

*Adiós, Migra: Documents*

*Protest Against Maltreatment of Mexican Laborers in California. General Secretary Martin Torres of Mexican Regional Confederation of Labor to United States Ambassador Josephus Daniels.*

Source: Washington, D.C., National Archives, Department of State, RG 59, 311, 1215/52.

Enclosure number 1 to despatch number 1348 of April 20, 1934, from the American Embassy, Mexico.

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FULL TRANSLATION OF LETTER

MEXICAN REGIONAL CONFEDERATION OF LABOR

General Secretariat  
No. 318

Subject: Protest against  
the maltreatment  
of Mexican laborers in the  
State of California

Mr. Josephus Daniels,  
Ambassador of the United States of America,  
Mexico.

The Delegation of Mexican Laborers forming the Confederation of Unions of Mexican Laborers and Peasants in the State of California, before the XI Convention of the C.R.O.M held in the City of Puebla, from the 14th to the 19th of March last, presented for the consideration of the assembly the situation of the Mexican laborers in the United States in the following respects (puntos):

1. Several months ago ten thousand compatriots in Southern California went on a strike, supported by the A.F. of L., the C.R.O.M. and the N.R.A., an organization created by President Roosevelt to secure an increase in the very low wages. These compatriots had been receiving ten cents per hour and were demanding thirty and that the children who had been working for five cents should be confined in future only to scholastic labors. The rich farmers of the region were not satisfied; they armed themselves to the teeth and taking advantage of a meeting which was being held by the strikers in the town of Vesalia, they fired their guns on them, killing two, including a Mexican who, as a member

of the Honorary Commission of a nearby town, was engaged in an investigation for the Government of Mexico. The farmer assassins fled. Later, they were tried by jury and were declared free of responsibility in the crime, and in order to celebrate, the following night an orgy was held which lasted till dawn and during which could be heard only the cry of "down with the Mexican greasers!"

2. At present in Chicago, our compatriots are being cruelly persecuted by the Jews, Poles, Russians and Americans who want to take from them the small and badly paid jobs which they have in the packing houses. Armed groups wait for them outside the plants, factories, and canneries; they attack them brutally and make them lose their work by putting them to flight; they enter the homes of Mexicans at night and put them out; they destroy their modest furnishings and provisions and ill-treat their women and children. The authorities do not pursue these offenders and when they do arrest them they free them after admonishing them or imposing on them a small fine.
3. For months five thousand Mexicans in the Imperial Valley, California, have been on strike, and under the pretext of their upholding radical ideas, notwithstanding the fact that the N.R.A. has backed the strike, they have been treated worse than beasts by the authorities and farmers. They have been incarcerated, struck, fired upon, put out of their homes with their women and children with clubs, firearms and tear bombs, and many leaders are still under arrest in the prisons of that region.
4. A few days ago the Mexican Feliciano Hernández, living in San Antonio, Texas, was assassinated by the policeman, Gilbert Herman, when he was eating a dish of chile con carne at a booth in the Municipal Market; but the murderer was not under arrest a single moment. Days later the same policeman attacked the father and a brother of his victim with a gun, they having been taken to the hospital seriously wounded and it being feared that the former, who is 62 years of age, may die also. Before this situation and in view of the fact that the policeman continued at liberty, the Hernández family approached the Consul at that city, requesting him to intervene and to have the law grant them the guarantees to which they are entitled; the authority replied in the affirmative; but the assassin continues free under bail.

We might cite more excesses like these, which are in contrast with

the benevolence shown by our governments to American offenders; not long ago a girl in an intoxicated condition killed a fireman in Tia Juana, she having run over him with her car, and was freed a short time after a young American was freed in Chihuahua who had made a trip to our country expressly for the purpose of killing a Mexican who had wronged him and who made a mistake and killed the wrong man. In cases like these, if Mexicans had been the offenders they would have been sentenced to be hanged, for it is the custom there to send our compatriots to the scaffold even when the evidence is only circumstantial or doubtful, which in any other country would be in favor of the accused.

Which complaint was referred to the Committee on International matters, which decided that the Mexican Regional Confederation of Labor, through its Central Committee, should protest through the diplomatic representation of the United States of the North, as well as to approach the Pan American Confederation of Labor to ask that it likewise protest against the series of outrages which are constantly being committed against the Mexican workmen; in view of which we take the liberty of addressing that Embassy under your very worthy charge, with a view to asking it to transmit to your Government our formal protest against the authorities of the State of California and of other cities of the American Union, in which, notwithstanding the fact that our compatriots organized themselves in accordance with the American Federation of Labor of (sic) the C.R.O.M., and with the approval of the N.R.A. established by the Honorable President (of the United States) Mr. Franklin Roosevelt, their rights have not been respected according to the laws of that country, since those who have assassinated or outraged Mexican workmen have been declared without responsibility by the corresponding authorities, which practically authorize them to continue the series of violations which they have been committing.

The Mexican Regional Confederation of Labor considers that the acts which motivated the complaints presented by our compatriots at the XI Convention of our Organization are radically opposed to the liberal purposes of the Honorable President - Mr. Franklin D. Roosevelt - which purposes he has publicly set forth on more than one occasion, and which he has crystallized into action, in some of his principles of Government so faithfully interpreted by you as Ambassador of that Democratic Administration, setting them forth in various addresses which you have made.

Having stated the above, we beg you, as we have solicited, to present to the Government which you so worthily represent the protest of the Labor Movement of Mexico, which the Mexican Regional Confederation of Labor represents, against the acts mentioned.

We thank you for any attention which you may give to our request, and beg to remain,

Respectfully your,  
Central Committee.  
Secretary General.  
(Sgd) Martin Torres.

Mexico, D.F., April 10, 1934.

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Trans: LC

*Anti-Alien Ordinance Proposal and Membership  
Application. National Club of America for Americans to  
Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors, San Diego,  
California, 18 August 1938.*

Source: Los Angeles County Decimal File.

THE NATIONAL CLUB OF  
AMERICA FOR AMERICANS, INC.  
UNDER THE LAWS OF CALIFORNIA  
NON SECTARIAN AND NON PARTISAN

OUR MOTTO

RETAIN AMERICA FOR AMERICAN CITIZENS  
OUR INSPIRATION, The 91 Psalm  
ADDRESS ALL MAIL TO P.O. BOX 750  
SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA

Board of Supervisors of  
Los Angeles County,  
Los Angeles, California.

Honorable Sirs: In behalf of the National Club of America for Americans Inc., I am enclosing copies of two proposed ordinances for the consideration of your honorable body.

The one ordinance calls for prohibiting the granting of labor permits to any unnaturalized alien to work in Los Angeles County unless no American citizen is available for the work. The other ordinance calls for prohibiting any Labor Union or Labor Organization from either electing or appointing any unnaturalized alien to represent them in any labor dispute in Los Angeles County. Let the aliens or their friends attack the Constitutionality of these ordinances and they will find that American Citizens can also legislate to protect the welfare of their citizens just the same as other Countries have and are doing today for their citizens.

The following suggestions will help you to see that the Board of Supervisors of Los Angeles County have the legal right to pass these ordinances.

REASONABLE INTERPRETATION:

The Constitution must be given a reasonable interpretation, according to the import of it's [sic] terms, and not differently from it's [sic] obvious or necessarily implied sense.

Let us assume that the Board of Supervisor of Los Angeles County wrote the tenth, eleventh, and fourteenth Amendments, to the Federal Constitution also wrote Article 1, Section 3, of the Constitution of California, then let us have faith that they being American Citizens, were practical, were considered sane and possessed a high conception of the patriotic responsibilities for the future welfare of American Citizens when they wrote these laws.

ANY AMERICAN CITIZEN SUBSCRIBING TO THE FOLLOWING  
PLEDGE IS WELCOME TO JOIN THIS ORGANIZATION.

1. I pledge my first allegiance to God and my country.
2. I pledge to carry into public life the teachings of what is right and wrong as taught by Jesus Christ.
3. I pledge to support and uphold the Constitution and the laws of our country at all times.
4. I pledge to see that our Constitution is enforced in keeping separate the duties of legislative, executive, and judicial branches of our government.
5. I pledge to work for such legislation as may be needed to reduce the cost of expenditures in Local, County, State and the Federal Government, by doing away with all useless bureaus and overlapping public offices.
6. I pledge to work for an amendment to our National Constitution

- prohibiting the issuing by any Local, County, State, or the Federal Government of tax-exempt bonds.
7. I shall oppose the United States' entering into entangling alliances with any foreign country in any shape or form.
  8. I will study all public questions in order that I may properly perform my duties as an American citizen.
  9. I will serve on jury duty if called, and will testify in court against any violation of our laws if necessary, in order that justice may be done and the laws of our country be upheld.
  10. I will work to keep our banking system free from control or undue influence from the international bankers whether they be of American or of some foreign country.
  11. I believe in the idea of social security for American citizens at the least expense to the public taxpayers, and to secure it without public expense if possible.
  12. We recognize the legal and moral right of every nation to legislate to protect and safeguard the welfare of their citizens at all times, and we reserve the same rights to the Forty Eight States and our Federal Government.
  13. I favor closing the doors on immigration from all countries for ten years to any one seeking to enter America to find employment or to enter business in competition with American citizens.
  14. I favor a federal registration of both American citizens and aliens as a safeguard in time of war and to stop the illegal entry of aliens of all kinds, including criminals and racketeers.
  15. I favor stopping the un-American and un-Godlike policy of paying any one to not raise or produce anything at the expense of the taxpayers.
  16. I will use my influence to retain America for American citizens, by buying American made goods and farm products in preference to those from foreign countries, and will employ American citizens in preference to aliens.
  17. I will vote at all elections, placing my honest convictions above party regularity; and will support for public office only those who are known to stand for civic and moral righteousness and who believe in upholding American laws, American ideals, American customs, and the United States form of government, as well as recognizing that all public offices should be run in the interest of all American citizens at the least expense to the taxpayers.
  18. I shall uphold the freedom of speech, the press and radio, so as to protect the liberties and freedom of American citizens.

19. I shall oppose government by federal bureaus.
20. I shall oppose any attempt at regimentation of the American people.
21. I shall see that the American Indians receive their full rights as American citizens.
22. I shall endeavor to promote a better understanding and closer friendship between American citizens and the citizens of all countries, especially our two neighbors Canada and Mexico.
23. I shall oppose any attempt by Congress or any other legislative body to appropriate any of the taxpayers' money to give jobs or work to aliens or to carry aliens on permanent welfare relief.
24. I shall oppose the cancelling or reduction of any of the World War Debts due United States and will vote to retire from public office any public official who advocates anything else but collecting those debts in full.

*El Condado: Documents*

*Repatriation Proposal. Supervisor John Anson Ford to Los Angeles Board of Supervisors, 18 November 1941.*

Source: Los Angeles County Minutes, Vol. 273: Page 385.

MEMO TO BOARD OF SUPERVISORS RE THE MOST ACCEPTABLE  
BASIS OF REPATRIATION OF MEXICANS  
BY JOHN ANSON FORD

The working out of a repatriation program for Mexican aliens in Los Angeles County which will assure fair and equitable treatment for the Mexicans who voluntarily participate, will benefit both Los Angeles County and Mexico financially and in many other respects. Furthermore, such a program can be made the means of engendering and strengthening bonds of good will between the two republics and will serve as evidence of sincere good neighborliness, springing from the people of a great state close to and intimately associated with Mexico.

The program about which we will confer with Mexican federal officials is designed as a long-range, continuing relationship rather than a brief or sporadic deportation effort. It can be made an invaluable contribution to better Pan American understanding.

A factor causing Los Angeles County and the State of California to give consideration at this time to a new program of repatriation of Mexican aliens, is the special interest that Mexican Nationals have shown in returning to their native land. I believe the program can be worked out that an increasing number will want to take advantage of the opportunity.

We find that the Mexican government has been encouraging the return of its Nationals, if such returns can be accomplished under conditions which include (a) Settlement of the repatriates where agricultural lands or industrial occupations are made available in advance and suitable to the background and experience of said repatriates; (b) The necessity of providing for each family a sufficient sum of money either from the Mexican federal government, the local Mexican government, or from California or Los Angeles County sources, or both, sufficient to guarantee said families against want during an adjustment period and/or sufficient to assist said repatriated person to establish himself with farm or craft tools, or otherwise, thereby giving him further assurance of self-support.

Due to the favorable ratio of five Mexican dollars for one American dollar, a contribution of a few months' relief money per family would go a

long way toward giving each family of repatriates that financial aid that would reasonably assure them against suffering in their new environment.

An important step toward the successful operation of such a program of transfer to Mexico would be obtaining cooperation from the Mexican Secretary of Interior and the Secretary of Social Service in Mexico City in conserving and supervising such Mexican and American funds as would be provided to the repatriates.

A careful social survey should be made of each family considered for this program to the end that the Mexican authorities and ourselves may cooperate in giving them reasonable security in their homeland.

Preferable families should be selected where all the members including the young people involved are in accord with the program as a real family opportunity.

After checking the costs carefully - I find that the trip by train will cost somewhat more than by auto. Accordingly I ask for authorization to take a County car because of the greater mobility it will afford, especially if there are land re-settlements to be visited.

John Anson Ford

*Great Demonstration, Trade Union Unity League and Unemployed Councils. Dallas, Texas, 25 February 1932.*

Source: Mexico City, Archivo de la Secretaría de Relaciones Exteriores, IV-349-1.

GREAT WORLDWIDE DEMONSTRATION

Wednesday, February 25, at 10:00 a.m.

Fair Park

Workers, employed and unemployed, join the great worldwide demonstration against unemployment and for immediate aid to starving workers.

Fight against unemployment and demand WORK OR WAGES!

Young workers, join and fight against long working hours and lower wages. Working women, mothers, wives come to the great demonstration. Children come and join your fathers, mothers, brothers, and sisters in their demands for WORK OR WAGES. Workers of all races, creeds, and

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nationalities come with us, to the great demonstration. Veterans of the war join in your demands with our brothers. Organize yourselves in the great Trade U[n]ion Unity League and in the Unemployed Councils.

Read VIDA OBRERA [Workers' Life] which will tell you the truth about the WORKERS' problems.

#### OUR IMMEDIATE DEMANDS

**Immediate Approval of National Security against Unemployment.**

Immediate Aid for the Unemployed and for poor country people.

→ Immediate suspension of all laws against vagrancy.

That all public buildings of the city, the state, and the nation be placed at the disposal of the unemployed and of poor country people.

That poor country people not be evicted for failing to pay rent.

For the defense of the Union of Soviet Republics.

Against the Imperialist War.

We hope that everyone will begin at once to prepare the masses for the Great Worldwide demonstration.

Show solidarity with the International proletariat.

Against all deportation of foreign workers. Political, social, and economic equality of the Negro masses.

Free water, gas, electricity, and food for the unemployed and poor country people. Lower Rent for those who only work part-time.

BY THE ORGANIZING COMMITTEE

Trade Union Unity League & Unemployed Councils of Dallas, Texas.

## REPATRIATION: EL REGRESO



Vamos, vamos caminando  
A la patria cariñosa  
Que como Madre Piadosa  
Sus hijos está esperando

"Adios Paisanos," Corrido

Let's go, let's be on our way  
To our loving homeland  
Which like a merciful mother  
Is waiting for her children

"Farewell Countrymen,"  
Ballad

The repatriation of Mexican men, women, and children from the railway station  
in Los Angeles on March 9, 1932.

(Los Angeles Public Library, Security Pacific Historical Collection.)

*El Regreso: Documents*

*"El Progreso Repatriation Announcement and  
Passenger List." San Diego Consul Armando C. Amador.  
11 August 1932.*

Source: Mexico City, Archivo de la Secretaría de Relaciones Exteriores,  
IV-360-38.

[seal of the Mexican Consulate in San Diego, Cal.]

RE: REPATRIATION OF MEXICANS  
ABOARD TRANSPORT "PROGRESO."

San Diego, California  
August 11, 1932

Sir

The Government of Mexico, with the cooperation and aid of the Welfare Committee of this County, will effect the repatriation of all Mexicans who currently reside in this County and who might wish to return to their country. This repatriation will be effected aboard the Mexican Transport "Progreso," which will leave from San Diego the 23rd of this month at two o'clock in the afternoon, with destination the ports of Mazatlán and Manzanillo.

Those persons who are repatriated will be able to choose among the States of Sonora, Sinaloa, Nayarit, Jalisco, Michoacán, and Guanajuato as the place of their final destination, with the understanding that the Government of Mexico will provide them with lands for agricultural cultivation in any of the aforementioned States and will aid them in the best manner possible so that they might settle in the country.

Those persons who take part in this movement of repatriation may count on free transportation from San Diego to the place where they are going to settle, and they will be permitted to bring with them their furniture, household utensils, agricultural implements, and whatever other objects for personal use they might possess.

Since the organization and execution of a movement of repatriation of this nature implies great expenditures, this Consulate encourages you, if your circumstances so require, to take advantage of this special opportunity being offered to you for returning to Mexico at no cost whatever and so that, once established anew in our country, you might dedicate all your energies to your personal improvement, that of your family, and that of our country.

If you wish to take advantage of this opportunity, please return this letter, duly signed, with the information requested on the reverse; with the understanding that, barring notice to the contrary from this Consulate, you should present yourself with your family and your luggage on the municipal dock of this port on the 23rd of this month before noon.

In case of any doubt or wish for clarification on your part as to the particulars, I would be grateful if you would direct yourself immediately to this Office, which would be more than happy to provide you with whatever information might be necessary.

With all due consideration.

EFFECTIVE SUFFRAGE. NO REELECTION.

Consul.

ARMANDO C. AMADOR.

*Repatriation Train Trip. Lucas Lucio.*

Source: Interview with Lucas Lucio. Courtesy of Lucas Lucio.

At the station in Santa Ana, hundreds of Mexicans came and there was quite a lot of crying. The men were pensive and the majority of the children and mothers were crying.

When they arrived at Los Angeles, the repatriates were calmed a bit because they were in Los Angeles... from Los Angeles to El Paso, some sang with guitars trying to forget their sadness and others cried. [Consul] Hill spoke very little, was very sad. . . the crying and singing. No one had any desire to speak. Varela [Orange County Department of Charities employee] tried to lift spirits and tried to converse.

The train did not arrive at the station in El Paso but rather at the border. There was a terrible cry. . . many did not want to cross the border because many had daughters and sons who had stayed . . . married to others here who did not want to return to Mexico. A disaster because the majority of the families were separated. There was no way for anyone to try leave the train or run or complete their desire to return to the United States.

*Repatriation Certificate. Denver, Colorado.*

Source: Mexico City, Archivo de la Secretaría de Relaciones Exteriores, IV-354-40.

CERTIFICATE OF RESIDENCE

Number 17 .

File 524.5

Fee GRATIS

ISMAEL M. VAZQUEZ Mexican Consul in Denver, Colo., U.S.A.

CERTIFIES - That according to proofs presented at this Consulate, Mrs. *Adela S. de Delgado* of Mexican nationality, who is being repatriated from *Pueblo, Colo.*, has resided in the United States for more than six months, required for enjoying the exemptions established by Circulars A-54-167 and 14-103-132 of the General Customs Office. The foregoing is registered by petition of the applicant for the consequent objectives, with the understanding that said applicant is being repatriated with the destination of *Santa Eulalia, Chih. MEXICO*, bringing the following items of personal property.

Truck of make ---, ----- Engine No. ----

Automobile of make *DODGE BROS.*, Engine No. *H-9126*

A trailer.

Used household items and, in addition,

1 carpet and some rugs.

1 oil stove.

1 trunks of used clothing.

3 mattresses, blankets, and pillows.

2 used spare tires.

1 box of utensils.

\_\_ valises of used clothing.

1 box of crockery. - 1 bed.

1 bundle of used clothing.

1 box with carpenter's tools.

\_\_ musical instruments.

1 box of books.

NOTE: She is accompanied by her daughters Margarita, Catarina, and Virginia ages 13, 12, and 9, respectively.

EFFECTIVE SUFFRAGE. NO REELECTION

Denver, Colo., Feb. 13 1932.

Consul,

[*Adela S. de Delgado.*]

Signature of Applicant

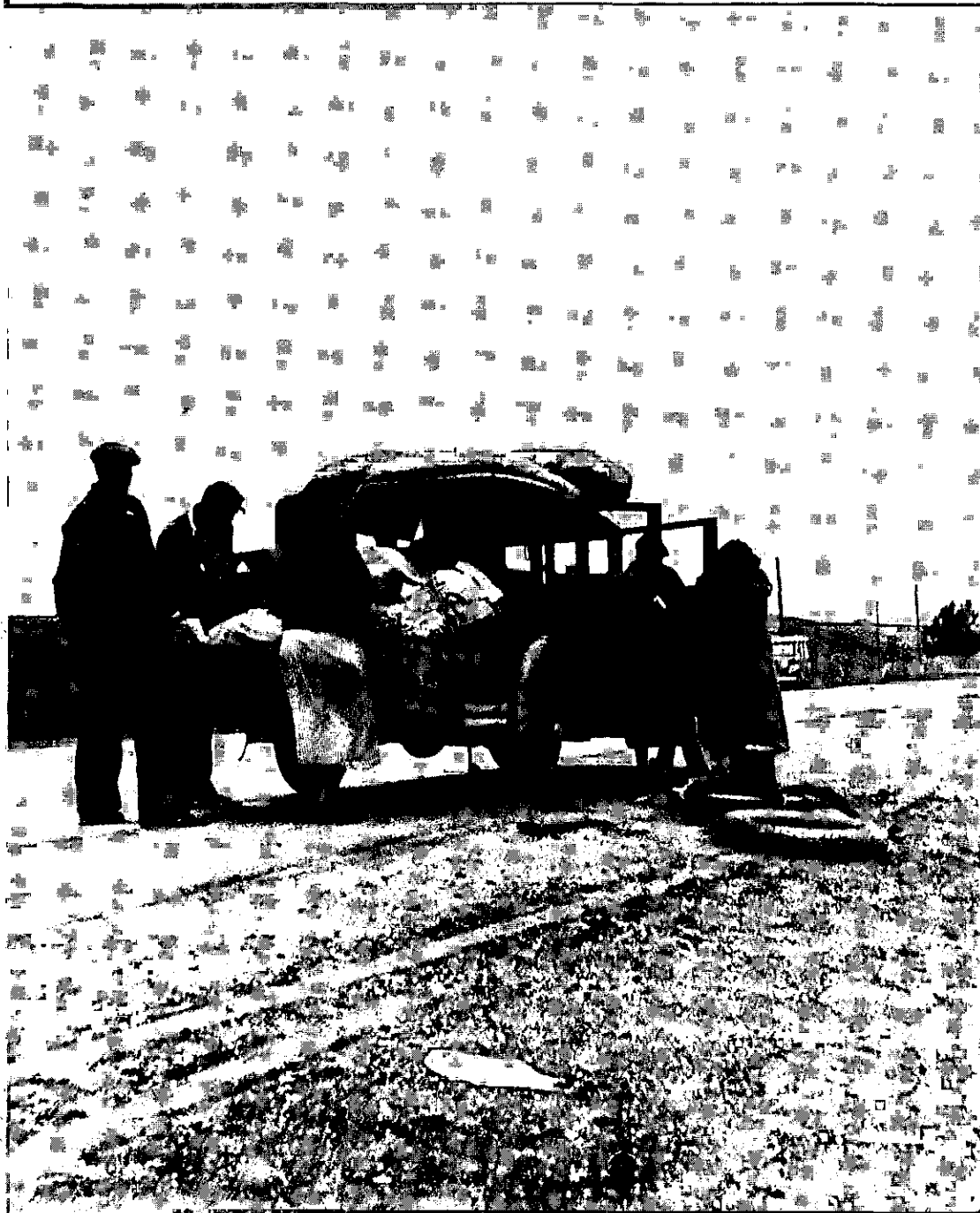
NOTE: Applicants must provide themselves with all such proofs as vouch for the ownership of the objects which they are attempting to bring with them into the country, so that they may be presented at the Mexican Customs of the port of entry.



# Decade of Betrayal

Mexican Repatriation  
in the 1930s

*Francisco E. Balderrama ·  
Raymond Rodríguez*



A migrant family of Mexicans on the road with tire trouble, February 1936.  
(Library of Congress, FSA Project, photograph by Dorothea Lange.)

University of New Mexico Press  
Albuquerque