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**GETTING TOGETHER** newspaper

## Carter immigration plan signals new wave of attacks



Maricopa County onion strikers protest arrests during strike of undocumented farmworkers

The Carter administration's new "immigration plan" is currently being discussed in Congress. This much touted plan is an attack aimed principally at the more than 7 million undocumented Mexicano immigrants in the U.S., and will also undoubtedly have a great impact on millions of undocumented Latino,

Asian, and other nationality immigrants.

The Carter plan calls for beefing up the U.S.-Mexico border patrol; fines of \$1,000 for employers who "knowingly" hire "illegal workers;" a limited amnesty to undocumented workers who have some "roots" in the U.S. and increased foreign aid to Mexico.

## Carter amnesty: a ploy to round up immigrants

One of the most publicized aspects of the Carter plan is the "amnesty" being offered to some undocumented workers. The government is pushing this amnesty, which would grant permanent residence status, with a lot of rhetoric about the "human rights" of immigrants and "recognizing" the "contributions" that some immigrants have made to society.

However, the amnesty plan is an attack on the overwhelming majority of undocumented immigrants. It would only apply to about 50,000 people — or a mere 1.2% of all the "illegal" immigrants in the U.S. The amnesty would only be available to those people who can *prove* that they have had continual residency in the U.S. since 1970. Anyone who had ever been deported, or who had ever left the country voluntarily; or anyone who had ever used a public service (such as a public hospital) or received any government benefits (such as unemployment insurance or food stamps); or anyone who had not correctly reported all their taxes, would not be eligible.

For those immigrants without legal status who have not been in the U.S. since 1969, but who entered the country before January 1, 1977, the Carter plan offers a "temporary" residence status. There are similar restrictions on qualifications as with "amnesty." Those who receive this temporary legal status would be able to stay in the U.S. for five years — but they would still be denied all public assistance and services, and they would still have to pay full taxes!

This is nothing but legalizing the current situation, where the capitalists squeeze superprofits out of the labor of immigrant workers and force them to live in an unequal status with no rights and under the most impoverished conditions.

Furthermore, after five years, those immigrants with the temporary status have no guarantee that they can even apply for permanent residence and the government would

already have a record of them.

In fact, while many people might apply for the "amnesty" and the temporary status, only a relatively small number of people could meet all the qualifications. And the government would know of their "illegal status" — they would have turned themselves in!

A similar ploy was used in the 1960's to get Chinese immigrants to "confess" to having come to the U.S. under false names. Hardly any of the "confession cases" resulted in the promised permanent residency status, and to this day many of the people who "confessed" have no status and no rights whatsoever.

Finally, the "amnesty" program calls for the immediate deportation of all undocumented immigrants who entered the U.S. after January 1, 1977. Further legal immigration is being reduced from 120,000 for all other American countries to 20,000 per country a year, according to the Eilberg law which was passed in December, 1976. In the past, 40,000 a year had come from Mexico alone.

To enforce these stricter immigration quotas and to increase the harassment and terror particularly against Mexicano immigrants, the Carter plan calls for doubling the INS border patrol on the U.S.-Mexico border and increased raids into Latino and other oppressed nationality communities.

### Employer fines

The Carter plan calls for \$1,000 fines to employers who "knowingly" hire undocumented workers. This is supposed to represent "fairness" on the part of the government in hitting not only immigrants but also the employers.

In reality, this law was proposed with the sole intention of intensifying discrimination against minority nationality people. Many companies would use this law as an excuse to not hire Latino and Asian workers. At the same time, the capitalists would continue to superexploit undocumented immigrants' labor power when they choose to.



### Foreign "aid" to Mexico means more plunder

Lastly, the Carter plan proposes various measures supposedly to "help" the Mexican economy so that Mexicanos won't have to come to the U.S. seeking work. The plan calls for increased foreign "aid" to Mexico, which would supposedly increase employment there. The plan also wants to ease trade restrictions with Mexico so that the U.S. can import more labor-intensive agricultural and manufactured goods from Mexico. This is supposedly to help Mexico's trade and economic growth.

These measures however are aimed only at increasing U.S. imperialism's domination of Mexico. For everywhere the U.S. extends its foreign "aid," there are a thousand and one strings attached which enforce economic dependency upon the U.S.

Furthermore, the easing of trade restrictions is aimed at encouraging U.S. manufacturing and agricultural capitalists to set up *more* assembly factories and enterprises in Mexico,

to further exploit Mexico's "cheap labor."

As it is throughout the world, this imperialist domination doesn't help but on the contrary devastates the economies of Third World countries like Mexico. This domination is what causes Mexico's impoverishment and forces thousands of people to immigrate to the U.S. The Carter plan will only intensify this situation.

### Attacks part of intensifying national oppression

As the Carter plan is being discussed in Congress, the government has been stepping up its repressive attacks on oppressed nationality immigrants. For example, plans are already underway to replace legal residents' "green cards" with new identification cards complete with fingerprints and computer-coded personal information. These will be used to monitor people similar to the internal passport system of South Africa.

Also in June, 1977 Carter approved the

importation of undocumented Mexicano contract laborers to pick the onion crop in Texas, as part of his guarantees to the capitalists that the "supply of labor will be assured." This is nothing but the revival of the *Bracero* program of the 1940's, 1950's and 1960's when millions of Mexicanos were forced to work in a semi-slave status for the agricultural capitalists in the U.S.

And in October, the Ku Klux Klan joined the INS on the U.S.-Mexico border by setting up its own "citizen patrols" aimed at intensifying the terror against Mexicanos and Chicanos in the Southwest and California.

The Carter plan and these mounting attacks on undocumented immigrants in general reflect the bourgeoisie's increasingly desperate attempts to cling onto its shaky rule. With U.S. imperialism sinking deeper and deeper into crisis and being beaten back internationally, the capitalists are more and more worried about their profits. The Carter plan is aimed at stepping up the repression against oppressed nationality immigrants so they can be super-exploited in a more intense and controlled

fashion.

In order to justify the Carter plan's attack on undocumented immigrants, the capitalists are promoting a chauvinist campaign which blames immigrants for the capitalist crisis. By doing this, the bourgeoisie hopes to make immigrants more vulnerable to attack. They hope to make people think that the cause of problems such as unemployment lies with "illegal aliens" and not the system of capitalism itself.

Undocumented immigrants and oppressed nationality peoples in the U.S. are rejecting the Carter plan and organizing to resist deportation raids and other anti-immigration attacks. Workers of all nationalities must take up this struggle as their own and give full support to this important struggle against national oppression.

**Oppose the Carter plan!**

**Abolish all anti-immigration laws!**

**Full status for all oppressed nationality immigrants!**

**Down with national oppression and imperialism!**

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