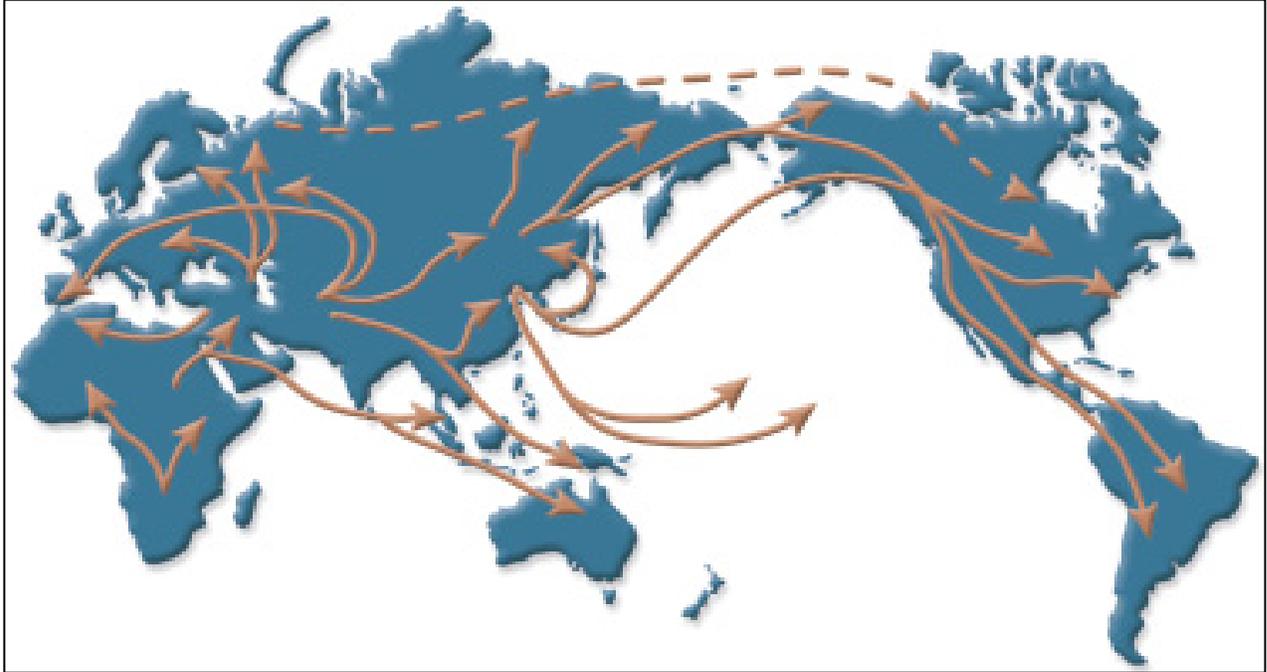


GLOBALIZATION

&

MIGRATION



There is no easy walk to freedom anywhere, and many of us will have to pass through the valley of the shadow of death again and again before we reach the mountaintop of our desires.

~**Nelson Mandela**



**American Friends
Service Committee**

Quaker values in action



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INTRODUCTION

The content of this short magazine is an amalgamation of different resources. The articles were chosen because they provide insight in helping us understand the complexities and many facets of Globalization and Migration. In addition, we hope you gain insight into the economic, cultural and social implications of these global phenomenon. Not all of the concepts or language in the Zine is endorsed by AFSC. Specifically, we never use the word 'illegal' to refer to immigrants. People may be out of status for many reasons, but that doesn't make them "illegal." We do not believe it is helpful to adopt dehumanizing terms that are racially charged, legally inaccurate or deny people due process. That is why at AFSC, we use terms like migrant, undocumented, without status or economic refugee instead of the I-word. If you have any suggestions and/or things you would like for us to include, please email Jordan Garcia (jgarcia@afsc.org). Enjoy!

TERMS YOU MIGHT NEED TO KNOW

- CAPITAL FLOWS:** the movement of investment capital from one country to another.
- CAPITALISM:** an economic system in which the means of production and investment tools are privately owned and operated for profit in a market system. Capitalism has been critiqued as inherently exploitative and creating increased wealth for those who control the means of production, while marginalizing those who provide the labor to those who own the means of production.
- CASH CROPS:** Crops such as coffee or cut flowers grown specifically for export.
- COMMODIFICATION:** To turn into or treat as a commodity; make commercial. (Example of this are water, fishing areas and land).
- COMMODITIES:** A raw material or primary agricultural product that can be bought and sold, such as copper or coffee.
- COMPARATIVE ADVANTAGE:** A component of free market theory that states that if each nation made just those things which it could produce cheaper relative to a foreign country and then trade with other nations to get that which they could produce relatively cheaper, wealth would expand and everyone would benefit.
- CONDITIONALITY:** Countries must adopt specified economic policies as a condition for receiving a loan from multilateral financial institutions such as the International Monetary Fund or the World Bank. One example of conditionality is Structural Adjustment Programs which include stringent austerity measures that in many cases have had devastating effects on struggling economies.
- CONTINGENT LABOR:** Includes part-timers, temporary workers and independent contractors; workers in jobs structured to be of limited duration.
- ECONOMY:** The wealth and resources of a country or region, esp. in terms of the production and consumption of goods and services.
- ECONOMIC GROWTH:** steady growth in the productive capacity of the economy (and so a growth of national income).
- ECONOMIC REFUGEE:** A person that has fled his or her country of origin, seeking to escape oppressive poverty. One of the only options that many immigrants, i.e. economic refugees, find themselves with to ensure the survival and well-being of their families is to join or take refuge in another countries' low-wage market.
- EXTERNALIZATION:** is a socio-economical term describing how a business maximizes its profits by off-loading indirect costs and forcing negative effects to a third party.
- DEMAND:** the want or desire to possess a good or service with the necessary goods, services, or financial instruments necessary to make a legal transaction for those goods or services.
- FAIR TRADE:** These companies negotiate directly with the growers or producers of products to establish a fair price for the product. In commodities such as coffee, organizations have committed to paying a price and following procedures which meet needs of the small growers even when the world market is below that price.

FDI: Foreign direct investment, investment by a company in a country other than that in which the company is based.

FREE TRADE: A term based on a theory in economics, but in reality the practice is something quite different, the theory of free trade contends that everyone in the world will be better off if each nation eliminates tariffs and other barriers to the flow of products across borders. The practice of 'free trade' departs from theory by including the export of money either for investment purposes or speculation. With firms able to move both money and products around the world, the benefits of lower prices and higher wages have not been enjoyed by most people. In addition, under recent 'free trade' agreements, the concept of barriers to trade has been expanded to include domestic regulations, public health and human rights measures, and environmental protection laws which inhibit business activity.



<http://www.scottbieser.com/images/fortress-America.jpg>

FTA: A Free Trade Area is a term used for a group of states that have reduced or eliminated trade barriers between themselves, but who maintain their own individual tariffs as to other states.

GDP: Gross Domestic Product - the total market values of goods and services produced by workers and capital within a nation's borders during a given period (usually 1 year).

GLOBALIZATION: The term frequently used to identify a trend toward increased flow of goods, services, money, and ideas across national borders and the subsequent integration of the global economy. However, the term is also used to refer to a deliberate project led by powerful institutions, people, and countries like the United States apply a single template of economic strategy and policy – 'market fundamentalism' – to all countries and all situations.

GNP: Gross National Product - a measure of an economy's economic performance. It is the market value of all goods and services produced by the residents of a particular country. It includes the income of those residents earned by corporations owned overseas and from

working abroad.

IMF: The International Monetary Fund is an organization of governments set up at the Bretton Woods conference in 1944 to stabilize currency exchange rates among trading countries. In 1971 the IMF began providing emergency loans to countries in debt to foreign creditors if they satisfied conditions, called Structural Adjustment policies, for restructuring their economies. The IMF voting system is weighted in proportion to the amount invested which means it is controlled by the major industrial powers.

INTEREST RATES: The price of money. Interest is what you pay when you borrow money and what you are paid when you lend your money to someone else, like a bank.

MAQUILLA/MAQUILLADORA: A Spanish word for factory which produces products for export; often under sweatshop conditions.



MARKETS: A market is any place where the sellers of a particular good or service can meet with the buyers of that goods or service where there is a potential for a transaction to take place. The buyers must have something they can offer in exchange for there to be a potential transaction.

MARKET FUNDAMENTALISM: A strategy to apply strict market principles – free trade, privatization, and reduced government regulation – to all countries and all situations.

MIGRATION: Movement of people to a new area or country in order to find work or better living conditions.

MONETARY POLICY: The actions of a central bank, currency board or other regulatory committee that determine the size and rate of growth of the money supply, which in turn affects interest rates. Monetary policy is maintained through actions such as increasing the interest rate, or changing the amount of money banks need to keep in the vault (bank reserves).

NAFTA: The North American Free Trade Agreement, between Canada, Mexico, and the United States, went into effect in 1994 and created the largest free trade zone in the world. NAFTA promised to increase the competitiveness of the region in relation to the rest of the world and increase jobs and prosperity in all three nations, but the evidence points to the

contrary.

NEOLIBERALISM: A view of the world based on the belief that the optimal economic system is achieved by giving free reign to market participants, privatization, free trade, and the shrinking of government intervention in the economy. Critics argue that neoliberal policies prioritize corporate profits over the welfare of the working majority and society at large. See also Washington Consensus.

PRIVATIZATION: The process of private, for-profit business taking over the provision of public services. Types of government contracts that have privatized include prisons, water utilities, trash collection, clerical jobs, food service, information system jobs, and job placement for welfare recipients.

RACE TO THE BOTTOM: The constant search for cheaper wages, lower taxes and weaker environmental and other regulations, produces a downward spiral in socio-economic conditions in the United States in in countries around the world. For example, jobs moved from Detroit to Mexico in pursuit of lower wages, and now jobs are being moved from Mexico to China.

SAPs: Structural Adjustment Programs are a tool used by organizations such as the International Monetary fund and World Bank that primarily impose neoliberal rules in exchange for loans or grants. Typical SAPs include emphasizing exports over goods produced for people locally; eliminating all barriers to the flow of goods, services, and money from outside the country; keeping inflation low and wages stagnant; privatizing public services; reducing government spending; and balancing government budgets.

SECONDARY LABOR MARKET: Occupations that provide insecure jobs, low wages, little or no benefits, and poor or hazardous conditions of work.

SUBSIDIES: Grants of money made by the government to either a seller or a buyer of a certain product or service, thereby altering the price of cost in a way which affects the output. Governments usually make payments to domestic producers to offset partially their costs or producing and selling certain goods and services. Subsidies are commonly used to support infant firms just entering a new market, to bail out older firms suffering from intensified competition, and to provide support for sectors (such as farming) deemed essential.

SUPPLY: The total amount of a good or service available for purchase; along with demand, one of the two key determinants of price.

SUSTAINABILITY: Meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

SUSTAINABLE GROWTH: Growth that does not negatively affect the poor, workers and the environment; economic growth that is just and fair improves the likelihood of such growth in the future.

TARIFF: A duty (or tax) applied to goods transported from one country to another, or on imported products. Tariffs raise the prices of imported goods, thus making them less competitive within the market if the importing country.

TRADE DEFICIT: The value of a nation's imports exceeds the value of its exports.

TRADE LIBERALIZATION: The reduction of tariffs, quotas, and other barriers to permit more foreign trade and investment.

TRANSNATIONAL/MULTINATIONAL CORPORATION: Corporations that operate in multiple countries and can move their products, personnel, and even factories to the location that would be the most profitable.

UNDEREMPLOYMENT: A measure of employment and labor utilization in the economy that looks at how well the labor force is being utilized in terms of skills, experience and availability to work. Labor that falls under the underemployment classification includes those workers that are highly skilled but working in low paying jobs, workers that are highly skilled but work in low skill jobs and part-time workers that would prefer to be full-time. This is different from unemployment in that the individual is working but isn't working at their full capability.

UNEMPLOYMENT: Unemployment occurs when a person who is actively searching for employment is unable to find work. Unemployment is often used as a measure of the health of the economy. The most frequently cited measure of unemployment is the unemployment rate. This is the number of unemployed persons divided by the number of people in the labor force.

WAGE RATES: Rate of pay based on per unit of production or per period of work time on the job.

WEALTH: What one owns.

WORLD BANK: Officially called the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, this bank was established in 1944 to provide loans for the reconstruction of Europe. In the 1970s the World Bank's focus shifted to assist in the reconstruction and development of its poor members by facilitating capital investment, making loans, and promoting foreign investment. The Bank has historically focused on larger infrastructure and other development projects. Like the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank has a set off strict requirements for economic policy reform before making grants or loans (see SAPS).

WTO: The World Trade Organization, established in 1995 as the successor to the 1948 General Agreement on Trade and Tariffs, administers trade agreements, provides a forum for trade negotiations, and monitors national trade policies for the 147 member countries. The overall aim of the WTO is to reach a single framework of rules for trade and 'trade-related' activities.

The History & People you should know if you're going to argue with a Neoliberalist...

Compiled by Jordan T Garcia, Immigrant Ally, Organizing Director, Coloradans For Immigrant Rights, a project of AFSC

1723 - 1790	 Adam Smith, Economist Smith moved to London in 1776, where he published "An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations," which examined in detail the consequences of economic freedom. It covered such concepts as the role of self-interest, the division of labor, the function of markets, and the international implications of a laissez-faire economy. "Wealth of Nations" established economics as an autonomous subject and launched the economic doctrine of free enterprise. Smith laid the intellectual framework that explained the free market that still holds true today. He is most often recognized for the expression "the invisible hand," which he used to demonstrate how self-interest guides the most efficient use of resources in a nation's economy, with public welfare coming as a by-product. To underscore his laissez-faire convictions, Smith argued that state and personal efforts, to promote social good are ineffectual compared to unbridled market forces. More on this Website: http://www.lucidcafe.com/library/96jum/96jum/smith.html
1818 - 1883	 Karl Marx, Founder Communism Karl Marx, with Friedrich Engels, a founder of modern socialism and communism. The son of a lawyer, he studied law and philosophy; he rejected the idealism of Hegel but was influenced by Ludwig Feuerbach and Moses Hess. His editorship (1842-43) of the Rheinische Zeitung ended when the paper was suppressed. In 1844 he met Engels in Paris, beginning a lifelong collaboration. With Engels he wrote the Communist Manifesto (1848) and other works that broke with the tradition of appealing to natural rights to justify social reform, invoking instead the laws of history leading inevitably to the triumph of the working class. More on this Website: http://www.trincoll.edu/depts/.../hilo/philis/marx.html
1820	 Industrial Revolution With war raging in North America as Britain's colonies there fight for independence, a British economist named Adam Smith publishes the seminal text defending modern liberal economic theory, An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations. The book, which is often referred to simply as The Wealth of Nations, advocates free-market economies and promotes the idea that individuals pursuing their own economic self-interest can create unintended positive side effects for the overall economy. The development of the Watt steam engine in the late eighteenth century spurs a wave of industrial development in Europe and the United States, which comes to be known as the Industrial Revolution. Major changes alter the face of agriculture, manufacturing, and transportation, and rewrite the economic status quo that had dominated Europe for centuries.
1820 - 1895	 Friedrich Engels, Founder Communism With unrest erupting across Europe, the German philosophers Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels publish The Communist Manifesto, the founding work of communist economic and social theory; the same year, the British philosopher John Stuart Mill publishes The Principles of Political Economy, which will become the dominant textbook on economics through most of the remainder of the nineteenth century. These two works coincide with the rise of laissez-faire economics, which espouses limited government intervention in the economy and which takes hold particularly in Britain during the middle part of the 1800s. The growing popularity of The Economist, a British news publication founded in 1843 that advocates liberal economic theory, accompanies this tide. Friedrich Engels, with Karl Marx, founder of modern Communism and Socialism, he was the son of a textile manufacturer, and after managing a factory in Manchester, England, he wrote his first major work, The Condition of the Working Class in England in

	<p>1844 (1845). In 1844 he met Marx in Paris, beginning a lifelong collaboration . He and Marx wrote the Communist Manifesto (1848) and other works that predicted the inevitable triumph of the working class. When the Revolutions of 1848 failed, Engels settled in England. With Marx he helped found (1864) the International Workingmen's Association. Engels's financial aid enabled Marx to devote himself to writing Das Kapital (1867-94); after his death Engels edited vol. 2 and 3 from Marx's drafts and notes. Engels had enormous influence on the theories of Marxism and Dialectical Materialism. His major works include Anti-Dühring (1878) and The Origin of the Family, Private Property, and the State (1884).</p> <p>More on this Website: http://www.trincoll.edu/depts/.../pbills/engels.html</p>
<p>1884</p>	 <p>Fabian Socialism An elite British intellectual group, founded in 1884 and calling itself the Fabian Society after the Roman general Fabius, promotes a strand of utopian socialism drawing from the ideas of Karl Marx but eschewing the violent revolutionary tactics of some of his followers. The group becomes known for its essays and literary works; its ranks include the prominent intellectuals Sidney and Beatrice Webb, George Bernard Shaw, H.G. Wells, and Virginia Woolf. The society promotes ideas such as the nationalization of property and the implementation of a minimum wage. Its followers figure prominently in the founding of the British Labour Party in 1900.</p>
<p>1913</p>	 <p>Federal Reserve System Created Following a financial panic in 1907, calls for banking and currency reform lead to the creation of the Federal Reserve System, in which a central government bank lends to regional banks. The primary purpose of the system is to increase financial liquidity and to give the U.S. government better control over its currency.</p>
<p>1919 - 1996</p>	 <p>Hyman Minsky, American Economist Hyman Minsky was an American economist and professor of economics at Washington University in St. Louis. His research attempted to provide an understanding and explanation of the characteristics of financial crises. Minsky was sometimes described as a post-Keynesian economist, because, in the Keynesian tradition, he supported some government intervention in financial markets and opposed some of the popular deregulation policies in the 1980s, and argued against the accumulation of debt. His research, nevertheless, endeared him to Wall Street.</p> <p>More on this Website: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hyman_Minsky</p>
<p>1929</p>	 <p>Stock Market Crash The Wall Street Crash of 1929, also known as the Crash of '29 or the Great Crash, was the most devastating stock market crash in the history of the United States, taking into consideration the full scope and longevity of its fallout. Three phrases—Black Thursday, Black Monday, and Black Tuesday—are used to describe this collapse of stock values. All three are appropriate, for the crash was not a one-day affair. The initial crash occurred on Black Thursday (October 24, 1929), but it was the catastrophic downturn of Black Monday and Tuesday (October 28 and October 29, 1929) that precipitated widespread panic and the onset of unprecedented and long-lasting consequences for the United States. The collapse continued for a month.</p> <p>Following the stock market crash of 1929, more than half a decade of economic depression, and a series of massive government interventions in the economy including new regulatory strictures implemented by President Franklin Roosevelt, a reassessment of markets takes root. The British economist John Maynard Keynes comes to represent the new thinking, suggesting several changes to the status quo of economic thought. Among other points, Keynes argues that capitalism won't "self-correct" and will require ongoing government oversight.</p>

1883 - 1946		<p>More on this Website: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/W...Street_Crash_of_1929</p> <p>John Maynard Keynes, Economist</p> <p>John Maynard Keynes is doubtlessly one the most important figures in the entire history of economics. He revolutionized economics with his classic book, <i>The General Theory of Employment, Interest and Money</i> (1936). This is generally regarded as probably the most influential social science treatise of the 20th Century, in that it quickly and permanently changed the way the world looked at the economy and the role of government in society. No other single book, before or since, has had quite such an impact.</p> <p>More on this Website: http://cepa.newschool.edu/het/profiles/keynes.htm</p>
1920s & 30s		<p>Friedrich August Hayek (1899-1992)</p> <p>Most of Hayek's work from the 1920s through the 1930s was in the Austrian theory of business cycles, capital theory, and monetary theory. Hayek saw a connection among all three. The major problem for any economy, he argued, is how people's actions are coordinated. He noticed, as Adam Smith had, that the price system—free markets—did a remarkable job of coordinating people's actions, even though that coordination was not part of anyone's intent. The market, said Hayek, was a spontaneous order. By spontaneous Hayek meant unplanned—the market was not designed by anyone but evolved slowly as the result of human actions. But the market does not work perfectly. What causes the market, asked Hayek, to fail to coordinate people's plans, so that at times large numbers of people are unemployed?</p> <p>One cause, he said, was increases in the money supply by the central bank. Such increases, he argued in <i>Prices and Production</i>, would drive down interest rates, making credit artificially cheap. Businessmen would then make capital investments that they would not have made had they understood that they were getting a distorted price signal from the credit market. But capital investments are not homogeneous. Long-term investments are more sensitive to interest rates than short-term ones, just as long-term bonds are more interest-sensitive than treasury bills. Therefore, he concluded, artificially low interest rates not only cause investment to be artificially high, but also cause "malinvestment"—too much investment in long-term projects relative to short-term ones, and the boom turns into a bust. Hayek saw the bust as a healthy and necessary readjustment. The way to avoid the busts, he argued, is to avoid the booms that cause them.</p> <p>More on this Website: http://www.econlib.org/library/Enc/bios/Hayek.html</p>
1929 - 1941		<p>America's Great Depression</p> <p>America's Great Depression is regarded as having begun in 1929 with the Stock Market crash, and ended in 1941 with America's entry into World War II. However, to fully understand the Great Depression, one must look at it in context of events that happened before and after those dates.</p> <p>More on this Website: http://www.amatecon.com/ed/edtimeline.htm</p>
1915-2009		<p>Paul Samuelson</p> <p>Following a period during which Keynesian economic theory reigned supreme, in part due to the work of the renowned economist Paul Samuelson, healthy economic times in the United States during the 1960s coincide with the rise of Milton Friedman, an economist who argues strongly in support of <i>laissez-faire</i>, libertarian economic principles that stand in contrast to the theories of John Maynard Keynes. Friedman also spreads the theory of monetarism, a school of economic thought in which the supply of money in an economy is used as the primary tool to affect the country's rate of inflation.</p>

1912 - 2006		<p>Milton Friedman, Economist Milton Friedman is the twentieth century's most prominent economist advocate of free markets. He was born in 1912 to Jewish immigrants in New York City. He attended Rutgers University, where he received his B.A. at the age of twenty, then went on to earn his M.A. from the University of Chicago in 1933 and his Ph.D. from Columbia University in 1946. In 1951 Friedman won the John Bates Clark Medal honoring economists under age forty for outstanding achievement. In 1976 he won the Nobel Prize in economics for "his achievements in the field of consumption analysis, monetary history and theory, and for his demonstration of the complexity of stabilization policy." Before that time, he had served as an adviser to President Nixon and was president of the American Economic Association in 1967. Since retiring from the University of Chicago in 1977, Friedman has been a senior research fellow at the Hoover Institution at Stanford University. More on this Website: http://www.econlib.org/library.../bios/Friedman.html</p>
1944		<p>Bretton Woods Following two years of negotiations and half a decade of war, world leaders meet in Bretton Woods, New Hampshire, and draft the first framework intended to govern monetary relations among the world's largest economies. The conference results in a system of fixed exchange rates, the creation of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, and plans for a third organization, aimed at governing world trade, that is eventually founded in 1947 as the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade.</p>
1947		<p>General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade The General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (typically abbreviated GATT) was negotiated during the UN Conference on Trade and Employment and was the outcome of the failure of negotiating governments to create the International Trade Organization (ITO). GATT was signed in 1947 and lasted until 1993, when it was replaced by the World Trade Organization in 1995. The original GATT text (GATT 1947) is still in effect under the WTO framework, subject to the modifications of GATT 1994.</p>
1956		<p>Peak Oil A geophysicist named M. King Hubbert theorizes that the rate of oil production in any given geographical area tends to follow a bell-shaped curve. Hubbert correctly predicts that oil production in the United States will peak between 1965 and 1970, lending credence to theorists who use a similar model to predict the date at which oil production will peak on a global scale--a theory which becomes known as "peak oil." New fears over global oil production coincide with the formation in 1960 of the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries, or OPEC, as a cartel bringing together many of the world's leading oil producers.</p>
1979		<p>Stagflation & Deindustrialization Paul Volcker takes the helm at the U.S. Federal Reserve during a period of stagflation--a combination of economic stagnation and inflation. Volcker implements the monetarism espoused by economist Milton Friedman as a counter inflation strategy, provoking a deep recession that accelerates the shift of the U.S. economy from manufacturing to services and lays the foundation for steady growth during the 1980s.</p>
1981		<p>Reaganomics & the Laffer Curve Ronald Reagan assumes the U.S. presidency in 1981, preaching four pillars of economic policy that come to be called "Reaganomics": reducing government spending; reducing marginal taxes on labor and income; reducing government regulation of the economy; and using monetary policy to keep inflation rates low. This theory of economics is bolstered by the "Laffer curve," a concept popularized by the economist Arthur Laffer that argues increases in taxation rates do not necessarily increase overall tax</p>

revenue.

The roots of many of our current economic problems can be traced back to the deregulation era that began during the Reagan administration. What George H.W. Bush once called "voodoo economics" fast became the biggest redistribution of wealth since the New Deal. The central article of faith in the "Reagan Revolution" was that money rerouted from the poor to the rich would produce a burst of productivity and economic growth. Give to the corporations and the wealthy, said the "supply side" economists, and they will invest the money in new factories, research and technology, and the country will be restored to greatness.

Did the theory work? Hardly. Rather than putting their money into jobs, research or equipment, the country's biggest businesses went on the largest merger binge in history, buying up smaller companies in a trend that spelled less competition, less productivity, and more control of the economy in fewer hands. Multi-billion dollar corporate war chests were assembled to finance takeovers of large oil and coal companies, communications giants, and prestigious financial institutions.

After a stock market meltdown in 1987, Wall Street advised the US Treasury not to meddle in financial markets. This paved the way for consolidation around large merchant banks, institutional investors, stock brokerage firms, and large insurance companies. Complex speculative instruments - derivatives, options, futures, and hedge funds - were largely unregulated, becoming vulnerable to manipulation. (excerpted from: <http://www.towardfreedom.com/home/content/view/1416/1/>)

1991



Post Cold War Globalization

The collapse of the Soviet Union and the end of the Cold War function as enabling mechanisms, spurring a period of globalization and economic liberalization across many countries. This shift is exemplified in 1995 by the establishment of the World Trade Organization, an organization tasked with supervising and standardizing oversight of international trade and liberalizing the global trade agenda. The shift toward globalization comes with discontents, however. The vulnerabilities engendered by a more liberalized international financial network become clear during the second half of the 1990s, as financial crises break out in several emerging economies, including Mexico, several East Asian countries, Russia, and Brazil. The International Monetary Fund (IMF) makes emergency loans to many of these countries, but imposes political restrictions as a condition for the loans. The shock of these crises and irritation over the IMF's loan conditions changes the way affected countries think about reserve capital. Particularly in East Asia, countries build up large reserves of foreign currencies in an effort to stave off future crises and the need for future IMF loans--a trend which exacerbates trade imbalances throughout the early 2000s.

Strengthening the Movement for Immigrant Justice!

303.623.3464 • 901 W. 14th Ave, Suite # 7, Denver, CO 80204

info@afsc.org • afsc.org/denver/ • www.coloradansforimmigrantrights.blogspot.com

Honoring Our Human Dignity *Beyond* Borders

Immigrants in the US: Separating FACT from FICTION...

Immigrants are our neighbors, co-workers, friends, and family members. Their labor helps put food on everyone's table. They belong to local school boards and city councils. They've made many significant contributions to U.S. culture and the arts. And the vast majority of us are building on the hopes and aspirations of immigrant ancestors who came here looking for a better life.

Yet talk-show hosts and politicians continue to chum out scare stories about our "broken border." Their spin creates the impression that undocumented immigrants strain our system. Meanwhile, the many benefits we all reap from immigration go unacknowledged or are pushed aside in favor of sound bites that spread fear and confusion.

Coloradans For Immigrant Rights, a project of the American Friends Service Committee (AFSC), a Quaker peace and social justice organization, believes that the focus should be on the root causes of problems such as unemployment and the lack of health care coverage for millions of people in this country. Such root causes include failed economic policies, wars, and the politics of division. We need to understand why people come to the United States and what the best research shows about the effects immigrants have on our economy and society. This will help us develop approaches that respect the inherent human dignity in each of us.

Most immigrants want to stay with and provide for their loved ones

The growth of undocumented migration is a worldwide phenomenon that represents a desperate response to desperate circumstances. Millions of people are dislocated by war, persecution, civil strife, and unjust global economic policies that impoverish entire nations and force individuals to leave their homes in order to survive. While some people migrate to the U.S. for political or religious reasons, the majority come to work and reunite with family members.

Did you know?

- The concept of "illegality" or who is "legal" is directly tied to how the government chooses to allow people to obtain documentation. U.S. laws have excluded a shifting roster of groups from citizenship (e.g., African-Americans, Native-Americans), and banned or severely curtailed immigration from China, Southern Europe (e.g., Italy), Mexico, and the Philippines. Each excluded group, meanwhile, has fought to be recognized as part of this country and as people with rights.
- Under the North American Free Trade Agreement, approved in 1994, the Mexican government agreed to continue phasing out subsidies for subsistence farming and for the consumption of tortillas, Mexico's traditional staple food. Mexican researchers estimate that these changes have forced as many as two million Mexican subsistence farmers to leave their homes because they can no longer make a living.

U.S. laws and regulations make it nearly impossible to obtain permanent residency/U.S. citizenship

The laws that govern the immigration process today are grossly inadequate. Those who immigrate out of economic necessity, for example, have almost no way to obtain legal status in the U.S. Adjusting one's immigration status is also costly and can take years.

Did you know?

- Exorbitant immigration fee hikes of up to 80 percent went into effect in July 2007. The fees are keeping many low-income, working, and moderate income immigrants from obtaining residency (green cards).
- Applications for permanent residence (green cards) from people with family members in the U.S. can take years—and sometimes decades—to even be considered. For example, Mexican children over 21 whose parents are U.S. citizens can wait up to 16 years to be eligible to submit their applications. Siblings of U.S. citizens from the Philippines can wait more than 20 years.

Immigrants add to the economic vitality of the nation

During difficult economic times, immigrants—especially undocumented immigrants—are often blamed for job losses, lower wages, and higher consumer prices. However, far more economic damage is inflicted by factors such as new technologies, foreign trade, the diminishing presence of unions, and the decline in the value of the minimum wage. Furthermore, undocumented immigrants pay nearly \$1.5 billion into Medicare and \$7 billion into the Social Security system every year, yet are ineligible for most public benefits (e.g., cash assistance, food stamps, and Social Security payments).

Did you know?

- In 2005, immigrant households and businesses paid approximately \$300 billion in federal, state, and local taxes: \$165 billion in federal income taxes, \$85 billion in state and local income taxes, and \$50 billion in business taxes.
- Depending on their skills and level of education, each immigrant pays, on average, between \$20,000 and \$80,000 more in taxes than s/he consumes in public benefits.

Immigrants contribute to the social fabric of our communities

Across the country, immigrants are helping to revitalize both urban and rural communities through their entrepreneurship and involvement in local culture and politics. In addition, immigrants raise the demand for goods and services. Contrary to the views of some pundits, surveys and studies show that immigrants want to learn English and are doing so in large numbers.

Did you know?

- Undocumented immigrants contribute an estimated \$400-\$460 billion to the U.S. gross domestic product and \$250-\$290 billion to U.S. personal consumption spending.
- Many immigrants want to become proficient in English; the demand for English classes nationwide far outstrips supply. Furthermore, an overwhelming number of second- and third generation immigrants speak English. For example, 88 percent of U.S.-born Latinos speak English very well. Among later generations of Latino adults, the figure rises to 94 percent. Reading ability in English shows a similar trend.

Punitive policies and unworkable laws are trampling immigrants' rights *and* hurting everyone

When efforts to develop fair and humane immigration policies fell apart in 2007, the government's primary response was to step up Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) raids and detention of immigrants. These punitive measures destroy communities and drive immigrants further underground. The forced separation of families also has led to growing poverty and psychological trauma. In addition, measures such as mandatory electronic employment verification undermine the privacy of every person and their civil liberties, and are so fraught with systemic errors that many people are wrongly flagged as ineligible to work.

Did you know?

- The "secure border initiative" announced in 2005 called for building 700 more miles of fence along the U.S.-Mexico border. Yet numerous studies and estimates show that a fence will not significantly reduce the flow of undocumented immigrants. A fence will, however, lead to more deaths along the border, be enormously expensive to build (\$3 to \$9 million per mile), and damage the environment.
- In 2006, ICE detained approximately 257,000 individuals on immigration violations. More than 272,000 people were deported from the U.S. by either ICE or Customs and Border Patrol.

Real challenges NEED Real solutions

AFSC's work with immigrant communities is based on our belief in the infinite worth and inherent dignity of every human being. Our goal is to create a society where everyone's gifts are celebrated, regardless of their immigration status. To this end, we should stop blaming immigrants for our economic and social problems so that we can address urgent issues in ways that benefit everyone. Developing fair and humane immigration policies—including a focus on family reunification and an end to immigration raids and detention—would benefit all workers by bringing undocumented workers out of the shadows

For example, we should:

- Increase the federal minimum wage.
- Enforce laws guaranteeing the right to organize unions and bargain collectively.
- Provide more opportunities for better education and training.
- Offer more meaningful support to working people, such as universal health insurance, child care, and parental leave.
- Enforce wage and hour laws and safety protections.
- Enact fair economic trade policies.

For the complete PDF of *Beyond Borders* with citations please visit <http://www.afsc.org/ImmigrantsRights/ht/a/GetDocumentAction/i/72496>.

How do we honor the human dignity in each of us?

We can start by coming together to address the root causes, and the considerable costs, of inequality and injustice.

Theories on Migration

Economic Explanations for Immigration module for US Curriculum: Neoclassical theories

Micro theories:

These Neoclassical theories use the rational actor model, and explain migrants as choosing to move based on cost-benefit calculations. A person decides to immigrate by calculating the benefit of moving (expected wages, probability of employment, expected total income, wage gap between country of destination and country of origin, etc.) and the costs of moving (probability and risk of unemployment, probability of apprehension if undocumented, etc). If the benefits outweigh the costs, the rational actor decides to immigrate. Such models try to explain migration by using the standard maximization reasoning of the rational economic Person: decisions to move are based on wage and employment differentials, and the desire to maximize income. Some variations (such as Oded Stark) moved to the household level and included the complications of multi-household members (cases where several families live together), with risk extending to agricultural failure- however, the structure of income maximization continued to hold. If the expected return is positive the actor moves, if negative, the actor stays, and if zero- the actor is indifferent.

Macro theories:

International migration in these explanations is caused by geographical differentials in the supply and demand for labor. Countries with large endowments of labor relative to capital have low wages, while countries with low supplies of labor relative to capital have higher wages. As a result of the wage differential, workers migrate from low-wage coun-



http://3.bp.blogspot.com/_dr8MGVv2_rl/TC2eASHSrOIAAAAAAAAAADbU/82fclmH7mpE/s1600/Arizona++Mexico+cartoon.jpg

tries to high-wage countries. If movement is allowed to progress, there will be wage equilibrium, at which point there will be no international migration. At the same time, capital moves to the low-wage/capital-starved countries in search of higher yields, again leading to a convergence in the profit rate. Michael Piore has been the most forceful proponent of the dual labor market theory, which argues that international migration is based on the economic structure of high labor demand in developed countries. According to Piore, immigration is not so much about 'push' factors in the country of origin, but rather 'pull' factors in the destination country. This labor demand is based on structural inflation, occupational hierarchies and motivational problems (there are more incentives and availability of factors that provide motivation in the destination country), economic dualism in developed countries (i.e. segmented labor markets), and the demography and composition of labor supply (i.e. workers in developed countries do not desire to work in the secondary labor market.

World Systems Theory & Marxian theory

Building on the work of Wallerstein, Sassen, and Portes. World systems theorists have linked international migration to the 'world market.' Driven by the search for higher profits and profit rates, capitalists enter peripheral countries to seek out cheap raw materials, new markets for surplus commodities, and to seek out cheap labor. First under colonial regimes, and then under neo-colonial relations, land concentration and land commodification give rise to agricultural displacement and out-migration. Cheap manufactured goods out-compete locally produced goods, and also create dislocation and disruption. At the same time, new material and ideological processes establish links between core and periphery countries, also making migration more likely (for instance, post-colonial migration from India to Britain, or Algeria to France). Investment in and ease of transportation for goods also makes it easier for people to move. In sum, both dislocation and new links produced by a world system of capitalism give rise to international migration.

Similarly, in Marxian theory, migration is deeply connected to the effects of international capitalism. In addition to capitalists' search for higher profit rates in non-capitalist peripheral areas, capitalists also seek to extract more surplus value out of employed workers; attracting immigrants who may have lower values of labor power, and be willing to accept lower wages, allows them to extract more profit in developed countries. In addition, using a 'divide and conquer' strategy, capitalists are able to extract more surpluses by differentiating migrant from native workers. Wage gaps between immigrant and native workers would persist in both primary and secondary labor markets (there is evidence of such wage gaps amongst immigrant and native engineers, doctors, other skilled and low-skilled workers).

In sum...

Micro theories base immigration on the rational actor model, and immigration is due to the function of individual choice. Micro theories of migration have been severely criticized for the same reasons that the rational actor model has been criticized by heterodox economists (such as feminist critiques by Paula England and Nancy Folbre). Macro theorists (including segmented labor market theorists) debate the relative strength of 'push/pull' factors of national economies, particularly focusing on the demand for labor. These tend to be structuralist explanations, with migration being the outcome of interactions between national economies. World Systems theorists can also be categorized as structuralist explanations and Marxian theorists are divided between structuralist and institutionalist perspectives. Network theorists can be categorized by an institutionalist perspective, and mature migration streams are the outcome of network formation.

FOR THE LOVE OF MY FAMILY: Cesar's story

I am remembering the most special Christmas for me and for all my family. It was after being far from them for many years. My wife and I decided to travel from both directions and meet in Albuquerque so neither had to travel so many hours to Denver. I was so glad to satisfy all of my children's wishes buying them clothes and other things that were not necessary, but important to them. This was a marvelous opportunity, enjoying the only ten days we could be together. Like the majority of people, I had to make a decision, and leave behind what I love the most, my wife and my children.

As a successful entrepreneur, the devaluation of the peso came as a surprise and after that we were hit with an economic recession. So my wife and I had a talk and decided that I had to leave to work outside the country, because that would be the way we would be able to give our children the education they needed.

When I lived with my parents, we also experienced a scarce economy, so my father also had to make a decision and immigrate to the United States. My father's history repeats itself in my life.

Even with the sorrow that consumed me I was able to get work and do well, but always with the presence of the love from my family.

When one of us has a problem, we talk it out and find a way to solve it or help the situation because after all, we still have an obligation to our son, to help him complete his education.

One particular day I woke up feeling depressed and my first thought was to go to church and pray to God. I needed to have inner peace.

There came a day when I had to call my wife and tell her I don't have a job, and her response was, "don't worry honey, your horoscope says that you will have a good opportunity." Those words filled me with joy and I took it as a good sign.

Two days later, I received a call for a job offer in which I am still employed at today.

Thinking of my family makes me happy and my strength is rooted in the love for my wife and my children.

The see and hear Cesar's digital story, go to <http://afsc.org/video/immigration-stories>, click on "play list" then scroll right to "Cesar's Story".



http://www.blackcommentator.com/242/242_images/242_cartoon_border_fence_hurwitt_small_over.gif

Notes:

What is Neoliberalism? - A Brief Definition for Activists...

by Elizabeth Martinez and Arnaldo Garcia,

National Network for Immigrant and Refugee Rights

"Neo-liberalism" is a set of economic policies that have become widespread during the last 25 years or so. Although the word is rarely heard in the United States, you can clearly see the effects of neo-liberalism here as the rich grow richer and the poor grow poorer.

"Liberalism" can refer to political, economic, or even religious ideas. In the U.S. political liberalism has been a strategy to prevent social conflict. It is presented to poor and working people as progressive compared to conservative or rightwing. Economic liberalism is different. Conservative politicians who say they hate "liberals" -- meaning the political type -- have no real problem with economic liberalism, including neoliberalism.

"Neo" means we are talking about a new kind of liberalism. So what was the old kind? The liberal school of economics became famous in Europe when Adam Smith, a Scottish economist, published a book in 1776 called THE WEALTH OF NATIONS. He and others advocated the abolition of government intervention in economic matters. No restrictions on manufacturing, no barriers to commerce, no tariffs, he said; free trade was the best way for a nation's economy to develop. Such ideas were "liberal" in the sense of no controls. This application of individualism encouraged "free" enterprise," "free" competition -- which came to mean, free for the capitalists to make huge profits as they wished.

Economic liberalism prevailed in the United States through the 1800s and early 1900s. Then the Great Depression of the 1930s led an economist named John Maynard Keynes to a theory that challenged liberalism as the best policy for capitalists. He said, in essence, that full employment is necessary for capitalism to grow and it can be achieved only if governments and central banks intervene to increase employment. These ideas had much influence on President Roosevelt's New Deal -- which did improve life for many people. The belief that government should advance the common good became widely accepted.

But the capitalist crisis over the last 25 years, with its shrinking profit rates, inspired the corporate elite to revive economic liberalism. That's what makes it "neo" or new. Now, with the rapid globalization of the capitalist economy, we are seeing neo-liberalism on a global scale.

<http://www.corpwatch.org/article.php?id=376>

A memorable definition of this process came from Subcomandante Marcos at the Zapatista-sponsored [Encuentro Intercontinental por la Humanidad y contra el Neo-liberalismo](#) (Intercontinental Encounter for Humanity and Against Neo-liberalism) of August 1996 in Chiapas when he said: "what the Right offers is to turn the world into one big mall where they can buy Indians here, women there" and he might have added, children, immigrants, workers or even a whole country like Mexico."

The main points of neo-liberalism include:

THE RULE OF THE MARKET. Liberating "free" enterprise or private enterprise from any bonds imposed by the government (the state) no matter how much social damage this causes. Greater openness to international trade and investment, as in NAFTA. Reduce wages by de-unionizing workers and eliminating workers' rights that had been won over many years of struggle. No more price controls. All in all, total freedom of movement for capital, goods and services. To convince us this is good for us, they say "an unregulated market is the best way to increase economic growth, which will ultimately benefit everyone." It's like Reagan's "supply-side" and "trickle-down" economics -- but somehow the wealth didn't trickle down very much.

CUTTING PUBLIC EXPENDITURE FOR SOCIAL SERVICES like education and health care. **REDUCING THE SAFETY-NET FOR THE POOR**, and even maintenance of roads, bridges, water supply -- again in the name of reducing government's role. Of course, they don't oppose government subsidies and tax benefits for business.

DEREGULATION. Reduce government regulation of everything that could diminish profits, including protecting the environment and safety on the job.

PRIVATIZATION. Sell state-owned enterprises, goods and services to private investors. This includes banks, key industries, railroads, toll highways, electricity, schools, hospitals and even fresh water. Although usually done in the name of greater efficiency, which is often needed, privatization has mainly had the effect of concentrating wealth even more in a few hands and making the public pay even more for its needs.

ELIMINATING THE CONCEPT OF "THE PUBLIC GOOD" or "COMMUNITY" and replacing it with "individual responsibility." Pressuring the poorest people in a society to find solutions to their lack of health care, education and social security all by themselves -- then blaming them, if they fail, as "lazy."

Around the world, neo-liberalism has been imposed by powerful financial institutions like the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Bank and the Inter-American Development Bank. It is raging all over Latin America. The first clear example of neo-liberalism at work came in Chile (with thanks to University of Chicago economist Milton Friedman), after the CIA-supported coup against the popularly elected Allende regime in 1973. Other countries followed, with some of the worst effects in Mexico where wages declined 40 to 50% in the first year of NAFTA while the cost of living rose by 80%. Over 20,000 small and medium businesses have failed and more than 1,000 state-owned enterprises have been privatized in Mexico. As one scholar said, "Neoliberalism means the neo-colonization of Latin America."

In the United States neo-liberalism is destroying welfare programs; attacking the rights of labor (including all immigrant workers); and cut backing social programs. The Republican "Contract" on America is pure neo-liberalism. Its supporters are working hard to deny protection to children, youth, women, the planet itself -- and trying to trick us into acceptance by saying this will "get government off my back." The beneficiaries of neo-liberalism are a minority of the world's people. For the vast majority it brings even more suffering than before: suffering without the small, hard-won gains of the last 60 years, suffering without end.

Elizabeth Martinez is a longtime civil rights activist and author of several books, including "500 Years of Chicano History in Photographs."

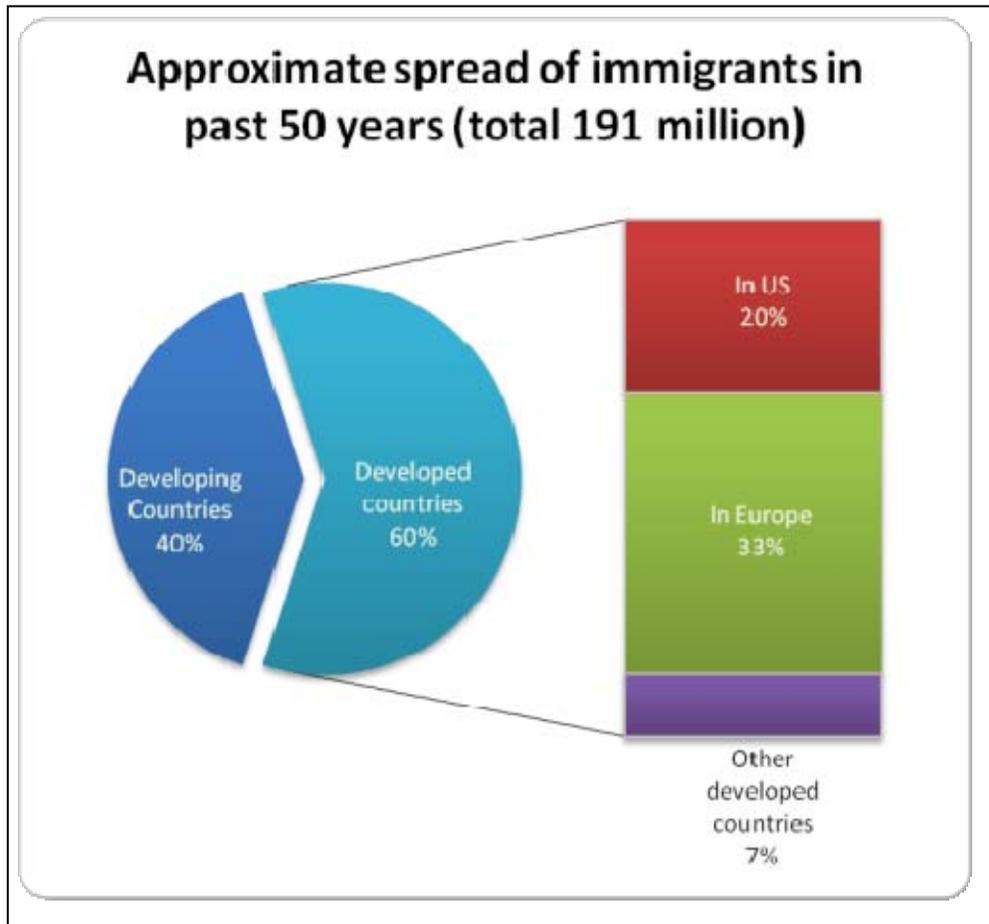
Arnoldo García is Program Director of the Immigrant Justice & Rights Program at the National Network for Immigrant and Refugee Rights and heads up [HURRICANE](#): The Human Rights Immigrant Community Action Network. Arnoldo edits [Network News](#), NNIRR's newsmagazine, and represents NNIRR on the regional coordinators committee of the "Liberty & Justice for All Campaign" with the Washington, D.C.-based [Rights Working Group](#). Arnoldo is also a long-time cultural worker and musician; his work appears in *XicKorea – poems rants words together* (California, 2003), *Chokecherries* (New Mexico, 2005) and *Hurricane Katrina: Response and Responsibilities* (New Pacific Press, 2005).

Global Migration Patterns

by Anup Shah

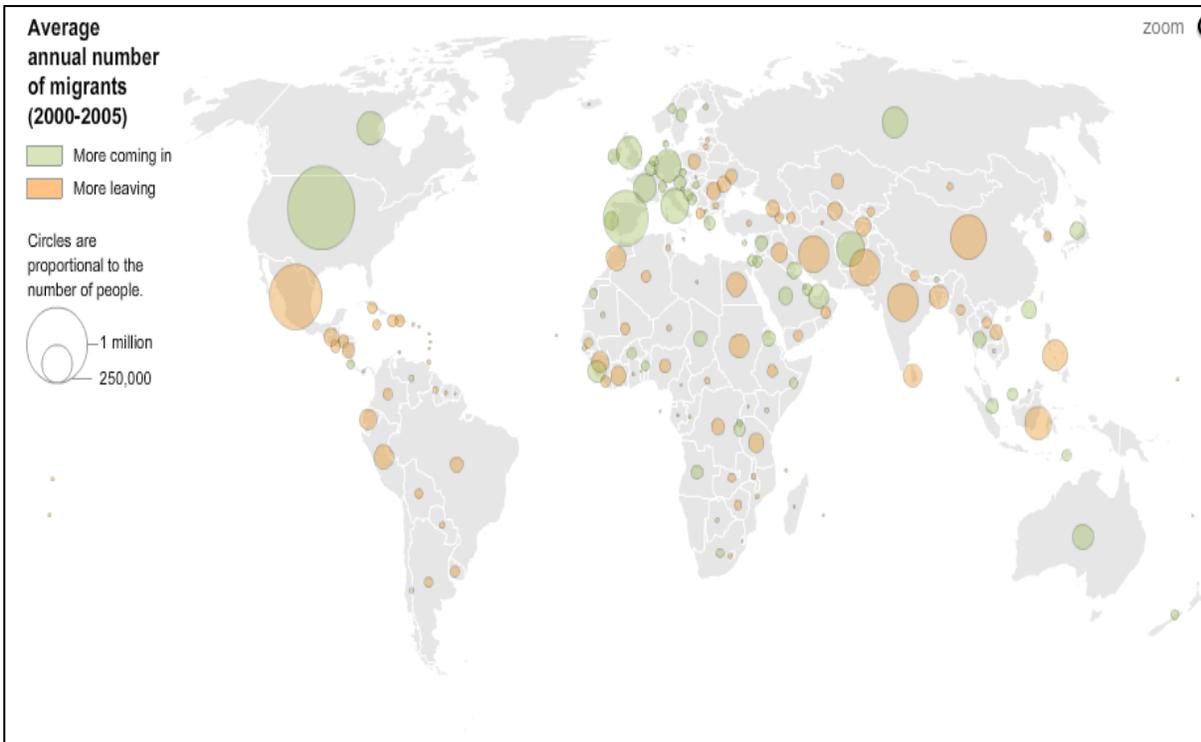
Worldwide Immigration Statistics

Immigration seems to be making more headlines in recent years. As the world globalizes in terms of nations' economies, trade and investment, borders are opened up more easily for "freer" flow of goods and products. People are supposedly freer to move around the world, too. Consider the following:



- Worldwide, there is an estimated 191 million immigrants;
- The last 50 years has seen an almost doubling of immigration;
- 115 million immigrants live in developed countries;
- 20% (approximately 38 million) live in the US alone, making up 13% of its population;
- 33% of all immigrants live in Europe;
- 75% live in just 28 countries;
- Between 1990 and 2005
 - There were 36 million migrations (an average of approximately 2.4 million per year);
 - 33 million wound up in industrialized countries;

- 75% of the increases occurred in just 17 countries;
- Immigration decreased in 72 countries in the same period;



http://www.nytimes.com/ref/world/20070622_CAPEVERDE_GRAPHIC.html#

Why do people emigrate?

People emigrate from one country to another for a variety of complex reasons. Some are forced to move, due to conflict or to escape persecution and prejudices, while others may voluntarily emigrate. Although such a move may be necessary, it can be quite traumatic on top of the challenges experienced so far.

From another perspective, immigration can also represent an act of courage. For example,

Moving to a different country with different culture and norms can be quite daunting;

- The potential loneliness to be suffered is not always easy to overcome;

There may be the additional pressure to earn enough to live (in a more expensive-to-live-in country) *and* send back meager savings.

An economic migrant, a person searching for work, or better opportunities, will be stepping into the unknown—an exciting prospect if the person is already well-to-do, or daunting at least, if out of desperation. As *Inter Press Service* (IPS) reported, the European Union has recently acknowledged a concern about immigration that has not received much media attention. That is, a large number of people are attempting to leave the devastation of their own country caused by the current form of globalization and other political and economic policies,

which, as well as creating winners, is creating a large number of losers, and increasing inequality. Tackling poverty and addressing issues of development and opportunity are important aspects of tackling this type of immigration.

Economics, Poverty and Immigrant Scapegoats

It is generally believed that those immigrants who have had the courage to leave one country and move to another are often enterprising and entrepreneurial, even if poor. As such, in many countries, immigrants often set up small businesses. They however, become easy targets when the general economic conditions in that host country worsen.

In other cases, people become immigrants because they have fled worsening conditions or persecution. In that situation, although they may live in another country, it may initially be quite difficult to adapt and change practices and customs. In such situations immigrants are clearly seen as different and in worsening economic times can be seen as sapping away resources that could otherwise have been used for local populations.

In the 1970s and 80s, Indian and Pakistani immigrants in the UK for example faced constant racist harassment and jokes about their small businesses. Many Indian and Pakistani communities escaping turmoil in East Africa were technically allowed to come to the UK but very quickly local populations became concerned and held numerous protests. While these communities have managed to weather this and many are now quite successful, the new wave of immigrants, Polish in particular it seems, face a new wave of hostility.

During the global financial crisis at the end of the 1990s, East Asia was particularly affected. This resulted in a wave of anti-immigrant sentiments, for example in Indonesia there was a wave of violence against Chinese immigrants.

In May 2008, South Africa saw a wave of anti-immigrant violence, as extremely poor South Africans turned against thousands of immigrants from other parts of Africa, killing some 50, and forcing thousands to leave.

In these and many other situations not mentioned here, anti-immigrant sentiment typically comes to the fore when economic conditions deteriorate. They are an easy target and either lies or exaggerations can contribute to fear, anxiety and ultimately hatred. As discussed earlier mainstream media coverage in some countries, even places like Britain, makes it easy to stir up hysterical stories about immigration which helps direct the conversation and policies towards who can be “toughest” on immigration.

When economic conditions get harder, these views are easier to digest and adopt and deeper causes, of why people immigrate in the first place, are less discussed. As a result, empathy and understanding for the situation and conditions immigrants face is easily lost.

There are indeed cases where some immigrant groups may come to countries like Britain under the mistaken and exaggerated understanding that if you cannot find work the government will pay for you to live (I remember on various vacations in developing countries being asked if this is true!). This may

be tempting for some groups that face much hardship, but it will be understandable in that case that local populations will not look too kindly on this attempt to get a “free ride.” Where this happens, it is unfortunately too easy for populist anti-immigrant sentiment to exaggerate that “all” immigrants want this.

Other times, policy does indeed seem to favor struggling immigrants over struggling local populations; it could be argued that local populations have had more opportunity than immigrant populations, and so the latter may benefit from some temporary assistance, but local populations are not going to accept that easily leaving policy makers feel they have little choice but to appear tough on immigration.

Excerpted from <http://www.globalissues.org/article/537/immigration>

History of U.S Mexico Colonization & Commerce

Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo and its impact– by Richard Griswold del Castillo

The Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo ended the U.S.-Mexican War. Signed on 2 February 1848, it is the oldest treaty still in force between the United States and Mexico. As a result of the treaty, the United States acquired more than 500,000 square miles of valuable territory and emerged as a world power in the late nineteenth century.

Beyond territorial gains and losses, the treaty has been important in shaping the international and domestic histories of both Mexico and the United States. During the U.S.-Mexican War, U.S. leaders assumed an attitude of moral superiority in their negotiations of the treaty. They viewed the forcible incorporation of almost one-half of Mexico's national territory as an event foreordained by providence, fulfilling Manifest Destiny to spread the benefits of U.S. democracy to the lesser peoples of the continent. Because of its military victory the United States virtually dictated the terms of settlement. The treaty established a pattern of political and military inequality between the two countries, and this lopsided relationship has stalked Mexican-U.S. relations ever since.

The treaty in draft form was brought to Mexico by Nicholas P. Trist, the U.S. peace commissioner, in the summer of 1847. In its basic form it called for the cession of Alta and Baja California and New Mexico, the right of transit across the Tehuantepec isthmus, and the Rio Grande as the southern border of Texas. In exchange the United States would pay up to \$20 million to Mexico and assume up to \$3 million in U.S. citizens' claims against Mexico. In subsequent negotiations the demand for Baja California and the right of transit were dropped.



<http://northalc.wikispaces.com/Mexican+Cession>

Negotiations began in earnest in January 1848. The Mexican government, headed by the ad interim Mexican president Manuel de la Pena y Pena, quickly agreed to the boundary issues: Texas's southern boundary would be the Rio Grande, the cession of Alta California would include the port of San Diego, and Mexico would give up its territory between Texas and California, with a boundary to be surveyed. Mexican peace commissioners Luis G. Cuevas, Bernardo Couto, and Miguel Atristain spent a good deal of time on various drafts of Articles VIII and IX, which dealt with the issues of property rights and U.S. citizenship for Mexican citizens in the newly ceded regions. The Mexican commissioners succeeded in amplifying the texts of the two articles. They also introduced Article XI, which gave the United States responsibility for controlling hostile Indian incursions originating on the U.S. side of the border. (Article XI proved to be a source of irritation between the two nations and was subsequently negated by the Gadsden Treaty of 1854.)

On his own initiative, Trist offered an indemnity of \$15 million, judging that this would gain acceptance for the treaty among those who felt that the United States had already paid enough in "blood and treasure." After reaching agreement on all these issues, Trist drew up an English-language draft of the treaty and Cuevas translated it into Spanish, preserving the idiom and thought rather than the literal meaning. Finally, on 2 February 1848, the Mexican representatives met Trist in the Villa of Guadalupe Hidalgo, across from the shrine of the patron saint of Mexico. They signed the treaty and then celebrated a mass together at the basilica.

The Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo looms larger in the history of Mexico than in that of the United States. Partly because of the loss of valuable territory, the treaty ensured that

Mexico would remain an underdeveloped country well into the twentieth century. Mexican historians and politicians view this treaty as a bitter lesson in U.S. aggression. The Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo has had implications not only for relations between the two countries but also for international law. Interpretations of the provisions of the treaty have been important in disputes over international boundaries, water and mineral rights, and the civil and property rights of the descendants of the Mexicans in the ceded territories. Since 1848 there have been hundreds of court cases citing the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo as a basis for land claims, but few Mexican claimants were successful in retaining their land. Since 1848 Native Americans and Mexican Americans have struggled to achieve political and social equality within the United States, often citing the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo as a document that promised civil and property rights. Although the treaty promised U.S. citizenship to former Mexican citizens, the Native Americans in the ceded territories, who in fact were Mexican citizens, were not given full U.S. citizenship until the 1930s. Former Mexican citizens were almost universally considered foreigners by the U.S. settlers who moved into the new territories. In the first half century after ratification of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, hundreds of state, territorial, and federal legal bodies produced a complex tapestry of conflicting opinions and decisions bearing on the meaning of the treaty. The property rights seemingly guaranteed in Articles VIII and IX of the treaty (and in the Protocol of Queretaro) were not all they seemed. In U.S. courts, the property rights of former Mexican citizens in California, New Mexico, and Texas proved to be fragile. Within a generation the Mexican-Americans became a disenfranchised, poverty-stricken minority.

http://www.pbs.org/kera/usmexicanwar/war/wars_end_guadalupe.html

We will never forget February 2nd...

Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo:

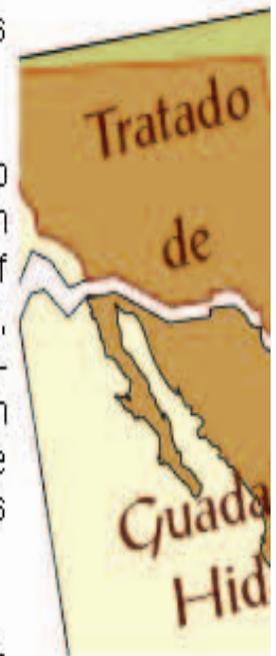
February 2nd marks the 157th anniversary of the signing of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo. On this date, Mexicans became foreigners on our own land. As the main provision of this treaty, over half of the Mexican National Territory, which include what are known as the states of California, Arizona, Colorado, Utah, Texas, Nevada, New Mexico and parts of Oregon, became part of the U.S. empire.

Aside from stealing over half our land, and imposing a political border which divides our people, the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo contains some provisions that have never been respected by the United States and that we, as Mexicanos should know about. These include:

-An open border between Mexico and the US. Today we are witness to the most militarized border in the world as this border is lined with high intensity lights, triple fences that stretches into the ocean, thousands of paramilitary personnel known as the U.S. Border Patrol, US Military, customs, and some of the most sophisticated military surveillance systems in the world. Because of this militarization there are more than 3,000+ Raza who have died all along this gringo imposed border since 1994, not counting all of our people who have died since this border was imposed on us in 1848.

-Respect for Land and property rights for those who stayed in what became US territory. What really happened is that the US organized hostile armed bands of gringo settlers like the Texas rangers to lynch, beat and brutalize Mexicanos and drive us off farm lands so they could take them for themselves for free.

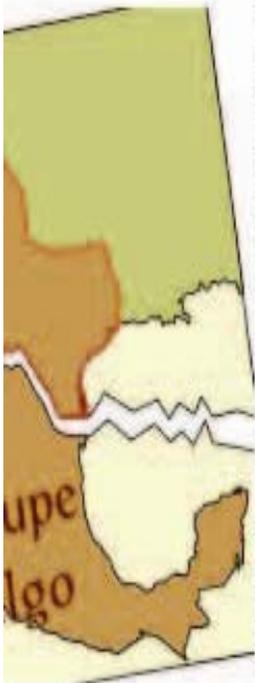
-Respect and protection for the Spanish Language, our cultural beliefs and customs as well as respect for local Indigenous rights and customs. Today there exist a campaign to eliminate our culture and language as the US government has passed legislation which denies us our history in school and eliminated bilingual education to inhibit our ability to even communi-



157 years of U.S. Occupation

cate with our own families.

The US government and, unfortunately, some in our own community tell us that all of this is "in the past." They say we are now immigrants, because the border is "here whether we like it or not." According to the government, and the vendidos, they lecture to us saying that if we want to be here in "America", we must "prove ourselves" and "earn" these rights.



Our answer is CHALE. The Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo is not what gives us our legitimacy and our rights as a people to be here. What gives us the rights we have is that we are an original people with over 50,000 years on this land. The fact that there is a treaty demonstrates that this is our land which was stolen a gunpoint. Furthermore, it is another treaty that the US-as they have done with every single treaty they have ever signed-has disregarded and broken it making us second class citizens in our own land. This has been especially true for indigenous people like us, who have seen other lands taken away, have been forced to live on so called "reservations," and placed into poverty by the gringo colonizer.

We must never forget the treaty or the war of aggression by US imperialism that stole our land and imposed a political border. Nor must we think that just because of the treaty, and by talking about it will we finally be given what's ours and treated like human beings. Rather, the treaty serves as evidence of where our condition started to worsen and we must study it and use it as a tool to organize our community and liberate ourselves from U.S. occupation. This February 2nd should be a time to recommit to independent struggle, to remember that this is our land, and that only a movement led by the masses of our gente will bring us power over our own lives on our own land.

¡WE DIDN'T CROSS THE BORDER; THE BORDER CROSSED US!

http://coalicionproderechos.org/pueblounido/2005/PuebloUnido_Feb2005.pdf

Immigrants Come Here Because Globalization Took Their Jobs Back There

By Jim Hightower, Hightower Lowdown, Jan 2008

The wailing in our country about the "invasion of immigrants" has been long and loud. As one complainant put it, "Few of their children in the country learn English ... The signs in our streets have inscriptions in both languages ... Unless the stream of the importation could be turned they will soon so outnumber us that all the advantages we have will not be able to preserve our language, and even our government will become precarious."

That's not some diatribe from one of today's Republican presidential candidates. It's the anxious cry of none other than Ben Franklin, deploring the wave of Germans pouring into the colony of Pennsylvania in the 1750s. Thus, anti-immigrant eruptions are older than the United States itself, and they've flared up periodically throughout our history, targeting the Irish, French, Italians, Chinese, and others. Even George W's current project to wall off our border is not a new bit of nuttiness -- around the time of the nation's founding, John Jay, who later became the first chief justice of the Supreme Court, proposed "a wall of brass around the country for the exclusion of Catholics."

Luckily for the development and enrichment of our country, these past public frenzies ultimately failed to exclude the teeming masses, and those uproars now appear through the telescope of time to have been some combination of ridiculous panic, political demagoguery and xenophobic ugliness. Still, this does not mean that the public's anxiety and simmering anger about today's massive influx of Mexicans coming illegally across our 2,000-mile shared border is illegitimate. However, most of what the politicians and pundits are saying about it is illegitimate.

Wedge issue

There is way too much xenophobia, racism and demagoguery at play around illegal immigration, but such crude sentiments are not what

is bringing this problem to a national political boil. Polls show -- as do conversations at any Chat & Chew Cafe in the country -- that there is a deep and genuine alarm about the issue among the nonxenophobic, nonracist American majority. In particular, workaday families are fearful about what an endless flow of low-wage workers portends for their economic future, and they're not getting good answers from Republicans, Democrats, corporate leaders or the media.

For the GOP candidates in this year's presidential run, the contest is coming down to who can be the most nativist knucklehead. They accuse each other of not wanting to punish immigrant children enough, of not being absolutists on "English-only" proposals, of having coddled illegal entrants in the past with amnesty proposals and sanctuaries, and of not being hawkish enough on sealing off and militarizing the border.

The leader of the anti-immigrant Republican pack is Tom Tancredo, a Colorado congress-critter who based his ill-fated presidential campaign on immigrant bashing. This goober is so nasty he'd scare small children. His website screeched that immigrants are "pushing drugs, raping kids, destroying lives," and his campaign slogan is a sledgehammer demand: "Deport those who don't belong. Make sure they never come back." As for illegal immigrants, Tom thinks that the term "illegal" is too soft, preferring to demonize immigrants as "aliens." Tancredo doesn't merely rant, he foams at the mouth, maniacally warning about waves of Mexican terrorists who are "coming to kill me and you and your children." Accused of trying to turn America into a gated community, he exulted, "You bet!"

At least he's taken a position, even if it's un-American and loopy. Democratic leaders, on the other hand, have mostly tried to do a squishy shuffle, wanting to beef up law enforcement against illegal immigrants while also mouthing soothing words about the good work ethic of our friends south of the border

and offering a bureaucratic rigmarole to allow some of the younger ones to gain permanent residency in our country. Worse, such corporate Democrats as Rep. Rahm Emanuel urge the party's candidates either to adopt the Republican's punitive message or simply to try ducking the issue.

Which brings us to the wall, both figuratively and literally. The fact that we are resort-

before the first-ever "Terlingua Memorial Over, Under, or Through the Mexican Fence Climbing Contest" was cooked up. Winning time: 30 seconds.

Yet here come the border sealers again. Bush & Co. (including Democrats who have allowed the funding) is putting up an initial \$1.2 billion to start building this version of the wall, which is projected to cost up to \$60 bil-



<http://www.laughitout.com/2008/11/go-back-to-africa-go-back-to-mexico.html>

ing to the construction of an enormous fence between two friendly nations admits to an abject failure by policy makers, who are so bereft of ideas, honesty, courage and morality that all they can do is to try walling off the problem.

We've had experience here in Texas with the futility of tall border fences. Molly Ivins reported a beer-induced incident that took place in 1983. Walling off Mexico had been proposed back then by the Reaganauts, and a test fence had been built way down in the Big Bend outpost of Terlingua. This little town also happened to be the site of a renowned chili cookoff that Molly helped judge, and it attracted a big crowd of impish, beer-drinking chiliheads.

There stood the barrier, 17 feet tall and topped with barbwire. It didn't take many beers

lion over the next 25 years to build and maintain. It's a monster wall -- two or three 40-foot-high rows of reinforced fencing that take a swath of land 150 feet wide and stretch for 700 miles.

The Mexican government and people are insulted and appalled by the wall; ranchers, mayors and families living on either side of the border hate it; environmentalists are aghast at its destructive impact on the ecology of the area. Still, it's being built. Indeed, a 2005 federal act contained a little-noticed section authorizing Bush's Homeland Security czar to suspend any laws that stand in the way of building the wall. Current czar Michael Chertoff has already used this unprecedented authority to waive 19 statutes, including the Endangered Species, Clean Water and National Historic Preservation Acts.

All this for something that will not work. As Gov. Janet Napolitano of Arizona put it, "Show me a 50-foot wall and I'll show you a 51-foot ladder." People have literally been dying to cross into the United States, and it's not possible to build a wall tall enough to stop them. They will keep coming.

Why? The question that policy makers have not faced honestly is this one: Why do these immigrants come? The answer is not that they are pulled by our jobs and government benefits, but that they are pushed by the abject poverty that their families face in Mexico. That might seem like a mere semantic difference, but it's huge if you're trying to develop a policy to stop the human flood across our border.

Although you never hear it mentioned in debates on the issue, you might start with this reality: Most Mexican people really would prefer to live in their own country. Can we all say, duh? Pedro Martin, who has seen most of the young men and women in his small village depart for *El Norte*, put it this way: "Up north, even though they pay more, you're not necessarily living as well. You feel out of place. Here you can walk around the whole town, and it's comfortable. Life is easier."

Their family, language, culture, identity and happiness is Mexican -- yet sheer economic survival requires so many of them to abandon the place they love. Again, why? Because in the last 15 years, Mexico's longstanding system of sustaining its huge population of poor citizens (including small self-sufficient farms, jobs in state-owned industries and subsidies for such essentials as tortillas) has been scuttled at the insistence of U.S. banks, corporations, government officials and "free market" ideologues. In the name of "modernizing" the Mexican economy, such giants as Citigroup, Wal-Mart, Tyson Foods and GE -- in cahoots with the plutocrats and oligarchs of Mexico -- have laid waste to that country's grass-roots economy, destroying the already-meager livelihoods of millions.

The 1994 imposition of NAFTA was par-

ticularly devastating. Just as Bill Clinton and the corporate elites did here, Mexico's ruling elites touted NAFTA as a magic elixir that would generate growth, create jobs, raise wages and eliminate the surge of Mexican migrants into the United States. They were horribly wrong:

Economic growth in Mexico has been anemic since '94, and the benefits of any growth have gone overwhelmingly to the wealthiest families.

Since NAFTA, Mexico has created less than a third of the millions of decent jobs it needs.

Average factory wages in Mexico have dropped by more than 5 percent under NAFTA.

Unemployment has jumped, and unskilled workers are paid only \$5 a day.

U.S. agribusiness corporations have more than doubled their shipment of subsidized crops into Mexico, busting the price that indigenous farmers got for their production and displacing some 2 million peasant farmers from their land.

Huge agribusiness operations, many owned by U.S. investors, now control Mexican agricultural production and pay farmworkers under \$2 an hour.

Since NAFTA passed, there has been a flood of business bankruptcies and takeovers in Mexico as predatory U.S. chains have moved in. U.S. corporations now control 40 percent of the country's formal jobs, with Wal-Mart reigning as the No. 1 employer.

Nineteen million more Mexicans live in poverty today than when NAFTA was passed.

So, here's the deal: Thanks to Mexico's newly corporatized economy, wage earners there get poverty pay of \$5 a day (about \$1,600 a year), while a few hundred miles north, they might draw that much in an hour. What would you do?

<http://www.hightowerlowdown.org/node/1510>

Immigration: France sees tensions rise five years on from Paris riots

By Angelique Chrisafis

November 16, 2010, Guardian News

Violence in the ghettos brought an outcry over racism – but President Sarkozy is now putting immigrants under even more pressure.

Fariz Allili looked out at the decaying tower blocks he calls the "ghetto". Graffiti cakes his entrance hall, there is no heating, the lift has been broken for months and unemployed youths loiter with nothing to do. Even the local mayor calls this place a "vertical shanty town".

Five years ago these estates in Clichy-sous-Bois on the edge of Paris exploded in riots that spread across France and led to a state of national emergency. The trigger for the violence was the death of two young boys electrocuted in a power substation while hiding from police.

But the root cause was the hopelessness of a generation of young French people, ghettoised in dismal suburbs, marginalised and jobless because of their skin colour or their parents' immigrant origins. Since then discrimination against the third- and fourth-generation children of immigrants has worsened, tension is rife and Nicolas Sarkozy's rightwing anti-

immigrant rhetoric is blamed.

Allili, 21, shared a school desk with one of the boys who died in Clichy. He witnessed the nights of rioting firsthand. The fourth child of an Algerian cafe-owner, he's one of the few youths on his estate who have managed to carve out a future, training in IT. But he doesn't feel accepted as French. "Sarkozy's constant talk of immigration and national identity chips away at you, but worse is the perpetual police stop and searches. Cops insult us, saying 'Get back to your own country', 'you're not welcome here'. That's pretty hard to stomach when you're French."

More than any other French president, Sarkozy, who himself has immigrant roots, has turned the issue of immigration into electoral politics. He has rounded up Roma, introduced France's fifth immigration law in seven years, banned Muslim women wearing the niqab in public places and launched a national debate on what it means to be French, led by his new ministry of immigration and national identity. In this week's ministry reshuffle, he dropped the contentious "national identity" title but shows no sign of softening his hard-line immigration policy.

But the president's anti-immigrant stance, aimed at securing him votes from the extreme-right Front National, is not so much about newcomers. It is about French society's prob-

lems coming to terms with its own diverse make-up. dren were identifying more with religion and immigrant roots than being French. Paradoxically these second- and third-generation

When Angela Merkel declared that multiculturalism in Germany had "utterly failed", some French children, raised and schooled in the republican tradition, were less integrated than their often semi-literate immigrant grandparents who came from north and sub-Saharan Africa, Asia or southern Europe to work on building sites after the second world war. The French government has taken grave offence at the booing of the national anthem at football matches and French youths waving Algerian flags. But social workers on estates say nothing has changed in five years since the riots and France is still raising a generation of dispossessed people.

France. "Most of the kids in this neighborhood are the fourth generation of their family in France," said Mohamed Mechmeche, 44, a youth worker in Clichy-sous-Bois who after the riots founded the community pressure group *Aclefeu*. "They're born here, they're French, they don't even know Algeria. To now be harking back to their parents' roots is proof that French society isn't working: integration and assimilation have failed.

Despite an outcry about the urban riots, some racially diverse estates in Clichy-sous-Bois still face over 40% unemployment for the under-25s. A recent study of French citizens with immigrant parents found that they suffered higher unemployment, fared worse at school and faced more discrimination than other French people. Over a third felt society did not accept them as being French. They were stigmatised because of their race, religion and roots.

Another leaked report for the prime minister's office warned of a "ghetto effect" in some schools where integration had failed and chil-

exists here. But that suits politicians of both the left and right. You want a scapegoat for

society's ills, someone to blame? They'll always point the finger at us. Sarkozy has really let himself loose – now it's as if anything goes and people can make comments as prejudiced as they like."

Mechmeche, whose Algerian grandfather fought for France in the second world war, sat with colleagues lamenting a series of recent public racist remarks which he said showed France was going backwards. The interior minister, Brice Hortefeux, Sarkozy's oldest friend, was fined for racism after saying of a north African party member: "We always need one. It's when there are lots of them that there are problems."

An heir to the Guerlain perfume empire said on TV he had worked "like a nigger" to create a new scent. Certain journalists had talked of "blacks and Arabs" being to blame for crime. "It's not new immigration that is a problem in France, it is integrating the diversity that is already part of society," said Patrick Weil, immigration historian and author of *How to be French*. "People want to be accepted as French, but of course they feel different and not accepted when the president is using the language he's using. They are being made a target."

Patrick Lozès, head of Cran, a leading French black association, said the fact that French young people with immigrant parents were demanding their rights to be equal citizens showed that the principle of the republican system worked, but it had been muddied by extreme discrimination. Many youths with Arab or African-sounding names still find their CVs binned when applying for jobs, or are even asked to change them to something "more French".

Claude Dilain, the Socialist mayor of Clichy, said the problems of marginalisation in diverse French suburbs had not been addressed over the last five years and the tinderbox of more urban rioting could go off at any time.

KhouLOUD Tombari, 21, who watched the rioting from her tower block window as a sixth-former, had started her own local catering company after she couldn't find work because of her name and her postcode. "I sent out 300 letters and CVs for jobs from secretary and receptionist to community work. I got no replies. So many people here have no work or are doing jobs beneath them. We're French but we're not considered as real French people. The discourse is getting worse. "I was born in France but feel totally rejected here, yet [in] my parents' native Tunisia, people say I'm French. I just want to be given a chance to succeed. We feel set apart from the rest of France as if we live on an island."

The ensuing police round-ups outside schools, metro stations and businesses sparked a mass

protest movement with some French people hiding the children of illegal immigrants in their homes. The left warned the round-ups harked back to France's shameful past when a collaborationist government helped deport more than 75,000 French citizens and Jewish refugees to the Nazi concentration camps.

Backstory

France has a long history of immigration and earlier this century was seen to be a country that openly welcomed foreigners rather than fear them.

In 1931, France had the highest proportion of immigrants of any western country. Around three million immigrants made up 7% of its population, a higher ratio than in the US at the time. Around one third of people in France now have a foreign relative in their close family tree, and France still has the highest number of asylum applications of any OECD country. But in recent decades, rising unemployment, poor housing problems and the questioning of the presence of Islam in a secular state have made immigration a pet topic of the far-right. During his 2007 election campaign, Nicolas Sarkozy appealed to far-right voters by promising a crackdown. France has around 200,000 to 400,000 illegal immigrants, known as 'sans papiers'. After his 2007 election Sarkozy ordered that 25,000 illegal immigrants be expelled by the end of the year.

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2010/nov/16/france-racism-immigration-sarkozy>



A graffiti-covered building in La Forestiere estate, Clichy-sous-Bois, where the Paris riots of October 2005 originated. Photograph: Dan Chung for the Guardian

a view from the other side of the border

Getting Below the Surface of the Immigration Debate

Arnie Alpert

You don't even have to scratch the surface in Oaxaca, a sprawling state in southern Mexico, to learn something about Mexico-US migration. Talk to just about anyone and they'll ask, "Where are you from?" Once you say, "the USA," you'll hear stories about brothers in California, sisters in Carolina, uncles in eastern Washington, or about their own time working on farms, construction projects, or factories north of the border. Even without tales of workplace raids, desert border crossings, and deportations, the challenges facing separated families are obvious and painful.

If you do scratch the surface, you can learn why beautiful, peaceful villages in the rural Mixteca region have empty houses and so few kids the school have shut down. Some reasons, like soil erosion caused by excessive logging, go back centuries to the time of Spanish colonialism. Others

are more recent, like the pressures put on Mexico in the 1980s to reduce price supports for tortillas, and the flood of subsidized corn from the USA which entered Mexican markets after the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) went into effect in 1994.



"The migrant is not a statistic. He has a face and dignity," from a mural at a shelter for Central American immigrants in Oaxaca.

Jesus León Santos, of the Center for Integral Development of the Mixteca, met with our Witness for Peace delegation in the village of San Juan Sosola and told us the region has experienced longer periods of drought and periods of intense rain brought on by global climatic change. Moreover, he says, chemical inputs of the "green revolution" made the land less productive.

Oaxaca is Mexico's second poorest state, and according to some figures, a third of its people are now living in the USA. Miguel Angel Vásquez, of EDUCA, Services for an Alternative Education, told us that 60% of the Mexican youth who enter the labor market every year are unable to find work.

More than 40% of Oaxaca's farmland is idle, says Luis Santos Martinez of the Union of Corn Producers. "Only old people and women stay in the countryside. The men have left for the north of the country and the United States," he tells Noticias, a Oaxaca daily.

And it's not just Mexico. In a religiously affiliated shelter in the city of Oaxaca we meet 3 young men from El Salvador and Guatemala,

Tales and Testimonies

Don Gregorio was one of the elders who greeted us when we arrived in the village of San Juan Sosola, in the mountainous Mixteca region, in July. The village is nearly empty of children and young adults, since teenagers tend to leave for points north as soon as they finish middle school. Practically the first thing Don Gregorio tells us is about a young woman from the village who had died in Los Angeles without her family being able to contact her.

"Carmen" tells me her brother's two teenage boys were on their way to school in California when they were scooped up by immigration agents. When their parents were called, the whole family was detained and deported, leaving possessions and community behind. Now, Carmen's brother is struggling to make it as a street vendor, selling electronic toys and gadgets in a mobile street market perpetually at odds with city officials.

"George" is a 10-year-old boy born and raised in California, where his mama still lives. For reasons I have no reason to know, his family decided he is better off in a mountaintop Oaxaca village, and they sent him "home" with his papa to a place he had never been. When we meet him at his primary school, he appears to be in shock. English is his first language. He doesn't know anyone. He misses his mama and his dog, who recently died. You can watch him struggling to hold back the tears; sometimes he's not successful.

A taxi driver in Chalcotango tells us, in English, that he enjoyed living in North Carolina. He returned to Mexico after the carpet factory where he worked moved its operations to China. We tell him his village is beautiful; he prefers Carolina.

Mincing no words, an elderly woman



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trying to make their way through Mexico past migration police and criminal gangs. A Salvadoran man says, “If I could stay in my country and make money I’d never leave.” But he’s making his second attempt to reach the USA – the first ended with arrest in northern Mexico – despite his knowledge of the perils of the road. It’s not like he expects money to fall from the sky, he says. He expects to work hard so he can send money home to his mom.

When the farm economy fails, rural people migrate. That’s the story of 19th century New Hampshire in the 19th century, modern China, of modern Mexico and Central America. But unlike the “mill girls” who left New Hampshire’s small towns in the 1840s for the bustling new cities of New England, and unlike the workers in Chinese sweatshops now, Mexicans and Central Americans have to cross a highly militarized border and face a climate of racism and persecution if they reach the other side.

Migration between the United States and Mexico is an old story. After all, the entire Southwest USA was once part of Mexico, and communities near the border have longstanding economic and social ties. As the economies have become more closely intertwined through the general process of globalization and the specific effects of NAFTA, it should be no surprise that migration has increased.

What is surprising, perhaps, is that the policy architects behind NAFTA claimed the opposite would happen. As the rationale went, “free trade” would create jobs south of the border and decrease migration. Instead, NAFTA and associated policy changes destroyed Mexico’s rural, corn-based economy. According to the Carnegie Endowment, Mexico’s agricultural sector lost 2.3 million jobs from 1990 to 2008.

Migration patterns have been affected in recent years by changes in immigration enforcement and economic conditions. But given the closer economic and cultural ties between the two countries, migration between the USA and Mexico will continue, even with constructive policy changes. What is needed, then, is reform that makes it possible for people to migrate without placing their lives and human rights at risk. Renegotiation of NAFTA to enable Mexico to shore up its corn farmers and slow the importation of subsidized, industrialized, American corn is also essential to restoring health to Mexico’s rural economy.

Arnie Alpert is New Hampshire Program Coordinator for the American Friends Service Committee, a Quaker organization devoted to social justice, peace, and nonviolence. He spent the summer of 2010 in Oaxaca, Mexico, and participated in a Witness for Peace (www.witnessforpeace.org) delegation exploring the root causes of Mexico-US migration.

American Friends Service Committee
New Hampshire Program
 4 Park St., Suite 209, Concord NH 03301
www.afsc.org/newhampshire
afscnh@afsc.org



American Friends Service Committee

whose family has invited us into her home during the 10-day mourning period for a recently deceased relative,



Bus stations all over Oaxaca advertise trips to the northern border region.

tells us “Los Angeles is full of bad people,” especially the immigration agents. Her sons are in Mexico City, but she has a grandson in LA, a

phone call away. She gives us sweet bread and hot chocolate, a Oaxaca custom.

An American couple is touring the imposing ruins of Monte Alban, capital of the Zapotec civilization for hundreds of years. When they retired, they moved to Mazatlan, on Mexico’s Pacific coast, to live more cheaply and closer to their son, who lives nearby. The internet has loads of sites for Americans interested in moving to Mexico, which can be done easily and legally.



Educator Omar Nunez asks 6th graders if they have relatives in the USA. Nearly every hand goes up.



A flood of U.S. corn imports, combined with subsidies that favor agribusiness, are blamed for the loss of two million farm jobs in Mexico. | Heriberto Rodriguez/MCT

Free trade: As U.S. corn flows south, Mexicans stop farming

By Tim Johnson | McClatchy Newspapers

February 1, 2011

SAN JERONIMO SOLOLA, Mexico — Look around the rain-fed corn farms in Oaxaca state, and in vast areas of Mexico, and one sees few young men, just elderly people and single mothers.

"The men have gone to the United States," explained Abel Santiago Duran, a 56-year-old municipal agent, as he surveyed this empty village in Oaxaca state.

The countryside wasn't supposed to hollow out in this way when the North American Free Trade Agreement linked Mexico, Canada and the U.S. in 1994. Mexico, hoping its factories would absorb displaced farmers, said it would "export goods, not people."

But in hindsight, the agricultural elements of the pact were brutal on Mexico's corn farmers. A flood of U.S. corn imports, combined with subsidies that favor agribusiness, are blamed for the loss of 2 million farm jobs in Mexico. The trade pact worsened illegal migration, some experts say, particularly in areas where small farmers barely eke out a living.

That is the case in the rolling hills of western Oaxaca state, ancestral lands of indigenous Mixtecs who till small plots of corn, beans and squash between stands of jacarandas, junipers and eucalyptus. Eagles soar in the brilliant blue skies. Clumps of prickly pear and organ cactus attest to the sporadic nature of rainfall.

When a visitor arrives, the gray-haired men on the veranda of the village hall talk about the exodus of young men.

"When they hit 18 and finish secondary school, they leave for the United States or other states of Mexico," Duran said.

His cousin, Jesus Duran, said young men see little future as corn farmers and observe with dismay how the government aims subsidies at medium and big farms, leaving only a trickle for small family farms.

"If you go to the offices over there and ask for help," Duran said, nodding to the local agriculture agency, "they say there isn't any to give."

Mexican negotiators who signed the NAFTA agreement hoped that small corn farmers thrown out of work by rising imports of cheap U.S. corn would be absorbed into jobs in the fruit and vegetable export industry or in manufacturing.

"That turned out to be incorrect. The numbers of people displaced from family farming were much, much higher than the number of new wage jobs," said Jonathan Fox, an expert on rural Mexico at the University of California at Santa Cruz.

Then U.S. corn imports crested like a rain-swollen river, increasing from 7 percent of Mexican consumption to around 34 percent, mostly for animal feed and for industrial uses as cornstarch.

"It's been roughly a tripling, quadrupling, quintupling of U.S. corn exports to Mexico, depending on the year," said Timothy A. Wise, the director of research and policy at the Global Development and Environment Institute at Tufts University in Medford, Mass. "Is that a river? Yeah, that's a lot of corn."

Fox and Wise are among the collaborators on

a study, "Subsidizing Inequality: Mexican corn policy since NAFTA," released last autumn.

Representatives of small farmers say Mexico's policymakers tossed the dice that trade-spurred growth would take care of rural disruptions — and lost.

"The great failure of this supposition is that there wasn't economic growth that would absorb these people," said Victor Suarez, the executive director of the National Association of Rural Producers, which represents 60,000 small farmers. "The result has left rural areas increasingly populated by the elderly and women."

Faced with deepening poverty, rural migrants have tried to escape regions of Mexico that never used to be sources of emigration.

"In Chiapas, there was hardly any migration before NAFTA," Suarez said, referring to Mexico's southernmost state. "Farm laborers were even brought in from Guatemala. Now, more than 50,000 rural people from Chiapas go each year to the United States."

Corn imports from the U.S. are only one component of what scholars say is a complex picture. In fact, Mexican corn production has risen since the trade pact, driven by domestic agribusiness and supported by subsidies biased to favor large producers that by one estimate surpassed \$20 billion in the past two decades.

The Mexican government also has cash-transfer subsidies, known as ProCampo, for small farmers who are considered the free-trade pact's losers. But they reach only a portion of small corn growers, a quarter of whom are indigenous.

Some rural farmers no longer have enough corn to sell, sinking into subsistence living for themselves and their families.

"Of my generation," said 33-year-old Balde-
mar Mendoza, a Zapotec small corn farmer in
the Sierra Juarez area of Oaxaca, "many peo-
ple want nothing to do with farming because
it doesn't pay. With all the changes in the
weather, there is no certainty that your har-
vest will be good."

Unless the central government tweaks subsi-
dies to make more small family farms eco-
nomically viable, the result may be sustained
migrant flows, experts said.

"The government didn't so much pull the plug
on corn. The government pulled the plug on
family farmers who grow corn because the big
guys who grew corn got massive subsidies and
protection from imports," Fox said.

Under the free-trade umbrella, several Mexi-
can agro-industrial companies have become
muscular global conglomerates.

"Before NAFTA, Grupo Bimbo was a big com-
pany. Now it is the largest industrial user of
wheat in the world," Suarez said, referring to
the world's No. 1 bread maker. "Maseca was a
big company. Now it is a global company with
a strong position in cornmeal worldwide."

Their powerful position in the market has kept
prices high for consumers, while in the coun-
tryside, the social fabric frays as families dis-
perse to find jobs.

The impact, Fox said, "unravels rural commu-
nities, separates families and makes it difficult
for young people to see a future in their com-
munities of origin."

Josefa Soriano, 74, doesn't need an explana-
tion of what's happening. She sees it with her
own eyes. As a rural exodus unfolds, families
keep fewer of the animals such as goats, cattle
and burros that provided manure for fields.
Such livestock must have caretakers.

"You have no choice but to buy fertilizer now,"
she said. "If you don't fertilize, nothing grows,
not even fodder."

As she ambled through the settlement, Sori-
ano offered a running commentary on those
who have migrated.

"The village is almost without people," Soriano
said. "Many houses are empty. The fathers
and the sons have gone."

She turned to a visitor and said, "If the young
people always leave, what do you think will
happen to us?"

[http://
www.mcclatchydc.com/2011/02/01/107871/free-
trade-us-corn-flows-south.html#ixzz1UOLtF0TA](http://www.mcclatchydc.com/2011/02/01/107871/free-trade-us-corn-flows-south.html#ixzz1UOLtF0TA)

Take Notes Here:

Immigration and the Culture of Solidarity

Posted on: 20/06/2011 by David Bacon



Editor's Note: This is the final article of a series on border solidarity by journalist and immigration activist David Bacon. All articles in the series were originally published in the Institute for Transnational Social Change's report Building a Culture of Cross-Border Solidarity. To get a PDF of the entire report, <http://www.cipamericas.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/05/culture-of-solidarity.pdf>

One indispensable part of education and solidarity is greater contact between Mexican union organizers and their U.S. counterparts. The base for that contact already exists in the massive movement of people between the two countries.

Miners fired in Cananea, or electrical workers fired in Mexico City, become workers in Phoenix, Los Angeles and New York. Twelve million Mexican workers in the U.S. are a natural base of support for Mexican unions. They bring with them the experience of the battles waged by their unions. They can raise money and support. Their families are still living in Mexico, and many are active in political and labor campaigns. As workers and union members in the U.S., they can help win support from U.S. unions for the battles taking place in Mexico.

This is not a new idea. It's what the Flores Magon brothers were doing for the uprising in Cananea. It's why the Mexican left sent activists and organizers to the Rio Grande Valley in the 1930s, and to Los Angeles in the 1970s. All these efforts had a profound impact on U.S. unions and workers. The sea change in the politics of Los Angeles in the last two decades, while it has many roots, shows the long-term results of immigrants gaining political power, and the role of politically conscious immigrant organizers in that process.

Today some U.S. unions see the potential in organizing in immigrant communities. But most unions in Mexico, in contrast to the past, don't see this movement of people as a resource

they can or should organize. What would happen if Mexican unions began sending organizers or active workers north into the U.S.? In reality, active members are already making that move, and have been for a long time. Yet there is no organized way of looking at this. Where, for instance, will the people displaced in today's Mexican labor struggles go? In 1998, almost 900 active miners from Cananea had to leave after their strike that year was lost. Many came to Arizona and California. In Mexico City, 26,000 SME members took the indemnization and gave up claim to their jobs and unions. Many of them will inevitably be forced to go to the U.S. to look for work.

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Cananea miners and Mexico City electrical workers have a wealth of experience and a history of participation in a progressive and democratic union. They can help both workers in the U.S. and those they've left back home, building unions in the places they go to work. But to use their experience effectively, unions on both sides of the border need to know who they are and where they're going, and see them as potential organizers.

Economic reforms and displacement create unemployed workers – for border factories, or for U.S. agriculture and meatpacking plants. Displacement creates a reserve army

SOLIDARITY and the migration of people are linked. The economic crisis in Mexico is getting much worse, with no upturn in sight. With a 40% poverty rate, the government still has no program for employment be-

ing, and more fearful of losing their jobs.

Displacement and migration aren't a byproduct of the global economy. The economic system in both Mexico and the U.S. is dependent on the labor that displacement produces. Mexican President Felipe Calderon said on a recent visit to California, "You have two economies. One economy is intensive in capital, which is the American economy. One economy is intensive in labor, which is the Mexican economy. We are two complementary economies, and that phenomenon is impossible to stop."

To employers, migration is a labor supply system. U.S. immigration policy is not intended to keep people from crossing the border. It determines the status of people once they're in the U.S. It is designed to supply labor to employers at a manageable cost, imposed by employers. It makes the laborers themselves vulnerable, especially those who come through guest worker programs where employers can withdraw their ability to stay in the country by firing them.

The economic pressure that produces migration has a big impact on relations between U.S. and Mexican labor. Today, for instance, governments and employers on both sides of the border tell unions that support labor supply, or guest worker, programs is part of a beneficial relationship. Any movement

for solidarity has to address this corporate pressure. A union alliance with employers on immigration policy, based on helping them use migration as a labor supply system, creates a large obstacle to any effort to defend the rights of migrants. Instead, U.S. and Mexican unions need a common program on trade, displacement and investment, which calls for increasing the security of workers and farmers, and reducing displacement and forced migration.

ANTI-IMMIGRANT policies were part of cold war politics in the U.S. labor movement. As late as 1986, the AFL-CIO supported employer sanctions, the section of U.S. immigration law passed in 1986 that essentially made work a crime for people without papers. They argued that that if undocumented workers couldn't support their families, they'd deport themselves.

The growth of the cross-border movement coincided with rise of the immigrant rights movement. In the 1990s, as labor activists pushed for support for unions in Mexico, they also organized to repeal sanctions. First the garment unions called for repeal, then SEIU, the California Labor Federation, and others. They argued that employers used the law to threaten and fire undocumented workers to keep them from organizing unions. Unions trying to organize and grow began to see immigrants as potential members — workers who

would strike and organize. They therefore opposed the idea of pushing Mexicans back across border, because they wanted them to become active in the U.S. They saw immigrants not just as a force on the job, but in politics. As people gained legal status and then became citizens, they could also vote and elect public officials who would act in workers' interests.

Today, unions criticize the racial profiling law SB 1070 in Arizona for the same reason — not just that it leads to discrimination, but that it's wrong to make workers leave. In 1999 the AFL-CIO reversed itself and called for repealing sanctions, for amnesty for the undocumented, for protecting the organizing rights of all workers, and for family reunification. The federation already had a longstanding position calling for ending guest worker programs.

Gradually, unions have seen the importance of workers with feet planted on both sides of the border. This is an important part of building a culture of solidarity. Some unions, like the UFW, have gone further and tried to develop strategic partnerships with progressive organizations in the immigrant workforce, such as the Frente Indigena de Organizaciones Binacionales (FIOB). It has hired Oaxacan activists, fluent in indigenous languages, as organizers, and supported indigenous Oaxacan

communities in protests against police harassment in cities like Greenfield in the Salinas Valley.

OAXACAN immigrants today are an important and growing section of many immigrant communities in the U.S., especially the rural areas where people work in farm labor. The FIOB is one of many organizations among Oaxacans that people have brought with them from their home state, or have organized as migrants on their travels. Many of its founders were strike organizers and social activists in Oaxaca and the fields of north Mexico. Years ago they saw the organizing possibilities among people dispersed as a result of displacement, but whose communities now exist in many places in both Mexico and the U.S.

For over half a century, migration has been the main fact of social life in hundreds of indigenous towns spread through the hills of Oaxaca. That's made the conditions and rights of migrants central concerns. But the FIOB and its base communities today also talk about another right, the right to stay home. Asserting this right challenges not just inequality and exploitation facing migrants, but the very reasons people migrate.

According to the 2000 census, Hispanic American Indians (the category used to count indigenous Mexican migrants) in California

alone numbered 154,000 — undoubtedly a severe undercount. These men and women come from communities whose economies are totally dependent on migration. The ability to send a son or daughter across the border to the north, to work and send back money, makes the difference between eating chicken or eating salt and tortillas. Migration means not having to manhandle a wooden plough behind an ox, cutting furrows in dry soil for a corn crop that can't be sold for what it cost to plant it. It means that dollars arrive in the mail when kids need shoes to go to school, or when a grandparent needs a doctor.

“There are no jobs here, and NAFTA pushed the price of corn so low that it's not economically possible to plant a crop anymore,” says Rufino Dominguez, former binational coordinator for the FIOB, and now head of Oaxaca's Institute for Attention to Migrants. In the 1980s, Dominguez was a strike organizer in Sinaloa and Baja California. “We come to the U.S. to work because we can't get a price for our product at home. There's no alternative.”

Without large scale political change most local communities won't have the resources for productive projects and economic development that could provide a decent living. “We need development that makes migration a choice rather than a necessity — the

right to not migrate,” explains FIOB coordinator Gaspar Rivera Salgado, a professor at UCLA. “But the right to stay home, to not migrate, has to mean more than the right to be poor, the right to go hungry and homeless. Choosing whether to stay home or leave only has meaning if each choice can provide a meaningful future.”

At the same time, because of its indigenous membership, FIOB campaigns for the rights of migrants in the U.S. who come from those communities. It calls for immigration amnesty and legalization for undocumented migrants. It campaigned successfully for translation and language rights in U.S. courtrooms, and protested immigration sweeps and deportations. The FIOB also condemns the proposals for guest worker programs. “Migrants need the right to work, but these workers don't have labor rights or benefits,” Dominguez charges. “It's like slavery.”

Today there is increasing interest among U.S. farm worker unions in activity in Mexico, much of it concentrating on workers recruited into H-2A guest worker programs. In the past, farm worker unions opposed the programs on principle, arguing that the workers recruited were vulnerable to extreme employer exploitation, and deportation if they struck or protested. Today unions like the UFW and FLOC argue that they can organize these

workers to win contracts, better conditions, and protection for their rights. But this comes at a price. Some no longer call for the elimination of guest worker programs, which exploit far more workers than those represented by unions. And if unions recruit guest workers themselves, how can they then strike or use jobsite actions against the employers hiring them?

-governor Ulises Ruiz and make a basic change in development and economic policy. The uprising was crushed by Federal armed intervention, and dozens of activists were arrested. To Leoncio Vasquez, a FIOB activist in Fresno, “the lack of human rights is a factor contributing to migration from Oaxaca and Mexico, since it closes off our ability to call for any change.”

While farm worker unions and organizations like the FIOB disagree about guest worker programs, they do agree about the rights of workers. “Both peoples’ rights as migrants, and their right to stay home, are part of the same solution,” Rivera Salgado says. “We have to change the debate from one in which immigration is presented as a problem to a debate over rights.”

During the conflict, teachers traveled to California from Oaxaca, and spoke at the convention of the California Federation of Teachers. Solidarity efforts between U.S. and Mexican teachers have barely started, but with the vast number of Mexican students in California schools, and with many immigrants themselves now working as teachers, the basis is growing for much closer relationships. Mexican teachers, members of Latin America’s largest union, have also organized a leftwing caucus that now controls the union structure in several states, including Oaxaca.

For many years the FIOB was a crucial part of the political opposition to Oaxaca’s PRI government, until the PRI was defeated in the elections of 2010. Juan Romualdo Gutierrez Cortez, a schoolteacher in Tecomaxtlahuaca, was the FIOB’s Oaxaca coordinator and a leader of Oaxaca’s teachers union, Section 22 of the National Education Workers Union, and of the Popular Association of the People of Oaxaca (APPO).

During the 2006 uprising, the state government issued an order for Gutierrez’ arrest, because he’d been a very visible opposition leader already for years. In the late 1990s he was elected to the Oaxaca Chamber of Deputies, in an alliance between the FIOB and Mexico’s leftwing Democratic Revolutionary Party. Following his term in office, he was imprisoned by then-Governor Jose Murat, until

The June 2006 strike by Section 22 started a months-long uprising, led by the APPO, which sought to remove the state’s then

a binational campaign won his release. His crime was insisting on a new path of economic development that would raise rural living standards, and make migration just an option, rather than an indispensable means of survival.

Gaspar Rivera-Salgado believes that “in Mexico we’re very close to getting power in our communities on a local and state level.” He points to Gutierrez’ election as state deputy, and later as mayor of his hometown San Miguel Tlacotepec, and finally to the election of Gabino Cue as governor. The FIOB’s alliance with the PRD is controversial, however. “First, we have to organize our own base,” Rivera Salgado cautions. “But then we have to find strategic allies. Migration is part of globalization, an aspect of state policies that expel people. Creating an alternative to that requires political power. There’s no way to avoid that.”

FIOB presents an important example of another kind of binational organizing and solidarity that complements efforts by unions. It has a strong base among communities on both sides of the borders. It has a carefully worked-out program for advocating the rights of migrants and their home communities, discussed extensively among its chapters before it was adopted. And it sees the system as the problem, not just the bad actions of employers or government officials.

In Conclusion

THE interests of workers in the U.S. and Mexico are tied together. Millions of people are a bridge between the two countries, and their labor movements. A blacklisted worker in Cananea one year can become a miner in Arizona the next, or a janitor organizer in Los Angeles. Who knows better the human cost of repression in Mexico than a teacher from Oaxaca in 2006, or an electrical worker who lost his or her job and pension in 2009?

Raquel Medina, a Oaxacan teacher, spoke at the 2007 convention of the California Federation of Teachers. She did more than appeal for support for Section 22. She helped teachers from Fresno and Santa Maria understand why they hear so many children in their classrooms speaking Mixteco. She helped them see that the poverty in her home state, the repression of her union, the growing number of Oaxacan families in California, and the activity of those migrants in California’s union battles, are all related. She connected the dots of solidarity. Educators should go back to their schools and union meetings, she said, and show people the way the global economy functions today – how it affects ordinary people, and what they can do to change it.

The historic slogan of the ILWU (and of many unionists beyond its ranks) is “an injury to one is an injury to all.” Today, an up-

dated version of it might say, “An attack on a union in Mexico is an attack on unions in the U.S.” Or it could say, “An attack on Mexican workers in Arizona is an attack on workers in Mexico.” Or it could say, “Organizing Mexican workers at carwashes in Los Angeles will help unions in Mexico, by increasing the power of those willing to fight for the mineros and SME.”

David Bacon is a California writer and photojournalist. His latest book is Illegal People: How Globalization Creates Migration and Criminalizes Immigrants.

NOTES:

Solidarity Economy is a TOOL for organizing toward a just, sustainable & democratic economy.

AFSC, former Austin, TX office

Solidarity Economy is an *emerging language* for building a movement to transform the economy.

Solidarity Economy is a *way of thinking about the economy* that opens up spaces of hope and possibility.

Solidarity Economy is a *framework for strategizing* about how to create this other economy, building on our strengths and connecting our practices from the ground-up.

Solidarity Economy is a *space in which to imagine, debate and create* visions for another economy based on shared values.

Solidarity Economy's Shared Values

Social & economic transformation

Cooperation and shared power

Justice in all dimensions (race, ethnicity, class, gender, ability, sexuality)

Democratic participation (economic, social & political self-determination)

Ecological responsibility

Pluralism & diversity (in organizing and in forms of organization)

Solidarity Economy involves:

- Diverse groups
- Diverse models of organization
- Shared values
- Shared commitment to a process of transformation

The Solidarity Economy approach believes that the best solutions come from our collective knowledge & experience.

The U.S. Solidarity Economy Network (US-SEN)

The mission of the US-SEN is to connect a diverse array of individuals, organizations, businesses and projects in the shared work of building and strengthening regional, national and international movements for a solidarity economy.

www.ussen.org

Some of Solidarity Economy's Core Debates

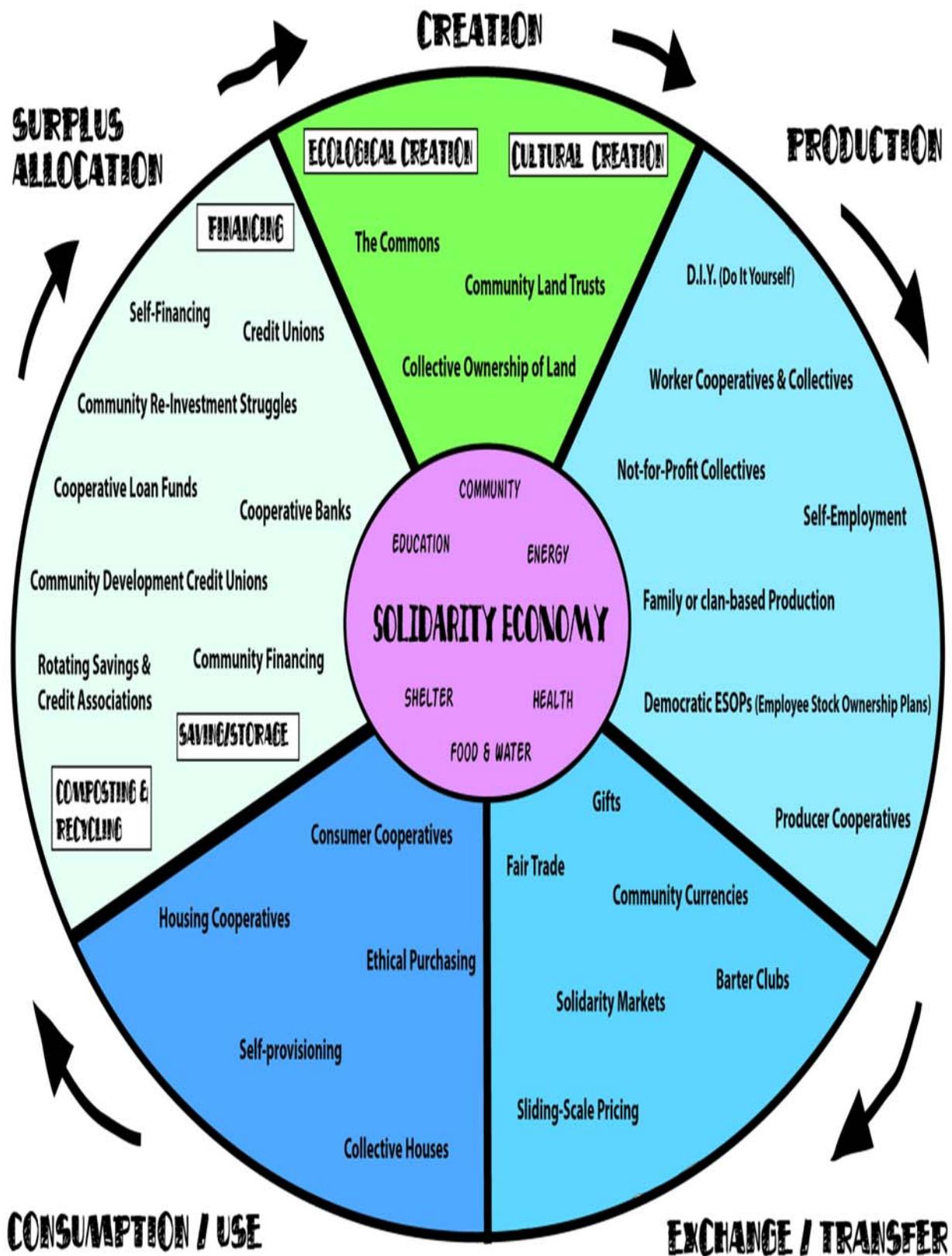
The role (and nature) of markets

The role (and nature) of the state

Reforming or replacing capitalism?

The role of models and visions

Who's in? Who's out? Where to draw lines of collaboration or conflict?



Uprooted & Criminalized

THE IMPACT OF FREE MARKETS ON MIGRANTS

Autumn 2008, by David Bacon

Contributors: Carolyn Purcell and Anuradha Mittal provided editorial support.

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For full article email jgarcia@afsc.org

Rufino Dominguez, coordinator of the Binational Front of Indigenous Organizations (FIOB, Frente Indigena de Organizaciones Binacionales) says there are about 500,000 indigenous people from Oaxaca living in the U.S. – 300,000 in California alone. Economic crises provoked by the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) and other economic reforms are uprooting and displacing Mexicans in the country's most remote areas, where indigenous people still speak their native languages. "There are no jobs, and NAFTA made the price of corn so low that it's not economically possible to plant a crop anymore," Dominguez says. "We come to the U.S. to work because we can't get a price for our product at home. There's no alternative." As he points out, U.S. trade and immigration policy are linked together. They are part of a single system, not separate and independent policies. The negotiation of NAFTA was in fact an important step in the development of this relationship.

Since NAFTA's passage in 1993, the U.S. Congress has debated and passed several new trade agreements – with Peru, Jordan, Chile, and the Central American Free Trade Agreement. At the same time it has debated immigration policy as though those trade



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agreements bore no relationship to the waves of displaced people migrating to the U.S., looking for work. Meanwhile, a rising tide of anti-immigrant hysteria has increasingly demonized those migrants, leading to measures that deny them jobs, rights, or any pretense of equality with people living in the communities around them. To resolve any of these dilemmas, from adopting rational and humane immigration policies to reducing the fear and hostility

ity towards migrants, the starting point has been an examination of the way U.S. policies have both produced migration and criminalized migrants.

MAKING A CASE FOR FREE TRADE TO HALT IMMIGRATION

Trade negotiations and immigration policy were formally joined together when Congress passed the Immigration Reform and Control Act (IRCA) in 1986. Immigrant rights activists campaigned against the law because it contained employer sanctions, prohibiting employers for the first time at a federal level from hiring undocumented workers. IRCA's liberal defenders pointed to its amnesty provision as a gain that justified sanctions, and the bill eventually did enable over 4 million people living in the U.S. without immigration documents to gain permanent residence.

Yet few noted one other provision of the law. IRCA set up a Commission for the Study of International Migration and Cooperative Economic Development to investigate the causes of immigration to the U.S. The commission issued a report to President George Bush and Congress in 1990. It found, unsurprisingly, that the main motivation for coming to the U.S. was economic need. To slow or halt this flow, it recommended "promoting greater economic integration between the migrant sending countries and the United States through free trade" and that "U.S. economic policy should

promote a system of open trade." It concluded that "the United States should expedite the development of a U.S.-Mexico free trade area and encourage its incorporation with Canada into a North American free trade area," while warning that "it takes many years – even generations – for sustained growth to achieve the desired effect." Mexican President Carlos Salinas de Gortari made it plain that he favored such a trade agreement between Mexico and the United States.

As Congress debated the treaty, President Salinas toured the United States, telling audiences unhappy at high levels of immigration that passing NAFTA would reduce Mexican immigration by providing employment for Mexicans in Mexico. Back home, he and other treaty proponents made the same argument. NAFTA, they claimed, would set Mexico on a course to become a first-world nation. "We did become part of the first world," says Juan Manuel Sandoval, coordinator of the Permanent Seminario on Chicano and Border Studies at Mexico City's National Institute of Anthropology and History.

NAFTA: A RECIPE FOR DESTRUCTION OF MEXICO'S AGRICULTURAL BASE

NAFTA became an important source of pressure on Mexicans, particularly Oaxacans, to migrate. The treaty forced yellow corn,

grown by Mexican farmers without subsidies, they'd grown. It's no accident that the Zapatista National Liberation Army planned their uprising to compete in Mexico's own market against subsidized corn from the U.S. producers. Agricultural exports to Mexico more than doubled during the NAFTA years, from \$4.6 to \$9.8 billion annually – \$2.5 billion in 2006 alone. In January and February of 2008, huge demonstrations in Mexico sought to block the implementation of the agreement's final chapter, which lowered the tariff barriers on white corn and beans.

By the 1980's, as a result of a growing crisis in agriculture, Mexico had already become a corn importer. According to Sandoval, large number of farmers switched to other crops when they couldn't compete against U.S. grain dumping. But NAFTA then prohibited price supports for Mexican farmers, without which hundreds of thousands of small farmers found it impossible to sell corn or other agricultural products at prices that would cover the production costs. The CONASUPO system, in which the government bought corn at subsidized prices, turned it into tortillas, and sold them in state-franchised grocery stores at subsidized low prices, was abolished.

And when NAFTA pulled down customs barriers, large U.S. corporations dumped even more agricultural products in the Mexican market. Rural farming families went hungry when they couldn't find buyers for what

tista National Liberation Army planned their uprising in Chiapas for the day NAFTA took effect. Indigenous farmers knew what awaited the southern countryside.

Mexico couldn't protect its own agriculture from the fluctuations of the world market. A global coffee glut in the 1990s plunged prices below the cost of production. A less entrapped government might have bought the crops grown by farmers from the state of Veracruz to keep them afloat, or provided subsidies for other crops. But once free market strictures were in place the government was unable to intervene and farmers suffered. Campesinos from Veracruz joined the stream of workers heading north, where they became an important part of the workforce in the Smithfield pork processing plant in North Carolina, as well as in other industries.

Poor people in Mexican cities fared no better. Although a flood of cheap U.S. grain was supposed to make consumer prices fall, the opposite occurred. With the end of the CONASUPO stores and price controls, the price of tortillas more than doubled in the years that followed NAFTA's adoption. One company, Grupo Maseca, monopolized tortilla production, while Wal-Mart became Mexico's largest retailer.

INCREASED IMPOVERISHMENT AMONGST THE WORKING POOR

Under Mexico's former nationalist development policy, foreign auto makers like Ford, Chrysler, General Motors and Volkswagen were required to buy some of their components from Mexican producers built by Mexican workers. NAFTA, however, prohibited governments from requiring foreign investors to use a certain percentage of locally manufactured parts in their production.

Without this restraint, the auto giants began to supply their assembly lines with parts from their own subsidiaries, often manufactured in other countries. Mexican parts workers lost their jobs by the thousands.

Economic reforms restructured the Mexican economy. One major objective of those reforms was the privatization of the large state sector, employing millions of workers. By the early 1990s Mexico had sold, not just its national mines to one company, Grupo

Mexico, owned by one family, the Larreas, but also its steel mill in Michoacan to the Villareals, and its telephone company to Carlos Slim. Former Mexico City mayor Carlos Hank Rhon drove the city's bus system deeply into debt,



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and then bought the lines in the 1990s at public auction. Mexico created more billionaires in this period than any other country in the world.

Rich Mexicans weren't the only beneficiaries of privatization. U.S. companies were allowed to own land and factories, eventually anywhere in Mexico, without Mexican partners. U.S.-based Union Pacific, in partnership with the Larreas, became the owner of the country's main north-south rail line, and immediately discontinued virtually all passenger ser-

vice, as railroad corporations had done in the expanded. Mexico's ports were sold off and U.S. As the Larreas and Union Pacific moved companies like Stevedoring Services of America to boost profits and cut labor costs, Mexican ica, Hutchinson and TMM now operate the rail em-



Esteban, a guest worker recruited from Huehuetenango, Guatemala, holds the notebook in which he recorded, every day, the number of pine trees he planted, and knew, therefore, how much he was cheated by the contractor. Photo by: David Bacon

employment dropped from over 90,000 to 36,000. The railroad union under leftwing leaders Demetrio Vallejo and Valentin Campa had been so strong that its strikes challenged the government in the 1950s. Facing privatization, railroad workers mounted a wildcat strike to try to save their jobs, but they lost and their union became a shadow of its former presence in Mexican politics.

After NAFTA the privatization wave

country's largest shipping terminals. The impact on longshore wages was devastating. In Manzanillo and Lazaro Cardenas, the two largest Pacific coast ports, a crane driver made \$100-160/day before privatization in the late 1980s. Today they make \$40-50.

FAILING WAGES AND RISING POVERTY

Slashing wages in privatized enterprises and gutting union agreements only increased the wage differential between the U.S.

and Mexico. According to Garrett Brown of the Maquiladora Health and Safety Network, the average Mexican wage was 23% of the U.S. manufacturing wage in 1975. By 2002 it was down to 12% of the United States manufacturing wage earned. Brown says that since NAFTA went into effect, real Mexican wages dropped by 22%, while worker productivity increased 45%.

In NAFTA's first year, the Mexican government reported that one million Mexicans lost their jobs. This was also a year when the peso was devalued in an attempt to avert the selloff of short-term bonds and a flood of capital shifting to the north. U.S. Treasury Secretary Robert Rubin engineered a \$20 billion loan to Mexico, which was paid to bondholders, who were primarily U.S. banks. In return, Mexico had to pledge that its oil revenue would be used to pay off its foreign debt, thus making the country's primary source of income unavailable for social needs.

As the Mexican economy, especially the border maquiladora industry, became increasingly tied to the U.S. market, Mexican workers lost jobs when the market for what those factories produced shrank during U.S. recessions. In 2000-2001, 400,000 jobs were lost on the U.S./Mexico border, and in the current recession, thousands more will be eliminated. In 2006 spreading poverty and the lack

of a program to create jobs and raise living standards, ignited months of conflict in Oaxaca, in which strikes and demonstrations were met with repression by an unpopular provincial government. Leoncio Vasquez, communications director for the FIOB in Fresno, California, says, "the lack of human rights itself is a factor contributing to migration from Oaxaca and Mexico, since it closes off our ability to call for any change."

DISPLACEMENT: A RESULT OF FREE MARKET POLICIES

All of these policies produced displaced people, who could no longer make a living or survive as they'd done before. The rosy predictions of NAFTA's boosters that it would slow migration proved false. Between just 2000 and 2005, Mexico lost 900,000 jobs in the countryside, and 700,000 in the cities. Since 1994, six million Mexicans came to live in the U.S. Another million went to work in the maquiladoras. In just five years, from 2000 to 2005, the Mexican population living in the U.S. increased from 10 to 12 million. With few green cards, or permanent residence visas, available for Mexicans, most of these migrants were undocumented.

From 1982 through the NAFTA era, successive economic reforms produced more migrants. Ejidatarios who lost their land (farmers on state land who had to work the

land regularly and produce a harvest to keep it) found jobs as farm workers in California. Laid off railroad workers. A line of young men sit beside the town plaza of Santa Eulalia, Guatemala, waiting for work. Many have relatives working in the U.S., and are thinking of going north themselves, as their forbears had during the early 1900s, when Mexican labor built much of the rail network through the U.S. southwest. The displacement of people had already grown so large by 1986 that the commission established by IRCA was charged with recommending measures to halt or slow it.

Its report urged that “migrant-sending countries should encourage technological modernization by strengthening and assuring intellectual property protection and by removing existing impediments to investment” and recommended that “the United States should condition bilateral aid to sending countries on their taking the necessary steps toward structural adjustment. Similarly, U.S. support for non-project lending by the international financial institutions should be based on the implementation of satisfactory adjustment programs.” The IRCA commission report even acknowledged the potential for harm by noting “efforts should be made to ease transitional costs in human suffering.”

The North American Free Trade Agree-

ment, however, was not intended to relieve hu-

man suffering. In 1994, the year the treaty went into effect, U.S. speculators began selling off Mexican government bonds. According to Jeff Faux, founding director of the Economic Policy Institute, “the peso crash of December, 1994, was directly connected to NAFTA, which had created a speculative bubble for Mexican assets that then collapsed when the speculators cashed in.”

“It is the financial crashes and the economic disasters that drive people to work for dollars in the U.S., to replace life savings, or just to earn enough to keep their family at

home together,” says Harvard historian John Womack. “The debt-induced crash in the 1980s, before

NAFTA, drove people north...The financial crash and the Rubin-induced reform of NAFTA, New York’s financial expropriation of Mexican finances between 1995 and 2000, drove the economically wrecked, dispossessed and impoverished north again.”

* * *

The U.S. immigration debate lacks a vocabulary to describe what happens to migrants before they cross borders – the factors that force them into motion. In the U.S. political debate,

Veracruz’ uprooted coffee pickers or the unemployed workers from Mexico City’s auto parts plants are called immigrants, be-

cause that debate does not recognize their existence before they cross the border. It would be more accurate to call them migrants, and the process migration since that takes into account people's communities of origin and those where they travel to find work.

Similarly, the U.S. debate makes a big distinction between Mexican job seekers, most of who are undocumented and have no rights or legal status, and Cubans, who get permanent residence visas as political refugees as soon as they set foot on a beach in Florida. These distinctions, however, have more to do with U.S. foreign policy goals than with reality. When teachers and farmers left Oaxaca seeking a viable economic future, after they were beaten in the streets for protesting that their state's government won't provide one, were they job seekers or refugees? They were both, of course. But in the U.S. and other wealthy countries, economic rights are not considered human rights. In the official view, hunger doesn't create political refugees. In effect, the whole process that pushes people north is outside the parameters of political debate.

Displacement itself has become an unmentionable word in the Washington discourse. Not one immigration proposal in Congress in 2006 and 2007 considered policies that uprooted miners, teachers, tree planters and farmers, in spite of the fact that Congress

members voted for these policies. In fact, while debating bills that criminalize undocumented migrants and set up huge guest worker programs, four new trade agreements were introduced, each of which would cause more displacement and more migration.

For the full article email jgarcia@afsc.org

About the Author: David Bacon, a Senior Fellow at the Oakland Institute, is a renowned Bay Area writer and photojournalist and he has received numerous awards for both his writing and photography.

For twenty years, Bacon was a labor organizer for unions in which immigrant workers made up a large percentage of the membership. Those include the United Farm Workers, the United Electrical Workers, the International Ladies' Garment Workers, the Molders Union and others. Those experiences gave him a unique insight into changing conditions in the workforce, the impact of the global economy and migration, and how these factors influence the struggle for workers' rights. David's work appears regularly in *TruthOut*, *The Nation*, *The American Prospect*, *The Progressive*, and the *San Francisco Chronicle*, among other publications. His books include *The Children of NAFTA* (University of California Press, March, 2004), *Communities Without Borders* (ILR/Cornell University Press, October 2006) and *Illegal People – How Globalization Creates Migration and Criminalizes Immigrants* (Beacon Press, 2008). In his latest project, *Living Under the Trees*, Bacon is photographing and interviewing indigenous Mexican migrants working in California's fields.

The Complexity of Immigration

By MARGA LANZEA

Massive immigration is a highly complex issue and has various implications in Central America. The majority of immigrants coming to the United States are not among the poorest in their home countries, because the costs of traveling are too high for the most destitute. Many have some level of education, and most of them fall in the low end of the middle class. This is why we find a teacher from Guatemala picking strawberries in California. He is party to a perverse exchange: he is paid much more money for an unskilled job outside of his country, but he will be paid as an illegal immigrant.

Early 1990s peace accords in Central American countries did not solve the problems of poverty and inequality. During the past two decades, various forms of exclusion have widened the gap between the rich and the poor. This income gap and the policies that create inequality account for the conditions that force people to leave their home countries.

Central America: Exporting Human Resources

In Central America during the 1980s and early 90s, the factors driving immigration were obvious, given the military conflicts we experienced. It was a matter of life and death, as many people fled their home countries to secure their survival outside. However, we expected that peace settlements would halt the trend of massive migration. This did not happen, and migration continued even as the primary reasons changed.

Migration became a matter of economic options. People had no jobs—or poorly paid jobs—and the gap between rich and poor widened. There are no exact figures of how many people are constantly moving, as most migrate illegally and even many of those migrating legally decide to overstay their visas. However, authorities calculate that there are around three million Central Americans in the United States. El Salvador is in first place with nearly two million people, then Guatemala, followed by

The new border fence between El Paso, Texas and Juarez, Mexico.

Honduras and, last, Nicaragua. By 2005, 1.3 million Central Americans had obtained legal resident status.

The Experience through Mexico

Traveling illegally to the United States through Mexico is both dangerous and extremely expensive. It can cost a person \$4,000 to \$9,000 (U.S. dollars), depending on the place of origin and the route taken. Ninety-nine percent of these migrants pass through Mexico. According to 2009 figures, over 5,000 Salvadorians have died or disappeared on their way to the United States. Mexico has worked to make migration difficult, hampering the work of Mexican human rights organizations to assist with immigrants. Every day Mexico departs over 200 Salvadorians. The situation has worsened since 1994, when Mexico implemented Operation Gatekeeper, the goal of which was to protect the U.S. border with Mexico.

Main Causes

External Debts with Their Related Conditionalities, Trade Liberalization (CAFTA) and Cuts in International Aid

For many reasons, national governments have not been allowed to truly invest in human development. There are three clear factors directly linked to the international policymaking that significantly restrained the administration of resources and national economic sovereignty. These are: external debt, trade liberalization, and international aid.

External debt has been used by international financial institutions (IFIs) as a political mechanism to impose the "Washington consensus"—a program of economic liberalization. In Central America, Honduras and Nicaragua provide clear examples. These two countries took on the long-term process of poverty alleviation through macroeconomic policies. The expected results did not occur even though they took the prescribed steps. Huge cuts were made to social investments (such as health and education), all in the name of alleviating poverty. Both countries remain the most impoverished in the region. They continue to bear the burden of debt repayment, even for debts linked to the civil wars and destructive projects such as the Chixoy Dam in Guatemala. Today, our economies are highly dependent and continue to subsist on international loans. As of this March, the IMF had granted \$790 million to El Salvador and \$735 million to Costa Rica. At the same time, Nicaragua's external debt measured \$3.5 billion, while Guatemala's debt has risen to \$4.9 billion.

Trade liberalization was a process encouraged primarily by international foreign advisors. CAFTA (Central American Free Trade Agreement, also known as CAFTA-DR, or U.S.-Dominican Republic-Central America Free Trade Agreement) offered the opportunity to trade with the U.S. and is a prime example. As happened with the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), the negative consequences could be seen





just four months after the implementation of the agreement. In 2005, a group of Salvadorian companies were exporting \$1.8 billion worth of goods to the U.S., but by 2009 they were selling only \$1.7 billion's worth. The winner was the United States, where exports to El Salvador rose from \$2.47 billion to \$2.6 billion in those same years. In 2005, there were 1,374 Salvadorian companies exporting to the U.S., but by 2009 only 377 were left. The job creation promised by CAPTA has not happened. In fact, decreased numbers of people paying social security indicate that jobs have actually been lost.

International aid committed by wealthy nations since 1970 has not been delivered. Forty years ago, an agreement was made that these rich countries should invest 0.7% of their GNP in developing nations (International Development Strategy for the Second United Nations Development Decade, UN General Assembly Resolution 2626 [XXV]). It was declared that financial and technical assistance should be aimed exclusively at promoting the economic and social progress of developing countries and should not in any way be used by the developed countries to the detriment of the national sovereignty of recipient countries. However, rich nations have consistently failed to

live up to their agreed-upon obligations. Rather than 0.7%, the amount of aid has been between 0.2% and 0.4%—some \$100 billion short. In the case of the U.S., two-thirds of government aid goes to only two countries: Israel and Egypt. Much of the remaining third is used to promote U.S. exports or to fight a “war against drugs” that could only be won by tackling drug abuse in the United States. For poor countries, the little we receive is often tied to policy-driven conditions, or is given in the form of military aid.

How the Situation Could Be Different

Though there are many factors driving massive migration from Central America to the United States and other countries, some factors require particular attention. National governments should have better and more access to economic resources to invest in sustainable development. Rich nations have to review their own commitments to impoverished countries. IFIs should lessen their power relationships over our economies and allow the UN to have a bigger role on economic reconstruction. There must be a review of all the practices of trade liberalization—including CAPTA—as it has been shown that unfair trade is fueling environmental degradation and causing less capacity for national production.

Finally international aid should be committed with no delays in order to achieve sustainable relationships between rich nations and poor countries. Only when we work for changes in the ways we relate to each other can the world be secure, sustainable and peaceful.

Márgela Louza, a Nicaraguan-born activist, is the Program Coordinator for Latin America with the Kenoli Foundation and also serves as Latin American facilitator for the Agribusiness Action Initiative. She has worked for more than 14 years on environmental, social and economic justice issues with many different national and international nonprofit organizations, and she holds a masters degree from Brandeis University. She spoke about the root causes of migration during Ecumenical Advocacy Days.



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Trading Against Colombia

David Callahan and Lauren Damme
The Nation, July 13, 2011

In July Congress took up a major trade package that includes free trade agreements with Colombia, Panama and South Korea. All these pacts are flawed in their own way, but none is more problematic than the proposed deal with Colombia, which would reward a political elite that has long repressed labor unions and could devastate that country's rural farmers.

President Obama entered office vowing to strengthen the links between trade and human rights. A good start would have been to junk the Colombia FTA altogether, which was negotiated under George W. Bush. Instead, the administration set out to improve the agreement through negotiations with Colombia's new president, Juan Manuel Santos. The result, unveiled in April, was a side agreement called the Action Plan, which lays out a series of promised steps by Colombia to bolster labor rights.

If the Obama administration thought the Action Plan would appease progressive critics of the FTA, it soon learned otherwise. The plan was instantly condemned by nearly every major US labor union, as well as the Sierra Club and leading progressives in Con-

gress. Critics noted that fifty-one union officials were assassinated in Colombia in 2010—more than in all other nations combined and an increase over such killings in 2009. At least 2,500 unionists were arrested last year.

The key problem with the Action Plan is that none of its provisions are enforceable. The plan is merely a set of promises that Colombia could easily renege upon once Congress ratifies the FTA.

What's more, the biggest problem with this FTA isn't even addressed in the Action Plan: the pact would throw thousands of rural farmers out of work by allowing a flood of cheap US agricultural products—subsidized by American taxpayers—into Colombia. Farmers make up 20 percent of the nation's labor force, and their livelihoods are now protected by steep tariffs on food imports. The FTA would change all that, with devastating results. According to a study funded by Oxfam International, the domestic production of corn and rice would fall by 20 percent, while farmers growing wheat, beans and pork would be hit even harder by US imports.

Overall, 1.8 million small farmers would see their incomes drop by an average of more than 16 percent, while 400,000 would experience income declines of 50–70 percent. The Oxfam study estimates that the FTA would destroy at least 20 percent of employ-



http://www.blackcommentator.com/48/48_images/48_cartoon_large.gif

ment, or more than 15,000 jobs, for small obvious way to survive is to migrate to the farmers who already live on less than \$3.90 per United States in search of work, however risky day. The Colombian government has no specific plan to retrain these rural workers—nor CAFTA have been widely credited with helping the Obama administration asked for such a plan. ing spur illegal immigration by peasants rendered destitute by the onslaught of cheap US

If all this sounds vaguely familiar, there is a reason: the North American Free Trade Agreement and the Central American Free Trade Agreement also put large numbers of rural farmers out of work while fattening profits for US agribusiness. farm products. Displaced farmers in Colombia might likewise head north—only to be greeted by an increasingly draconian US crackdown on undocumented workers (the irony of US hostility to economic refugees created by our own trade policies is seldom remarked on).

Unemployed rural farmers in poor countries don't have many good choices. One Legions of desperate Colombian peasants would have other choices, too—none of

them good. If they can no longer survive by cultivating rice or corn, they might grow coca and help boost Colombia's vast production of cocaine for the US market. Or, if they just want a paycheck, they could join one of Colombia's many paramilitary groups. Another option—especially if they are angry about the collapse of their livelihood—would be to join the FARC, the leftist guerrilla group that remains actively at war with the Colombian government.

Proponents of the Colombia FTA, including officials in the Obama administration, say ratification would give an economic and political boost to that troubled nation. But the agreement seems designed to produce the opposite results: higher unemployment, more coca production, larger paramilitaries and a stepped-up insurgency. In short, the FTA would create yet more instability in Colombia.

Congress is still haggling about how to move forward on all three of the pending FTAs, as well as renewal of Trade Adjustment Assistance to help US workers. To stop the Colombia deal, lawmakers may have to vote against a single legislative package that includes the TAA and the trade deals with South Korea and Panama.

Is this FTA really that bad? Yes, it is.

Placing the Massacre of Migrants at the Feet of U.S. Immigration Control & Trade Policies

Statement from National Network for Immigrant and Refugee Rights, August 27, 2010

Migrant workers continue paying a heavy price as a result of the volatile mixture of the U.S. militarization of immigration control and border communities, the criminalization of migration, the expansion of NAFTA or “free” trade under the “Merida Initiative,” a war on drugs and national security.

On Tuesday, August 24, 2010, devastating news reports began trickling out about a horrific massacre of some 72 international migrants that took place in Mexico. Armed members of a drug cartel had kidnapped these Central and South America migrants. The cartel gunmen were trying to extort ransom money from them to let them continue on their dangerous journey to the U.S. with the hope of reuniting with their families and seek work to survive.

The drug traffickers had tied the migrants’ hands behind their backs and then executed them by shooting them in the back. One migrant who survived the execution, although gravely wounded, dragged himself miles when he stumbled upon a military checkpoint on a highway and alerted them. Some 200 soldiers were mobilized and went to the farmhouse where a heavy gun battle ensued, leaving one soldier and three drug cartel gunmen dead. Then the soldiers made the grisly discovery of the migrants’ bodies, 58 men and 14 women—migrants from Honduras, El Salvador, Ecuador, and Brazil—who been slaughtered inside a farmhouse close to San Fernando, a small farming community in the Gulf coast state of Tamaulipas and about a 100 miles south of Brownsville, Texas.

Epidemic of Abuse and Exploitation of Migrants

The Mexican government’s National Human Rights Commission (CNDH) reports that more than 10,000 migrant kidnappings have been reported in the first six months of 2010 in Mexico. Yet, the CNDH and the Mexican government have not worked to effectively protect migrants, expose the abuses and prosecute the traffickers and their collaborators in the police, military and other government entities.

Drug traffickers and smugglers, as well as police and military, often hold migrants hostage and force them to pay high ransoms before they are allowed to continue usually on the last leg of their journey to the U.S. The CNDH said that in the first half of 2009, when only some 9,000 migrant kidnapping cases had been reported, corrupt government officials and police, or-

ganized crime, traffickers and other criminals extorted as much as \$25 million dollars from kidnapped migrants.

When migrants make it to the U.S.-Mexico border, they fare no better. The U.S. deliberately funnels migrants into the deserts and mountains of Arizona and parts of New Mexico and Texas. Here at the border they are subjected to another layer of abuse. They are thrown into the hands of smugglers and other traffickers who have no second thoughts about abandoning individuals, who are often injured or suffering severe exhaustion, in the wilds, where migrants face a certain death either by extremes of heat or cold.

As a result of criminalization and few if any options to regularize their status or migrate with rights, U.S. and international migration control policies make migrant workers easy targets for exploitation and criminal attacks and extortions, where they live and work or whether in they are in transit or in the U.S.



http://www.google.com/imgres?q=Placing+the+Massacre+of+Migrants+at+the+Feet+of+U.S.+Immigration+Control+%26+Trade+Policies&um=1&hl=en&sa=N&rlz=1C1RNNN_enUS347US386&biw=1066&bih=534&tbn=isch&tbnid=qvMb72I0hOhXdM:&imgrefurl=http://censored-news.blogspot.com/2010/08/obama-and-congress-increase-border.html&docid=bbwRLgUDdrMOIM&w=1600&h=1200&ei=Km1yTtTGebE0AGDq9WmCg&zoom=1&iact=hc&vpx=606&vpy=154&dur=17&hovh=194&hovw=259&tx=120&ty=116&page=1&tbnh=148&tbnw=198&start=0&ndsp=8&ved=1t:429,r:2,s:0

Although Mexico is a signatory to the “International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families,” the Mexican government’s de facto policies and treatment of migrants is a bloodied mark on the convention. The U.S. is not a signatory to the migrant workers’ human rights convention. U.S. immigration enforcement

and services, bound up to the U.S. politics of national security, are rife with abuses and human rights violations.

Mexican and U.S. policies, collusion through inaction, and their own impunity have created a situation where thousands of migrants are being subjected to extremes of abuse. The massacre of migrants in Mexico shows that drug traffickers have “diversified” their wares to include humans. They act with impunity, either as a result of official corruption or collusion that turns a blind eye to the exploitation, and results in the unfortunate death of migrants “funneled” by U.S. policies through the deadly desert and mountainous areas of the border.

Migrants who survive the journey only slightly fare better. Once out of the clutches of traffickers and smugglers they face a gauntlet of unscrupulous police, elected officials and employers who prey upon them. Or they are further criminalized and are hunted down, filling the dungeons of prisons, euphemistically called “detention centers.”

What is to be done?

What is to be done? Certainly, we should call for the investigation and prosecution all the abusers and those in government who collaborated in this heinous crime. But even this will not be enough. To prevent further abuses will take historic efforts on our and the immigrant rights and justice movements’ part. It will mean organizing to make the U.S. and Mexican governments decriminalize migration and demilitarize immigration control and border communities. These demands also have to expose the root causes and push back on economic and trade policies that undermine communities and forcibly displace workers and divide families.

For now we ask everyone to take a minute to reflect on this horrendous massacre of innocents and to respect those migrants among us who have survived this odyssey – just to be with their families, to work and support their families and communities back home.

What does Just & Humane Immigration Policy Look Like?

The principles and recommendations of *A New Path: Toward Humane Immigration Policy* are grounded in the American Friends Service Committee’s history and values as a faith-based organization and the voices of the communities with whom we are deeply connected. AFSC supports measures that ensure the integration of immigrants as full members of our society and address the root causes that push people to migrate. We believe that the basis of U.S. immigration policy should be the protection of human rights rather than an immigration system designed to supply labor to employers. There are approximately 12 million undocumented people residing in the United States. Of that number, eight to ten million are workers laboring in a variety of industries and services vital to the U.S. economy and to the survival of families both in the United States and in their countries of origin. Humane immigration policy must include a fair mechanism for undocumented workers to gain permanent residence status in a fair and orderly fashion. Furthermore, U.S. immigration policy must be coupled with economic policies that encourage and fund sustainable development, permit working people to earn a living wage in their home countries, foster an authentic commitment to demilitarization, and lead to the peaceful resolution of internal and international conflicts.

We urge principled and visionary leadership on effective immigration policies that embody the best of the nation’s values. AFSC is firmly rooted in immigration policy change grounded in the following principles and key recommendations:

PRINCIPLE ONE

Create justice with humane economic policies

International economic policies, including trade agreements, need to be consistent with human rights, trade justice, and sustainable approaches to the environment and economic development.

- Fully respect the right of developing countries to develop, safeguard, and nurture their economies and the livelihoods of their people.
- Respect the human and labor rights of all workers by stopping the use of trade agreements and structural adjustment policies that produce displacement and a vulnerable labor force.
- Adopt, sign, and ratify the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Their Families.

PRINCIPLE TWO

Protect the labor rights of ALL workers

All workers are entitled to humane policies that protect their labor and employment rights.

- End workplace raids.
- Repeal employer sanctions.
- End electronic worker verification systems and other means for enforcing punitive employer sanctions.
- End guest worker programs.

PRINCIPLE THREE

Develop a clear path to permanent residence

Inclusive measures must be enacted that lead to permanent residence for undocumented immigrants, multi-status families, refugees, and asylees

- Provide safe, legal means for migration through ports of entry.
- Enact legislation that allows people who reside in the U.S. to apply for permanent residence.

- Allow people who plan to migrate to the U.S., but who have no relatives here to petition for them, to submit applications to the U.S. Consulate in their country of residence.

PRINCIPLE FOUR

Respect the civil and human rights of immigrants

Immigrants, regardless of status, deserve the same civil and human rights as all U.S. residents

- End arrests, detention, and deportation of immigrants.
- Halt community sweeps, checkpoints, and roadblocks.
- Eliminate detention practices that separate family members, particularly parents from their children.

PRINCIPLE FIVE

Demilitarize the U.S.-Mexico border

The U.S.-Mexico border region must be demilitarized and the quality of life of border communities needs to be protected

- Cease all enforcement policies, practices, measures, laws, and strategies that criminalize immigrants and border communities.
- Delink migration from national security by removing “enforcement” of national immigration policy by the Department of Homeland Security.
- Prohibit the collaboration of police with immigration authorities as a matter of national policy and move immigration responsibilities from the Department of Homeland Security to the Department of Labor.

PRINCIPLE SIX

Make family reunification a top priority
Recognize the distinctly important and valuable role of family ties by supporting the reunification of immigrant families in a way that equally respects both heterosexual and same-sex relationships.

- Meet the global demand of immigrants to be reunited with their families by eliminating the cap on the total number of family-based visas available and funding the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Service to expedite the immigration adjustment process.
- Expedite the processing of pending visa applications by allocating additional funds to the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Service.
- Eliminate restrictions on eligibility for spouses of deceased U.S. citizens or lawful permanent residents and ensure that children can immigrate with parents.

PRINCIPLE SEVEN

Ensure that immigrants and refugees have access to services

Public programs and services should not exclude immigrants or refugees

- Extend access to quality, affordable health care and social services to everyone, regardless of immigration status.
- Eliminate all bars that discriminate between immigrants and non-immigrants in determining eligibility for public benefits.

The complete policy paper, *A New Path: Toward Humane Immigration Policy*, can be found on the American Friends Service Committee Website at <http://afsc.org/newpath>, or by calling 303.623.3464.

El papel completo de la política, *Un Nuevo Camino: Hacia una política migratoria humanitaria*, puede ser encontrado en el sitio web del Comité de Servicios de los Amigos Americanos <http://www.afsc.org/document/un-nuevo-camino>, o llamando 303.623.3464.

Strengthening the Movement for Immigrant Justice!
 303.623.3464 • 901 W. 14th Ave, Suite # 7, Denver, CO 80204
info@afsc.org • afsc.org/denver/ • www.coloradansforimmigrantrights.blogspot.com

How the American Financial Industry Caused the Economic Crisis in Mexico and the Rise in Immigration

Early 1990s: Mexico in Debt

- Mexico is running a huge deficit because of factors such as declining export profits and high wage growth.
- In April 1994 American financial service institutions (i.e. Wall Street) come together in the Weston Forum and offer to invest \$17 billion in Mexico if Mexico will sell *tesobonos*, bonds based on the U.S. dollar, and keep the peso at a falsely overvalued exchange rate.
- Mexico agrees, and by December 1994, Mexico issues *tesobonos* in the amount of \$30.4 billion.
- The peso crashes and drops in value by more than 40% on December 22nd.



1994-95: Mexico's debt increases dramatically, and the country is nearly bankrupt because the Federal Reserve raises interest rates from 3% to a high of 6%, thereby increasing Mexico's *tesobono* debt and attracting investors away from Mexico.



Mexico still owes billions of dollars in the *tesobono* debt. Wall Street is worried.

- Concerned that they wouldn't receive the money that Mexico owed them on the outstanding *tesobonos* and therefore would lose profits, the American financial industry complains to President Bill Clinton and U.S. Secretary of Treasury Robert Rubin.
- Clinton pulls together Canada and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) to bail out Mexico. The U.S. and Canada's bailout will mostly pay the Wall Street companies back, but...
- Mexico has to follow certain requirements, such as **freezing wages and raising interest rates, and pay the rest of the debt in dollars—this turns out to be 31% more than what the Wall Street companies bought in *tesobonos*.**
- Still concerned that they wouldn't get back all their money and more, the Wall Street companies complain to Congress, particularly the Congressmen who receive millions of dollars in campaign contributions from these same Wall Street companies and who serve on the Committees on International Relations and Banking and Financial Services.
- Congress demands oversight over monthly reports of implementation of this bailout. Every 30 days Secretary of the Treasury Rubin has to submit reports to the House and Senate committees on banking for oversight on all actions that he wants to implement as part of the bailout.



So what happens to the Mexican people?

- The Mexican law changes to allow interest rates there to skyrocket: **business & farm loans go up to 56%, car loans to 91%, homes to 75%, credit cards to 69%.**
- So Mexican-owned businesses go bankrupt.
- Millions lose their jobs and many lose their homes and their farms.
- Millions leave Mexico to find jobs—and many end up in the districts of the Representatives on the House and Senate committees on banking.

Enlace, August 2007, www.enlaceintl.org





Wall Street leaders weren't satisfied with profits from Mexico – they took more \$ from Americans as well

Republican-Controlled Congress helped Wall Street:

- Financial service institutions decide to double-charge each other's customers at ATMs
- They acquire real estate, insurance, credit card, brokerage companies, and other banks, too
- And charges triple on bank accounts and credit card balances



These decisions impact people's bank accounts and credit card balances in the US:



- Family credit card debt rose 62.9% in the 90's
- Low income families spend more than 10% of income on credit card debt
- The majority of middle income families carry unpaid credit card balances

They also profit from "Illegal" Immigration at taxpayer's expense:

- Wall Street invests in 3 prison companies that the Bush administration hires, **Geo, Cornell, and Corrections Corp. of America**, to build prisons for immigrants in January 2007
- Wall Street's profits from companies with new immigrant prison contracts:
 - o Morgan Stanley - \$43.1 million
 - o FMR – \$26.8 million
 - o Wells Fargo - \$33.4 million
 - o JP Morgan Chase - \$8.3 million



In December of 2006: Swift & Co. ICE raids

- 1,282 workers arrested
- Many workers are charged with a felony of identity-theft instead of illegal use of Social Security numbers, which is only a misdemeanor
- This new interpretation of the law from ICE creates millions of new Class B felons

What are Financial Service Institutions?

This is a new term that largely came into use when Congress passed the Gramm-Leach-Bliley Act in 1999, which allowed different types of financial services companies to merge. Financial service institutions often offer services in banking, real estate, lending, credit cards, investment, and stock brokerages. This new entity basically allowed corporations to skirt anti-trust laws and make even more profit than they already did.

June 12, 2007 in Portland, more ICE raids:

- 165 were arrested and taken to Tacoma Detention Facility
- The Bush Administration has a contract with Geo to run the Tacoma Detention Facility



Bush-Cheney Friend Profits

- Geo CEO, George Zoley, is a 2004 Bush-Cheney "pioneer" (bundled over \$100,000 in campaign contributions)
- Zoley nets over \$2.5 million in Geo stock income as Geo gets prison contracts, & its stock value soars over the past year:

November '04 Geo stock price = \$7.68.

June '07 Geo stock price = \$29.25

Additional Reading List/Resources on Globalization & Migration

Alejandro Portes

NAFTA and Mexican Immigration

<http://borderbattles.ssrc.org/Portes/>

The Atlantic Wire- what matters now

Norway Shooting Shines Light on Country's Cushy Penal System

<http://www.theatlanticwire.com/global/2011/07/norway-shooting-shines-light-countrys-cushy-penal-system/40418/>

David Kotz

Crisis and Neoliberal Capitalism

<http://www.globalresearch.ca/index.php?context=va&aid=11034>

Eric Holt-Gimenez

Agri-food Industry's Deadly Cycle Feeds Immigration

<http://alainet.org/active/13987&lang=en>

Greg Guma

The Final Failure of Reagonomics

<http://towardfreedom.com/home/content/view/1416/1/>

Public Citizen

Global Trade Watch <http://www.citizen.org/tradewatch> (updates on trade agreements and alternatives)

Failed Trade Policy & Immigration: The Causes and Effects <http://www.citizen.org/documents/failed-trade-policy-and-immigration.pdf>

Harold Meyerson

NAFTA and Nativism

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2006/02/07/AR2006020701272.html>

Laura Carlsen

NAFTA Free Trade Myths Lead To Farm Failures in Mexico

http://www.democraticunderground.com/discuss/duboard.php?az=show_mesg&forum=102&topic_id=3117008&mesg_id=3118987

National Network for Immigrant and Refugee Rights/ Red Nacional para Los Derechos de Las y Los Inmigrantes y Refugiados

Excluded and Exploited: The New Regime of Trade, Managed Migration & Repression: <http://www.nnirr.org/resources/docs/ExcludedandExploited-English2.pdf>

Denver Justice and Peace Committee

Global Solutions to Violence curriculum: Human Face of Poverty, Lessons 1-6

<http://denjustpeace.org/how-we-work/education/gstv-curriculum/>