

The following is a statement given by [REDACTED] [REDACTED] to ILEMP on 12-4-90 about an encounter he had with Custom's agent. the incident took place on February 15, 1990 at 3:20 p.m.. Mr. [REDACTED] is a Mexican Citizen who is a photographer for El Norte, a Mexican newspaper. he was returning to his office from an assignment when this incident took place.

At about 3:00 p.m. [REDACTED], Director of photography for El Norte, [REDACTED] 11 years old son of [REDACTED], [REDACTED], another photographer for El Norte were returning from an assignment. We took the route of El Malecon which runs close to the Cordova Bridge. We noticed that there was an unusual amount of traffic backed up at the bridge and we decided to check what was occurring.

We went to the bridge and we saw two vans from Customs (they were blue vans, I believe). The vans were in the middle of the bridge holding up traffic. There were a lot of Customs agents in the vans and outside of it. We started taking photographs of both vans. some of the agents inside the vans told us not to take photographs but we took them anyway.

During this time an agent came over and tried to grab [REDACTED] [REDACTED] didn't have a camera nor was he doing anything but accompanying us. When he grabbed [REDACTED] I took the agents photo. The agent then let go of [REDACTED] and grabbed me. When he grabbed me, I tried to give my camera to [REDACTED]., I didn't succeed. However [REDACTED] did take the photograph of the agent grabbing me or holding me by the neck. [REDACTED] was also taking

photographs nearby.

Next came another agent and both of them detained me. They took me by the arms, pulled them behind me and led me to the van. Before they grabbed both of my arms one of them took my camera away. When we were by the van, they handcuffed me, and frisked me. Handcuffed they walked me over to the Customs offices at the bridge. On the way to the office they asked me why I was on the American side. they also told me it was not permitted to take photographs of Customs agents. I answered them that it was my job to take photographs.

At the office building, they took me into a small room and the handcuffs off. One of the agents told me to empty my pockets. I was told to lean with my hands on the wall and then the agents searched me. While I was being searched a third agent arrived.

During the procedure, the agents who first grabbed me was talking to me in an angry condescending tone. He told me, "Don't pretend to be stupid, you know you can't take pictures on the American side and you know you were on the American side."

The agent who first grabbed me, then took my credentials and went to make xerox copies. I was then left alone in that room for a while. Agent no. 1 returned and he told me to face him so he could take my photo. He left the door open and he was laughing at me in a ridiculing manner and was talking loud enough for other agents to hear. they too began to laugh while he took my photograph. he was using my camera to photograph me. Then he told me to turn around and to give him my back (so he could continue taking photos) I felt indignant because he and the others were

laughing at me so I refused. He said loudly trying to imitate me, "Oh you don't want to.", I said no. He told me in a threatening manner, "I said turn," so finally I turned and he took my photo.

Then he told me to take the roll of film out of my camera. I did this and he kept the whole roll of film. He left.

A while later another agent called me and told me to go to another place. This place was a larger room and they directed me to a desk. At this place they got all of my statistics: name, address, work place, etc. The man who took my statistics and some other agents started speaking english among themselves. I didn't understand what they were saying. The agent who took my statistics told me to go and sit down where there were some chairs nearby. they continued talking and I saw another agent arrive. I believe he was their supervisor, because the agents began telling him thing about me. He seemed to be giving them orders in english.

An agent came and told me to get up, to get my thing and leave. they gave me everything back except my roll of film. I left.

When I came out I noticed the vans were gone. I called my office and later someone from my office came to pick me up. I want to comment that while I was handcuffed the agent who first grabbed me told me that in the U.S. it was prohibited to take photographs of customs agents and that U.S. laws were not like Mexican Laws because in the U.S. the laws were enforced. " Dando entender que en Mexico no se cumplen."

Mr. [REDACTED] did not get any of the agents name nor badge numbers. He said he could give descriptions of them.