



Justice Rising

Grassroots Solutions to Corporate Domination

Emigrants—World Citizens or Corporate Slaves

by Jim Tarbell

The vulnerable and abused condition of undocumented, migrant labor is a symbol of the degraded and commodified position of the working class in the globalized economy. As long-time border analyst Tom Barry from the Center for International Policy states, “Until immigration advocates can . . . speak directly to the economic plight of US citizens and all workers, the prospects for immigration reform that supports a just legalization process are grim.” The national media only quotes conservatives connecting corporate power to immigration policies, like Pat Buchanan whose solution is to “seal the borders of this country cold.”

The truth is that corporations are omnipresent in the immigration debate. On one hand, they have formed EWIC, the Essential Workers Immigration Coalition to push a corporate agenda that sees migrants as working machines rather than people and uses them to lower wage rates for all workers.

Prominent national immigrant organizations have corporate members on their boards. The National Immigration Forum, which calls itself “the nation’s premier immigrant rights organization,” is chaired by John Gay of the National Restaurant Association. Joining him on the board are representatives from the US Chamber of Commerce and the American Nursery & Landscape Association. Meanwhile, the National Council of La Raza has had board connections with Wal-Mart, State Farm, McDonald’s, Kraft Foods, and JC Penney.

Corporations play a dominant role in the advisory committees that lay out the philosophy and direction of both the Department of Homeland Security and its Immigrations and Customs Enforcement (ICE) and Protection units. The Homeland Security Advisory Council includes the CEO of Lockheed Martin, a Vice President of Dow Chemical and a Vice President of Boeing. The Co-chair of the Secure Borders and Open Doors Advisory Committee is the chairman of Sybase and is joined on the committee by the CEO of the US Chamber of Commerce, the President of the National Association of Manufacturers as well as representatives of Boeing, Disney and other corporate interests.

Meanwhile, Boeing and its corporate brethren are

reaping contracts with the Department of Homeland Security and private industry is lined up to earn profits from the construction of the border fence—except where it is not being built along the ranches of the wealthy and the country clubs of the rich.

As for the immigrants, until our laws recognize the Universal Declaration of Human Rights proclamation of 1948 that, “All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights,” the only beneficiary of immigration policies is the corporate world. The sad part is the “merciless” violence this free market in human souls has brought upon people and communities.

This *Justice Rising* looks at the corporate role in this tragic situation and the grassroot solutions to solve this vexing problem. It exposes the benefits to global capital of a vulnerable migrant workforce without rights to organize and protect their own welfare. It reveals the role that neoliberal trade agreements have played in destroying economies in the global south, creating a diaspora of hungry and desperate people. It spotlights the solutions, which, due to the corporate influence on the national level, mainly come from grassroot groups. These solutions build alternative, self-reliant economies across the planet that eliminate the need for people to migrate abroad. Most importantly, they ensure that all workers have the rights of human beings and citizens. We all deserve these rights.



graphic: MinutemanMedia.org

Supplying global capital with immigrant labor is now a multibillion dollar industry.

William I. Robinson, page 3

Since NAFTA passed in 1994, 2 million small farmers in Mexico have been forced out of agriculture.

Christopher Huh, page 4

Corporate mobility coupled with repressive immigration laws means lower wages, fewer benefits and less power in the employer-employee relationship.

Laura Carlsen, page 5

When they told us that the market would govern our lives we didn't know it could be so merciless.

Julián Cardona, page 9

A Publication of The Alliance for Democracy