

Personal note from the editor: *We are publishing this special edition to coincide with the launch of our new campaign slogan: "If you are illegal then I am Illegal!" We are asking for your support. Take action as follows: Next time you meet a good neighbor, new acquaintance, or old friend, ask them to recite the slogan with you in any language while shaking your hand. It is best if you do it while looking straight into each other's eyes: "If you are illegal, then I am Illegal!" Do it with love in your heart.*

Write in to let us know how many new friends you convert. Or if you don't want us to know that many details, you may want to just write in to let us know that you participated. At some point we may start publishing an idea of the number of participants. This may become significant if we ever meet any skeptics who need to be convinced.

The Rights of Immigrants — the Rights of All!

The workers and democratic-minded people who are coming forward in the struggle for immigrant rights are bringing to the fore fundamental issues about the direction and future of our country.

The people are fighting against the racism and chauvinism of the capitalist government.

The immediate demand of the people is to stop the government from passing new anti-immigrant legislation which would criminalize immigrants and further repress them. This legislation is backed by a hysterical propaganda campaign that vilifies immigrants as "terrorists" and "criminals."

The capitalists also try to blame immigrants for "taking American jobs" and "bankrupting" the country by using social services. Of course, it is not

immigrants but the capitalists and the government who are slashing jobs and social services.

The government is trying to pass laws declaring English as the official language. This is part of the government's program of forcibly amalgamating everyone in the "melting pot" of the Anglo nationality. This program aims at increasing the oppression imposed on the minority nationalities and immigrants.

From the beginning, the capitalist state has forcibly annexed other nations, subjugating the Mexican people of the southwest, the Puerto Rican people, the Native Americans, and bringing the African people here in chains. So too, the capitalists have denied the rights of successive waves of immigrants, creating a caste of superexploited and oppressed workers. But the American people have always fought against this national oppression - against the slavery and racial discrimination imposed on the black people, against the genocidal subjugation of the Native peoples, against the colonization of Puerto Rico, etc. The American people have always tried to make this a land of refuge to which peoples from all over the globe can come and add their experience and voice to the struggle to guarantee the rights of all.

The immigrant rights movement is part of carrying this struggle through until every nationality is guaranteed equal rights in a true family of nations.

No, the problem is not immigrants or the oppressed nationalities who are the very foundation of our country; the problem is that the economic and political relations imposed by the government deny the reality of our country and the rights of the peoples.

The immigrant rights movement is fighting against the fascistization of our country.

Ongoing Struggle of Mexican People Against the Effects of the Capitalist Economic Crisis

The following article is from the NAFTA archives of The Worker. We are sharing it with you in the hope of being in service to all those interested in stepping up the struggle of the American people, at home and abroad, against the effects of capitalist globalization by teaching you about some of its star moments.

During his New Year's message to the nation, Mexican president Salinas de Gortari stated that 1989 would be a "year of transition," in which the government pledged to grow for the "social benefit" of the Mexican people and to "lessen the impact" of the foreign debt through

the new "Pact for Stability and Economic Growth." But in fact, the economic policies enunciated by the Gortari administration - a continuation of the so-called "solidarity pact" of former President Miguel de la Madrid - were designed from the beginning to put the burden of the crisis on the backs of the Mexican workers and peasants in order to protect the profits of the international and Mexican capitalists.

The government budget for fiscal 1989 calls for stepping up the privatization of state-controlled companies (a process already started in 1982) and reducing the income tax paid by the corporations - the maximum tax

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The Rights of All

from page 1

The government is not only attacking immigrants but the rights of all types of Americans. Already the government has used its anti-immigrant hysteria to pass laws limiting everyone's access to various social services such as Medicaid. The government is also militarizing the country, further integrating federal and local policing powers in order to better control the population.

The government is trying to create an ideological criteria for citizenship, virtually demanding a "loyalty oath" from immigrants and insisting that all "true Americans" embrace capitalist values.

The struggle for immigrant rights is in the forefront of the fight against the police state which the capitalists are trying to impose. The people are fighting for a truly modern America which recognizes that the rights of one are inseparable from the rights of all.

In fighting for the rights of immigrants, people are fighting against the superexploitation imposed on tens of millions of people. Today, as for centuries, the entire outlook of the

government is to use the immigrants and oppressed nationalities as a source of cheap, super-exploited labor and as a way to divide people with the aim of reducing the wages of the entire working class.

Today, in the name of "amnesty" or an "earned path" to legal status, the capitalists are preparing to criminalize millions of workers under a caste system of indentured servitude. Millions of workers who had been living and working in the U.S. for years - making their lives and building our country - would get the "privilege" of working continuously for 6 more years in order to apply for naturalization. Every year, hundreds of thousands more criminalized "guest workers" would be brought to the U.S. on a contract system to meet the needs of the capitalists. After their contracts of 3-6 years are up, these workers would be returned to their native countries.

We say that immigrants do not have "to earn" dignity or "prove" their loyalty. They are already part and parcel of the human race.

The struggle against the

superexploitation of immigrant workers is part of the movement of the working class to assert its common class interests and to come out as a class for itself, a class which aims at ending all forms of exploitation and oppression.

The struggle for immigrant rights brings to the fore the issue of: "What kind of country?"

The capitalists are seeking to throw society backwards and impose race hatred and national oppression on us. They are rapidly strengthening their police state, militarizing the country and attacking the rights of the people, all along the line. They are driving the working people deeper into exploitation and poverty.

The immigrant rights movement, as part of the struggle of the working people, is fighting to carry through the highest aspirations of the American people - to create a true family of nationalities and a land of refuge which recognizes the equality of the peoples; to create a country which guarantees the rights of all human beings and which eliminates all forms of exploitation and oppression.

NAFTA archive

rate on profits has already fallen from 39.2% in 1988 to 37% in 1989 and is scheduled to fall to 36% by 1990 and 35% by 1991. In addition, the Gortari administration has allocated close to 60% of the budget to servicing the foreign debt. Mexico has a total foreign debt of \$115 billion, mostly to U.S. banks and the U.S. government, which represents almost \$1,200 per inhabitant. In 1988 alone, debt payments totaled close to \$16.1 billion. Just between 1983 and 1988, the Mexican government paid out more than \$83 billion in debt service, even while the country's total external debt increased by \$18 billion. Also, the budget called for increasing foreign investment, eliminating many jobs and wholesale price rises on basic necessities and services. In face of an inflation rate of more than 50% the government has allocated wage increases of only 8% for the workers.

Today, a few months after its introduction, the "Pact for Stability and Economic Growth" has shown its real effects on the life of the people. Rising inflation, shrunken wages and scarcity of a growing number of basic consumer products - especially milk, eggs, sugar, etc., are the everyday reality for the Mexican people. At the same time, in contrast to the public declaration of the so-called "success" of the Pact in constraining inflation, the deficit shown by the government continues to grow and is expected to reach \$50 billion this year. The Mexican government is also tightening its links with the International Monetary Fund and creditor banks. On April 11, the government signed a "letter of intention" with the IMF for a new loan of \$3.6 billion for a period of 3 years. The IMF awarded this loan because of its satisfaction with the government's program of imposing austerity on the

masses. Not only did the Mexican government pledge to continue these same austerity measures but it also pledged to eliminate all restrictions for foreign investors, to facilitate new debt-for-equity swaps and consolidate the ones already in place - in essence, to deepen the economic domination of the country by U.S. imperialism.

from page 1

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