

October U.S. Immigration Alert!

A Monthly Newsletter from National Immigrant Solidarity Network
October 2005 Issue, Volume 10

No Immigrant Bashing! Support Immigrant Rights!

<http://www.ImmigrantSolidarity.org>

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First They Come to the "Illegals"

The worsen situations of U.S. immigrant rights

"Injury To One Is Injury to All!"

National Immigrant Solidarity Network Commentary:

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That's no secrets that domestically, "War Against terror" is in fact oppressions against immigrant communities. However, the government and the society obviously doesn't really want to get rid of all undocumented workers, because it would be the simplest thing in the world to find them. Everyone knows where undocumented workers work. No, we want them here...as long as they don't ask for a living wage and thereby threaten our ongoing massive accumulation of wealth.

It's no secret: Pick any commercial building in downtown Los Angeles or New York Garment districts, and at least a third or even half the workers in the building will be undocumented. It's also common knowledge that most major restaurants are staffed with undocumented immigrants, with police or immigrant agents eating in such restaurants everyday. Who harvests the fruits and vegetables we eat daily at California, Texas or Florida? College kids? Or immigrants we don't even care their names?

With the recent U.S. passage of the CLEAR Act, the possible passing of Immigrant "Reform" bill next year, the racist Minutemen at U.S.-Mexico border and California Governors recent veto against Immigrant Driver License Bill, the life of immigrant communities will not getting better, but will be worse. All we can do is hope for the best and bite our teeth to live through it.

It's the time anti-globalization, peace and social justice activists need to spend their time focusing the community struggles where we lives, join us to support immigrant workers solidarity campaigns!

THINK GLOBALLY, ACT LOCALLY!

Comprehensive Immigration Reform Policy Update

Senate Judiciary Committee holds hearing on immigration reform. Senate to consider immigration reform early in 2006. House likely to consider enforcement-only legislation before the end of the year. Homeland Security appropriations bill passes and signed by President Bush, with more resources for border security.

1. Senate Judiciary Committee holds second hearing on immigration "reform"

On Tuesday, October 18, the Senate Judiciary Committee held a second hearing on immigration reform issues. Homeland Security Secretary Micheal Chertoff explained that the Administration was taking initiatives to remove illegal immigrants by moving from a "catch and release" policy, in which immigrants are released on bond because of the lack of detention space, to a "catch and return" policy. Chertoff highlighted several steps being taken to move toward a "catch and return" policy, including increasing detention capacity, expanding expedited removal along the Southwest border, expanded air and ground transportation to remove immigrants, and stricter repatriation requirements. Nevertheless, under questioning Chertoff stated that it would be "hugely difficult" to deport the 8-10 million undocumented currently in the country, costing "billions and billions" of dollars. Chertoff stated that, in order to curb illegal immigration, the Administration supported a "three-legged stool" strategy which features 1) control of the border; 2) an interior enforcement program; and 3) the establishment of a temporary worker program.

Labor Secretary Elaine Chao reiterated Administration principles first articulated by President Bush in January, 2004, including 1) protecting the homeland by securing our borders; 2) matching willing workers to willing employers; 3) protecting the rights of legal immigrants so that illegal immigrants do not jump ahead in line; 4) incentives to return home; and 5) promoting compassion by allowing current undocumented workers to join a new temporary worker program. When asked whether the Administration supported a path to permanent residency, Chao reiterated Administration opposition to an "amnesty." She stated that the Administration did not support an "automatic" path to permanent residency. When asked what she meant by the word "automatic," Chao reiterated Administration opposition to an "amnesty." Chao stated that a temporary worker program would allow employers to more easily hire immigrant workers who fill jobs that U.S. workers do not perform. Both Chertoff and Chao stated that an enforcement-only approach to illegal immigration was insufficient to solve the problem.

On the second panel, Frank Sharry of the National Immigration Forum testified that only a comprehensive immigration plan was workable, with enhanced enforcement; legal channels for the flow of workers and families; and a workable solution for the 11 million undocumented currently in the United States featuring a path to permanent residency. Mark Krikorian of the Center for Immigration Studies advocated that the solution to the immigration crisis is enforcement of current law, which is not being done, particularly in the workplace. Doug Massey testified that current immigration policy, which has focused on blocking the border, has led to increases in illegal immigration during the 1990s to the present day.

The testimony of each of the witnesses can be found at www.senate.judiciary.gov.

2. Senate to consider immigration "reform" in early 2006

On October 25, Senator Bill Frist (Rep.-Tenn.), majority leader of the U.S. Senate, announced that the Senate would take up immigration reform early in 2006, most likely in February. Senator John McCain (Rep.-Az.) and Senator John Cornyn (Rep.-Tx.) joined Senator Frist in the announcement. Frist stated that a border security bill, most likely from the House, would serve as the vehicle, with amendments other pieces of immigration reform added. It is unclear as to whether such a vehicle would first move through the Senate Judiciary Committee or go straight to the Senate floor.

3. House likely to consider enforcement-only bill by end of the year

It is likely that the House of Representatives will consider an immigration enforcement bill prior to the end of the year, legislation which is being drafted by the Committee on Homeland Security and the House Judiciary Committee. It is unclear what proposals will be included in the legislation, but it is likely that the bill will include the CLEAR Act (local law enforcement), an expansion of expedited removal, and other harsh provisions. More information to come as it is known.

4. President Bush signs Homeland Security appropriations bill

On October 18th, President Bush signed H.R. 2360, the Homeland Security appropriations bill, which includes the addition of 1,000 more Border Patrol agents, 100 immigration interior enforcement officers, 1,900 more detention beds, and \$41 million in border security technology. In signing the legislation, Bush stated that his Administration was making strides to "control our borders." He reaffirmed the Administration commitment to a guestworker program which matches "willing workers with willing employers." The legislation also includes \$115 million for visa backlog reduction.

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Minutemen Watch

Please Visit our Minutemen Watch Webpage!

URL: <http://www.immigrantsolidarity.org/Campaigns/Minutemen.htm>

San Diego, CA: Temporary Civilian Border Patrols May Be Permanent

Minutemen Seek Permanent Base in San Diego

Associated Press October 21, 2005

CAMPO, Calif. -- What began this summer as a series of temporary civilian patrols along the border in east San Diego County could become permanent, with at least one border watch group hoping to establish a long-term address.

Real estate agents who work in the Campo area have received inquiries from people identifying themselves as part of a patrol group -- or calling on behalf of one -- looking to buy or rent property. One prospective benefactress is considering buying a property where border watchers could stay and train in exchange for maintenance.

"The Minutemen would be able to use it if they did work around the place," said Kathy Severin, 58, a self-described philanthropist who says she wants to help because she is "a staunch supporter of volunteerism."

Severin, who with her husband owns several properties in Chula Vista, traveled to Campo for a July patrol event held by the California Minutemen.

The group, led by former postal worker James Chase of Oceanside, has been conducting armed patrols in the area on and off since then.

Linda Chase, who participates in the patrols, said the main appeal of having a private place to sleep, camp and train is to be able to shake off protesters, along with the legal observers who monitor patrol groups for civil and human rights violations.

**Report Back: Washington D.C. Protest Against Minuteman Meeting on September 28
Ben Dalbey, ISO Baltimore/DC**

On one day's notice, about 30 Washington, D.C., area activists mobilized to protest the presence of racist vigilantes Chris Simcox, president of the "Minutemen Civil Defense Corps," and James Gilchrist, founder of the Minutemen, here September 28.

The D.C. event, held in the swank Capitol Hill Club, which is a private Republican club a stone's throw away from the U.S. Capitol, was billed as a "kick-off" for the vigilantes' "Secure Our Border" initiative planned for the month of October. The Minutemen website heralds the October initiative as a series of anti-immigrant rallies across the country attended by "mainstream" far-right figures such as Alan Keyes as well as "local patriots."

The business-suited congressional staffers and Capitol Hill elite arriving at Gilchrist and Simcox's event here were visibly surprised and upset to see a young, confident and vibrant crowd chanting with a bullhorn and picket signs and leafleting at their front door. Unable to have the police remove us from the public sidewalk, they resigned themselves to giving us the finger and hurling such sharp-witted jibes as "you smell" as they scurried into the club door.

Gilchrist and Simcox have worked hard to portray themselves as reasonable and mainstream, and the D.C. event was clearly part of that effort. Gilchrist himself has declared his candidacy for the U.S. congressional seat from the 48th district in California, and has been endorsed by current Rep. Tom Tancredo (R-CO).

However, coming out of D.C. two things were abundantly clear. The first is that even with a tie on; the supporters of the Minutemen include extremely violent, racist thugs who are quite eager to physically intimidate those who oppose them. The political left needs to take this group extremely seriously, and our efforts to oppose them need to be organized and united.

The second is that every single person who can join a picket or other organized protest at every one of these "Secure Our Border" rallies will be making a difference. Even in the heart of Capitol Hill, our protest was able to draw support and thanks from passers-by, including immigrants who work and live in the area. But more importantly, our small but confident presence was enough to strike fear into the racist's hearts. They do not want to hear or see us, because in their delusional far-right fantasy we shouldn't exist. That's why we need to be screaming in their face everywhere we can.

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Recent Government-Sponsored Anti-Immigrant Campaigns

**ICE/RC/Corporate violence on Latinos and Vietnamese Hurricane Katrina Survivors
Wed, 5 Oct 2005**

**Loan Dao
Ph.D. Candidate Department of Ethnic Studies
University of California-Berkeley
loandao@yahoo.com**

Victoria was at the Red Cross center in Biloxi, MS on Oct 5 and witnessed them physically ejecting Latino evacuees. One of the Viet people working in Houston said that Bill Chandler of the Mississippi Immigrant Rights Alliance in Jackson mentioned that a RedCross Center had been raided a few days ago by Immigration Customs Enforcement. I was able to talk with Victoria, another MIRA rep, who has been traveling throughout the Gulf Coast. Here's her summary:

She witnessed and/or documented:

- Continual police brutality of immigrants, esp. Latino
- No due process rights
- Extremely slow process of getting temporary housing trailers in poor communities (while wealthy ones have all been given trailers).
- Deportation of hurricane survivors and latino clean up workers
- Raids and round-ups at a Red Cross in Long Beach, MS (80 people), Kenner (?), LA, Chinese restaurants, Astrodome, at workplaces, in Biloxi.

- Undocumented workers enticed with housing and good pay to do hurricane clean up work for government contractors, only to be left "high and dry" with no housing, little money, and kicked out of shelters.

The evictions, harassment, and roundups pick people based on suspicion only because none of the authorities have the legal right to ask people whether they are/for their documents.

Finally, according to Vietnamese social service orgs in Houston, Viet people are finding themselves "legally undocumented and illegal" because many lost their immigration papers in the flooding and hurricanes. they are also going to detention and deportation proceedings as a result.

She's calling for immigration legal assistance, stronger pressure put on authorities and ICE to stop these acts. Please contact her at **(228)234-1697/1698** for an interview, or Bill Chandler at headquarters **1-888-204-3355** to send lawyers, etc.

Border Wars Colorado Eyes Arizona's Prop 200 To Stop 'Illegals'

By Michael Conniff, New West

10-04-05

How bad has the battle over illegal immigration become? Three Colorado state legislators are in Arizona today, patrolling the Mexican border with the Minutemen civilian militia group. The mission for the legislators: to see just how bad things might get if nothing is done about illegal immigrants.

Led by David Schultheis, a Republican from Colorado Springs, the lawmakers are also in Arizona to study the value of bringing Proposition 200—the measure passed by voters in Arizona last year to stop healthcare and welfare services for immigrants—and they are considering additional measures to make it illegal for illegals to buy property in the state. Under the plan scheduled for introduction in the next session of the Colorado legislature, people who work in the food business would also have to produce a photo ID and fingerprints.

The passage of such a measure would have a profound impact on Aspen, Snowmass, and other towns in the Roaring Fork Valley, where Mexican immigrants—legal and illegal—have become the backbone of the work force, supplanting the prototypical and historical ski bums with people who eschew the slopes as they pursue the American dream.

Immigration News Briefs from Across the Country

Immigration News Briefs is a weekly supplement to Weekly News Update on the Americas, published by Nicaragua Solidarity Network, 339 Lafayette St, New York, NY 10012; tel 212-674-9499; fax 212-674-9139; wnu@iqc.org.

1. WI: RESTAURANT OWNER SENTENCED

On Oct. 13, Wisconsin restaurant owner Steven Metzler was sentenced to five years probation, six months house arrest and a \$5,000 fine for hiring undocumented workers and providing them with fake identity documents. Julie's Cafe, the business Metzler co-owns with his wife, was also fined \$20,000. Julie's Cafe has two restaurants in Green Bay, Wisconsin, and one in nearby De Pere.

On June 15, 2004, Green Bay police arrested 13 Mexican workers employed by Julie's Cafe in an investigation into stolen identity; police questioned and released the workers but handed their information over to US Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE). This past April, Metzler pleaded guilty to one count of "harboring illegal aliens" by employing them at Julie's Cafe.

The prosecution was the result of an investigation by ICE with assistance from the Green Bay Police Department and the Social Security Administration. According to court documents cited in an ICE press release, from 1998 until the June 2004 raid, Julie's Cafe required its undocumented employees to purchase false identification

documents from the owners in order to work. The workers were paid in cash and the fee for the false identity was deducted from their wages. [*ICE Press Release 10/18/05*]

2. SOLDIERS BUSTED FOR SMUGGLING

On Oct. 11 Victor Domingo Ramirez, a US Marine Corps recruiter stationed in Laredo, Texas, pleaded guilty to charges of illegally bringing three women into the US from Mexico on July 22. Ramirez was wearing his Marine uniform and driving an official government vehicle when he was stopped by a Texas state trooper. Laredo Marine recruiter Vic Martin Martinez was with Ramirez at the time; he pleaded guilty on Oct. 11 to knowingly making a false statement to federal agents. Ramirez and Martinez have been in federal custody since their arrest, and will remain in federal custody pending their sentencing hearings, scheduled for Feb. 13, 2006, in Laredo. ICE said Ramirez' arrest was the result of an ongoing ICE investigation involving the assistance of a confidential source, with whom Ramirez allegedly discussed alien smuggling. [*ICE Press Release 10/14/05; San Antonio Express-News 10/15/05*]

On Oct. 12, US Marine recruiter Gunnery Sgt. Hubert A. Lucas was found guilty in a court martial at Parris Island, South Carolina, of selling and delivering counterfeit documents to undocumented immigrants in order for them to join the Marines. Lucas was sentenced to a year in prison and a bad conduct discharge. The investigation began on Aug. 11, 2004, after an ICE intelligence report said a Marine stationed in California had identified Lucas as the person who charged her \$250 for a counterfeit green card and stolen Social Security number for the purpose of enlisting her in the Marine Corps. The charges against Lucas span from late 2001 to mid-2004, and include fraudulent enlistment, conspiracy to commit fraud, and dereliction of duty. [*Village Voice* 10/4/05, 10/13/05]

Officials confirmed on Sept. 7 that two soldiers from the 4-1 Cavalry at Fort Bliss, near El Paso, Texas, were arrested in Columbus, New Mexico, for transporting undocumented immigrants. Pfc. Miguel Angel Diaz Roman and Pfc. Kenneth Earl David III were carrying five Mexican nationals and \$3,500 in cash in their two vehicles. One of the immigrants said they were being charged \$1,400 each to be taken to Arizona. The soldiers were released about an hour after their arrest; it was not clear whether any charges would be filed. [*El Paso Times* 9/8/05; *La Jornada (Mexico)* 9/10/05 from correspondents]

3. "PREDATOR" RAID IN NYC

On Oct. 19, ICE agents and New York City probation officers arrested 50 immigrants described as "criminal

alien sex offenders" in Brooklyn, Queens, the Bronx and Manhattan. The arrests, part of ICE's Operation Predator, were announced on Oct. 19 by ICE Director of Investigations Marcy Forman and New York City Department of Probation First Deputy Commissioner Richard Levy. "We look forward to working with ICE on future operations and we will work to keep future sex offenders off the probation rolls," said Levy.

ICE said 36 of those arrested were in the US illegally, while 14 were legal permanent residents. Nearly all were from Latin America or the Caribbean. All were placed in removal proceedings and transported to detention facilities. Since Operation Predator was launched on July 9, 2003, ICE has arrested nearly 6,500 sex offenders nationwide and has deported more than 3,100 of them. [*ICE* 10/19/05]

Frank Figueroa, head of the ICE office in Tampa, Florida, was arrested on Oct. 25 for exposing his genitals to a 16 year-old girl at a shopping mall food court. He was freed hours later on a \$500 cash bond after being charged with exposure of sexual organs and disorderly conduct in a public food establishment. ICE has placed Figueroa on administrative leave and launched an internal investigation. A week earlier, agents under his charge had busted a prostitution ring and Figueroa had issued a statement with US Attorney Paul Perez promising to vigorously pursue sex crimes. [*Orlando Sentinel* 10/26/05; *AP* 10/26/05]

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Immigrant Labor Solidarity Movements from Across the Country

AIN'T I A WOMAN?! Campaign to Fight Against Sweatshops Garment Factories!

National Mobilization Against Sweatshops
P.O. Box 130293 - New York, NY 10013-0995
Tel: (718) 625-9091 Fax: (718) 625-8950

Chinese Staff & Workers' Association
P.O. Box 130401 - New York, N.Y. 10013-0995
Tel: (212) 334-2333 Fax: (212) 334-1974

URL: www.aintlaWoman.org

e-mail: info@aintlaWoman.org

The "Ain't I a Woman?!" campaign grew from a small group of garment workers holding **DKNY** accountable for sweatshop conditions to become a call for a new women's movement fighting for control over our time, health, respect and payment for care giving work. DKNY workers have been joined by other women workers who also have tolerated abusive conditions for the sake of their families -- such as the workers of Liberty Apparel's factories.. Many women are inspired by the example of these workers who risked so much to fight to be treated with respect like human beings, and to have some say about their working conditions and time.

Our campaign has drawn in women workers from across the board whose are experiencing longer hours, lower wages and worsening conditions. Whether we work in a corporate law firm or a garment factory, control over our time and our lives is slipping away.

A century after Sojourner Truth's struggles against racism and sexism, women workers are stepping up the fight against the most destructive form that modern-day racism and sexism has taken: economic segregation and the perception that crumbs are better than nothing. Refusing to be treated like slaves or second-class citizens, we are coming together to build upon Sojourner Truth's struggle and proclaiming **Ain't I a Woman?!**

IMMIGRANT SOLIDARITY NETWORK CALLS FOR IMMIGRANTS FOR PEACE & JUSTICE CAMPAIGNS

The immigrant communities had increasingly become one of the fastest growing targets for the U.S. military recruiters. With the "promises" of citizenships and show your "patriotism," many new comers were tricked to join the army to fight the unjust wars of Afghanistan and Iraq. Many injured even killed.

Some 37,000 men and women - or about 3 percent of the total active duty force - are non-citizens, up from 28,000 five years ago. Many immigrants enter the military in the hopes it will speed up citizenship applications. Many, however, only become full-fledged Americans only after their deaths at the combats. Currently, at least several dozen new immigrants killed in Iraq and Afghanistan before they achieve their American dreams.

We are calling for a national formation of immigrant counter-recruitment coalition, to link military recruitment with the "promises" of citizenships. The U.S. citizenships should not become the exchange tools for the government to lure new immigrants who are desperately need documented in this country. No Killing for Citizenships as part of the growing national counter-recruitment campaigns and immigrant-based anti-war movements.

For more information, please send e-mail to Lee Siu Hin National Immigrant Solidarity Network

E-mail: info@ImmigrantSolidarity.org Tel: (213)403-0131

Please subscribe to our ISN Immigrants Information daily-info listserv!

Send e-mail to: isn-subscribe@lists.riseup.net or visit: <http://lists.riseup.net/www/info/isn>

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Los Angeles, California 90048**

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About National Immigrant Solidarity Network

ISN is a coalition of community, immigrant, labor, human rights and student activist groups, founded in 2002 in response to the urgent needs for the national coalition to fight immigrant bashing, support immigrant rights, no to the sweatshops exploitation and end to the racism on the community. Please visit our website:

<http://www.ImmigrantSolidarity.org>

Contact Information:

E-mail: siuhin@aol.com

(213) 403-0131 (Los Angeles)

(212) 330-8172 (New York)

(202) 544-9355 (Washington D.C.)

Please donate to ISN! (All donations are tax deductible!)

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Los Angeles, California 90048