

Carter Administration To Unveil New Immigration Policy: Militarize U.S.-Mexico Border

MEXICO

The Carter Administration is expected shortly to release a series of legislative proposals for stopping the flow of illegal aliens across the U.S.-Mexico border. The proposals are the outcome of a special, cabinet-level task force that began to map out a new immigration policy three weeks ago. According to Labor Secretary Ray Marshall, a member of the task force, the new immigration policy ranks second on the Carter Administration's agenda: "No issue, with the possible exception of energy, has been studied as long and as intensely in this Administration as immigration."

Details of the new policy have remained concealed behind a facade of "concern for human rights of illegal aliens" — a line most frequently voiced by Labor Secretary Marshall and by the recently appointed head of the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS), Leonel J. Castillo. But a series of statements by Carter spokesmen and press outlets have made clear that the central aspect of the policy will be the militarization of the border between Mexico and the U.S.

This militarization operation is slated to be run by the El Paso Intelligence Center (EPIC), the prototype of the National Security Council-controlled "command organization" for international terrorism and drug-running now being pushed by Brian Jenkins, the Director of Research on International Terrorism at California's Rand Corporation (See Counter Intelligence report). Secondary aspects of the plan, including an "amnesty for illegal aliens" program and fines on employers of illegal aliens, will have serious repercussions within both the U.S. and Mexico.

South of the Barbed Wire

Carter's plan to militarize the U.S.-Mexican border was presented by Attorney General Bell to the National Border Crime Conference in San Diego, California April 21. Directly contradicting previous reports by Secretary of Labor Marshall that "we have never considered closing off the border with Mexico," Bell emphasized that "stopping an unlawful entrant from coming in and working is better than deterring employers or deporting the employees." The Administration, Bell added, plans to "make the border more secure."

Administration plans to this end are no secret. The day after Bell's speech, columnist Jack Anderson revealed that Senators Sam Nunn (D-Ga.) and Charles Percy (R-Ill.), in a letter to Defense Secretary Harold Brown, had

asked for the intervention of the Pentagon with "airplanes, radar, detectors and other equipment to adequately protect our border" from illicit drug traffic with Mexico. This call for deployment of U.S. armed forces hardware to "protect the border" has been echoed by other Carter spokesmen and press outlets. A *New York Times* article which appeared one day prior to the first of the Cabinet-level meetings emphatically presented the Administration's view of the border with Mexico in a quote by Congressman Lester Wolff (D-N.Y.): "We really have a Maginot Line. It is outflanked, overflown, and infiltrated. And you know what happened to the French." The article — the first in a series by the *Times* — outlined in detail how agents of the U.S. Border Patrol, the Drug Enforcement Administration, the U.S. Customs Service and other agencies are "fighting a futile holding action against a flood of Mexican aliens, brown heroin, marijuana, manufactured goods, plant and animal pests, and human diseases streaming across the sparsely patrolled Mexican frontier."

As Carter's INS chief, Leonel J. Castillo made clear in an interview in the April 25 *New York Times*, this new immigration policy does not stop at the border. Castillo was quoted as saying, "You could put 10 divisions of marines along the border and not seal it . . . we can improve and streamline border enforcement efforts, but we must do much more than that."

Implications for Mexico

In fact, the border question has become a point of pressure against the Mexican government of President López Portillo. A direct threat will be posed to Mexico's sovereignty by the presence of U.S. troops along a 2,000 mile border. Moreover, the plan to stop the emigration of unemployed workers and peasants to the U.S. — viewed as a "safety valve" for social tensions within the country — could quickly intensify the existing explosive situation in the countryside. William Paddock, a Rockefeller-linked agronomist who called for "reducing Mexico's population by one-half" two years ago, has stated that an essential part of his plan is "sealing the border and watching them scream." The *New York Times* article April 3 which presented images of Mexicans "streaming across the border" has stressed that the "most pressing long-term problem for both nations is Mexico's population growth."

Administration officials have announced that the Administration's proposals will also call for direct sanctions against employers who hire illegal aliens and for a special amnesty program.

Despite widespread opposition to the fines on employers, an article in the *Wall Street Journal* April 26 makes

clear that the plan will include some provision of this sort.

On the amnesty question, the initial calls for adoption of a lenient measure granting legal resident status to all aliens residing in the U.S. for the last two to six years, have been replaced by a tough, restrictive policy. Attorney General Bell in his statements to the San Diego conference announced that an amnesty plan would apply only to "undocumented aliens who have built up substantial equities during extended residence in this country. They would be persons who have, in effect, been woven into the nation's economic and social fabric."

In light of expected resistance within the U.S. to the new immigration policies, the Administration has attempted to push through its program as part of the effort

to lower unemployment within the U.S. The *Wall Street Journal* this week revealed that at the first Carter Cabinet meeting in December of 1976 Marshall "warned that failure to act on the issue (of "illegals") could undermine the new Administration's programs to create jobs and reduce unemployment." The connection between the Administration's immigration policy and the Carter plan for "creating" labor-intensive jobs, however, was driven home by Castillo two weeks ago. If the several million illegal aliens in the U.S. were rounded up, Castillo stated, "You'd have to find U.S. workers willing to take many menial, low-paying jobs. You'd have to relocate a lot of them. Would an unemployed iron worker in the East want to come and pick cabbages in Texas?"

New 'Violencia' Touted For Colombia

COLOMBIA

Colombian President Alfonso López Michelsen acknowledged on April 22 that his collapsing government is in desperate political straits, in a warning that "the political fighting in Colombia is extremely cruel and, until now, dormant... (but)... *physical violence* has begun to reappear." López's choice of words was deliberately intended to evoke the bloody civil war of the 1950s between Liberals and Conservatives popularly known as "La Violencia" (The Violence).

López's warnings of a new Violencia were more than a simple commentary; they were brandished as an open threat against stubborn political opposition to his World Bank policies of triage and deindustrialization in which working class and industrialist layers have increasingly made common cause. In an address to the nation earlier this month, López identified this pro-industrial cross-party alliance in a twisted fashion, charging that "Today there is class warfare rather than party warfare. Thus, we are divided between those who want to overthrow the system and those who want to preserve it... (those who are) friends of the status quo and those who aspire to a different order."

The preparation of a new Violencia has been in increasing evidence during, especially, the last two weeks. The prominent national daily *El Tiempo* has repeatedly editorialized about the imminence of a new Violencia outbreak. On April 22 its lead editorial noted that "(parliamentary aggressions) contribute to the fomenting of extra-Congressional passions, at times — and we have lamentable experience with this — causing physical violence in the cities and in the countryside as easy to provoke as it is difficult to eradicate." Newspaper coverage of criminal incidents has become increasingly sensationalist as well, with *El Tiempo* running shock headlines such as "Violence in the Countryside," to capitalize on the terrifying memories of the Violencia.

This psychological warfare is part of a deliberate and coordinated plan. Finance Minister Espinosa Valderrama this week announced that Liberal youth were arming themselves to prevent a Conservative electoral victory from replacing the Liberal government now in power. This declaration was calculated to aggravate the historic tensions between Liberals and Conservatives, and on cue Conservative spokesmen responded that they had lost all confidence in the government's claims of "impartiality" in next year's presidential elections.

Violencia Against Whom?

The 1950s Violencia — while nominally a civil war between the two major parties in Colombia, Liberals and Conservatives — was actually a stage-managed decade-long terror scenario designed to exterminate all real and potential opposition within the working class and progressive capitalist layers, and to thereby institutionalize World Bank control over the Colombian economy. Bands of fascist goon squads joined with police and military assassins under the Conservative banner to rove the country, massacring thousands of peasants and workers and executing Liberal and Communist Party leaders wherever they could be found. When the Violencia ended, estimated deaths were 300,000 and higher.

The unleashing of a new Violencia in Colombia certainly poses no *sane* political option for anyone. And yet the failure of López and his World Bank backers to find *any* workable political combination capable of imposing severe austerity has underlined the urgent need for even such drastic "solutions." A Chile-style military coup in Colombia, under active consideration earlier this month by the World Bank and its friends, had to be put aside for the time being when major factional splits within the military itself and a visible strengthening of the Colombian Communist Party's organizational capacity became evident.

The splintering of both Liberal and Conservative Parties around the issue of economic policy for Colombia has prompted an hysterical López to resort to blackmail