

# TO STOP THE 'ANARCHY' IN U.S. IMMIGRATION

The New York Times

December 28, 1982, Tuesday, Late City Final Edition

Copyright 1982 The New York Times Company

**Section:** Section A; Page 22, Column 4; Editorial Desk; Letter

**Length:** 414 words

## **Body**

---

To the Editor:

Joaquin Avila, president of Maldef, the Mexican American Legal Defense Fund (Op-Ed Dec. 17), is in a better position than most to know that the failure of state employer-sanction laws to deter illegal immigration, rather than being an argument against the nowfailed Simpson-Mazzoli bill, is a confirmation of the ever more urgent need for strong Federal leadership in immigration enforcement.

he states' unfamiliarity with immigration and nationality practice, the deficiencies of most current ID documents and our courts' uncertainties about the proper state role in immigration have all worked to undermine the effectiveness of state laws. In at least one state, California, litigation supported by special-interest groups, such as Maldef, helped stall enforcement.

Joaquin Avila, president of Maldef, the Mexican American Legal Defense Fund (Op-Ed Dec. 17), is in a better position than most to know that the failure of state employer-sanction laws to deter illegal immigration, rather than being an argument against the nowfailed Simpson-Mazzoli bill, is a confirmation of the ever more urgent need for strong Federal leadership in immigration enforcement.

The experience clearly shows that strong Federal leadership, based on a comprehensive, tamperproof, nondiscriminatory ID system, is a must. Mr. Avila's misgivings notwithstanding, the remarkably low percentage of error and fraud in the astronomical volume of credit card transactions shows that it is technically attainable.

And after reading his arguments, I wondered why Maldef opposed the bill at all, since employers' greed, the porosity of any ID system, the exception planned for small enterprises and the expanded temporary-workers program would add up to just as many or more immigrants as ever.

Perhaps Maldef's greatest fear was not that the bill would not have worked but that it just might have begun to end the current anarchy, in which so many have a stake, and to channel long-established flows of undocumented immigration into legal channels.

Mr. Avila mischaracterizes the objectives of immigration reform as "to stop the flow of immigrants and to save, for citizens, jobs now held by undocumented workers." More accurately, the bill would have reasserted control over our borders, once again making the composition and volume of our annual immigration flow a matter of national choice rather than a process of immigrant self-selection.

It may well be that we will accept as much or more immigration once we have reasserted control, but at least we as a society will be able to say it was not left entirely to chance. DAVID E. SIMCOX Washington, Dec. 20, 1982

## **Classification**

---

**Language:** ENGLISH

TO STOP THE 'ANARCHY' IN U.S. IMMIGRATION

**Subject:** **IMMIGRATION** (91%); **IMMIGRATION** LAW (90%); ILLEGAL IMMIGRANTS (89%); EDITORIALS & OPINIONS (89%); HISPANIC AMERICANS (78%); US STATE GOVERNMENT (77%); FOREIGN LABOR (77%); LITIGATION (77%); LETTERS & COMMENTS (74%); TEMPORARY EMPLOYMENT (73%); BORDER CONTROL (73%); SMALL BUSINESS (72%)

**Industry:** CREDIT CARDS (69%)

**Geographic:** CALIFORNIA, USA (79%); UNITED STATES (93%)

---

End of Document