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Oakland CA 94601  
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Committee on Chicano Rights,  
National City, CA

Dear Friends:

Enclosed is a copy of our recently published pamphlet, "Carter's Attack on Immigrant Workers : A Threat to All".

Please see the back cover for bulk rates.

The Bay Area Committee on Immigration recently reviewed its work for the past year. We resolved to continue and strengthen our work on legislation, information gathering and outreach, and to develop an analysis of the significance of immigrant labor to the working class movement in the United States.

We are especially anxious to correct a weakness - that of not always being fully informed and in touch with other groups involved in this issue. We would like to be on your mailing list and receive any regular bulletins.

Please send any new material you have. We will have an enlarged "immigration update" meeting later this month, and will appreciate your perspectives.

Thank you



Travis Lafferty

Coordinator

Bay Area Committee on Immigration

# **CARTER'S ATTACK ON IMMIGRANT WORKERS: A THREAT TO ALL**



**Bay Area Committee on Immigration**

**Photo credits:**

*cover: border at Mexicali, Gil Ortiz*

*pages 4, 11: Gil Ortiz*

*page 6: Celia Griego, El Cuhamil*

*page 10: Curt Gunther, Camera 5*

**Carter's Attack on Immigrant Workers:  
A Threat to All**

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## THE IMMIGRANT WORKER: "SALT OF THE EARTH"

The immigrant that comes to this country, documented or not, comes here to work. The undocumented workers have been made the scapegoat by the media, our government, and some union officials for high unemployment and the high cost of providing social services. However, the growing unemployment is concentrated in jobs *never held* by undocumented workers. Furthermore, there are no reliable statistics to show that undocumented workers are a burden on social services. On the contrary, the 1975 Linton study authorized by the US Department of Labor revealed that the majority of undocumented workers do not utilize social welfare programs. Only 5% received welfare payments, and less than 1.5% received food stamps. Nevertheless, 77% of those interviewed paid social security taxes and 73% had their federal income taxes withheld. The majority never filed for refunds nor received social security benefits.

The facts show that undocumented workers receive far fewer services in proportion to the taxes they pay. Undocumented workers pay state as well as federal taxes. They spend 80% of their pay in this country. The question is, then, who is eating up tax dollars for welfare? It is certainly not the undocumented workers nor even the small minority of citizens who are welfare recipients. The major portion of welfare budgets—85%—is eaten up solely by administrative costs.

In spite of these facts, the undocumented workers are inhumanely being *denied* social services that in principle should be offered as a basic human right. **We firmly demand that no social service be denied to anyone in need, and that this be instituted as the law of the land.**

Immigrants and their descendants built this country. *We* built the railroads, heavy industry and agrigusiness. In war time workers have been recruited from many countries to make up labor shortages, producing war goods, feeding the people, and creating profits for the corporations. And in times of economic recession, transnational corporations, such as the Ford Motor Company, Del Monte Corporation and Coca-Cola, seeking ever-higher profits, move their production to areas like Latin America in search of cheap labor and raw materials. These Latin American countries are controlled by such transnational corporations; their economies are kept from developing to serve the needs of their own people. Rather than providing full employment at decent wages, these companies keep their profits high by paying low wages and using labor-saving machinery to employ as few workers as possible. The

immigrant who seeks to escape poverty and unemployment in Latin America then finds himself or herself attacked as the cause of the social ills of this troubled society.

The undocumented workers do not receive the benefits of unemployment compensation, social security payments or protection of the federal minimum wage and occupational health and safety laws. In fact, many of the US *documented* workers, such as farmworkers employed by agribusiness, do not receive these benefits or protection, either. The benefits that have been gained for workers are the result of long and difficult labor struggles. Despite the threat of deportations, undocumented workers have been and continue to be a militant part of this struggle; 16% are union members. They do not undermine our wages, as some union officials say, but rather push for better wages, conditions and services for all of us. In fact, many are skilled and effective union organizers.

Big business interests do not want a well organized and stable work force. It takes away their control and assurance of the most profit. We, as workers, recognizing the plight of the undocumented workers and the struggle of workers in general, **support the basic right of all workers—the right to organize—and demand that this right be guaranteed by law.**



## BACI LEGISLATIVE STRATEGY WILL SUPPORT WORKERS, COUNTER CARTER PLAN

The Bay Area Committee on Immigration (BACI) has analyzed several proposed laws dealing with the so-called "problem of undocumented workers." Three major bills are now before the Congress: The Carter Plan ("The Alien Employment and Adjustment Act," (S. 2262), the Cranston Bill (S. 68) and the Roybal Bill (HR. 9531). The Carter Plan is the most dangerous and the most likely to become law. It would deprive undocumented immigrants of their rights as people and as workers, and threaten our Chicano, Latino and other immigrant communities.

Our response to *all* proposed immigration laws is based on two propositions:

1. The problem is *not* the so-called "flood of undocumented immigrants." The problem is *unemployment and poverty*. These result from the complex economic and political system which dominates the Western Hemisphere—a system, controlled by corporate giants, which puts profits before people. The contradictions in this system cannot be resolved by acts of the US Congress.

2. Nevertheless, because this legislation threatens the rights and livelihood of all workers, we are determined to challenge and change government policy through organized opposition and counter-proposals.

The Carter administration's strategy is to railroad its bill through Congress, disarming liberal opposition with its sham "amnesty" provisions. Consequently, we make two basic legislative demands:

1. We demand public Congressional hearings of US immigration policy and proposed changes in the law. Hearings should be held in areas of the country where large numbers of immigrants live and work. Use the democratic process. Let the people most affected be heard.

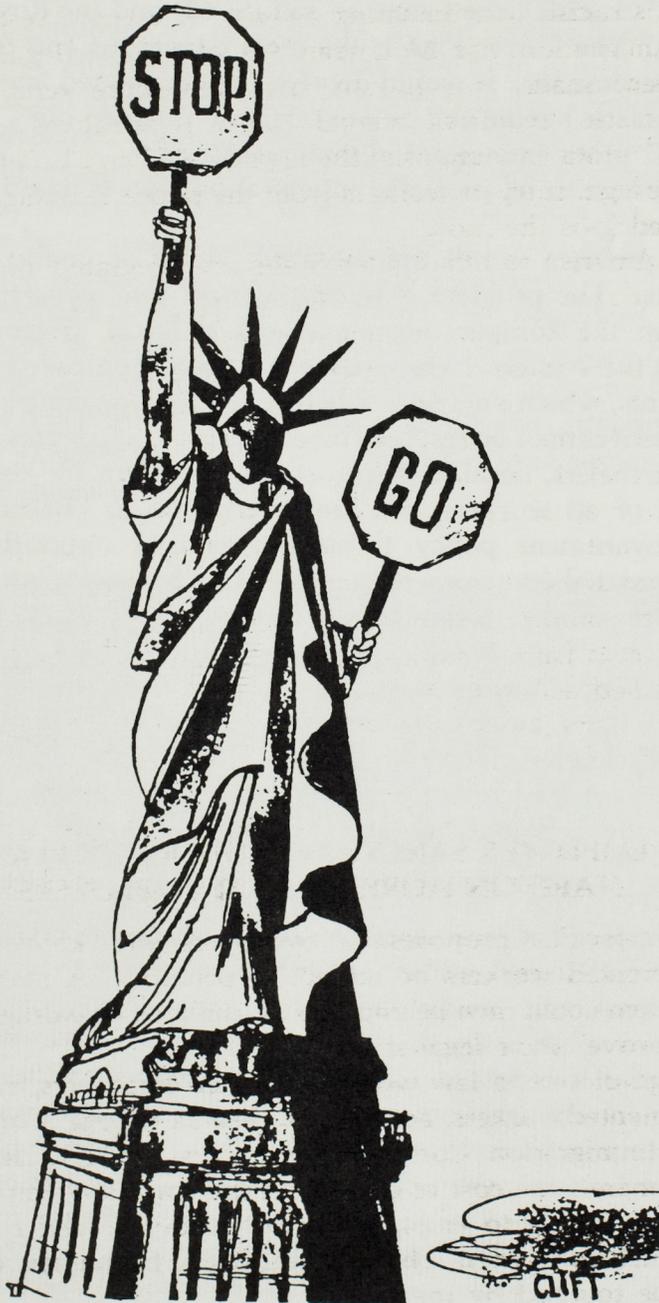
2. We urge the establishment of a Federal Commission on Immigration composed of representatives of the immigrant communities and concerned organizations. Its purposes:

- a) To thoroughly study the immigration issue, regarding immigrants objectively as part of the US labor force, before new legislation is passed. This would develop a sound basis for changes in immigration policy, and would supercede the notoriously inaccurate and biased "studies" of the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS).

- b) To provide a forum for public discussion of government immigration policies.

c) To provide an agency where immigrants could voice their complaints and seek redress.

d) To evaluate and monitor the INS, the application of protective laws for workers, and other factors affecting the lives of immigrants.



## PRESENT IMMIGRATION QUOTAS ARE RACIST AND UNREALISTIC

The Carter Plan leaves intact a discriminatory quota system. Any new law should completely revise it in the interests of justice and common sense.

The basic US immigration law of 1921, with its "national origin" quotas, is racist, discriminating against all except Western European immigration. The McCarran Act of 1952, a legacy of McCarthyism, made immigration law even more repressive and undemocratic, requiring annual "alien registration." The "per country" quota restrictions of the laws of 1965 and 1976 further restrict the legal entry of workers from the poorest countries—those who need jobs the most.

Latin America and the United States are integrated into an international economic system dominated by transnational corporations. As we have seen, this one economic system of which we are all a part is the cause of the miserable conditions from which immigrants are trying to escape. For this reason, immigration quotas should reflect the "special" relationship which exists between Latin America and the United States.

Common sense shows that the present quotas are far too low. Current quotas are: 120,000 annually from the Western Hemisphere, and 170,000 from the Eastern Hemisphere, with a 20,000 ceiling per country. BACI urges a *realistic* annual figure of at least 170,000 from Latin America, and that "country of origin" quotas be abolished as unjust and unenforceable.

## "EMPLOYER SANCTIONS" OF CARTER PLAN HARD ON WORKERS, NOT EMPLOYERS

The Carter Plan proposes that employers who "knowingly" hire undocumented workers be subject to penalties. A massive "ID" card system could then be imposed on millions of workers so they could "prove" their legal status.

Passage of such a law would not deter employers from hiring undocumented workers, according to Joshua Eilberg, Congressman on the Immigration Committee. He says, "A civil fine would become merely the cost of doing business for many employers." It would be limited to employers who make a practice of hiring undocumented workers. The net effect would be that few employers would be touched by the law.

But for the workers, such a law would create a massive violation of civil rights, not only of undocumented workers but of native-born Mexicans and Latin Americans. Non-Anglo workers who "look foreign" would be subject to harassment and discrimination. Employers would be less likely to hire new workers from these groups.

This law would force the employer and union hiring halls to do the work of the INS, Border Patrol and law enforcement agencies in checking documents. This could only diminish the Civil Rights of all of us living in "the land of the free." The use of ID cards offers countless opportunities for the government to use them as instruments of repression. Similar IDs are used in South Africa to promote apartheid.



### THE INS SHOULD SHIFT ITS EMPHASIS FROM POLICING TO SERVICING

The Immigration and Naturalization Service's administrative function of admitting new immigrants should take precedence over its role of policing undocumented entries. Under the already implemented executive direction of the Carter Plan, most of the INS budget and energies go to the army of police patrolling the Mexican border and to harassment and deportation of workers. The INS estimates that it will deport 2 million workers in 1978, double the number for 1977. The often brutal actions of the INS have brought an atmosphere of fear to our communities. It is a continuing injustice to those who cross the border in search of work and to those who wait months, even years, for their applications to be processed

by the INS. If the INS were as diligent in processing applications as it is in trying to throw people out, there would be a far higher percentage of workers here with legal papers.

INS's own statistics show its discriminatory treatment of applications from Latin Americans. A total of 46 million have entered the US under its administration. Of these, 36 million have been of European origin, 4 million Canadian, and 4 million Latinos, mostly Mexicanos. The remaining 2 million have been Asian, Pacific Islanders, and others. These statistics reveal the long-standing racism of US immigration policy as administered by the INS.





### CARTER PLAN "AMNESTY" A SHAM

The Carter Plan includes a so-called "amnesty" provision which proposes that permanent resident status be given to undocumented immigrants who can prove they have lived in the US continuously for at least seven years. It also proposes a temporary 5-year resident alien status for immigrants who can prove they entered the US before January 1, 1977. These immigrants would not be eligible for services such as Medicaid, food stamps, or welfare. Their only "benefit" would be a work permit. These provisions are an attempt to disguise the repressive nature of the Carter Plan. Very few workers could prove seven year continuous residence, and an unsuccessful interview with the INS could mean immediate deportation.

The Carter Plan also calls for an expansion of the present temporary work permits program (Section H-2 of the 1952 Immigration and Naturalization Act). Under this slave-labor program, foreign workers may be contracted by an employer for a limited time period, when the Department of Labor decides that there is a shortage of labor in a certain area. These temporary contracts require the workers to pay taxes, but they do not provide workers' benefits such as social security or workman's compensation. Union activities—or almost anything else the employer doesn't like—can be considered a "breach of contract" and thus a cause for immediate deportation.

The creation of a class of immigrant workers with no benefits but a work permit puts such workers at the mercy of their employers, inhibits the exercise of their rights as workers and as human beings, and serves to divide and inject fear into the Latino and Chicano communities.

## THE BAY AREA COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION INVITES YOUR HELP

We are a group of Bay Area community organizations and individuals concerned about the immigration policies of the US government, especially as they affect our well-being and freedom in the Latino and Chicano communities. Our concern with the undocumented immigrant is not only from our sense of justice, but from self interest. It can be said in many ways: "If they can do it to them, they can do it to us." "An injury to one is an injury to all."

We invite you to join us with your energy or financial help to help us influence public policy and alert our communities to present injustice and threatened dangers.

### What You Can Do

1. Contact the immigration committee in your area. (See list below)
2. Write to your Congressperson and Senator expressing your opposition to the Carter Plan.
3. Share this pamphlet with people at your unions, schools, churches and workplace.

*Stop Deportations*

*Unconditional Amnesty and Full Democratic Rights  
For Undocumented Workers*

*Stop the Carter Immigration Plan!*

*The BACI is one of a growing number of coalitions and organizations that have formed to defend the rights of undocumented workers. The following is a partial list of these organizations:*

### **For Services and Legal Help**

California Rural Legal Assistance  
128 Oak St.  
Soledad, CA 93960  
(408) 678-2601

Community Service Organization  
222 South Jackson Ave.  
San Jose, CA 95116  
(408) 251-2885

El Concilio de Stanislaus Co.  
for the Spanish Speaking  
126 "H" Street  
Modesto, CA 95351  
(209) 521-2033

Immigration Counseling Center  
Catholic Social Services  
2nd & Reed St.  
San Jose, CA 95116  
(408) 293-5374

International Institute  
of the East Bay  
297 Lee St.  
Oakland, CA 94610  
(415) 451-2846

International Institute of  
San Francisco  
2209 Van Ness Ave.  
San Francisco, CA 94109  
(415) 673-1720

La Raza Centro Legal  
2588 Mission St.  
San Francisco, CA 94110  
(415) 826-5506

Legal Aid Society  
525 "H" St.  
Union City, CA 94587  
(415) 489-1020

Manzo Council  
1025 N. Grande  
Tuscon, AZ 85705  
(602) 623-5739

National Lawyers Guild  
Immigration Project  
712 So. Grand View St.  
Los Angeles, CA 90057

One Stop Immigration Center  
1443 Wright St.  
Los Angeles, CA 90015

San Francisco Neighborhood  
Legal Assistance Foundation  
2701 Folsom St.  
San Francisco, CA 94110  
(415) 648-7580

UNITE  
PO Box 8041  
Chicago, IL 60680

### **To Help Stop Carter's Immigration Plan**

Centro de Inmigracion <sup>ok</sup>  
Georgetown Univ. Law Center  
600 New Jersey Ave., NW  
Washington, D.C. 20001  
(202) 624-8374

Coalition for Fair Immigration  
Law and Practices  
PO Box 26363  
San Jose, CA 95116  
(408) 926-2982

Coalition for Rights  
of Immigration  
2209 Van Ness Ave.  
San Francisco, CA 94109

Committee on Chicano Rights  
1837 Highland Ave.  
National City, CA 92050  
(714) 474-8195

Davis Immigration Committee  
c/o Luis Arroyo  
Department of History  
University of California, Davis  
Davis, CA  
(916) 752-1638

Hispanic Ad Hoc Coalition  
on Immigration  
1725 Eye St., NW Suite 210  
Washington, D.C. 20006  
(202) 659-1251

Immigration Coalition  
311 Junipero #7  
Long Beach, CA 90814

Immigration Coalition  
2808 Altura St.  
Los Angeles, CA 90031

La Raza National  
Lawyers Organization  
809 8th St.  
Sacramento, CA 95814  
(916) 446-4911

Latin American Union  
for Civil Rights  
805 So. 5th St.  
Milwaukee, WI 53204  
(414) 645-6740

Maricopa County Organizing  
Project  
Box 819  
El Mirage, AZ 85335  
(602) 977-1410

National Coalition for Fair  
Immigration Laws & Practices  
1523 Brooklyn Ave.  
Los Angeles, CA  
(213) 225-1561

National Immigration Coalition  
8601 Lankershim Blvd.  
Sun Valley, CA 91352  
(213) 657-1171

National Lawyers Guild  
Immigration Project  
712 So. Grand View St.  
Los Angeles, CA 90057

Sacramento Committee for a  
New Immigration Policy  
PO Box 1644  
Sacramento, CA 95817

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To add your organization to this list, please contact us. Thank you.

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