

ON THE QUESTION OF MEXICAN MIGRATION AND THE MILITARILY IMPOSED BORDER



MOVIMIENTO DE LIBERACION NACIONAL MEXICANO

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INTRODUCTION

In occupied Palestine, Northern Ireland and the Basque region of Spain and France, anti-imperialist national liberation struggles are challenging the legality of imposed borders. However, we don't have to look beyond the borders of the U.S. to understand anti-imperialist struggles against imposed borders. Within the current boundaries of the U.S., the Mexicano people are preparing the soil to nurture their prolonged struggle for the socialist reunification of Mexico. The struggle for the socialist reunification of our homeland directly challenges U.S. imperialism from within its "own" borders. The victory of our struggle along with that of the Puerto Rican people for independence and socialism and that of New Afrikans for the Republic of New Afrika will lead to the destruction of U.S. imperialism.

Our first two discussion documents presented the basis for our struggle for socialist reunification of Mexico. This, our fourth discussion document, presents our view on the militarily imposed border, the Migra and the future course of this front in our national liberation struggle.

We dedicate this discussion document to those Mexicanos who have at some point or other crossed the militarily imposed border despite all of the precautions of the Migra. This decades long migration has constantly reinforced our Mexicanidad. To those Mexicanos in Baja California that used rocks to bring down a Migra helicopter during a reconnaissance flight, we say that the day is rapidly approaching when this type of action will be repeated throughout the occupied Mexican Territory.

¡ LA FRONTERA IMPUESTA NO PARARA NUESTRA LUCHA!

¡ LUCAR POR UNA PATRIA REUNIFICADA Y SOCIALISTA, O MORIR POR ELLA!

The Border

The current U.S. Mexico border is approximately 2,000 miles long. It is a border that was militarily imposed on the Mexican nation as a result of the U.S. Invasion of 1846-1848 and of the Gadsden Purchase of 1853. This border was established at the point of a gun through the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo. Behind this border to the north lies 51% of the Mexican national territory and approximately 20 million Mexicanos. This border does not follow any geographic division of a land mass, but rather it is entirely man-made. Recognizing the importance of this militarily imposed division of a nation, the U.S. strategically placed military installations and camps at or near the border. Some examples are: Fort Bliss, which stretches over a million acres near El Paso, Texas, Fort Huachuca in Arizona, Fort Williams Air Force Base in Phoenix, Davis Monthan Air Force Base in Tucson and Camp Pendleton near the border of Baja and Alta California.

Despite these attempts at militarizing the border and other attempts such as Carter's "barbed wire" curtain to exclude our people from our occupied homelands, we have continued to cross the border almost at will. This constant migration of our people has re-inforced our Mexicanidad. It has insured that our roots remain alive.

The militarization of the border has also failed to "contain" the Mexican revolution and Mexican revolutionary thought. During the Mexican revolution of 1910, Francisco "Pancho" Villa was able to carry out a military attack in New Mexico behind enemy lines in retaliation for the U.S. granting Villa's opponents free passage in order to attack him from behind. From the forced exile to the occupied territory, the Magon brothers and the other leadership of the Partido Liberal Mexicano was able to organize Mexicanos in militant solidarity with the Mexican revolution. During the 1970's, Mexican revolutionaries from the stolen territories and from the south, were able to meet and discuss the strategy that would reunify our divided nation.

Many Mexicanos, however, have internalized the border and created a mental border. This belief accepts the border as legitimate and ignores the historical imposition on our land. Furthermore, this mental border serves to divide our people when we say that Mexicanos from the south are different from us. This mental border division only serves the interests of U.S. imperialism because it divides the strength of our movement and organizations.

History has shown that this separation and division of our people is a false one. Looking back at the deportation round-ups of the 1930's, 1950's and as recently as "Operation Raids(jobs)", we can see that it did not matter to the Migra agents whether we were from this side or from the other side. We were still arrested, beaten and deported. To the Migra agents, we are all Mexicanos. We are all subject to attack and harassment by the Migra. We must transform this recognition into one of the strengths of our continuous liberation struggle. We cannot accept the imposed border nor the mental border. Our movement must challenge the existence of these borders. To do otherwise, is to negate our historical development and to give continued life to U.S. imperialism.

Mexican Migration

Mexican people have been coming to the "southwestern states" long before the imposed border was established. As stated in our second discussion document, since the military occupation of 51% of our homeland, our people have migrated in constantly increasing numbers to this area. This historical process of migration began with the settlement of the northern territories and has continued to this day. Migration of Mexicanos to the occupied territories was overwhelmingly from Mexican states that were adjacent or close to these territories. Migration to Texas came from Coahuila, Tamaulipas and Nuevo Leon. California received migrants from Sonora, Sinaloa and Jalisco. North central Mexicanos, primarily from Chihuahua, migrated to Nuevo Mexico. Mexican migration has continued and now involves migration from other states of Mexico.

We describe the movement of Mexicanos across the imposed border as migration and not "immigration". This stems from a historical overview of this movement and of the creation of the border. Migration means the movement within one given country. Whereas immigration means the movement of a people into another country and across a border. In our specific situation, we do cross a borderline, but it is a militarily imposed border. We do not cross into another country, rather we cross over to our occupied homelands. As such, we cannot be described as "immigrants", but as migrants.

Migration also challenges the mental border. Describing our movement as migration challenges the border while it unites our struggles and our people.

Migration challenges the false divisions that have been created among our people. We must struggle against all the false divisions that perpetuate the division of our nation and people.

We must begin to describe our movement as migration because it also challenges the dominating view of the state in its approach to the movement of our people. This description also challenges the view of many of the reformist sectors doing work in this area. As a movement and as a people, we must continue to advance our own definitions on the issues confronting us. To do otherwise, allows the state, reformist and liberal sectors to define the direction of our movement. This we cannot allow to occur.

If our movement is to be successful, then our view must come to be the dominating view on issues affecting us. This will only occur the more we struggle for our positions. As a national liberation movement, we have the right and the obligation to define the issues affecting us and to provide direction to those forces who support our struggle. Only by being steadfast and firm in our principles, will we be able to define the direction of our struggle. Neither the state nor other sectors of the left can define our movement for us.

The Migra

The Immigration and Naturalization Service and the Border Patrol are known among Mexicanos as "la Migra". La Migra was officially created by an act of the U.S. Congress in 1924. Prior to this time, the U.S. government had not created a specific state policy to enforce its white supremacist rule in our occupied homeland. There were, however, white supremacist organizations belonging to the state in existence which preceded the Migra. Today, the Migra is clearly an army of occupation in our occupied territories.

With the military annexation of 1848, the U.S. acquired a new 2,000 mile border that had to be protected. In the early years following the occupation, white supremacist organizations such as the Texas Rangers, Arizona Rangers and California Rangers were established to protect and guard the new border. These Rangers were initially created to protect the large ranches that were established on the stolen Mexican land. Many Mexicanos resisted the encroachment of white settler ranches and because of this resistance, the local Ranger organizations were created. From these beginnings, the Rangers were then used to put down other resistance efforts of Mexicanos. Later, the Rangers were used to patrol the border areas to limit the number of Mexicanos entering the southwest. Many Rangers were motivated by anti-Mexican hysteria and notched their guns for every Mexicano they killed. The Rangers were never prosecuted for many of these murders. This gave rise to the belief in Mexican communities that the Rangers had a "license to kill" Mexicanos. This situation continued on the border until 1924.

There were various objective factors that led to the establishment of the Migra in 1924. The Mexican revolution played an important part in the creation of the Migra. Both because of the increased migration and because revolutionary ideas and ideals were being distributed in Mexican communities by Mexican revolutionaries in exile. Chief among these were the Flores Magon brothers and the Partido Liberal Mexicano that organized a military expedition into Baja California during the Mexican revolution. The U.S. had to place one-fourth of its army on the Mexican border in order to contain the Mexican revolution.

During this time, the U.S. also became involved in World War I and saw itself forced to increase the patrols along the U.S.-Mexico border. Also, in 1915 the U.S discovered the Plan de San Diego, Texas. This plan called upon the Mexican residents of the occupied territories to rise up against the U.S. federal state. With the discovery of the plan and arrest of some of the leaders, the implementation of the uprising was moved up. This led to a war in the area of south Texas in order to put down this rebellion of Mexicano people. These objective factors led to the establishment of the U.S. border patrol in 1924. Since then, the Migra has been used to terrorize and harass our communities in general. In particular, the Migra has been used in an effort to stop the organizing activities of our people.

Shortly after its creation, the Migra was used in the mass deportations of the 1930's. In Los Angeles alone, some 70,000 Mexicanos were deported in the 1930's. These deportation raids occurred at the same time that Mexicano people were organizing throughout the southwest for better working conditions and higher salaries. Throughout the "southwest" over 300,000 Mexicanos were deported during the 1930's. These mass deportations of our people have continued to the present.

The Migra, since its creation, has created terror in our communities. This fact can be readily understood when we recognize that Mexicano farmworkers run and hide when they see the green and white vans approaching or when they hear and see the Migra helicopter flying overhead. We need only look back to the raids of the Migra that were carried out during Operation Jobs. At that time, streets in predominately Mexicano and Latino communities were completely deserted as a result of the fear that existed amongst our people. Many of our people were even afraid to use the various community services that had been created as a result of the struggles of the 60's.

We must move the struggle from reforms of the Migra to its elimination. In our occupied territory, the Migra has no right to exist. We must recognize it as state policy to keep us divided. If we merely reform the Migra, it will be able to continue the deportations of our people, but in a more humanitarian way. This does not stop the deportations, nor does it challenge the existence of the militarily imposed border, nor that of U.S. imperialism. As a state institution which has attacked, beaten, killed and raped our people, we cannot allow it to exist. We cannot separate the Migra from the state which keeps us colonized. We must struggle for the elimination of the border, the Migra and the U.S. federal state.

¡ MUERTE A LA MIGRA!

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