The Importation of Mexican Contract Laborers to the United States, 1942–1964

Manuel García y Griego

It can be argued without exaggeration that the Bracero Program that ran from 1942 to 1964 helped to establish the major contours of modern Mexican migratory flows and to create many of the economic, political, and cultural issues that dominate debate over immigration at the present time. Although the program was originally viewed as a temporary measure designed to alleviate labor shortages in the United States during World War II, the bracero soon became an institutional feature of the American labor market after employers successfully convinced the U.S. Congress to renew the program repeatedly. However, as Manuel García y Griego, a professor of political science at the University of California, Irvine, argues in this richly detailed chapter, the institutionalization of the widespread use of Mexican labor had profound consequences. On the most basic level, the program helped to stimulate a renewed influx of both legal and unsanctioned immigrants. More important over the long run, the Bracero Program helped to reestablish and reinforce transnational migration circuits that in many ways still persist today.

The bracero program, also known as the Mexican contract-labor program, was a mechanism by which Mexicans were sent to work in certain agricultural areas of the United States under a series of bilateral agreements with Mexico that spanned two decades. It began in 1942 as an emergency program to satisfy perceived labor shortages created in agriculture by World War II. By the time this growing and increasingly controversial program reached its peak in the late 1950s, it had become an institutionalized feature of U.S. and Mexican agriculture.

Although the contract-labor program was not renewed after 1965, it left an important legacy for the economics, migration patterns, and politics of the United States and Mexico. Since 1980, the possibility of again admitting temporary workers from Mexico has become a significant element in the ongoing debate over the direction of U.S. immigration policy. Various interpretations of what occurred during the program have figured prominently in arguments raised for and against the future admission of temporary workers. This chapter will describe the operation and development of the program in historical context and assess its legacy for the current policy debate.

An overview of the history of twentieth-century Mexican migration to the United States before 1942 suggests that four themes may be stressed: (a) the characterization of much of the flow as the movement of temporary or seasonal laborers; (b) the operation of formal labor recruitment systems; (c) the utilization of established repatriation mechanisms at selected points in time, especially during U.S. economic slowdowns; and (d) the involvement of U.S. and Mexican government agencies in influencing the nature and volume of the flow.

Mexico's official position on emigration emerged from the 1917 Constitutional Convention, where legislation was passed in the form of Article 123 of the Constitution to provide safeguards for emigrant workers. Popular views in Mexico correctly held that emigrant workers in the United States suffered serious abuses. In the late teens, Mexican border officials were ordered to discourage the departure of workers who did not have labor contracts meeting the standards of the newly enacted legislation. The consulates in the United States were directed to become more active in protecting the rights of Mexican citizens, which they did, to a limited extent. Throughout the 1920s, the Mexican government exhorted emigrants to stay at home and provided return transportation to others with the hope that the return migration would be permanent.

By 1929, it had become abundantly clear that Mexican unilateral efforts to restrain emigration had failed. From this failure, and from the sudden realization in the early 1930s that the U.S. economic downturn—and not Mexican government policies—was causing emigrants to return in record numbers, emerged a view that the emigration of unemployed Mexicans was a "safety valve" for Mexico's polity. In a move that would foreshadow the institution of the bracero program a decade later, the Mexican government in 1929 proposed to the United States that it consider an international agreement for the purpose of jointly managing the flow of workers between the two countries. The proposal was ill timed and not acted upon.

In contrast, the changing policies of the U.S. government seemed to be a function of fluctuating economic conditions. In 1909, when there was apparently a need for sugar beet workers in Colorado and Nebraska, Presidents Taft and Porfirio Díaz arrived at an executive agreement authorizing the migration of a thousand Mexican contract laborers to those states. In 1917, as the United States entered World War I, the prohibitions against contract labor that had just been legislated were suspended for about seventy-three thousand Mexican workers. Some authors have referred to the World War I temporary admissions as the "first bracero program." The program begun in 1942 drew from the United States' experience with the unilateral recruitment of workers during this earlier period.

Wartime Cooperation, 1942–1946

On August 4, 1942, the governments of the United States and Mexico embarked upon a program unprecedented in the history of both nations: the large-scale, sustained recruitment and contracting of temporary migrant workers under the aegis of an international agreement. This agreement was renewed several times during World War II, and in 1946, a year after the war ended, its termination was proposed by the State Department. Also in 1946, Congress provided the first legislative authority for a postwar contract-labor program. Since the succeeding international agreement that took effect in March 1947, introduced some substantial changes in the operation of the program, 1946 marks an appropriate terminus for what may be considered the first and simplest phase of the bracero program.

What the 1942 agreement did was to create a labor recruitment and contracting system administered by a number of government agencies on both sides of the border. On the Mexican side the program first involved the Dirección General del Servicio Consular, the Oficina Mayor and, later in the 1950s, the Dirección de Asuntos de Trabajadores Agrícolas Migratorios (DATAM) of the Secretaría de Relaciones Exteriores (SRE); officials of the Secretaría de Gobernación and the Secretaría del Trabajo y Previsión Social; the offices of the state governors; and the presidentes municipales of counties where migrant workers resided. First an agency of Gobernación, then DATAM served as the principal administrative center, where operating decisions were made and information relative to Mexico's role in the international agreements was gathered. This agency was also responsible for assigning quotas to the Mexican states and for making sure that the requisite number of workers assembled at the recruitment centers (Mexico City during 1942–1944 and Guadalajara and
Irapuato during 1944–1947). The functions of some of these agencies changed several times during the life of the program.7

On the U.S. side, four departments were involved in the administration of the program: State, Justice, Agriculture, and Labor. The federal agencies most actively involved were the U.S. Employment Service (USES) of the Department of Labor (DOL) and its state branches, and the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) of the Department of Justice. The principal administrative responsibility was signed initially to the DOL in 1942; this was quickly transferred to the Department of Agriculture in 1943 and then returned to the DOL at the end of the war.8

The Mexicans who were accepted by their government as bracero candidates were turned over to the Department of Labor representatives, who, acting as agents for employers, selected those thought fit for agricultural work. Next, INS officers took fingerprints and prepared documentation for those accepted, and the candidates were transported to U.S. contracting centers at the border. There they were screened by the U.S. Public Health Service and were left to be considered by visiting employers and their agents.9

This process of labor recruitment and distribution, created during the war, remained in operation for twenty-two years. To be sure, the names and duties of the government agencies involved changed throughout this period; for several years after World War II, the labor contracts were made directly between U.S. employers and Mexican workers, and the bureaucratic machinery to enforce their provisions was scaled back drastically. But even then, the program was operated within the framework of an international agreement, and either one or both governments were involved in the recruitment and distribution of workers. Thus, the wartime program represented the beginning of a process Ernesto Galarza aptly calls “managed migration”—a process sustained virtually without interruption from 1942 to 1964. In a number of other respects, however, the period 1942–1946 is unique. First, World War II represented a period of extraordinary growth in the demand for labor in the United States. Yet, by comparison to the years after 1946, the number of workers involved in the wartime program was the smallest ever. Another feature of the period 1942–1945 is that contract laborers were employed in activities other than agriculture. Finally, it was the only sustained period during which the Mexican government seems to have had the upper hand during the bilateral negotiations.

A felt need for labor and the critical importance of certain agricultural products in wartime were the essential elements which provided the justification—from the U.S. point of view—for the creation of the wartime emergency contract-labor program. Whether labor “shortages” actu-

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Mexican contract workers departed, according to Mexican authorities</th>
<th>Contracts issued to Mexican workers by U.S. authorities</th>
<th>Mexican immigrants admitted to U.S.</th>
<th>Deportable Mexicans apprehended</th>
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<td>Year</td>
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<td>Mexican Contract Laborers, 1942–1964</td>
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The only nonagricultural industry to succeed in establishing that a labor shortage existed was the railroad. The employment of contract laborers by this industry, particularly in tasks related to the maintenance of ways, was unique to the wartime period and an aberration in the history of the bracero program. Its administration by U.S. officials was entirely separate from the farm-labor program; and many of its logistical functions, such as defining the specifications and requirements for labor, securing food and transportation facilities, carrying out recruitment and interviewing workers, and issuing Individual Work Agreements and cards, were the responsibility of a quasi-labor agency, the Railroad Retirement Board. Moreover, at the end of the war there was an immediate effort to repatriate the contract workers and terminate the program, an effort which suffered relatively minor delays.

In April 1943, when contracting for the railroad program began, the agency responsible for supervising the program, the War Manpower Commission, approved the use of construction and maintenance-of-way workers for the Southern Pacific; the Atchison, Topeka, and Santa Fe; and the Western Pacific railroads. The privilege of utilizing Mexican contract workers was extended the following year to twenty-one other railroads. By the time the contracting stopped in 1945, thirty-five railroads were involved. The majority of the railroad "braceros" worked in Montana, Washington, Oregon, California, Nevada, and southern Arizona; over half of them worked for the Southern Pacific or the Atchison, Topeka, and Santa Fe lines. At the peak of the railroad program in March 1945, sixty-nine thousand workers were employed.

The position of the Mexican government on the creation and operation of the contract-labor program during the cooperative era of 1942–1946 was influenced to a great extent by its prior experiences with the repatriations of Mexican citizens, and with the unorganized recruitment that had been carried out by enganchadores (labor contractors) and private employers during the preceding decades. Controls over the international contracting of its citizens had been written into the Ley de Migración of 1932. Mexico was also influenced by domestic public opinion, which opposed labor emigration to the United States, and by the ideas of Manuel Gamio, a leading anthropologist who had written a seminal work on the subject in 1930.

The preparation that went into the negotiation of the agreement, and the reluctance to enter into the contract-labor program in 1942, reveals the Mexican government's sensitivity to these factors and explains why it expressed serious reservations about the emigration of its citizens. In addition to these concerns, opposition to the program was based on the notion that Mexican agricultural production would be harmed by labor emigration to the North. Nevertheless, it is probable that emigration was perceived in some quarters of Mexican government as a potential safety valve for rural unemployment even as early as 1942. Adherents of this point of view held that the U.S.-Mexican agreement would facilitate the labor exodus in a controlled manner, one which would allow the Mexican government to influence its management. Moreover, it seems that the bracero agreement was initially conceived by Mexico as part of a package that included wartime cooperation in other areas in exchange for U.S. concessions on Mexico’s foreign debt and the settlement of claims arising from the recently expropriated oil industry.

In any event, when in 1942 Mexico expressed its willingness to consider an international labor agreement with the United States, it did so on the basis of a number of conditions. First, recruitment would be based on a written labor contract. Second, the administration of the program would be carried out by both governments, and contract compliance would be guaranteed by the same. Third, recruitment would be based on need, i.e., Mexican laborers would not displace domestic labor or lower its wage. Fourth, employers or the U.S. government would pay
transportation and subsistence costs between the recruitment center in Mexico and the work site. Fifth, contract workers would need to be permitted to remain permanently in the United States. Finally, racial discrimination, of the type in which Mexicans were turned away from "white" restaurants and public facilities or sorted by color on buses, was unacceptable. Its occurrence in a U.S. community would constitute grounds for excluding braceros from that community. In the view of the Mexican government, adherence to these conditions would allow the migration to take place without the serious abuses it perceived had occurred in the past.\(^{23}\)

The agreement, signed on July 23, 1942, and made effective by an exchange of diplomatic notes on August 4, incorporated all the above elements and provided contract workers with certain labor guarantees not then available under U.S. law to domestic workers. This outcome suggests a relatively strong Mexican negotiating position in 1942,\(^{24}\) a further indication of which was the initial reaction by U.S. growers to the contents of the agreement. The president of the American Farm Bureau complained about the expansiveness of the program’s regulations, expressed the view that they were unnecessary, and recognized that informal recruitment mechanisms already existed: “Why not just let the growers go into Mexico and get the workers they needed as they had done in the past?”\(^{25}\)

Another indication of Mexico’s bargaining strength was its refusal to certify braceros for employment in the state of Texas—a position it justified by reference to the discriminatory treatment historically suffered by Mexicans in that state. In response, Texas appointed its Good Neighbor Commission and lobbied strongly to be included among the areas receiving contract laborers. It was unsuccessful in effecting a change in Mexican policy throughout the war, however, and not until March 10, 1947, did Mexico lift its ban on Texas.\(^{26}\) During the period when the bracero agreement was in force in Texas, its agricultural employers relied on Mexican workers who entered without any documents at all—known then as "wetbacks."

Although the Mexican government’s practice of unilaterally blacklisting Texas—and other U.S. areas where discrimination occurred—may not have reduced the discrimination its citizens suffered in the United States, it did promote greater awareness, at some embarrassment to U.S. officials, of the problem. The Mexican government could also point to the blacklisting, in justifying the program to domestic constituencies, as a sign of its willingness to establish some limits on the abuses suffered by Mexican workers in the United States. Nonetheless, the practice became a serious bone of contention, and it ended during the negotiations for the 1949 agreement.

Despite occasional tension over the conduct of the program, the two governments managed to play down the conflicts that occurred and put the best possible light on the situation. Some of those incidents, however, were indicative of underlying tensions that were to erupt in the postwar period, during a time when the management of conflict between the two governments was to receive less attention.

One source of tension was the previously mentioned Mexican insistence that contract laborers not be sent to Texas because of ongoing discrimination against Mexicans in that region. Nevertheless, Texas growers needed labor, and they made their needs felt when Congress, in the spring of 1943, enacted Public Law 45, which gave legislative approval to the executive agreement negotiated months earlier. The act included a section authorizing the commissioner of immigration to lift then-existing restrictions on the entry of farm laborers so that under certain conditions an “open border” could be unilaterally declared by the United States, much as had occurred during the temporary admissions of World War I. On May 11, 1943, regulations were issued authorizing Mexican laborers waiting at the border to enter for a period of one year. According to one source, Texas farmers, “harried by fears of insufficient labor to meet spring needs, rushed across the border to recruit the necessary workers.” This process evidently undermined the bilateral program upon which the Mexican government had staked so much, and on May 28 it threatened to abrogate the agreement. After a series of meetings between U.S. government officials and farm groups “in which some of the participants bluntly advocated disregarding Mexico’s wishes,” the State Department announced that the section of Public Law 45 providing for unilateral recruitment did not apply to Mexico.\(^{27}\) What in 1944 might have boiled over as a crisis was averted by the adoption of a U.S. position that assigned a greater weight to assuring Mexico’s cooperation in keeping the program intact than to assuaging the special interests of Texas growers in getting access to labor on their own terms.

Another source of tension was the management—or mismanage-

———— of the so-called wetback problem. When contract laborers and unilaterally recruited workers were harnessed from Texas, in order to assure a labor supply to the growers of that state the U.S. government acqui-

esced in the use of “wetback” labor by Texas farmers. An assistant com-

missioner of immigration wrote: “At times, due to manpower shortages and critical need for agricultural production brought on by the war, the Service officers were instructed to defer the apprehension of Mexicans
employed on Texas farms. This practice brought Mexican protests that the United States did something about the employment of undocumented workers, and the United States charged that Mexico was not doing enough to prevent illegal migration and to return expelled migrants to the interior.

In June 1944, the two governments agreed on a set of joint policies to address the problem, which included border enforcement by both countries. According to U.S. sources, Mexico did not carry out its part of the agreement. The United States did increase enforcement by the INS, but to minimize its expense, it expelled the migrants through the nearest border community; those apprehended in California were expelled through Mexicali and Tijuana, which were virtually isolated from the rest of Mexico at the time because of limited transportation facilities. The INS actions apparently created severe problems for those Mexican border communities, and in December 1944 the Mexican government unilaterally closed those two ports to the return of expelled migrants. The U.S. government responded by redirecting some of those expelled migrants to other border ports more accessible to the Mexican interior. As in the previous example, this series of events suggests a superior Mexican bargaining position.

During 1945 and 1946, Mexico and the United States continued to make limited efforts to improve the management of the legal program and to address the problem of workers who entered illegally. By this time, however, it was becoming clear that it was not possible to get more money on enforcement—and perhaps not even then—that objectives would not be met. In whatever ways, neither government increased its allocation of resources significantly. When the war came to a close, conditions were perceived to have worsened. The Mexican government refused to transport expelled migrants to the interior. U.S. officials shackled efforts to deport migrants, and unemployed Mexicans congregated in the border towns of both countries. Domestic groups in the United States, which had not been vocal during the war, began to speak out against the importation of foreign labor.

At the end of 1946, the posture of the U.S. government, though ambiguous, seemed to indicate that the bracero program was coming to an end. To be sure, Public Laws 521 and 707, enacted that year, extended the appropriations of the program to 1947 and provided legislative authority for what could no longer be considered an emergency, wartime program. Nevertheless, the nonagricultural component of the bilateral agreement was terminated noisily, and the State Department formally proposed an end to the agricultural program within the time frame originally established. Similarly, although two years earlier a Mexican source had indicated that the emigration of workers had been a palliative for Mexico's unemployment, the secretaria de trabajo unofficially communicated its desire that the program come to an end. Thus, during the closing weeks of 1946 it appeared that the four-year program, with several thousand contracts issued, was about to pass into history. It would have been difficult to imagine that eighteen more years of existence and 4.3 million more contracts lay ahead.

Turbulence and Transition, 1947–1954

Almost all the significant changes that occurred in the contract program between the early war years and the late contracting system of the 1960s took place during the eight-year period 1947–1954. During these eight years, the bracero program evolved from a wartime to a peacetime activity where key interests and power politics were given a freer hand, the consequences of which are examined below.

A useful approach to the issues of that time is to divide them into two broad categories: (a) the general problem of illegal, or "wetback," immigration, and (b) certain specific issues of dispute between Mexico and the United States. These problem issues resulted in a number of confrontations, two (October 1948 and January 1954) of which merit discussion as events that both shaped and laid bare the reaccommodation of postwar U.S.-Mexican power relationships.

The Postwar Wetback Invasion

The entry and presence of undocumented Mexicans became an important issue that drew increased national attention and public hostility in the United States during the postwar years. Since undocumented migration is a clandestine phenomenon, the public perception of the growing problem was based on any that could be only a rough index of its volume, and on its interpretation by public officials. At that time as now, this data consisted of the number of deportable aliens apprehended by the INS. A rapidly growing number of apprehensions led the U.S. President's Commission on Migratory Labor to argue in 1951: "The number of deportations and voluntary departures has continuously increased each year. . . . In its newly achieved proportions, [the wetback traffic] is virtually an invasion." The magnitude of the arrests increased rather than declined after the commission's report, and in 1954, an INS official characterized the phenomenon as "the greatest peacetime invasion complacently suffered by a country under open, flagrant, contemptuous violation of its laws."
The views expressed by the commission in 1951 reflected a position that was slow to develop in the United States. Earlier, public opinion had countenanced the illegal entry and employment of undocumented Mexicans. Thus, some of the proposals of the commission—the imposition of penalties for those who harbored, concealed, or transported illegal aliens; fines and imprisonment for employers of deportable aliens; prohibitions against interstate shipment of products made with the labor of undocumented aliens—seemed novel or harsh. The recommendations of the commission were largely ignored. Only the criminal sanctions against "harboring" deportable aliens were approved, and at the insistence of the Texas congressional delegation, the so-called Texas Proviso was inserted in the 1952 antireaback legislation, which explicitly exempted the act of offering employment from its penalties.\(^\text{17}\)

By contrast, since the early 1940s the Mexican government had expressed the view that the extralegal emigration of its workers was a threat to the bracero system, to domestic agricultural production, and to the agricultural interests who wanted access to an ample domestic labor supply. Early in the operation of the program Mexico pressed the United States to effectively penalize employers of undocumented labor. It also promoted cooperative efforts to control the clandestine migration to the North, but it stopped short of costly enforcement measures.\(^\text{18}\)

Critics of Mexican antireaback policies have pointed out that other than consistently to pressure the United States to penalize employers, Mexico itself did little to stop the undocumented flow.\(^\text{19}\) The reasons for this have yet to be adequately explored. Certainly, Mexican officials were juridically correct in pointing out that Mexican legislation on this issue provided the government with few legal means to interfere with the free transit of its citizens. Also, Mexican policymakers probably had not forgotten that there were limits to the effectiveness of Mexican government intervention in this process, as evidenced by the failure of Mexican efforts in the 1920s to stop labor emigration. Moreover, the thrust of Mexican government actions throughout the bracero program suggests an awareness by political elites that the government had little domestic "policy space" in this issue area.\(^\text{20}\) But there is also evidence, as is mentioned below, to show that Mexico's stance in the continuation of emigration to the United States seems to have become more visible in the postwar years, raising the question of whether it was consistent with its objective interests to stop the clandestine flow. Nevertheless, Mexico's perceived interests, as well as its formal position, were consistently expressed in opposition to the uncontrolled emigration of its citizens.

The United States was more equivocal. "Even in 1952 and 1954, when the wetbacks were in full tide," wrote Ernesto Galarza, "senators and rep-

resentatives from the border states took the lead in cutting back appropriations for the Border Patrol. With the purse half shut the gate could remain half open."\(^\text{21}\) Testimony of Border Patrol officers indicates that immigration law enforcement, particularly along the Texas border, was deliberately lax and selective. As early as 1949, Senator Clinton P. Anderson of New Mexico had introduced a bill (S. 272) arguing for an "open border" and virtually unrestricted recruitment from Mexico.\(^\text{22}\) The following year, the chief inspector at the port of Tucson, Arizona, testifying before the President's Commission on Migratory Labor, noted that he "received orders from the District Director at El Paso each harvest to stop deporting illegal Mexican labor."\(^\text{23}\) A report from south Texas at about the same time indicates that a senior officer kept his force of Border Patrolmen away from certain farms and ranches in his district.\(^\text{24}\) The explanation for this flexible approach to the enforcement of immigration law was expressed in testimony before Congress in 1951 by the chief INS official responsible for this enforcement in a bald-faced assertion of authority to enforce the law selectively: "We do feel we have the authority to permit to remain in the United States aliens who are here as agricultural workers whether they are here legally or not."\(^\text{25}\)

U.S. policy responses to undocumented migration can be divided into two categories: mass legalization (1947-1951) and mass expulsion accompanied by legalization (1954-55). Both processes involved the transformation of illegal to legal (contract) labor migration. During this period, therefore, the flow of Mexican labor was not stopped; it was regularized. The first process was called "drying out the wetbacks"; the second was a campaign run by the Border Patrol called "Operation Wetback."

Legalization was a process by which deportable Mexicans who had been in the United States for a certain number of weeks were given bracero contracts, usually to work for the same employer, without the laborer having to return to Mexico and undergo the screening process in the interior, or the employer having to pay transportation to the United States. It first occurred as a result of the 1947 bilateral agreement, when fifty-five thousand undocumented Mexicans in Texas (which up to that time had received no contract laborers) were legalized as braceros.\(^\text{26}\) According to the President's Commission on Migratory Labor, during the years 1947-1949, 74,600 Mexican contract laborers were imported, and 142,200 deportable Mexicans already in the United States were legalized and put under contract.\(^\text{27}\) During fiscal year 1950, only 19,813 new bracero contracts were issued; but 96,239 undocumented Mexicans already here were "dried out" as a result of the international agreement.\(^\text{28}\) Thus, in the years following the war, more legalized "wetbacks" were contracted by employers than braceros were imported from within Mexico. By the time
the commission’s report was written in 1951, it had become evident that mass legalization was not curbing illegal immigration; as a result, its abolition was successfully recommended. Nevertheless, the practice did convince many employers that bracero labor could be used as a substitute for undocumented labor when deportation raids threatened to interrupt access to such labor.

The organization of Operation Wetback followed a tour of inspection of the U.S.-Mexican border in August 1953 by Attorney General Herbert Brownell. In April 1954, retired army general Joseph Swing, a personal friend of President Eisenhower, was named INS commissioner, and a military-style expulsion campaign was in the process of formulation. After much fanfare in the United States, Operation Wetback formally began on June 17 with the deployment of eight hundred Border Patrol officers in Mexican communities and ranches throughout southern California. The immigration authorities were able to count on the support of local and state authorities, including the police, and the local press, who created the impression that an “army” of Border Patrolmen was “invading” the area. The patrol had impressive logistical support, including the use of aircraft and boats. Most important, in California they were able to count on the farmers who employed the aliens. Many were not expelled to the border as was customary, but were transported by air, sea, and land to the Mexican interior with financial support provided by the Mexican government.

In the months following, the operation moved to the Midwest and Pacific Northwest, and to Texas, where it received some resistance in farm communities. Operation Wetback was sanctioned by U.S. public opinion, which blamed “wetbacks” for the propagation of disease, labor strikes in agriculture, subversive and communist infiltration, border crimes, low retail sales in south Texas, and adverse effects on domestic labor.

Operation Wetback was viewed by its organizers as a test upon whose outcome the future of the Border Patrol might rest. Fortunately for the leadership of the INS, the action was immediately successful in restoring credibility and morale to an agency which had a serious image problem with Congress. The campaign had been underway for barely a month when Congress, which had cut the INS’s budget from the previous year, rewarded the agency with a supplemental appropriation of $3 million.

Contrary to popular opinion, Operation Wetback was not merely a mass-expulsion campaign, although the deportation drives were the most visible part of this action. Had it been, history suggests that it would have accomplished little. Instead, the relative success of Operation Wetback in reducing the volume of illegal migration seems to have rested upon a unique strategy of combined rewards and punishments mostly directed at the employers of such workers. Important elements in this strategy were INS activities designed to (a) convince employers that they faced an increased risk of having the INS interrupt their use of undocumented labor, (b) facilitate access to contract labor for these employers, and (c) “streamline” the contract-labor program and eliminate those provisions to which employers objected most seriously. Another element that seems to have been important in effecting changes in employer attitudes toward the status of their workers (though not toward their need for Mexican labor) was the more general pattern of antiwetback public opinion. These factors, taken together, provide plausible reasons why Operation Wetback was successful in regularizing much of the flow of Mexican labor to the United States.

As early as 1955, the INS could take credit for having eradicated the “wetback problem.” In his annual report of that year, Commissioner Swing wrote: “The so-called ‘wetback’ problem no longer exists. . . . The border has been secured.” The number of apprehensions of Mexicans dropped precipitously after 1954, and by 1958 the Mexican newspaper Excélsior was implicitly editorializing that “the era of the ‘wetbacks’ [had passed] into history.” Hindsight tells us, of course, that they editorialized too soon, but it is evident that the flow of undocumented labor was reduced substantially for a decade from what appearances suggest it had been before 1954.

The costs of this achievement were not immediately apparent. One of the consequences of the “success” of Operation Wetback, as was noted, was the substitution of bracero labor for undocumented workers. In order to persuade employers to effect the substitution, the protections of the contract-labor program were dropped—formally, through negotiation with Mexico, and informally, by reduced U.S. enforcement of contract provisions. In other words, after 1954 the bracero program became little more than a formally sanctioned recruitment system for the employment of “wetbacks” in U.S. agriculture.

Diplomacy and Dispute on Selected Issues

The period 1947–1954 witnessed a series of sharp confrontations between the governments of the United States and Mexico and a growing public debate on the formal aspects of the contract-labor program. The disputed issues, to be discussed below, were (a) the location of the recruitment centers in Mexico, (b) the practice employed by the Mexican government of unilaterally blacklisting areas and employers from receiving contract workers, (c) the wages earned by contract laborers, and (d) the relative
merits of government-to-government and employer-to-worker agreements. To varying degrees, each of these issues led to breakdowns in negotiations during this eight-year period, and each contributed to the mounting tensions immediately preceding the two border incidents and diplomatic confrontations.

Out of this turbulence, three major and interconnected themes emerge: the progressive deterioration of the Mexican government's bargaining position, the assertion of control over the program by U.S. farm organizations, and the increasing importance to the Mexican government that it maintain the program for what was perceived to be a "safety valve" for domestic rural unemployment. As a result of these processes, by 1954 U.S. farm groups had managed to institutionalize a labor-recruitment program largely paid for by the Mexican and U.S. governments, which supplied them with labor on favorable terms. Also apparent by 1954 was a willingness on the part of the Mexican government to compromise, almost at any cost, its position on the operation of the program and to look the other way when the contract guarantees it had worked so hard to achieve became diluted.

The U.S. position on the location of the recruitment centers, which was largely determined by the interests of agricultural employers, was that recruitment should be done as close to the border as possible. A nearby recruitment center was attractive because it meant lower transportation and subsistence costs to the employer who participated in the program. This position also recognized that, since Mexican northward migration to the border had been self-sustained since the 1920s, there was no need for a formal recruitment system to absorb the expense of transporting workers from their communities of origin.

The Mexican position held that recruitment centers should be located in the interior, hundreds of miles from the border. This position seems to have been determined by two principal considerations: first, that the labor supply of large-scale Mexican agriculturalists in the northern states of Sonora, Chihuahua, and Sinaloa might be adversely affected by border recruitment, and second, that the degree of Mexican control over the migration process was directly proportional to the distance the centers were located away from the border. This position recognized that the contract-labor program was a system of managed migration; in order to reduce the effects of stimulating undocumented migration, the centers should be located away from the border, where such effects would be less pronounced.

The location of the recruitment centers gradually shifted northward. During the war, Mexicans were recruited in Mexico City, Guadalajara, and Irapuato. During the 1947–1954 period, new centers were located closer to or at the border: Monterrey, Chihuahua, Zacatecas, Tampico, Aguascalientes, Hermosillo, and Mexicali. Beginning in 1953, Mexican statistics show that some braceros were officially contracted at the border, and Ensenada, Sonora, also appeared as a new recruitment center location.

The demise of the Mexican negotiating position on this issue had occurred as early as 1950, even though it may not have been evident to the public at the time. On August 18 of that year, the Mexican government did not seek to prevent the issuance of work certificates to Mexicans at the border. "Although Mexico expressed concern about the total withdrawal of wetback restraint," wrote Peter Kirsten, "there was no abrogation, there was no protest note—just a request that publicity of the Mexican-supported open order 'be restricted.'" Similarly, the practice of blacklisting certain areas in the United States by the Mexican government to bar the use of braceros was another source of international conflict in which Mexico's position was gradually undermined. These areas were motivated by Mexican perceptions that employers in those areas had not lived up to the terms of the agreements, and by concerns that Mexican citizens in those places were subjected to discrimination. The first concern led to a brief ban upon eight midwestern and northern states in 1946 because of reported violations of the agreement by sugar beet employers. The second concern led to the prohibition of Mexican contract labor in Texas until the legalization in 1947 of undocumented workers already there. Mexico's perception that Texas farmers proceeded to violate the terms of the contracts conferred upon them with the acceptance of legalized labor led to its decision to close Texas to further bracero contracting on September 26 of that year.

The Mexican position during the January–February 1949 negotiations held that a blacklisted area would not be allowed to receive contract workers until guarantees were offered by local authorities that discrimination would stop. In the event that these guarantees were violated, the appropriate Mexican consul was to request the participation of the USES in a joint investigation. But "if the USES and the Mexican consul differed as to the presence of discrimination, the issue was to be unilaterally resolved by the Mexican foreign minister." The United States argued for joint determination of blacklisted areas and made the execution of its part of the bargain to enforce laws against "wetbacks" contingent upon Mexico's removal of the Texas ban. By the summer of 1949, the Mexican government had given in, and the bracero program was salvaged by an agreement to determine such bans jointly. Disputes between the United States and Mexico concerning the wages to be paid to braceros by farm employers go to the heart of the conflict.
over the administration of the program itself. The President's Commission correctly characterized the negotiation of the agreements as a "collective bargaining situation" where Mexico represented its workers and the United States its employers. And the SHF, wrote Galarza, "had never concealed its polite indignation over the low wages prevailing in the Southwest." According to Galarza, Mexican pressures to raise the wages paid to braceros led to the two open-border incidents that occurred in 1948 and 1954. Mexican motives for wage increases seem to have been linked to domestic pressure by labor organizations in Mexico and the awareness that they would improve the foreign-exchange earnings of the contract workers. The U.S. response was to accuse the Mexican consul's of attempting to set the wages at rates higher than those prevailing, to blame the "wetback" influx upon Mexican intransigence, and to insist that "if the employers were to be persuaded to give up hiring illegals "certain modifications in the agreement and in the work contract are imperative." The original Mexican position during the 1942 agreements was that Mexican labor was to be paid the "prevailing wage" in the communities where braceros were sent. As the Mexican government began to realize that the prevailing wage was whatever the employers decided it would be, it developed the position that the wages paid were negotiable. Its attempt to raise wages for cotton pickers in 1948, however, was unsuccessful. The death knell of the new Mexican position was sounded by the terms of the 1951 agreement, which stated that the U.S. secretary of labor would have the exclusive responsibility for determining the prevailing level of wages. After the second major diplomatic confrontation in 1954, the Joint Determination signed that year reaffirmed the same principle.

A final issue that grew out of the conflicts of the years 1947–1954 was the relative merits of government-to-government and worker-to-employer agreements. The wartime agreements were of the former type; they required close governmental supervision over recruitment, selection, transportation, the issuance of contracts, the investigation of complaints, and the assurance of contract compliance. The 1948 agreement introduced some changes that moved the program in the direction of the latter type of agreement: Individual Worker Contracts were issued on a worker-to-employer basis, and the responsibility of the INS and USES for assuring compliance was removed. Experimentation with a less formal version of the bracero program continued until congressional approval of Public Law 78 in 1951.

The passage of Public Law 78 had come partially as a result of Mexican insistence that a formal structure for the execution of bilateral agreements be created, and that there be a return to a government-to-government program. In pressing its demands, the Mexican government took advantage of the conjuncture afforded by the Korean War. Its position was strengthened by the President's Commission, whose report was issued as the enactment of Public Law 78 was being debated, and which also argued for an end to the worker-to-employer experiment. Mexico's insistence that the experiment come to an end was motivated by the perception that U.S. employers frequently violated the terms of the agreements negotiated between 1948 and 1951. Placing the responsibility for enforcing the agreement on the shoulders of the U.S. government was perceived to be the most feasible way to assure compliance. Mexican pressures for assuring accountability therefore could be expressed through the familiar channels of diplomatic protest and bilateral negotiation.

The passage of Public Law 78 and the end of the informal period of contracting could be narrowly construed to be a victory for the Mexican vis-à-vis the U.S. position. However, during the postwar years the U.S. position shifted from one exclusively determined by powerful agricultural interests to one influenced by other segments of the U.S. public. These latter segments demanded that the United States assert some control over contract-labor migration and not leave it exclusively in the hands of the employers. Their views were typified by those of the President's Commission. Even so, the influence that employers had on Congress can be discerned from the fact that, despite the pressure of antiwetback forces, the Mexican government, and others, Congress refused to legislate any penalties against employers for hiring "wetbacks."

The adoption of Public Law 78 was a hollow victory for the Mexican government. To be sure, the mechanisms to ensure contract compliance were formally in place once again, but by this time the Mexican negotiating position had so deteriorated that it mattered little. The years after the 1951 agreement, and particularly after 1954, are marked by Mexican acquiescence in a program whose specifics would have been rejected out of hand at any time prior to 1947.

An important event that influenced Mexican policy responses to bracero emigration was the increasing Mexican stake in maintaining the contract-labor system. This grew out of the perception, which came to dominate the views of Mexican policymakers sometime after World War II, that bracero emigration provided much-needed dollar income and "probably spared Mexico a great deal of social unrest and upheaval." Juan Ramón García argues: "Even if Mexico had discontinued the program at the end of World War II, it is quite doubtful that large-scale emigration to the United States could have been prevented... [A]n international agreement, reasoned Mexican officials, would allow for some protection of their citizens while in the United States. If mass emigration
seemed inevitable, then let it occur under government auspices." While it is not clear just when the view that emigration was "inevitable" became prevalent among policymakers, it evidently gained currency in the post-war years. At the same time, emigration was becoming a source of acute embarrassment, because it was associated with the failure of the regime's land-reform program. Thus, the relationship between the Mexican government and the labor program began to be framed in the form of a dilemma for Mexican policymakers. On the one hand, the program was perceived to be increasingly important as a safety valve for domestic political and economic troubles and as an interim strategy for managing Mexico's economic underdevelopment. On the other hand, Mexico's participation in the program was itself viewed as an admission of failure in providing domestic solutions for unemployment problems and as an activity that abetted the exploitation and discrimination suffered by Mexican workers in the United States. Thus, the Mexican government found itself caught between what it perceived to be a growing state in keeping the labor program in operation and the political heat resulting from its participation in it—particularly the criticisms leveled at it by leftist opposition groups. It acted to reduce the impact of negative publicity arising from the program and adopted public and private negotiating positions that were increasingly inconsistent. As Mexico's maneuvering room with respect to the United States was shrinking as a consequence of the domestic political process, its bargaining capacity vis-à-vis its neighbor was deteriorating steadily. These complex, interrelated processes set the stage for the diplomatic confrontations of 1948 and 1954.

Two Open-Border Incidents

In the summer of 1948 the U.S. government pressured Mexico to allow recruitment along the border; Mexico yielded partially by agreeing to establish a recruitment center in Mexicali and by proposing that centers be established in interior cities of other border states. Nevertheless, according to a secret study uncovered by Peter Kirstein in the Truman Library, representatives of the DOL, the INS, and the State Department met to discuss the pros and cons of opening the border to illegal entrants, thereby unilaterally disrupting the 1948 agreement. The meeting, mediated by the White House, seems to have resulted in the position that the agreement would be adhered to.

Between October 13 and 18, however, the border port of El Paso was opened to several thousand undocumented Mexicans waiting to enter the United States: "The braceros . . . waded the shallow river in sight of the Border Patrol, which received them with formality, herded them into temporary enclosures and immediately paroled them to the cotton growers, who trucked the men at once to the fields." The Mexican government responded by abrogating the 1948 agreement, formally announcing that it would reserve the possibility of filing claims for damage inflicted upon its agricultural production in the North from the uncontrolled exodus of border resident laborers. The United States formally apologized for the incident days later.

As a result of his review of the secret study, Kirstein concluded that the order to open the border did not emanate from the White House, but was a decision made within the INS and USES. He made a point to note that no disciplinary action was taken against the officials who created the "El Paso incident," as it became known, and that the United States used the incident to place new conditions on the table when negotiations were reopened during January–February 1949.

In any event, the planning for the second incident clearly involved the highest levels of the U.S. government. On January 15, 1954, the Departments of Justice, State, and Labor issued a joint press release announcing that braceros would be contracted unilaterally until a binational accord was reached. Mexico responded sharply by announcing that braceros could no longer be legally contracted to work in the United States and by exhorting Mexican laborers to stay at home.

The situation in 1954 would seem anomalous today: the United States was advocating an "open border" at its neighbor's expense. During the last week of January, hundreds of Mexican workers gathered at Mexican border cities with the expectation of entering the United States, despite the call of their government to stay at home. Mexican local police converged upon mobs, attempting to disperse them and to prevent their entry to the United States. As some of the men raced across the line they were snatched back into Mexico, while Border Patrol officers extended a helping hand from the other side. Other undocumented migrants already in the United States were brought to the border, told to step across briefly to meet the legal requirement of having been expelled, and then to reenter so they could be admitted as contract workers by INS officials. The resulting commotion was illustrated graphically in a photograph published in February 1954, depicting a bracero pulled in a tug of war between a Mexican border official and a U.S. officer.

Mexico countered with a show of force designed to prevent the emigration of its citizens. The government deployed troops to Ensenada, Nuevo Laredo, Nogales, and other points near the border. Border guards repelled the rush of illegal crossers with clubs, fists, water hoses, and shots fired into the air. In Mexicali, five hundred would-be braceros
marched on the governor’s palace demanding jobs or food; soldiers turned them back with fire hoses. As President Ruiz Cortines received reports that the international confrontation was turning into a domestic crisis at the border, he ordered Mexican troops withdrawn and instructed Mexican officials not to use force to oppose any citizen attempting to cross illegally. Mexico had been beaten in its brief attempt to use dissuasion and force to prevent the emigration of its workers.\textsuperscript{96}

The Mexican defeat in January 1954 merely laid bare the end result of a process that had been unfolding for several years. On the one hand, as close observers had known for some time, Mexico lacked either the political will or the policy instruments to withhold the labor of its workers on whose behalf it was negotiating, and its “cooperation” with the United States in this and other issue areas was no longer vital. On the other hand, domestic criticism was forcing Mexico to adopt positions which it could not sustain.\textsuperscript{97} When it refused to compromise further its position in the fall of 1953, it apparently miscalculated in assuming that the United States would not adopt a position of unilateral recruitment.\textsuperscript{98} Once the confrontation was in process, little could be done to salvage Mexico’s position or credibility.

A number of deliberately conciliatory signals sent by Mexico during the crisis were suggestive of Mexico’s limited “policy space.” It unilaterally extended the life of the agreement which had expired, and Ruiz Cortines made a public statement that the affront by the United States was “not a problem but only an incident that could be resolved within the norms of the good neighbor policy.”\textsuperscript{99} Simultaneously, the Mexican ambassador in Washington quietly made a request that negotiations be resumed, to which Eisenhower publicly acceded on February 11. Since the Mexican government needed a face-saving device, this was played up as a victory in the Mexican press.\textsuperscript{100}

In the aftermath of the diplomatic crisis it was discovered that the U.S. government had no legal authority to spend federal funds on unilateral recruitment; Congress therefore passed Joint Resolution 355 on March 3, which amended Public Law 78 to provide for U.S. unilateral recruitment.\textsuperscript{101} Although the implications of this were not lost on the Mexican negotiators (a U.S. congressman characterized it as a means of seeking an agreement “with a pistol in their backs”),\textsuperscript{102} the Mexican government publicly played down this legislative defeat.\textsuperscript{103} Two days later, the Mexican government announced that the negotiations for a new agreement were proceeding satisfactorily. To allow Mexico some domestic maneuvering room, Eisenhower postponed signing Resolution 355. A new bilateral accord, in which Mexico in essence ceded all its demands, was reached on March 10, and on March 16 Eisenhower signed the resolution into law.\textsuperscript{104} Perhaps to strengthen Mexico’s position before its domestic critics, or because the U.S. president had an appreciation for irony, he explained that signing Resolution 355 was “necessary for the United States government to provide Mexican braceros with the protection of its laws.” Not surprisingly, Mexico publicly ignored the resolution and instead played up its “success” in reaching the labor agreement, which in actuality “contained little to satisfy the Mexican demands that had prompted termination of the agreement a few months earlier.”\textsuperscript{105}

The crisis of January 1954 was a rude awakening for the Mexican public. A columnist in a Mexico City newspaper in February seemed to express this when he wrote that thanks to the “safety valve afforded by emigration, the failure of the regime’s agrarian-reform policies had not provoked another revolution.”\textsuperscript{106} Another columnist wondered: “Is it possible to prevent the emigration of braceros?”\textsuperscript{107} The answer from the Mexican public seemed to be “no.” In his State of the Union address in September 1954, Ruiz Cortines “deplored the migration of laborers but concluded that it was unavoidable because the country did not have enough work to hold the braceros.”\textsuperscript{108} This view was to hold among Mexican political elites for many years after the crisis of 1954.\textsuperscript{109}

**Apogee and Demise, 1955–1964**

By 1955 the bracero program was well into what Richard Craig calls the “era of stabilization”—a period with no serious disagreements between Mexico and the United States or substantive changes in the formal operation of the program. It was also a time when the “adverse effects” of the importation of foreign workers, particularly in the agricultural labor market, emerged as a domestic issue in the United States, which ultimately led to the end of the contract-labor program.

Early opposition to the importation of foreign workers, in 1947–1949, was based on claims that it undermined strikes, working conditions, and farm wages. So claimed the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, which issued public statements to that effect; and the National Farm Labor Union, affiliated with the American Federation of Labor, enlisted the support of the Federal Advisory Council of the Bureau of Employment Security with the DOL. This position apparently had limited acceptance at that time, however; although the President’s Commission showed that the increased use of braceros correlated negatively with rising agricultural wages, it did not propose an end to the program. Instead, it argued for modifications which would assure that certifications of need would be based on actual shortages.\textsuperscript{110} This view implicitly recognized that the realities of U.S. domestic politics did not allow for
any successful opposition to the farm bloc in Congress and assumed that if the program could be held to some standard of compliance, adverse effects could be avoided.

Growers opposed such interpretations of the contract-labor program with arguments which essentially held that there were no serious adverse effects and that the labor contracts were being complied with. They argued that braceros were more efficient than native workers, and that from constituting a source of cheap labor, they were more expensive than domestic workers since employers were responsible for transportation costs, insurance, bonds, and the like. It appears that the thrust of the growers' arguments—that bracero laborers were more expensive in terms of gross outlays—would have been correct if the contracts had actually been complied with. Evidence suggests that contract compliance was most frequently observed during the wartime program, the period when the labor program was least attractive to employers. Nonetheless, as contract compliance declined and the program was made more attractive to employers (after the postwar period of worker-to-employer agreements and during Operation Wetback), adverse effects from the importation of contract laborers became more visible. As the number of workers involved in the program expanded, growers resorted to the fiction that bracero workers were more expensive—as indeed they had been at the beginning of the program—to defend the program against those who attacked it as a means for importing "cheap labor." In assessing this expanding bracero labor force, Galarza wrote: "Contrary to the iron laws of supply and demand, which are nowhere more ironic than in agriculture, the dearer type of labor was driving out of the market the cheaper."

The substitution of contracted labor for domestic labor proceeded apace throughout this final phase of the program. California farm-labor statistics tell part of the story. From December 1949 to September 1959, the peak number of braceros at work in the state shot up from seventy-five hundred to eighty-four thousand. Peak employment of local domestic seasonal workers for the same years declined from 150,000 to 131,500. In certain crops, such as sugar beets, and certain areas, such as San Diego and Imperial counties, noncontract labor had virtually disappeared. Comparisons to out-of-state or nonlocal workers are more illustrative. In 1949 there were more than three noncontract workers for every contract laborer; in 1959 there were six contract laborers for every three noncontract workers. "Plainly," asserted Galarza, "the native inter-state migrant, about whose peripatetic misery a copious and sympathetic literature had accumulated, was close to extinction in California."

As the number of contract workers involved in U.S. agriculture increased, so did the perception among agricultural labor organizers that the importation of farm labor had adverse effects upon the domestic labor force. Wages in the agricultural areas where they worked remained constant or dropped. Some domestic farm wages, largely determined by the employers in advance of the harvest, never got much higher than "wetback" standards in the 1950s; it was possible—and common—to find domestic, contract, and undocumented workers in the same crews. Wage depression in the 1950s was facilitated by the importation of labor during a period when increased mechanization of certain crops also lowered the demand for casual labor. Given the relative immobility of many domestic farm workers between rural and urban occupations, and the absolute immobility of contract workers, it appears that increasingly both were competing for less. The National Agricultural Workers Union, a group that was persistent in its attempts to organize California agricultural workers, thus directed most of its energies not toward attacking the growers directly, but toward stopping the Mexican contract-labor program.

The emphasis that the National Agricultural Workers Union gave to exposing the evils of the bracero program found expression in a research project directed by Ernesto Galarza, which was published in 1956 under the title *Strangers in Our Fields*. This report recorded the abuses of the bracero system with depth and perception, often by reproducing interviews held with the braceros in and out of work camps in California. Galarza's interviews and his review of pay stubs and receipts for camp meals and other deducted charges led him to conclude that "in almost every area covered by the International Agreement, United States law, state law, and the provision of the work contract, serious violations of the rights of Mexican nationals were found to be the norm rather than the exception."

The response to *Strangers* by agricultural interests was predictably negative. The official response by the DOL, however, was silence, and its unofficial response constituted the beginning of a reassessment of its position of the contract-labor program. By exposing employer noncompliance with the terms of the labor agreement, Galarza had raised the painful issue of whether the bracero program was having adverse effects on the domestic labor market.

The year that *Strangers* was published also marked the beginning of a new effort by the DOL to tighten its administration of Public Law 78 and to adopt a more skeptical attitude concerning employer compliance with the agreements. In December 1956, the department improved the standards applied to bracero housing; in the summer of 1958, a new formula for determining wages and assuring a minimum hourly rate was applied. In October 1959, the findings of what was known as the Consultants' Report were released; the study recommended that the secretary of
labor take action to reduce the adverse effects of the importation of braceros. In November, the DOL issued new regulations that set minimum standards for the wage and working conditions of domestic workers recruited through the farm placement service of the Labor Department. During the period, the actions of the department and the records of its private meetings indicate the reluctant admission that many of the allegations in Strangers were true. 134

As early as 1957, farmers in the state of California began to sense that opposition to the program created by Public Law 78 was mounting and that the contract-labor system was being seriously threatened. Local grower associations began to exhort their members to "not turn down domestic labor applicants," and one demanded that its members sign a pledge of honest compliance, or be dropped. Caught between the DOL's increasingly forceful attempts to ensure compliance and minimize adverse effects and a public opinion shifting against the bracero program, farmers became more uncomfortable with a system they had worked to create. Mechanization of the harvest, particularly for those engaged in cultivating cotton, became a sought-after alternative. 135

Beginning in 1960, opposition to the bracero program mounted in Congress. During the session of that year, acrimonious debate postponed the vote on the extension of Public Law 78 until the last day, at which time a six-month extension was secured. This was the first effective attack on the program in Congress. In 1961, the program was extended for another two years; the antibracer forces had gained in strength, although they were unable to bring the program to an immediate end. In 1962 the Kennedy administration openly opposed the Public Law 78 program, and in 1963 the program was extended one final time. 136

The final extension of the program was obtained only after probracero advocates revealed that there was substantial opposition by the Mexican government to its abrupt termination. A diplomatic dispatch from the SRE dated July 21, 1963, summarized the Mexican position: to end the contract system would not end the underlying migratory process; in other words, bracero emigration functioned as a substitute for illegal migration. In the view of Mexican political elites, the termination of the program would have serious effects on Mexico's unemployment; the dispatch argued for more time so that Mexico could reabsorb approximately two hundred thousand persons to "stave off the sudden crisis" that would result. 137 The dispatch was placed into the Congressional Record on August 15, and the program was extended for a final year. 138 On December 31, 1964, the Mexican contract-labor program formally came to an end. 139 Mexico did not experience a political upheaval, crops in the

U.S. Southwest did not rot in the fields. Whatever were the effects of the termination of the program, they were not immediately apparent.

The Legacy of Debate

A phenomenon of the magnitude and duration of the Mexican contract-labor program does not end without leaving traces of its impact. The effects of the bracero program on the migration process itself have not been adequately researched, although inferences can be drawn from available data. The importation of laborers under contract largely reinforced the characteristic features of pre-bracero migration: the seasonal migration of laborers as opposed to permanent settlement, a regional concentration of migrants from about six or seven states in the north-central region of Mexico to selected areas of the U.S. West and border areas, and the concentration of Mexican workers in agriculture and in "stoop" labor. It is no surprise that post-1964 "illegals" come from the same regions, work for many of the same employers in the United States, and often work only a few months before returning to Mexico. 140 Clearly, the migration of braceros established continuity between the first wave of Mexican migrants during the first four decades of the century and the more recent immigration of undocumented persons during the 1960s and 1970s.

The migration of workers stimulated and regulated by the contract-labor program is not an aberration in the history of Mexican immigration to the United States. To be sure, the large-scale importation of contract labor from Mexico under the auspices of a binational agreement has not occurred before or since, but to dwell on the formal aspects of administrated migration is to miss the point. The bracero migration not only continued the labor migration of the earlier period, it reaffirmed the notion that the northward movement of Mexicans is a single process. Braceros and undocumented (and, to a limited extent, legally admitted) immigrants were substituted for each other. After 1954, the "success" of Operation Wetback signified the substitution of braceros for "wetbacks"—at labor standards substantially below those afforded by contract-labor guarantees. After 1964, some braceros were replaced by "wetbacks" and others by machines; the elite within the bracero labor force immigrated legally and became either permanent residents or "green card commuters." 141 Thus, throughout the contract-labor period and since then, the formal conditions of Mexican labor migration—i.e., the labels assigned to it—varied from time to time, but the informal patterns of migration persisted.

The termination of the contract-labor program had a pronounced effect on Mexican policymakers. One result was the creation of additional
jobs in Mexico, presumably for the ex-braceros who after 1964 could not work legally in the United States. Most frequently cited in this connection is the Border Industrialization, or Maquiladora, Program—a system of unique binational concessions principally to U.S. corporations that located manufacturing assembly plants in northern Mexico border towns and whose production is exported entirely to the United States. 127

A number of factors had already laid the basis for the Maquiladora Program before the end of the contract-labor recruitment, but the Mexican government gave it additional stimulation in 1965. Mexican concessions involved making a number of exceptions in its legislation to allow for wholly owned foreign subsidiaries to enter the country. This action had perceived and objective benefits to certain sectors of Mexico's society, but it also involved some risk to the government. The Maquiladora Program has been criticized within Mexico as an abandonment of revolutionary goals with respect to the control of foreign direct investment and to limitations upon landownership by foreigners; it has also been attacked as the de facto transformation of the country into a free-production zone.

That Mexican political elites would knowingly embark upon such a program is in part a reflection of how seriously they viewed the elimination of the safety valve afforded by the labor program.

The border industries have not hired ex-braceros, however; instead, they have hired a young female labor force who had attained a level of education superior to the men among local residents. This outcome apparently was unforeseen by the Mexican architects of the program. Thus, if the Maquiladora Program has acted as a substitute safety valve, it has not done so directly.

Another set of Mexican responses to the termination of the bracero program was to seek its renewal, an effort sustained over a period of ten years. These efforts were made for a twofold purpose: to reestablish the safety valve, and to adopt a control measure to manage what was perceived to be a growing problem of undocumented migration (apprehensions of deportable Mexicans grew at a geometric rate of about 25 percent per year in the late 1960s and early 1970s). These efforts culminated in a public admission by President Echeverria in his 1974 State of the Union address that Mexican attempts to secure a labor agreement with the United States had failed. In his 1972 and 1974 addresses Echeverria stressed several familiar themes: that emigration was in part due to the lack of domestic opportunity and that development efforts were addressing that problem; that Mexican workers in the United States received inhumane treatment; and that Mexico expressed its concern that this be corrected. 128

By 1975, Echeverria's position changed, to the surprise of many, when he publicly announced that Mexico did not want a labor agreement. According to Jorge Bustamante, a meeting between Echeverria and Galarza shortly before his announcement had persuaded the president to change his posture. 129 In his 1976 State of the Union address, Echeverria explained: "We reject the idea of a new migrant worker agreement, for such agreements have never succeeded in preventing undocumented emigration in the past." 130 This reflected a new interpretation of the potential effects of a renewed contract-labor program—one which stressed the stimulation, rather than the substitution, effects of such a program with respect to undocumented emigration.

Echeverria's sudden change in policy threw open a debate—largely conducted within government circles and the Mexico City press—which has continued to this day. The sudden de-emphasis of a search for a binational temporary-worker program may be consistent with Mexican domestic and foreign policy objectives, but it has left that government with few alternatives. Generating additional employment within Mexico continues to be an important goal of the regime, but even if drastic changes in Mexico's development model, placing more emphasis on labor-intensive activities, were to be made, the domestic employment problem would not be even close to solution during this century. 131 In falling back upon a position which stresses domestic job generation and in protesting the ill treatment of undocumented Mexicans in the United States, Mexican policymakers have continued to demonstrate that migration touches upon sensitive domestic issues, and that it continues to be perceived as a "safety valve." This fallback position also reveals that the Mexican government has few options in this issue area that can yield short-term results.

In the United States, the termination of the bracero program has set in motion several processes which have also demanded policy responses. Three of these have been mentioned—the increased flow of "commuters" across the border, increased undocumented immigration, and the export of jobs through "runaway plants" that have relocated on the Mexican border. Thus, the termination of the program ended the legal importation of workers, but not the U.S. domestic controversy over Mexican labor migration. Of these post-bracero program issues, the perceived increase of undocumented immigration has provoked the sharpest debate and presented U.S. policymakers with a serious issue on which there seems to be no national consensus about how to proceed. 132

It is no surprise that the policy proposals most frequently suggested to address the "illegal alien problem"—increased enforcement at the border, mass roundup of deportable aliens in the interior, penalizing employers for hiring such aliens, legalizing undocumented persons already here, and instituting a temporary-worker program—are not new. Today's
proposals are but variants of those measures adopted or actively considered during the “wetback invasion” of the early 1950s. The participants in the present debate seem to be unaware of the past, however, those who advocate “sealing” the border, for example, seem to be aware neither that such options have been considered before nor of the reasons why such responses have not been pursued in the past. Proponents of “police-type” solutions apparently do not know that no such measure has ever successfully stopped migration, at best, in the aftermath of Operation Wetback, the flow was only regularized. Even then, the mass roundup of 1954 created new problems as it temporarily solved an old one. Those who argue that the United States bears no responsibility to Mexican migrants who recently have entered illegally ignore the long-standing involvement of U.S. employers in promoting this flow, and of the U.S. government in encouraging the violation of its immigration laws in order to accomplish its foreign policy objectives. To embark upon paths that repeat errors of the past does not speak well for the capacity of this society and polity to learn from historical experience.

One area that has generated recent discussion is temporary-worker programs. Early in its term the Reagan administration itself proposed a “pilot program” by which fifty thousand Mexican nationals would be admitted each year for temporary work in the United States. It is noteworthy that while this proposal was included within a package of other far-reaching immigration policy proposals, it is the temporary-worker plan that has generated the most discussion thus far. That temporary-worker proposals are themselves controversial is a legacy of a program which itself expired almost two decades ago.

It may be true, as David Gregory argues, that “the historical perspective of Mexican participation in earlier programs such as the bracero programs acts as an impediment to our current search for a policy to effectively deal with contemporary migration movements.” Certainly, current interpretations of that experience have led many to equate all temporary-worker program proposals with the bracero program, and to assume that the evils and/or benefits of the earlier program automatically carry over into the present. It is in this sense that Gregory seems to be arguing against the drawing of close parallels between the earlier experience and the present situation.

Nevertheless, it is also true that the historical experience derived from the bracero era is indispensable for an understanding of the current debate and for the formulation of an appropriate U.S. policy response to undocumented migration. The experience of the contract-labor program may not give us answers regarding what a proposed temporary-worker program will accomplish, but it does offer a framework for posing some important questions. An examination of the proposals made thus far suggests that many of these questions have received little public attention or scrutiny.

Perhaps the first question to be posed in the current debate is, to what extent is the proposed program simply a copy of the contract-labor program, and to what extent does it diverge significantly? For example, the so-called H-2 program, which currently operates through §101 (15) (B) (ii) of the Immigration and Nationality Act, is essential a unilateral bracero program. It involves the importation of temporary workers who are admitted to work for a specific employer, largely in agriculture. The principal difference between this and the Mexican contract-labor program is that the Mexican government is not directly involved in its design or administration.

Other questions which might be considered are: if the temporary-worker program is designed to serve as a substitute for undocumented migration, what evidence is there to suggest that it will function as planned? (The earlier experience suggests that the contract-labor program functioned alternatively as a stimulant and as a substitute for undocumented migration, depending upon the circumstances.) Moreover, what additional measures will be needed to get the proposed program to function as a substitute for undocumented migration? (The earlier experience suggests that widespread employer participation in any temporary-worker scheme is necessary for it to function as such a substitute.) Will a temporary-worker program be accompanied by an expulsion campaign, a new version of Operation Wetback? Will the design of the program be such that it will constitute little more than legitimizing the current situation in which undocumented workers are employed? Will the operation of the program have the necessary safeguards for working conditions and wages, or will it result in the kinds of abuse and exploitation that occurred previously, particularly during the 1950s?

The answers to such questions will be debated for some time. The discussion about the future direction of U.S. immigration policy with respect to Mexico will unavoidably focus on undocumented migration, on temporary-worker program proposals, and on conflicting interpretations of the contract-labor program of 1942–1964.

Notes

1. For a discussion of Mexican policies to restrain or return emigrants during the years 1910–1940 and Mexican perceptions of abuses suffered by Mexican workers in the United States, see Lawrence Cardoso, Mexican Emigration to the United States, 1897–1931: Socio-economic Patterns (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1980), 64, 107, 113–15; Arthur F. Corwin, ed., Immigrants—

2. Gonzalez Navarro, _Población y sociedad_, 208.

3. This view was expressed by José María Dávila, a member of Congress, in 1932. Gonzalez Navarro, ibid., 163.


8. Agencies within the Departments of Agriculture and Labor that were responsible for the administration of the program during the war were the Farm Security Administration, the Extension Service, the War Food Administration, and the War Manpower Commission (Galloza, _Merchants of Labor_, 80).

9. Ibid., 82-83; Anderson, _The Bracero Program_, passim.

10. The 1942 recruitment season began late and is excluded from the calculation of the average. According to the table, U.S. statistics indicate that 195,165 contracts were issued during 1943-1946, and in the same period, Mexican sources register 329,821 departures (salidas) of contract laborers. In interpreting these figures, the reader should keep in mind that they represent an approximate measure of the flow of Mexican contract workers to the United States for the years indicated, as Mexican workers at any given time (stock). Contract extensions, renewals, and multiple entries by individual workers make these numbers somewhat deceptive. The reader should also note that, as yet, no one has explained the differences between the U.S. and Mexican statistics on the flow of braceros. (U.S. secondary sources cite U.S.

11. According to U.S. statistics, 1,128,990 contracts were issued between 1942 and 1954, according to Mexican statistics, this number was 929,964. Mexican statistics for 1955-1964 indicate that 3,327,601 braceros departed; U.S. statistics record 3,317,241. The total for the program, according to U.S. sources, is 4,646,719; the same total, according to Mexican data, is 4,591,538.

12. My research indicates that only railroad workers were employed through the nonagricultural labor program, although attempts to use them in the San Diego yards and as farm and foundry workers, road workers, sawmill operators, and in other capacities, almost succeeded. McCain, "Contract Labor as a Factor," 182-92.


16. Mexican domestic opposition to the initiation of the wartime program and to the program's continued participation had several motivations and can be gleaned from a number of sources. See, e.g., a letter from a labor organization representing Mexican workers in the United States which argued against bracero emigration in April 1942, reproduced in: _Boletín del Archivo General de la Nación_, Tercera Serie 4, no. 4 (October-December 1998): 22-32.

17. Manuel Gamio's participation in the design of the contract-labor program still has to be adequately researched. His proposal for a temporary worker program to substitute for the northward movement of illegal immigrants is expressed in his book _Mexican Immigration, 1822-33_. Evidence that his involvement was crucial in the formulation of a Mexican position in 1942 is provided in a reference made by Robert D. Tomasek, "The Political and Economic Implications of Mexican Labor in the United States under the Non-Quota System, Contract Labor Program, and Wetsback Movement," (Ph.D. diss., University of Michigan, 1957), 29, in an interview with a Mexican official. For other evidence of Gamio's involvement in the wartime program, see his confidential report to Álvaro Cárdenas, reproduced in _Boletín (1980): 38-40.

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19. The view that emigration harmed Mexico's rural economy seems to have emerged soon after the program began. González Navarro (Población y sociedad, 215) reports that at the outset of mass labor migration, the authorities of Hidalgo and Guanajuato—sought to prevent it "because of the economic damage it caused." He also notes (p. 167) that in 1943, as bracero emigration increased, a shortage of agricultural labor developed in parts of Mexico.


21. These are summarized from the list presented in Galarza, Merchants of Labor, 47.

22. One should keep in mind that "needs," like agricultural labor "shortages," are not absolute, even though the initial Mexican position—accepted by the United States—assumed that they were. In a path-breaking analysis of the California harvest labor market, Lloyd Fisher noted that labor demand is best explained by the number of harvesters, not by the number of workers, labor hours, since farmers expressed their needs in terms of numbers of laborers, not in labor hours. Since farmers had an interest in minimizing the risks of disease, had weather, and soil quality, and had an interest in maximizing the risks of disease, had weather, and soil quality, and had an interest in minimizing the risks of disease, had weather, and soil quality, and had an interest in maximizing the risks of disease, had weather, and soil quality, and having been willing to accept these risks and some unevenness of quality in the product harvested, Fisher argues, labor demand would have been lower and the harvest season longer. Thus, a labor "shortage" in this type of agriculture is a relative, not an absolute, concept (Lloyd H. Fisher, The Harvest Labor Market in California [Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1953], 6, 123, 151-69).

23. The first and fourth conditions mentioned are explicitly derived from Article 123 and pertinent Mexican labor legislation. The second, third, and fifth conditions are explicitly mentioned in Manuel Gamio's proposal, outlined in 1930 (Mexican Immigration, 182-83). The sixth condition reflects an old concern by the Mexican public and government dating to the teens and twenties.


29. Ibid., 154, 158, 154-55.

30. Ibid., 156-57; Tomasek, "Political and Economic Implications," 51.

31. Tomasek, "Political and Economic Implications," 158, 171; del Pinal, "Los trabajadores mexicanos," 33. Tomasek (p. 153) cites a number of Mexican sources who opposed the extension of the program and implies (p. 84) that only the president and the SRE preferred to continue with the program.

32. Many articles in the national media, in such publications as Time, Newsweek, Life, the New York Times, the Saturday Evening Post, Business Week, and the Washington Post, drew attention to the "wetback" problem in the postwar years, especially during 1951-1954. These articles stressed the threat, real or imagined, that undocumented Mexicans represented for the United States. Since the vast majority of the U.S. population did not have contact with "wetbacks" in their daily lives, it is generally agreed that these articles—and the allegations of antwetback groups reported therein—were instrumental in the shaping of U.S. public opinion on issues relating to undocumented migration.


35. President's Commission, Migratory Labor, 88.

36. Tomasek, "Political and Economic Implications," 253-54; Galarza, Merchants of Labor, 62; Corwin, Immigrants and Immigrants, 152-53.


38. Tomasek, "Political and Economic Implications," 224.

39. Indications of this are that, when Mexico used force to prevent emigration to the United States, as in August 1953, there was a virtual news blackout on the action. The only reference I was able to find was a four-paragraph article in the Mexican City official newspaper: "Impideles que se contraten salgan muchos braceros: centenares, detenidos en la frontera norte," El Nacional, August 18, 1954. (Compare Tomasek, "Political and Economic Implications," 257.) By the same token, when Operation Wetback was launched a year later, Mexico's active participation in it received practically no notice in Mexican City newspapers during June, July, or August 1954. (Again compare Tomasek, "Political and Economic Implications," 271.)

40. Galarza, Merchants of Labor, 61.

41. McCann, "Contract Labor as a Factor," 268-89; Kirsten, Anglo over Bracero, 73-74; García, Operation Wetback, 111, 122.

42. Kirsten, Anglo over Bracero, 90. See also President's Commission, Migratory Labor, 75-76; Tomasek, "Political and Economic Implications," 141.


44. Quoted in Galarza, Merchants of Labor, 63. See also García, Operation Wetback, 111.

45. President's Commission, Migratory Labor, 52.

46. Ibid., 53.

47. Galarza, Merchants of Labor, 63.


49. Hundreds of agricultural employers joined farm-labor associations during the years 1951-1954 on the condition that deportable Mexicans in their employ would be approved for bracero contracts (Galarza, Merchants of Labor, 64).

50. Craig, The Bracero Program, 127; Galarza, Merchants of Labor, 70; García, Operation Wetback, 158; Tomasek, "Political and Economic Implications," 267.
52. Craig, _The Bracero Program_, 128.
57. Commissioner Swing reportedly told the chief of the Border Patrol that whether or not there would be a patrol in the future depended upon the success of the campaign (García, _Operation Weback_, 178).
58. The negative image problem and low morale of the Border Patrol in the early 1950s are discussed in a number of sources. See García, _Operation Weback_, 113, 116–17, 218–19; Tomasek, "Political and Economic Implications," 140.
59. Tomasek, "Political and Economic Implications," 150, 267–68, 270. He notes (p. 256) that appropriations for the Border Patrol had been reduced such that in 1952 it had 1,200 men compared to 1,450 ten years earlier, when the number of apprehensions was much smaller. In early 1953 the force was further reduced to one thousand men.
60. Indicative of this were the howls of pain raised by many growers, particularly in Texas, and the creation (accompanied by some initial grumbling) of new organizations in the lower Rio Grande Valley, Arizona, and Imperial Valley to contract braceros. See García, _Operation Weback_, 219; Tomasek, "Political and Economic Implications," 99.
62. "Streamlining" the program involved changing provisions that the Mexican government had insisted on from the outset of the program. Mexico dropped its requirement of a minimum contract work period of six weeks for "special cases," and lowered it to four weeks two days after Operation Weback began in Texas. See SRE, _Memorias_, 1954, 694; García, _Operation Weback_, 212. In 1955, the INS unilaterally instituted a simple border-crossing card that "allowed braceros to proceed immediately to contracting centers and to bypass procedures set up by the Mexican government" (García, _Operation Weback_, 219). "Streamlining" also involved relaxing DOL provisions designed to reduce the "adverse effects" of braceros on domestic labor, such as the contracting of specialized contract workers (ibid., 219). It was not immediately apparent how much of an impact this had on U.S. farm workers, but Tomasek ("Political and Economic Implications," 274) notes the substitution of domestic migrant labor for the same. In the lower Rio Grande Valley contract laborers increased from three thousand to seventy thousand; domestic workers only increased from nineteen thousand to thirty-two thousand. Compare García, _Operation Weback_, 208, 209.
63. Galarza, _Merchants of Labor_, 70.
64. Quoted in García, _Operation Weback_, 225.
65. "La época de las 'espaldas mojadas' pasa a la historia," Excélsior, August 24, 1958. Craig ( _The Bracero Program_, 129) also notes that when the United States and Mexico concluded an agreement relating to illegal migration in April 1955, "the weback lid, for all practical purposes, ceased to exist."
66. One of the "costs" rarely discussed in writings on Operation Weback, which cannot be elaborated on here but is nonetheless important, is the violation of civil rights—particularly of persons of Mexican origin—that the campaign entailed. References to the tremendous social costs borne by the Mexican community in the United States as a result of this action can be found in García, _Operation Weback_, 194–99, 216, 218, 230–31.
67. Tomasek, "Political and Economic Implications," 274.
68. Craig, _The Bracero Program_, 104; García, _Operation Weback_, 39; Kirstein, _Anglo over Bracero_, 67.
69. Galarza, _Merchants of Labor_, 77; García, _Operation Weback_, 39; González Navarro, _Población y sociedad_, 248.
70. Galarza, _Merchants of Labor_, 52, 8; González Navarro, _Población y sociedad_, table opposite p. 146.
71. An internal document prepared during the Truman and Eisenhowe administration summarized the communication between the U.S. and Mexican governments on this issue during 1948-1953. This document was entitled _The Secret Study_ by Kirstein, who discovered it (Kirstein, _Anglo over Bracero_, 76).
73. Ibid., 274, 278–79, 284, 288–89.
74. Kirstein, _Anglo over Bracero_, 70.
75. Ibid., 76.
76. President's Commission, _Migrant Labor_, 50; Galarza, _Merchants of Labor_, 77.
77. Galarza, _Merchants of Labor_, 77–78.
78. Prevailing wages were determined at preharvest-season meetings, where farmers agreed in advance on what wages would prevail. See American G.I. Forum, _What Price Webacks?_ 50; Fisher, _The Harvest Labor Market_, 91–116; Galarza, _Merchants of Labor_, 111; President's Commission, _Migrant Labor_, 59–60.
79. This provision was agreed to as a compromise solution, since the growers actually wanted the Agricultural Extension Service to determine farm wage levels.
82. Tomasek, "Political and Economic Implications," 239–42.
83. Galarza, _Merchants of Labor_, 75; Salinas, _La emigración de braceros_, 11–29.
84. García, _Operation Weback_, 121.
86. Tomasek (ibid., 84), notes that the economic importance of bracero remittances and income brought by returning migrants was an argument offered by a Mexican government official as an explanation for the desire of the Alemán administration to renew the program in 1947, notwithstanding domestic opposition
to its continuation. It is doubtful, however, that bracero earnings ever had a substantial impact on Mexico's exchange of goods and services with the United States. Bracero remittances (which do not include amounts brought back by returning contract workers) reached a peak relative value of 20 percent of the U.S.-Mexican trade balance in 1955. In other years it fluctuated between 10 and 16 percent, and occasionally dropped to lower levels.

87. García, *Operation Wetsback*, 58–59. Referring to the years 1948–1951, Richard Craig writes: “One needs little imagination to visualize the extent of rural discontent that Mexico was spared as a result of the legal and clandestine northern flow during these years” (Craig, *The Bracero Program*, 60).


91. García (*Operation Wetsback*, 32) notes: “In confidential letters, memos, and telegrams, Mexican officials often expressed concern about problems plaguing the program, including discriminatory acts against Mexican nationals, physical abuse, inadequate grievance procedures, and violations of civil rights and contract guarantees. When news of such incidents did become public, Mexican officials wrote with concern about how such news proved damaging to their efforts to keep the contract labor program in a positive light. They informed officials of the United States that, when news of abuses of secret agreements leaked out, it placed Mexico in a difficult situation, forcing [it] to take harsher stands than [it] ordinarily might.”


95. Kirstein, *Anglo over Bracero*, 70, 76.


100. Tomasek, “Political and Economic Implications.” For a discussion of that criticism, see 166–79, 257–58.


126. Craig, The Bracero Program, 155-85; Kirstein, Anglo over Bracero, 104.

127. In Kiser and Kiser (Mexican Workers, 111-14, especially p. 111), a split among agricultural interests is noted between those who found mechanization a viable alternative and those who did not.

127. The text of the diplomatic note is reproduced in Kiser and Kiser, Mexican Workers, 120-23.


129. Contract labor continued to be admitted as for more years under Public Law 414 (the Immigration and Nationality Act of 1952). The number of such workers was small.


133. See Jorge A. Bustamante, "La migración mexicana en la dinámica de las percepciones" (paper presented at the Seminar on Economic and Social Aspects of Relations between the United States and Mexico, Stanford University, Stanford, CA, November 15, 1980), 19-29; and Corwin, Immigrants—and Immigrants, 157, 197-99. Excerpts from Echeverría’s State of the Union addresses in 1972 and 1974 are reproduced in Kiser and Kiser, Mexican Workers, 124, 196.


