

Delfino Varela

Undocumented workers Hidden problem that went public

Since comprehensive world-wide immigration laws began to appear on U.S. statute books in 1924, an ever-growing body of immigrants have entered the U.S. by extra-legal means. To the Immigration & Naturalization Service, the Justice department, the labor movement, and other parts of the establishment, these immigrants are known as "illegal aliens." But to the increasingly conscious and militant Mexican and Latin communities, which are centers of welcome and refuge for these immigrants, they are people without documents.

The Mexican and Latin communities who provide the magnet and the protective environment for the extralegal immigrants feel that no human is "illegal," and that if the immigrants are here without documents they are here on lands taken from Mexico by force of military arms a scant 130 years ago, and have been forced out of their native lands by unemployment and starvation under a cruel system of underdevelopment, exploitation, and unemployment kept in place by the U.S.

Congress compounds the problem.

The Eastern Establishment has provided most of the representatives and senators who have developed our immigration policy. These Easterners, Peter Rodino (D-NJ), Sen. Edward Kennedy (D-Mass) and Joshua Eilberg (D-Pa), for example, together with their friends in the old European white ethnic communities of the East Coast and the hierarchy of the U.S. labor movement, see immigration as European, and coming through easily controlled ports of entry. Their response to the ever-increasing flow of immigrants without documents has, therefore, been more and more to tighten up the laws.

In 1963, in response to growing pressure from labor, the State and Justice departments imposed a requirement for the Labor department to certify that an immigrant from Mexico had a job for which there was a scarcity of American workers and that the wage offered the immigrant was the highest prevailing U.S. wage. This requirement became frozen into the immigration laws in 1965, effectively cutting off legal immigration except for immediate relatives of U.S. citizens or permanent residents.

What Washington officialdom, the Congress and the labor hierarchy have failed to appreciate is that the U.S./Mexican border is a huge 3,000-mile border that cuts in two a large economic region over which the work force has traveled back and forth to work for centuries. Increasingly the region is traveled by workers from as far South as Argentina.

The more Congress and the administration have shut off the possibilities of legal immigration, the greater the necessity has become for extra-legal immigration.

High hopes for Carter's proposals.

For a harassed Mexican and Latin community the victory of President Jimmy Carter created high hopes for change. During the election campaign liberal Democrats in the House of Representatives through highly secretive and clever maneuvers in the last two days of Congress passed the Eilberg amendments of 1976. These cut visas for Mexicans by 60 percent and cut out parents of U.S. citizens or permanent residents. President Ford signed the legislation saying that at the next congress, if elected, he would introduce legislation to correct the bill he was signing.

The first signs of the Carter administration were good. Lione Castillo was appointed commissioner of immigration and naturalization, the first Mexican to ever hold a position of such high responsibility and prestige. A cabinet level committee was appointed to develop the administration's immigration package, and hopes ran high throughout the East Coast, Southwest, and the West Coast.

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It soon became apparent, however, that the administration was deeply divided on its understanding and perspectives of the problem. Labor Secretary Ray Marshall reflected the regressive and repressive approach of the labor hierarchy. Commissioner Castillo reflected the feeling of the Mexican and Latin communities that instead of more oppressive controls, existing labor legislation should be utilized to enforce minimum wage and minimum standards of employment and to correct the abuses of the undocumented workers, thus lessening their competitive effect on citizens and permanent residents. Attorney General Griffin Bell proposed a universal card, so that only documented workers could get jobs.

What finally emerged on Aug. 2 after months of discussions was a hodge-podge that pleased no one.

Limited amnesty.

The proposals would grant a right of permanent residence to anyone in the U.S. prior to Jan. 1, 1970. The major component of the undocumented work force consists of immigrants from Mexico. Only 25 percent of them would benefit, according to attorney Velma Martinez, who replied to Castillo's speech at the annual banquet of the Mexican/American Legal and Education Fund at Los Angeles. Mexican immigrants tend to travel back and forth between the U.S. and their families in Mexico, and are far less likely to qualify for the continuous residence requirement than immigrants from Europe and Latin America.

The second Carter proposal would grant a conditional five-year residence permit to all undocumented workers who entered the U.S. between Jan. 1, 1970, and December 31, 1976. These workers would have the right to live here, work and travel between the U.S. and their homelands. They would pay all taxes required of citizens and residents but could not reunite their families and would not be entitled to government benefits. As Castillo ob-

served at the MALDEF banquet, "I am sure MALDEF and other groups will sue us on this one."

The third Carter proposal is to bring into law the despised Rodino bill, which would impose fines, injunctions and possible jail and imprisonment on employers of workers without documents. Unemployment in many Latin and Mexican ghettos is running as high as 22 percent and the imposition of fines and penalties on employers of undocumented workers would increase the rate.

Finally, border control is to be beefed up to double its present strength and large-scale electronic surveillance of the Mexican border is to be added.

Joint commissions to develop economic and immigration policies are to be established between the U.S. and Mexico and Latin countries. There has been a joint U.S.-Mexico immigration commission operating for the past three years, but Congress paid no heed to its existence or recommendations when it adopted the Eilberg amendments in the closing days of the 94th Congress.

Recommendations for change.

The best short-run solution would be to provide for unhampered legal immigration of an additional 50,000 people per year from Mexico. The present level of



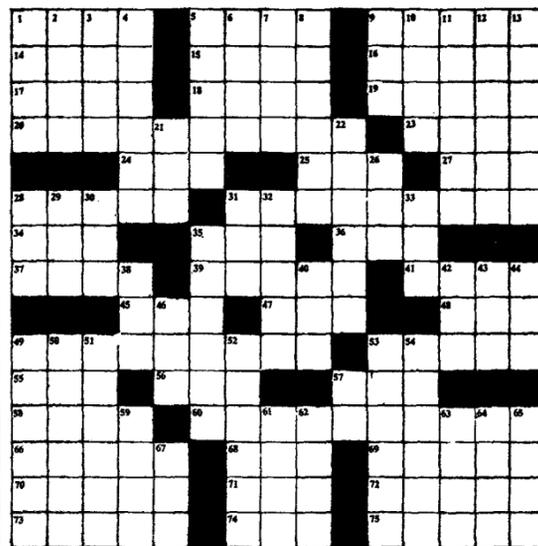
20,000 per country from Latin America, with a maximum total of 120,000 per year for the Western Hemisphere seems to be adequate to meet the demand for visas from Canada, Central and South America. The new combined Mexico, Canada and Latin America, total of 170,000 is what is what is now allowed for the Eastern Hemisphere. The elimination of the requirement for labor certification would remove an impossible barrier for the semi-skilled and unskilled workers who form the bulk of the Mexican and Latin immigrant pool.

The reduction of the residence requirement for application for U.S. citizenship to three years from the present five years and permitting the citizenship exam to be taken in the applicant's own language would make it possible for immigrants to become full participants in American social and economic life within a short time of their arrival.

Finally, instead of a one-time amnesty date, any person in the U.S. for five years, holding a job and not a public charge should be allowed to register with the Immigration Service and become a permanent resident. This would provide an ongoing method of coping with the problem of workers in the U.S. without documents and would eliminate the depressing effect of their presence on wages and working conditions.

Delfino Varela has been active in the Los Angeles Mexican community since 1955. A founder of the Council on Mexican Affairs, Varela is also active in the Mexican-American Political Association and the National Coalition for Fair Immigration Laws and Practices.

Inversion by David Mermelstein



Across:

- 1 Hick
- 5 Epic poet
- 9 Organization's name based on his song
- 14 Addict
- 15 Military group: Abbr.
- 16 Type of acid
- 17 Prima donna
- 18 Meeting places
- 19 Casts off, as hair or skin
- 20 Organization's 1969 Chicago activity
- 23 Thirsty
- 24 Suffix for count or lion
- 25 "... flew over..."
- 27 Lipton's or twinning's
- 28 Prevaricators
- 31 "... to know which way the ...": song of

9 Down

- 34 Radical org. of '60s
- 35 Feminist (usually) sessions: Abbr.
- 36 ... supra (where mentioned above)
- 37 100 yard or Sam
- 39 To go, in Nice
- 41 ... pong
- 45 Neuter form of his or her
- 47 Boston's direction from K.C.: Abbr.

48 Cohn or Rogers

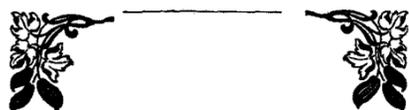
- 49 Lawyer or I Down, and family
- 53 23'rd is famous
- 55 Liberal political group: Abbr.
- 56 Frequent prefix to -ism or -ist
- 57 Hide of young beast
- 58 Former Portuguese money of account
- 60 Occupied in '68 by 34 Across
- 66 Come in
- 68 Char
- 69 ... fixe
- 70 Uninverted leader
- 71 Type of suit
- 72 Ike and ... Turner
- 73 Four-legged animals, in Soho
- 74 Patty's former (?) org., et al.
- 75 Cardinal's Slaughter

Down:

- 1 Surrendered voluntarily Sept. 14, 1977
- 2 U.S. propaganda org.
- 3 Flock, as of larks or quail
- 4 Rubber
- 5 Devotees
- 6 Lyre
- 7 ... avis

- 8 Kind of fly
- 9 ... Kapital
- 10 One of the Y's
- 11 Was told untruths
- 12 Jackson or Johnson
- 13 ... can be (prying busy-body)
- 21 CIA's precursor
- 22 Last
- 26 Wane
- 28 Acid
- 29 Occupiers demanded this agency be removed from campus: Abbr.
- 30 Blockhead
- 31 Pacifist org.
- 32 Small island
- 33 Sass
- 35 Relaxed
- 38 First of Latin threesome
- 40 Printer's measures
- 42 Mouths
- 43 Cambodian tyrant, Lon ...
- 44 Issue in '68 sit-in
- 46 Jones or Mix
- 49 City on the Rio Grande
- 50 ... bust, sign of utopian hitchhiker
- 51 Religions
- 52 Perches
- 53 Former name of Bklyn. school where Genovese, Leacock, Levinson and Mage once taught: Abbr.
- 54 Elf
- 57 Ousted president of Columbia, et. al.
- 59 Withered
- 61 Well-being
- 62 Actress Turner
- 63 Tennis score
- 64 Divorce haven
- 65 Positive votes
- 67 Hospital professionals

Solution to October 19 puzzle.



Malvina Reynolds
(composer of "Little Boxes")

&
Second City

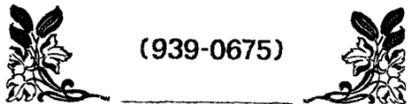
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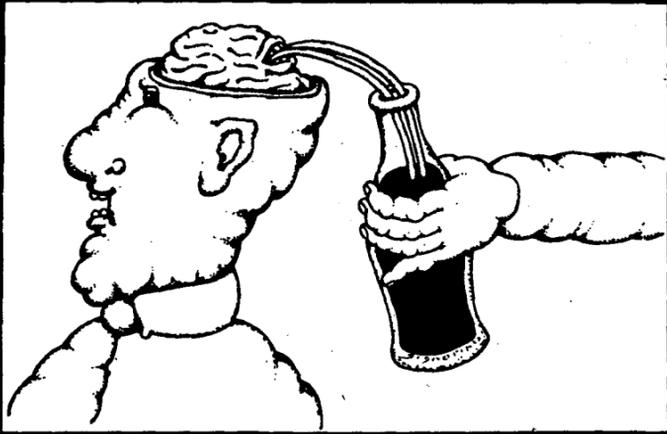
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Chau-tau-quu: an assembly for the purpose of education and refreshment of the mind.



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DIALOG

A statement by Corliss Lamont on the ACLU and the FBI

I am currently a member of the American Civil Liberties Union and also served on its board of directors for 23 years, from 1931 to 1954. Hence I am in a position to comment from personal experience on the ACLU's affairs and especially on the recent exposures that in the 1950s there was close collaboration between high officials of the ACLU and the FBI.

A careful sifting of the more than 10,000 pages out of some 20,000 in the FBI files on the ACLU shows that during the great anti-Communist witch-hunt collaboration was so intimate that top officers of the two organizations acted as spies and informers for one another. It also reveals that members of ACLU governing committees handed over to the FBI confidential documents, including correspondence between ACLU officials, drafts of position papers and even minutes of meetings.

An official news release on the situation by the Civil Liberties Union states: "The files show that on a number of occasions, almost entirely during the McCarthy era, certain persons who were then ACLU officials were in contact with the FBI to provide or obtain information about the political beliefs or affiliations of other ACLU members and officials, particularly those who were thought to be Communists. Whatever their motive, such contacts with the FBI were wrong, inexcusable and destructive of civil liberties principles. These incidents took place in a different era and are contrary to the way the ACLU operates today."

I am one of the few surviving ACLU board members from the early '50s. During those years I was under considerable pressure when officers of the organization became worried over a ridiculous rumor that I was a member of the Communist party. Patrick Murphy Malin, then ACLU executive director, called on J. Edgar Hoover, director of the FBI, and asked him if the rumor was true. Hoover said "No."

When Malin reported this visit to a full meeting of the ACLU board of directors, I protested strongly that it violated our principles of independence and, in effect, gave the FBI clearance power in the selection of ACLU officers. No other board member raised the slightest objection, but they did vote not to mention Malin's little interview in the

minutes of the meeting. During the same period, Malin sought the help of the FBI in trying to keep Communists off the boards of affiliates in Detroit, Los Angeles, Denver and Seattle.

Morris L. Ernst, who for 25 years shared the general counselship of the Civil Liberties Union with Arthur Garfield Hayes, played a special role in the relations of the organization with the FBI. He became J. Edgar Hoover's personal attorney and referred to him as a "treasured friend." Ernst was not only a prime mover in the general ACLU/FBI collaboration, but independently started to pass information to the FBI as early as 1942.

The collaboration between the ACLU leadership and the FBI was a scandalous betrayal of American civil liberties. It stemmed directly from the fanatical anti-Communism of the times, typified by the rantings of Sen. Joseph McCarthy. Many ACLU personnel swallowed McCarthy's moonshine about a terrible Communist threat and became more concerned with exposing and crushing Communists than with preserving civil liberties. This was a crass violation of the trust that had been placed in the leadership of the Civil Liberties Union by the general membership of the organization and the American people.

Although the *New York Times* has established beyond doubt the guilt of the ACLU officers, it printed, on Aug. 14, an editorial, "A Predicament for Civil Libertarians," that in effect apologized for the double dealing of the responsible persons. Said the *Times*: "It is not easy in 1977 to recall the temper of the 1950s and the situation that confronted dedicated people in and out of government, as they attempted to respond both to the threat of Communism and the threat of those who were willing to suppress civil liberties in the name of anti-Communism. They made serious errors, but the problems they grappled with were hard. Condemnation by hindsight is too simple a judgment."

Yet how else are we to condemn misconduct except by hindsight that takes into account all the facts? The *Times*' position, with its reliance on the Cold War myth of a Communist menace within the U.S., will not be accepted by true civil libertarians of firm ethical principle.

We can be thankful that the present leaders of the Civil Liberties Union had no part in the ACLU/FBI collaboration and are opposed to any such compromise of principle. For many years now the ACLU has been doing a most creditable job.

At the same time it is to be remembered that all through the McCarthy era and down to the present there were organizations, such as the National Emergency Civil Liberties Committee, the National Lawyers Guild, the American Committee for the Protection of the Foreign Born, whose every member stood firm for civil liberties and against FBI influence and infiltration. All sincere civil libertarians today, in light of the ACLU/FBI revelations, need to remain on the alert to see that such a disaster never occurs again.



"I wish you wouldn't refer to me as a 'fellow traveler.'"

LIFE IN THE U.S.

SPORTS

Would you shoot yourself over fumbles?



Jane Melnick

Is interest in sport today a means of propagating a male culture of violence and domination, as in the movie *Slapshot* (below)? Or is it one of the main creative outlets in our society? Sports commentators Mark Naison and Jack Russell and reviewer Simon Rosenblum argue the question.



An opiate of the masses

FANS!: How We Go Crazy Over Sports
By Michael Roberts
New Republic Book Co., Washington,
\$8.95

In 1973 a Colorado man attempted suicide by shooting himself in the head. His suicide note referred to the Denver football team that fumbled seven times that day in a losing effort to the Chicago Bears. The note read: "I have been a Broncos fan since the Broncos were first organized, and I can't stand their fumbling anymore."

Most fans obviously don't go that crazy, but sports have an unquestionably deep influence on our lives. Michael Roberts uncovers the pervasiveness of what Robert Lipsyte has called the "Sports World."

Roberts describes the ethnic and regional loyalties that athletic teams are able to manipulate, the celebrity status of star athletes and their incredible salaries and the utilization of athletes by corporate and political forces. (I wonder what he would have thought about Bill Walton's picture on a recent *ITT* front page!)

Irreverent and often very funny, *Fans* is a useful journalistic description of the impact of sport on American life. Unfortunately, the book does not ask the obvious question: *why* do we go crazy over sports?

It has become increasingly apparent that the locus of oppression in advanced capitalism is not confined to the factory, but extends to every aspect of life—from sexuality to technology, from language to the sports arena. Indeed, sport may provide a touchstone for understanding how people live, work and think.

A number of writers have suggested that America's enthusiasm for sports events brings to mind the decadence of the Roman empire, when similar physical exercises formed a circus spectacle that whipped up the tired nerves of paying spectators.

Former *Look* magazine sports editor, Leonard Schecter said, "We play our games, or watch them contested with the same ferocity with which we fight a war in Vietnam and with as little reason or sense." Indeed such a noted social critic as Spiro Agnew has remarked that "sports—all sport—is one of the few bits of glue that holds society together."

This review is not a systematic attempt to locate sport in the totality of American society. Rather it is a tentative effort to explain the exaggerated emphasis placed on sport by many American males. I do not claim to know the whole picture and will simply call them as I see them.

Male socialization.

Sports tend to dominate the childhood and adolescence of males. Primarily they are important to the father-son relationship and secondly, the actual and vicarious participation in sports is the means through which male children become "men."

Sports are one of the prime ways young men are brought together (even though they might be competing against one another). The American boy is prepared, through adult pressures, for a life of dedication to sport.

In most case, he is a "has-been" by his late teens, and he then joins the army of spectators. Men cling to sports after the illusions of youth as it provides a reassurance of masculinity in a society in which the ordinary male has fewer and fewer opportunities to "prove" he is a "man."

Continued on page 24.