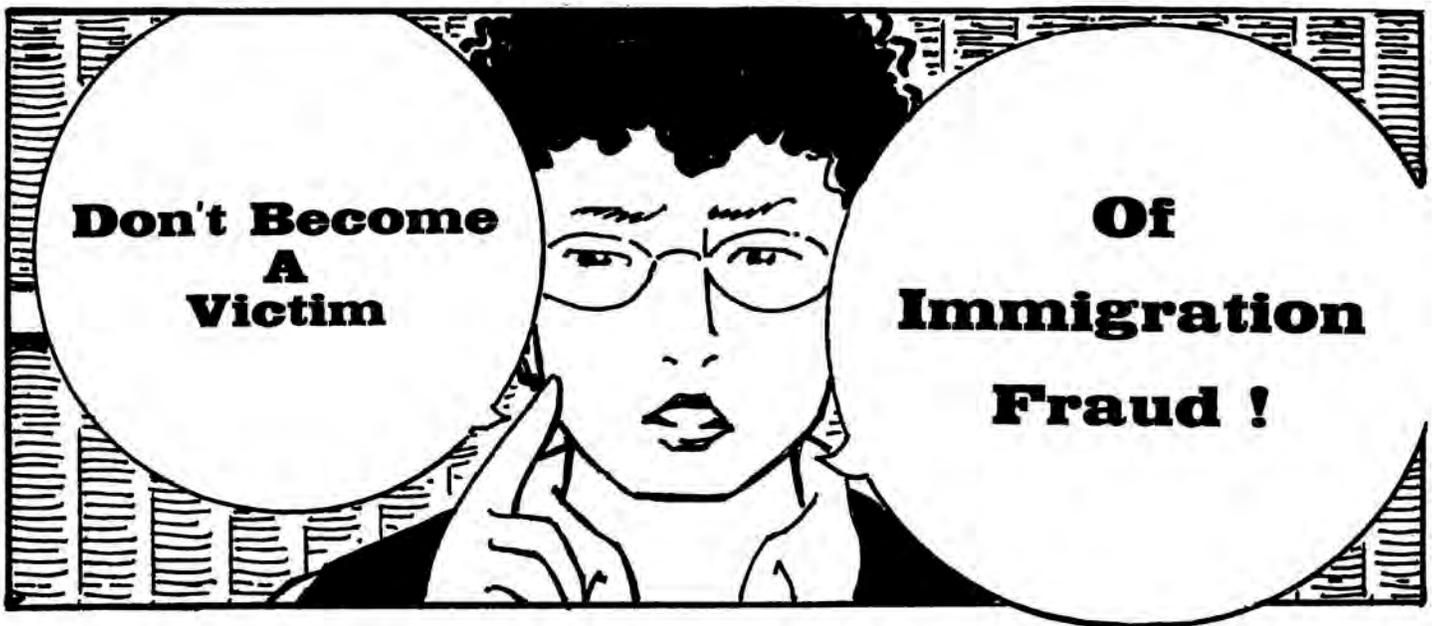


# **Watch Out When You Seek Help with Your Immigration Papers!**



## **Need Immigration Help?**

**California Edition**

**Look Inside for More Information**

Prepared by the Immigrant Legal Resource Center  
(English Version of 10 Year and Fake Amnesty Scams)

## Table of Contents

Title Page	3
Definitions	4
The “10 Year Benefit” Scam	5
The “New Amnesty” Scam	19
Help with Your Immigration Papers	34
Information/Know Your Rights Flyer	35



TEACHING, INTERPRETING AND CHANGING LAW SINCE 1979

The Immigrant Legal Resource Center is a California-based national training and resource center that offers low-cost, quality services in the form of consultations, trainings and publications. Established in 1979, the ILRC’s commitment to high standards in the field of immigration is demonstrated by its numerous publications and trainings, its work on precedent-setting cases in the U.S. Supreme Court and Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals. The ILRC legal staff also advises nonprofit agencies and private attorneys, offering expert telephone consultation and other work on issues relating to immigration and crimes through a contract service. The ILRC continues its commitment to the immigrant community by offering its manuals and publications to attorneys, paralegals, legal service workers, criminal defense attorneys, social workers, and community-based advocates, and by sponsoring continuing legal education services for members of the California Bar Association. Over the years, the ILRC has evolved beyond the traditional definition of a resource center. Partnerships with grassroots organization have led to leadership training, social change organizing, and other community-based work focused on increasing the civic capacity of newcomers to address the laws and policies that affect their daily lives.

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Immigrant Legal Resource Center  
San Francisco, CA



**THIS BOOKLET WAS  
CREATED TO TEACH  
PEOPLE  
HOW TO AVOID  
IMMIGRATION SCAMS**

**Each of the Stories told here is based  
on a real-life situation.**

**Help for Victims of Immigration Fraud:**

Produced by the Immigrant Legal Resource Center,  
With Generous Funding from the Zellerbach Family Foundation  
Artwork and Design by Dwayne Bibby & Nora Privitera  
Translation to Spanish by Cynthia Alvarez  
Translation to Chinese by Cheryl Tsui & Janet Wong

# DEFINITIONS

## of some words used in this booklet

**CIS or US Citizenship & Immigration Services:** The federal government agency that approves or denies immigration and citizenship applications.

**Immigration Court:** The federal government court that decides whether or not people should be deported.

**Immigration Consultant:** A person or company who can help you file documents and applications with U.S. Citizenship & Immigration Services.

**Lawyer/Attorney:** A person with a law degree who is licensed by the state to give legal advice and represent people in immigration court and handle other legal matters.

**Accredited Representative:** A person who works for a non-profit organization or agency that is licensed by the federal government to provide immigration legal services and represent clients in immigration interviews and court hearings.

**Lawful Permanent Residence:** The legal status of being permitted to remain permanently in the United States, even though you're not a citizen of the United States. Also called a "green card" or "mica," or "LPR status."

**Political Asylum:** An immigration status given to people who have experienced or who have a fear of persecution in their home countries because of their political opinion, race, religion, ethnicity or membership in a social group.

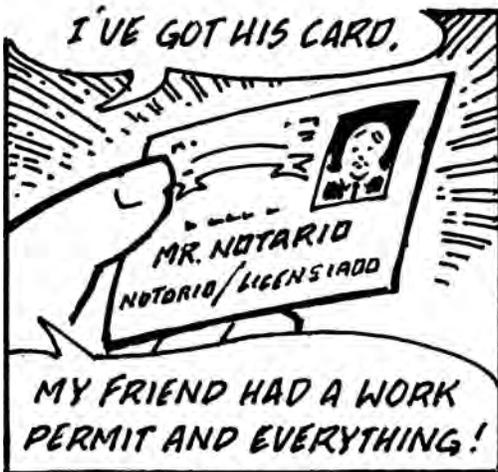
**Naturalization:** The process of applying for U.S. Citizenship (you have to be a lawful permanent resident, usually for at least 5 years, before you can become a U.S. citizen).

**Cancellation of Removal:** A provision of the immigration law that allows a very small number of people to remain in the U.S. and become lawful permanent residents. To qualify, the applicant must be in removal/deportation proceedings in immigration court, and must have a parent, spouse or child under 21 who is a U.S. citizen or lawful permanent resident who would suffer "exceptional and extremely unusual hardship" if the applicant were deported. The ordinary hardship of returning to your home country doesn't count. The applicant's hardship also doesn't count. The applicant also has to have been in the U.S. for over 10 years and have good moral character.

**Employment Authorization:** A temporary "work permit" from CIS that may be granted to people with some kinds of applications pending before CIS or the immigration court.

**Labor Certification:** The first stage in a 3 stage process where an employer is applying for lawful permanent residence on behalf of an employee. The employer must prove that there is a shortage of U.S. workers in the employee's type of job.

# The "10 Year Benefit" Scam



LOOK, WE'VE GOT TO TRY THIS. I DON'T WANT TO SPEND THE REST OF MY DAYS WORRYING ABOUT IMMIGRATION, AND LOOKING BEHIND MY BACK, AND I'M TIRED OF WORKING FOR A FEW DOLLARS HERE AND THERE. I SAW HIS WORK PERMIT!



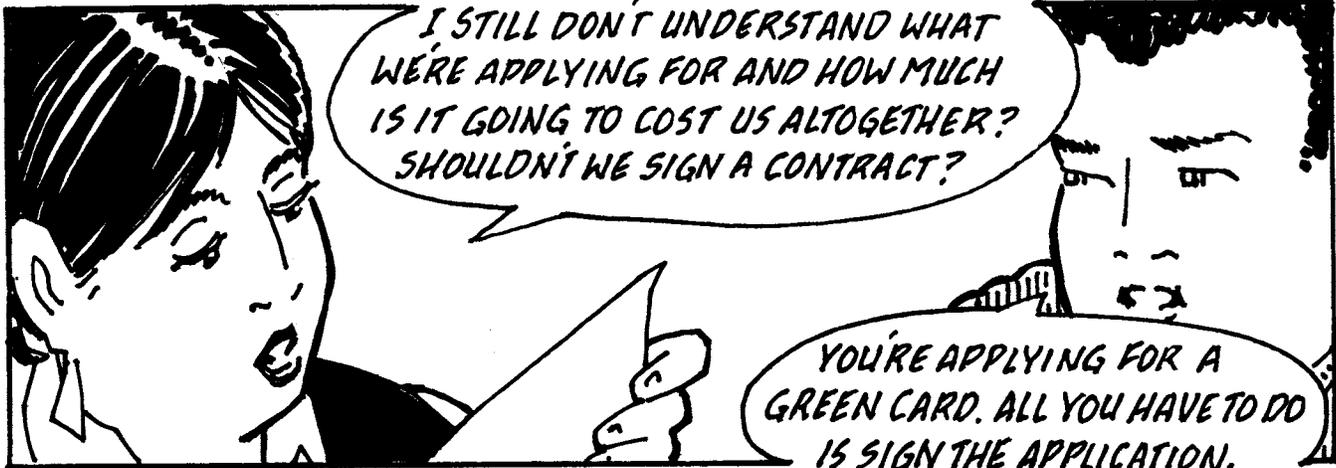
The "10 Year Benefit" Scam



WE'RE GOING TO HAVE YOU SIGN THIS APPLICATION. IT WILL GET YOU A DATE IN IMMIGRATION COURT IN FRONT OF AN IMMIGRATION JUDGE, WHO WILL GIVE YOU A GREEN CARD BASED ON YOUR MORE THAN 10 YEARS IN THE U.S.



I'LL NEED YOUR \$1000 DEPOSIT, AND YOU NEED TO BRING ME ALL YOUR BIRTH CERTIFICATES, MARRIAGE CERTIFICATES, ETC.



I STILL DON'T UNDERSTAND WHAT WE'RE APPLYING FOR AND HOW MUCH IS IT GOING TO COST US ALTOGETHER? SHOULDN'T WE SIGN A CONTRACT?

YOU'RE APPLYING FOR A GREEN CARD. ALL YOU HAVE TO DO IS SIGN THE APPLICATION.

WE TAKE CARE OF THE REST, I DON'T KNOW HOW MUCH IT WILL COST. IT ALL DEPENDS ON WHAT MR. NOTARIO SAYS IS NECESSARY.



WHEN DO WE GET OUR WORK PERMITS?

AFTER YOU APPEAR IN COURT IN FRONT OF AN IMMIGRATION JUDGE, WE'LL FILE ANOTHER APPLICATION FOR YOU AND YOU CAN GET THE WORK PERMIT THEN.



BUT DON'T WORRY. HE'S GOTTEN GREEN CARDS FOR LOTS OF PEOPLE THIS WAY.

The "10 Year Benefit" Scam

4 MONTHS LATER AT THE NOTARIO'S OFFICE

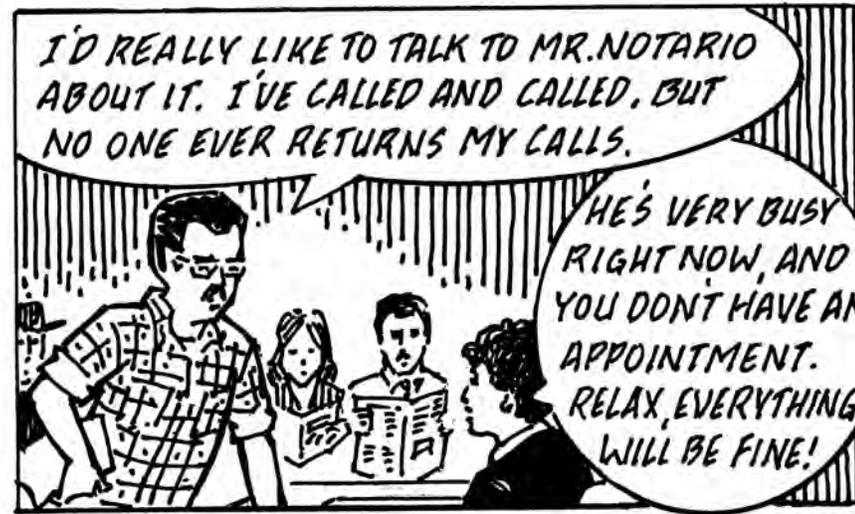


WHAT IS THIS?  
I CAN'T READ IT.

MY SON SAYS  
IT SAYS SOMETHING  
ABOUT ASYLUM.

WHAT IS  
THAT?

OH, IT'S ONLY A  
NOTICE FROM THE  
IMMIGRATION SERVICE  
THAT YOUR APPLICATION  
WAS RECEIVED. DON'T  
WORRY ABOUT IT. YOU  
DON'T HAVE TO DO  
ANYTHING, YOU'LL  
GET SOMETHING ELSE  
IN THE MAIL SOON.



I'D REALLY LIKE TO TALK TO MR. NOTARIO  
ABOUT IT. I'VE CALLED AND CALLED, BUT  
NO ONE EVER RETURNS MY CALLS.

HE'S VERY BUSY  
RIGHT NOW, AND  
YOU DON'T HAVE AN  
APPOINTMENT.  
RELAX, EVERYTHING  
WILL BE FINE!



2 MONTHS LATER  
MR. NOTARIO'S OFFICE  
SAYS WE HAVE TO GO TO  
THE IMMIGRATION COURT  
ON TUESDAY



BUT HE SAYS WE HAVE TO HIRE  
MR. ABOGADO TO COME WITH US  
TO THE HEARING, WHO IS HE?

MAYBE WE ARE GOING TO GET  
OUR WORK PERMITS SOON.



I HOPE SO BUT  
I'M SCARED.

MR. NOTARIO  
NEVER ANSWERED OUR  
QUESTIONS AND WE'VE PAID  
HIM \$3000 SO FAR AND WE  
CAN'T EVEN GET INTO SEE  
HIM. AND WHO IS  
MR. ABOGADO?

WHY DOESN'T  
MR NOTARIO COME  
WITH US TO THE  
HEARING?



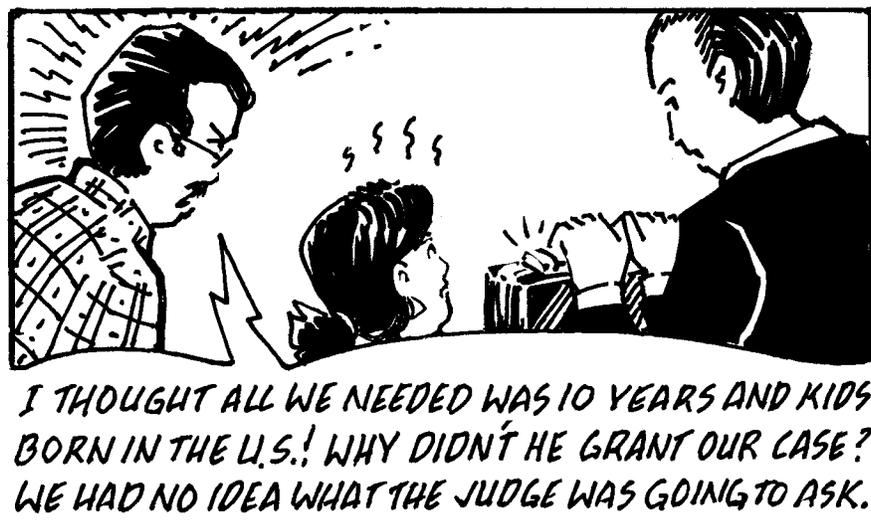
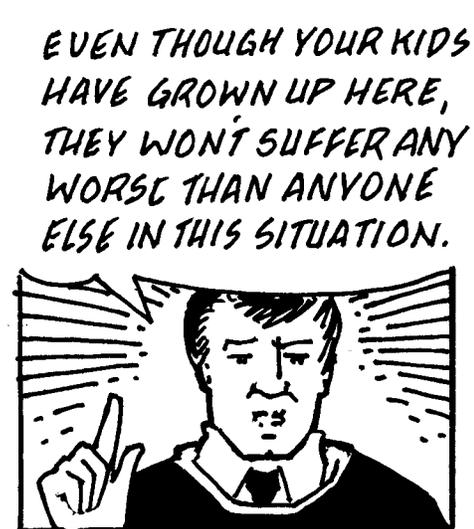
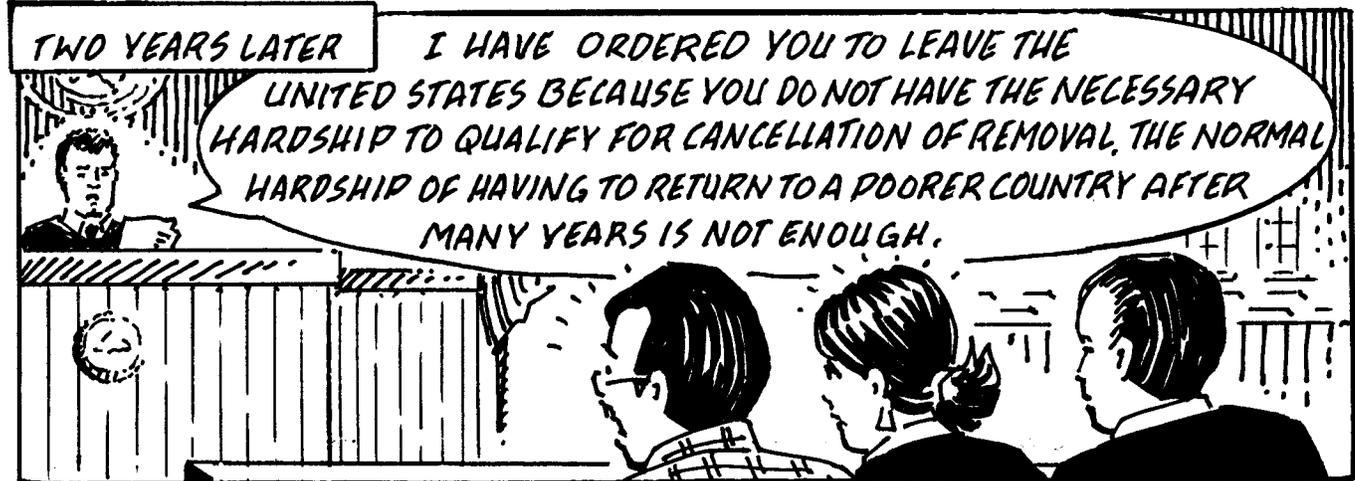
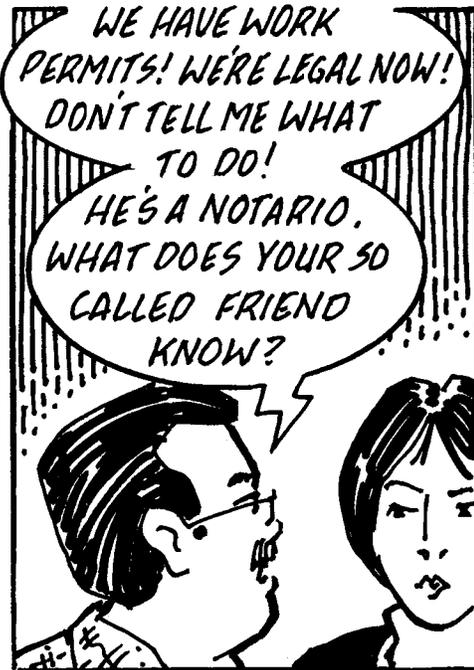
ALRIGHT, YOUR NEXT HEARING WILL BE IN A YEAR, AND AT THAT TIME, MR. ABOGADO, YOU HAD BETTER BE PREPARED TO PRESENT THE CASE AND REPRESENT YOUR CLIENTS.



SEE MAMA, WE HAVE WORK PERMITS, THAT MEANS THAT WE ARE ON OUR WAY TO BECOMING LEGAL HERE, YOU SHOULD NOT HAVE DOUBTED THE LAWYER.

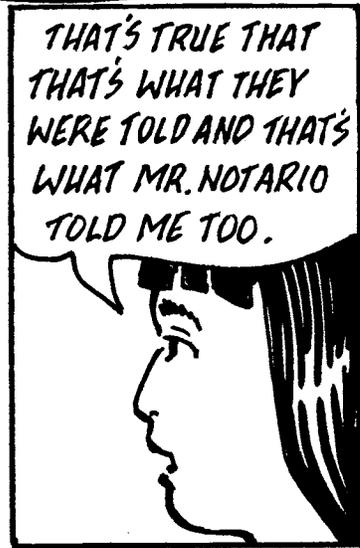
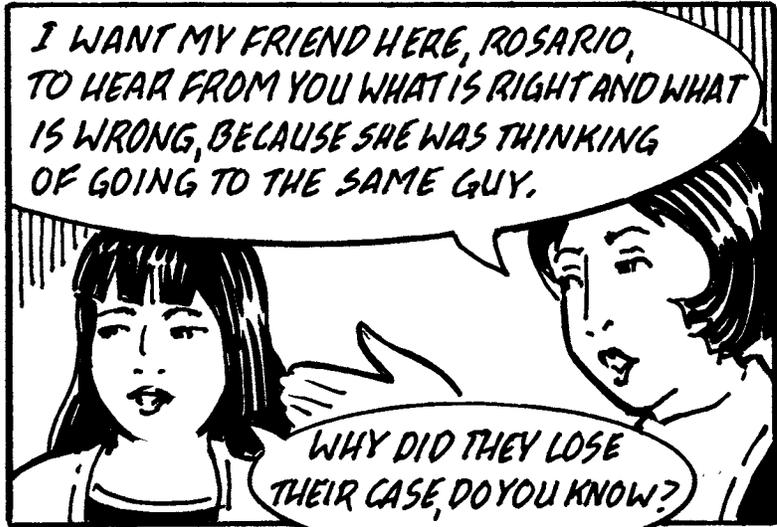


The "10 Year Benefit" Scam





The "10 Year Benefit" Scam



IS THERE  
A 10 YEAR  
BENEFIT?

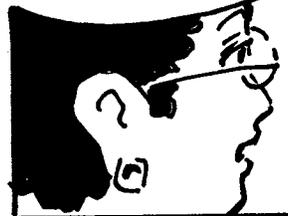


THERE IS SOMETHING CALLED CANCELLATION OF REMOVAL AND ONE OF THE REQUIREMENTS IS THAT YOU HAVE 10 YEARS IN THE U.S. BEFORE YOU GET INTO THE IMMIGRATION COURT SYSTEM.



BUT THERE ARE OTHER REQUIREMENTS THAT ARE VERY, VERY DIFFICULT TO MEET.

YOU HAVE TO HAVE A PERMANENT RESIDENT OR U.S. CITIZEN PARENT, SPOUSE, OR CHILD WHO WILL SUFFER WHAT THEY CALL EXCEPTIONAL AND EXTREMELY UNUSUAL HARDSHIP IF YOU ARE ORDERED TO LEAVE THE U.S.



WELL, I HAVE 3 U.S. CITIZEN CHILDREN THAT WOULD HAVE A HARD TIME IF I WENT BACK TO MEXICO. CANT I APPLY?



FIRST, YOU CANT APPLY FOR CANCELLATION OF REMOVAL UNLESS YOU'RE ALREADY IN DEPORTATION PROCEEDINGS BEFORE AN IMMIGRATION JUDGE, AND THAT MEANS THAT IF YOU DONT WIN YOUR CASE THE JUDGE WILL ORDER YOU TO LEAVE THE U.S.

YOU CANT JUST APPLY WITH THE IMMIGRATION SERVICE



SECOND, THE HARDSHIP YOUR CHILDREN WOULD SUFFER HAS TO BE ABOVE AND BEYOND THE KIND OF HARDSHIP THAT NORMALLY WOULD OCCUR IF YOU HAD TO RELOCATE BACK TO YOUR COUNTRY. IT WOULD HAVE TO BE SOMETHING THAT'S BOTH SERIOUS AND VERY UNUSUAL.

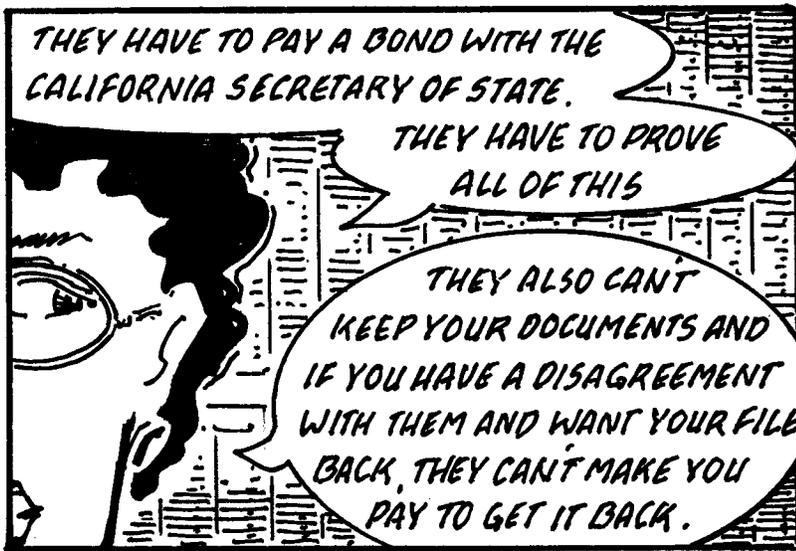
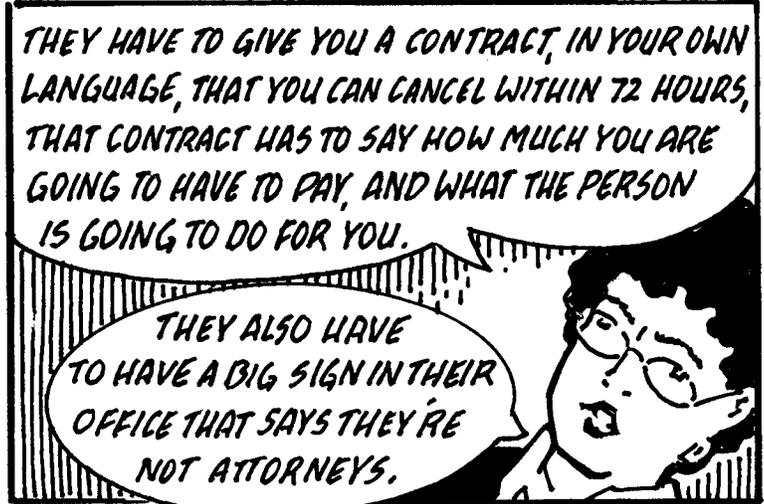
The "10 Year Benefit" Scam



FOR ONE THING, IF SOMEONE TELLS YOU HE'S A NOTARIO OR LICENCIADO AND THEREFORE A LAWYER, HE'S LYING. IF YOU'RE NOT SURE, ASK FOR PROOF THAT HE'S AN ATTORNEY.



YOU REALLY SHOULD GO TO AN ATTORNEY OR SOMEONE WHO WORKS FOR A NONPROFIT AND IS CALLED AN "ACCREDITED REPRESENTATIVE" FOR IMMIGRATION ADVICE. PEOPLE WHO HELP WITH IMMIGRATION PAPERS AND ARE NOT ATTORNEYS OR ACCREDITED REPRESENTATIVES ARE CALLED "IMMIGRATION CONSULTANTS."



IF THERE'S AN ATTORNEY TELLING PEOPLE THEY CAN GET GREEN CARDS JUST FOR BEING HERE 10 YEARS AND MAYBE HAVING A CLEAN RECORD AND CHILDREN BORN HERE,...

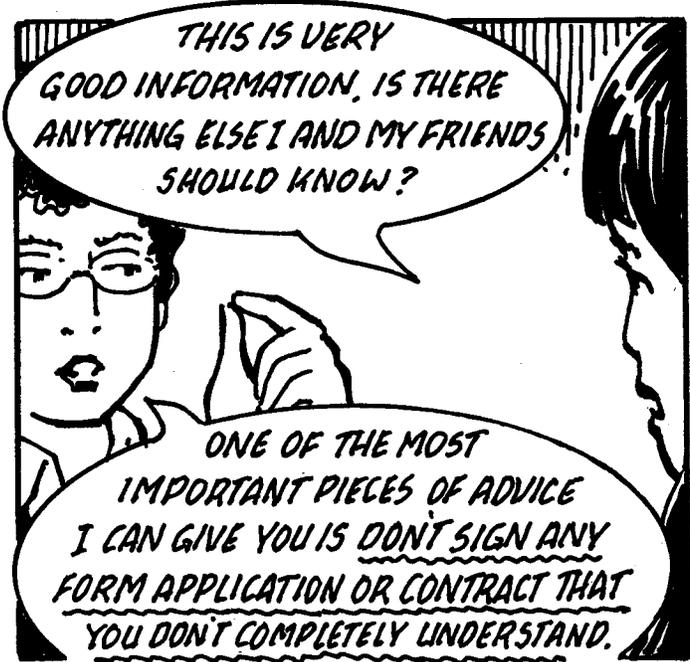


The "10 Year Benefit" Scam

YOU MAY EVEN WANT TO MAKE A COMPLAINT ABOUT THAT PERSON TO THE STATE BAR AT 1-800-843-9053

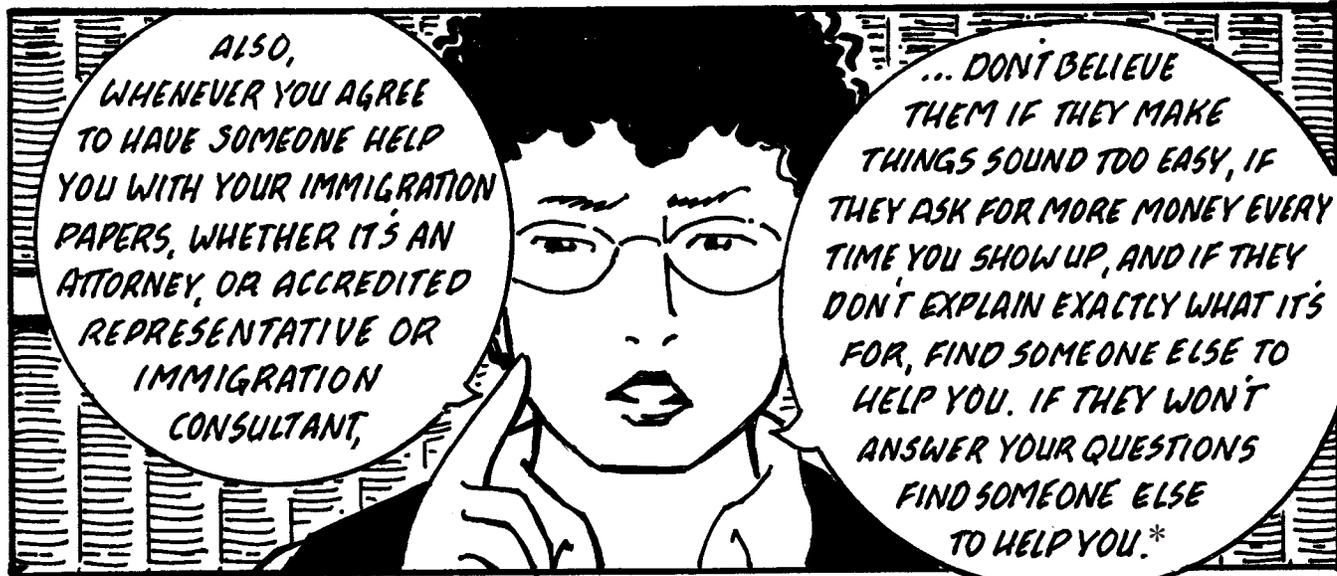


ATTORNEYS CAN LOSE THEIR LICENSES IF THEY TRY TO DEFRAUD THEIR CLIENTS AND THEY ARE REQUIRED TO UNDERSTAND THE LAW AND DO A GOOD JOB OF REPRESENTING THEIR CLIENTS.



THIS IS VERY GOOD INFORMATION, IS THERE ANYTHING ELSE I AND MY FRIENDS SHOULD KNOW?

ONE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT PIECES OF ADVICE I CAN GIVE YOU IS DON'T SIGN ANY FORM APPLICATION OR CONTRACT THAT YOU DON'T COMPLETELY UNDERSTAND.



ALSO, WHENEVER YOU AGREE TO HAVE SOMEONE HELP YOU WITH YOUR IMMIGRATION PAPERS, WHETHER IT'S AN ATTORNEY, OR ACCREDITED REPRESENTATIVE OR IMMIGRATION CONSULTANT,

... DON'T BELIEVE THEM IF THEY MAKE THINGS SOUND TOO EASY, IF THEY ASK FOR MORE MONEY EVERY TIME YOU SHOW UP, AND IF THEY DON'T EXPLAIN EXACTLY WHAT IT'S FOR, FIND SOMEONE ELSE TO HELP YOU. IF THEY WON'T ANSWER YOUR QUESTIONS FIND SOMEONE ELSE TO HELP YOU.\*



THANKS SO MUCH FOR THIS INFORMATION, I REALLY APPRECIATE IT AND WILL TELL MY COMMUNITY.

YOU ARE WELCOME AND GOOD LUCK!

\*See flyer on the last page of this booklet for more information on avoiding immigration fraud.

## *Things to Remember about the 10 Year Scam*

### **REMEMBER:**

---

- You can't get a green card just because you have lived in the US for over 10 years and you have children born here.
- Anyone who tells you it's easy to get a green card simply because you've been here 10 years is lying to you.
- Immigration law is complicated so make sure you go to someone who is honest and knowledgeable (see the list of good organizations in this book).
- You have a right to ask questions about your immigration case! Don't trust people who refuse to answer your questions.
- Don't sign forms or documents that you don't understand.
- Review the attached Know Your Rights handout.



# The "New Amnesty" Scam



IMMIGRATION HAS BEEN ALL OVER THE NEWS, BUT THIS IS THE BEST I'VE HEARD YET!



WHERE DO WE GO TO SIGN UP?



HERE, THE LADY'S NAME IS VILMA GARCIA,

IT SAYS SHE'S GOING TO BE AT THE HOTEL LINDA NEXT WEEK AND GIVE A PRESENTATION.



LET'S GET ALL OUR IMPORTANT PAPERS TOGETHER SO WE'RE READY.

The "New Amnesty" Scam

HOTEL CONFERENCE ROOM



THERE'S GOING TO BE A NEW IMMIGRATION LAW COMING. I KNOW, I HAVE INSIDE INFORMATION BECAUSE I KNOW PEOPLE IN IMMIGRATION, AND NOT EVERYBODY IS GOING TO BE ABLE TO GET IT, BECAUSE THERE AREN'T ENOUGH NUMBERS, SO YOU SHOULD GET IN LINE AS SOON AS YOU CAN.



IF YOU SIGN UP WITH ME TODAY, YOU'LL BE ONE OF THE FIRST IN LINE, AND I CAN GUARANTEE YOU THAT YOU'LL GET IN. ALL YOU NEED TO SHOW IS THAT YOU'VE BEEN HERE SINCE JANUARY 1 AND YOU DON'T HAVE A REALLY BAD RECORD.

BUT I THOUGHT THEY GAVE UP ON AN IMMIGRATION BILL?



BELIEVE ME, I KNOW. I'M AN IMMIGRATION EXPERT, NOTARIO, AND LIKE I SAID, I HAVE INSIDE INFORMATION FROM THE IMMIGRATION DEPARTMENT ITSELF, WHAT YOU'RE GOING TO NEED TO PROVE IS THAT YOU'VE BEEN HERE SINCE JANUARY 1, 2007.

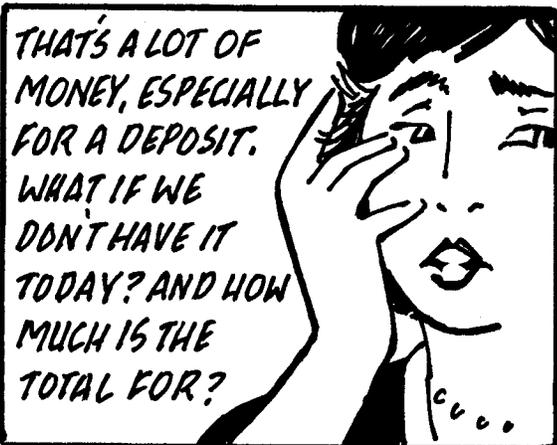
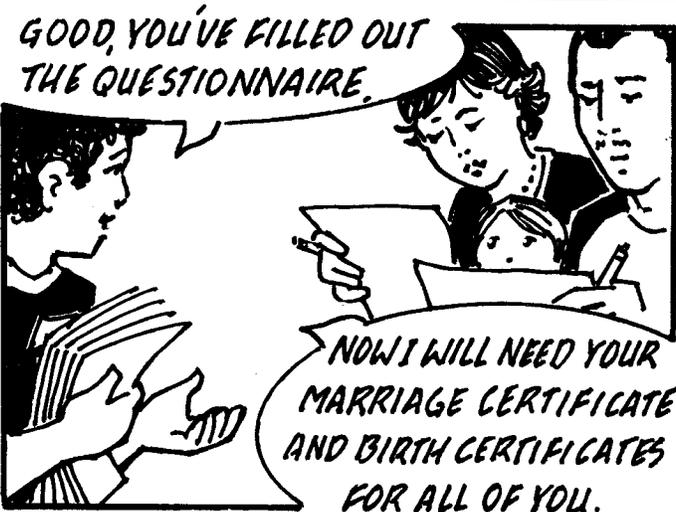
THAT MEANS THAT YOU HAVE TO SHOW RENT RECEIPTS, PAY STUBS, AND ANY OTHER INFORMATION THAT SHOWS HOW LONG YOU'VE LIVED HERE.

YOU ALSO HAVE TO DO FINGERPRINTS AND YOU HAVE TO FILL OUT THESE FORMS, INCLUDING AN APPLICATION FOR A WORK PERMIT AND A BIOGRAPHIC FORM. YOU ALSO HAVE TO SUBMIT YOUR BIRTH, MARRIAGE, AND DIVORCE CERTIFICATES FOR EVERYONE WHO IS APPLYING.





FILL OUT THE QUESTIONNAIRE THAT MY ASSISTANTS ARE PASSING OUT. WHEN YOU HAVE COMPLETED IT, ONE OF MY ASSISTANTS WILL TALK TO YOU.



The "New Amnesty" Scam

THE TOTAL FEE DEPENDS ON HOW MUCH WORK IS INVOLVED.



I'VE GOT A LOT OF PEOPLE TO TALK TO, AND THEY'RE READY TO SIGN UP. I'LL COME BACK TO YOU LATER.



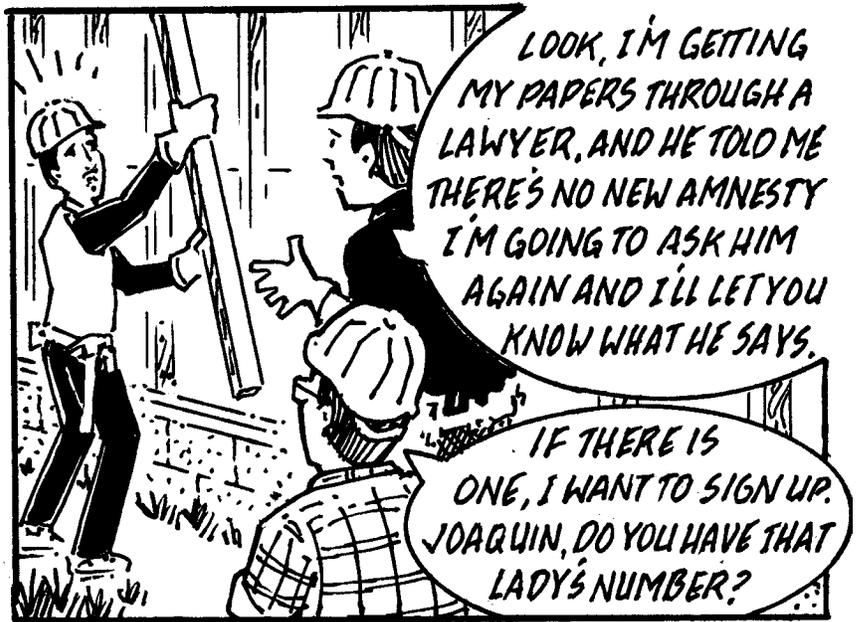
WE CAN'T PASS UP THIS CHANCE! THINK OF IT. WE WON'T HAVE TO STRUGGLE SO MUCH, WE'LL GET BETTER JOBS, WE WON'T HAVE TO WORRY ABOUT IMMIGRATION BUSTING DOWN THE DOOR OR RAIDING US AT WORK!



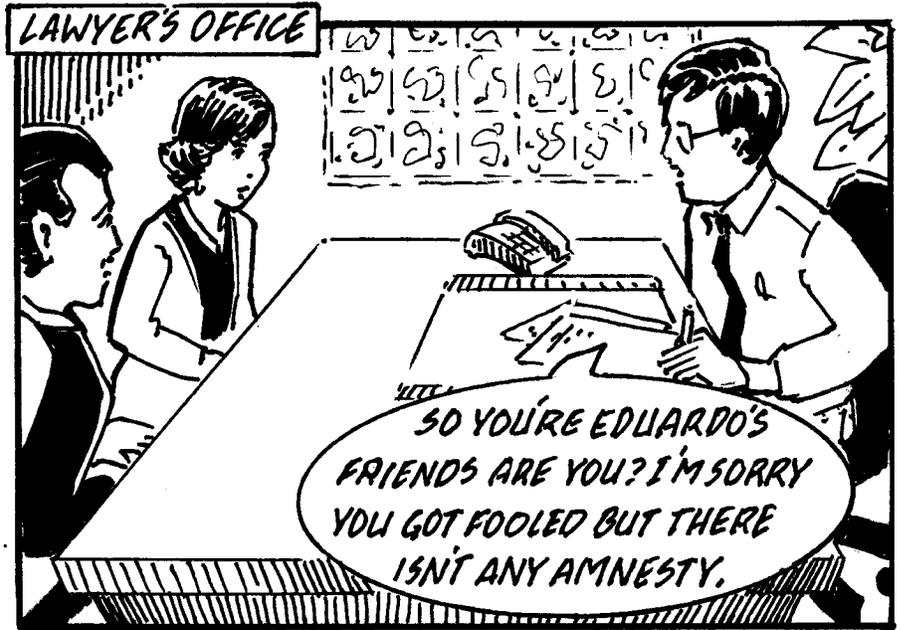
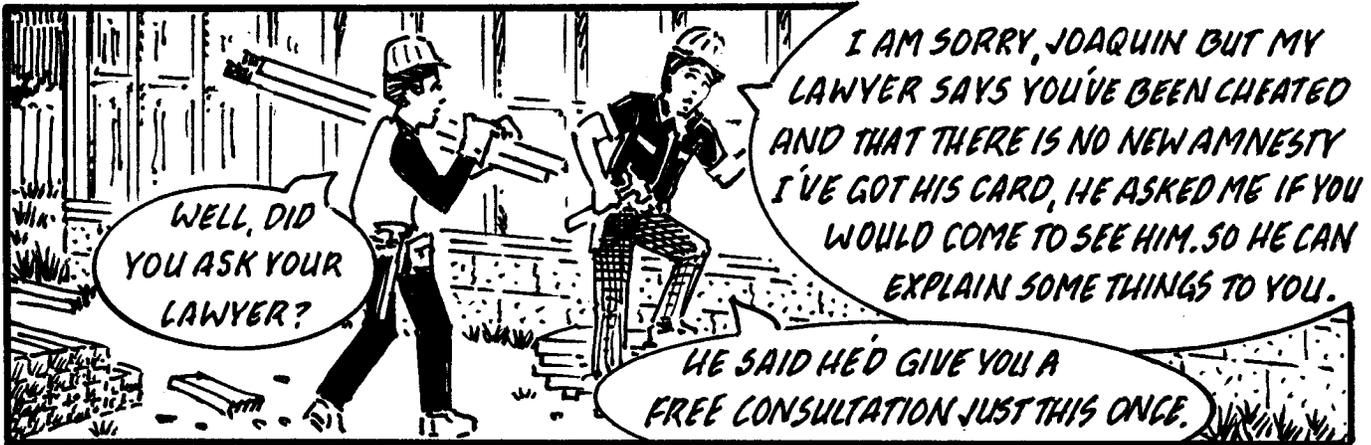
HEY MISTER, I DON'T HAVE \$3000 TO GIVE YOU RIGHT THIS MINUTE, HOW LONG ARE YOU GOING TO BE HERE TODAY?



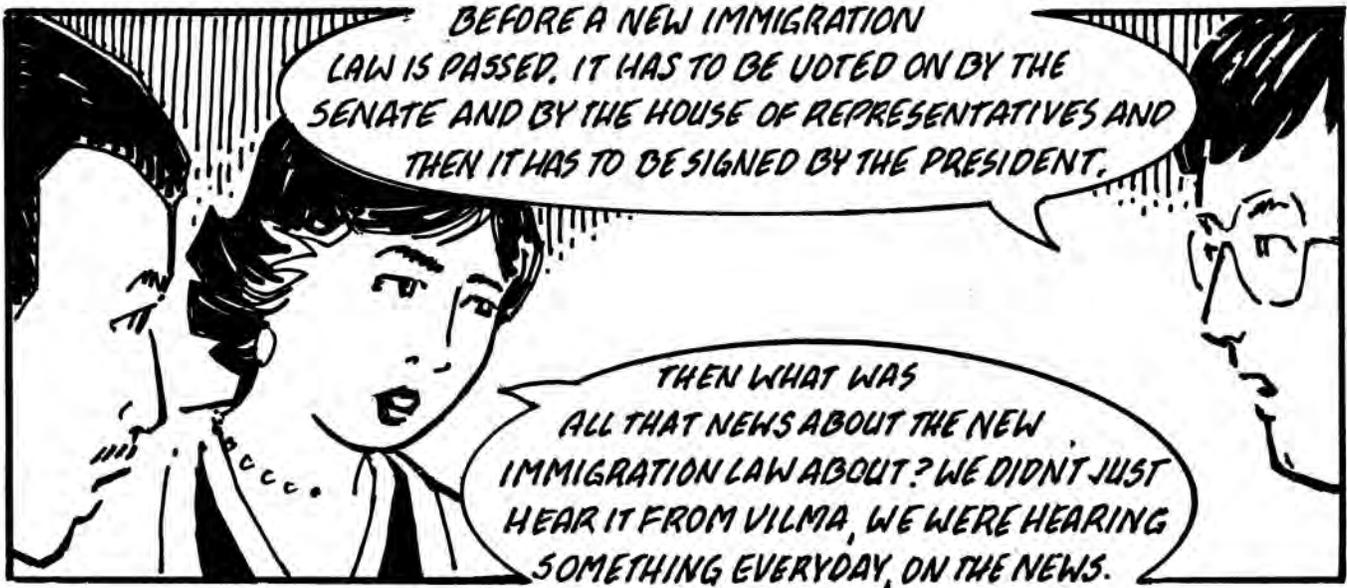
The "New Amnesty" Scam



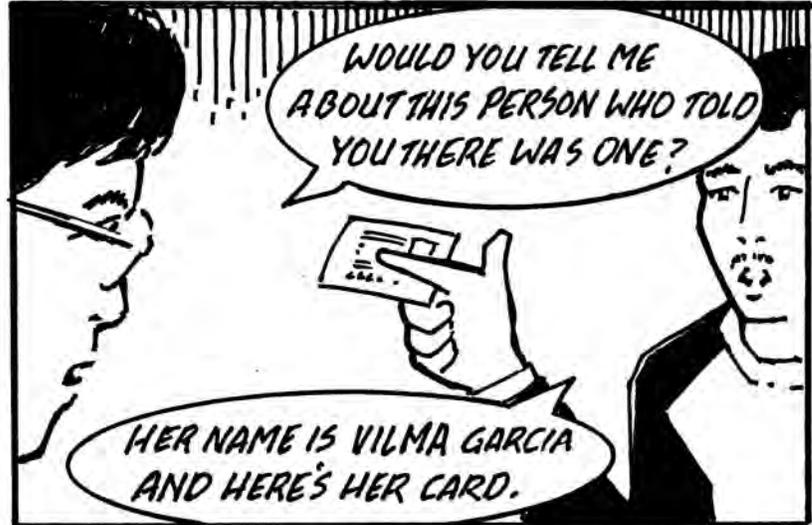
I AM TOO. I WASN'T GOING TO TELL YOU THIS, AT LEAST NOT YET. BUT EDUARDO SAID HIS LAWYER TOLD HIM THERE IS NO NEW AMNESTY. HE'S GOING TO CHECK TO MAKE SURE.



The "New Amnesty" Scam



THERE IS NO NEW IMMIGRATION LAW, AND NO NEW AMNESTY.



SHE TOLD US THERE WAS A NEW AMNESTY AND WHAT WE HAD TO DO TO APPLY, SHE SEEMED TO KNOW WHAT SHE WAS TALKING ABOUT AND SHE CAME TO A HOTEL IN OUR TOWN. SHE IS NATIONAL; SHE LIVES IN FLORIDA.



SHE SAID SHE WAS AN EXPERT BUT SHE NEVER SAID WHETHER OR NOT SHE WAS A LAWYER.

HAVE YOU EVER HEARD OF HER?

I HAVEN'T HEARD OF HER BUT THERE ARE LOTS OF PEOPLE LIKE HER WHO PREY ON IMMIGRANTS SOME ARE LAWYERS, SOME AREN'T, YOU CAN CHECK THE STATE BAR WHICH IS THE ORGANIZATION THAT LICENSES LAWYERS, TO SEE IF SOMEONE REALLY IS A LAWYER.

IF SHE'S NOT LICENSED HERE IN CALIFORNIA, SHE MAYBE ABLE TO PRACTICE IMMIGRATION LAW ANYWAY, BUT SHE WOULD HAVE TO TELL YOU WHAT STATE SHE IS LICENSED IN. YOU CAN CHECK WITH THE SAME BAR OF THAT STATE TO SEE IF SHE HAS A LICENSE,

IF SHE IS REALLY A LAWYER YOU SHOULD FILE A COMPLAINT AGAINST HER.

I COULD HELP YOU WITH THAT.

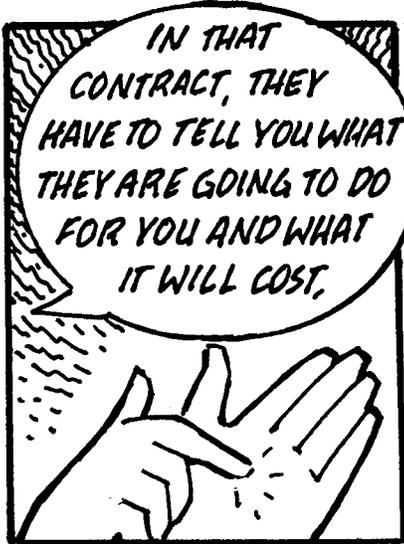
WHAT IF SHE'S NOT A LAWYER?

WE REALLY DON'T KNOW.

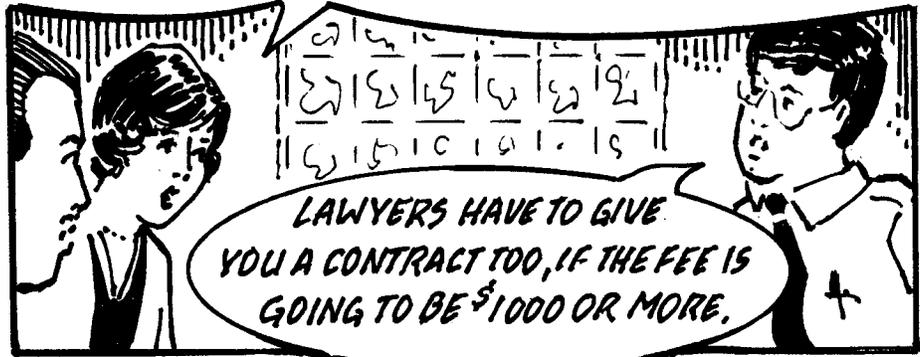
PEOPLE WHO ARE NOT LAWYERS BUT HELP PEOPLE WITH THEIR IMMIGRATION PAPERS ARE CALLED IMMIGRATION CONSULTANTS.

THEY HAVE TO FOLLOW THE LAWS OF CALIFORNIA.

THEY HAVE TO POST A BOND OF \$50,000 WITH THE CALIFORNIA SECRETARY OF STATE, AND THEY'RE NOT ALLOWED TO GIVE LEGAL ADVICE. THEY HAVE TO GIVE YOU A CONTRACT IN YOUR OWN LANGUAGE, OR A LANGUAGE YOU UNDERSTAND THAT YOU CAN CANCEL WITHIN 72 HOURS, WHICH IS THREE DAYS,



WELL SHE CERTAINLY DIDNT DO ANY OF THAT! DOES EVERYBODY WHO HELPS PEOPLE WITH THEIR IMMIGRATION PAPERS AND IS NOT A LAWYER HAVE TO GIVE YOU A CONTRACT!



THE ONLY PEOPLE THAT DONT HAVE TO GIVE YOU A CONTRACT ARE "ACCREDITED REPRESENTATIVES." THESE ARE PEOPLE WHO WORK FOR NONPROFIT ORGANIZATIONS AND WHO ARE RECOGNIZED BY THE BOARD OF IMMIGRATION APPEALS.



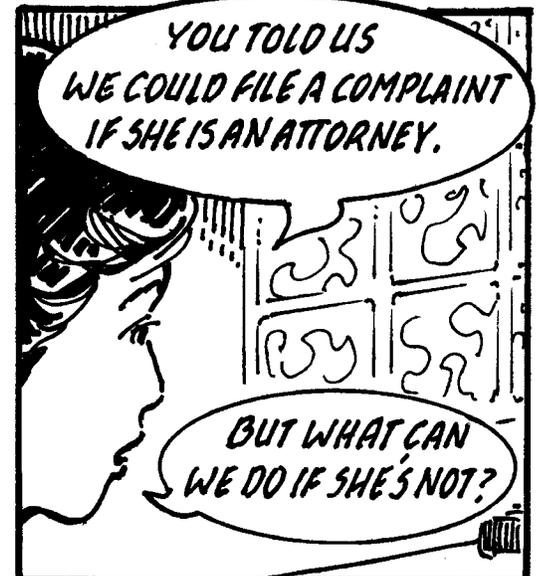
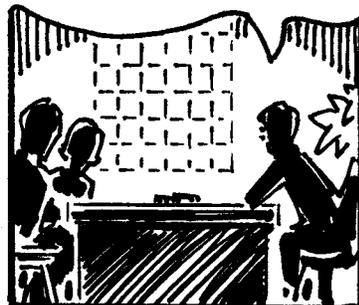
TELL US, IS THERE ANYTHING ELSE THAT THESE IMMIGRATION CONSULTANTS ARE NOT ALLOWED TO DO?



THEY ALSO CAN'T CALL THEMSELVES "NOTARIOS" BECAUSE THAT TERM CONFUSES PEOPLE WHO THINK THAT "NOTARIOS" ARE THE SAME AS LAWYERS.



I'D ALSO LIKE YOU TO TELL YOUR FRIENDS WHAT TO WATCH OUT FOR SO THEY WON'T BECOME VICTIMS TOO.



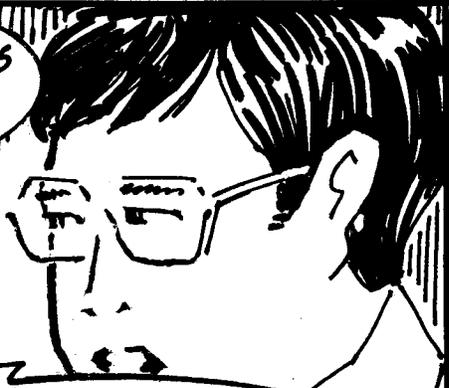
THE DISTRICT ATTORNEY IS THE OFFICE THAT PROSECUTES CRIMES IN A COUNTY, AND ALSO PROTECTS VICTIMS OF FRAUD, SOME OF THEM WILL DO THIS TYPE OF CASE, SOME WON'T



The "New Amnesty" Scam



WHY WOULD WE GO TO THE DISTRICT ATTORNEY?  
WON'T HE REPORT ME TO THE IMMIGRATION SERVICE?



A LOT OF TIMES DISTRICT ATTORNEYS OFFICES DO NOT REPORT PEOPLES IMMIGRATION STATUS.  
FOR EXAMPLE, IN SAN FRANCISCO AND SOME OTHER CITIES THE POLICE AND DISTRICT ATTORNEYS ARE NOT PERMITTED TO REPORT A PERSON'S IMMIGRATION STATUS TO THE IMMIGRATION SERVICE.



I REALLY DO WANT TO GET OUR MONEY BACK, BECAUSE WE HAD TO BORROW MOST OF IT, BUT HOW CAN WE GO AFTER HER WHEN SHE LIVES IN FLORIDA?



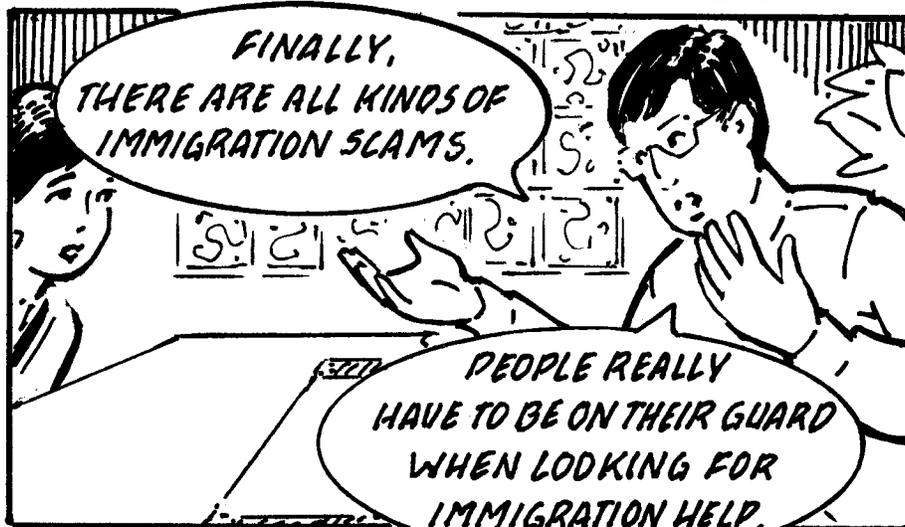
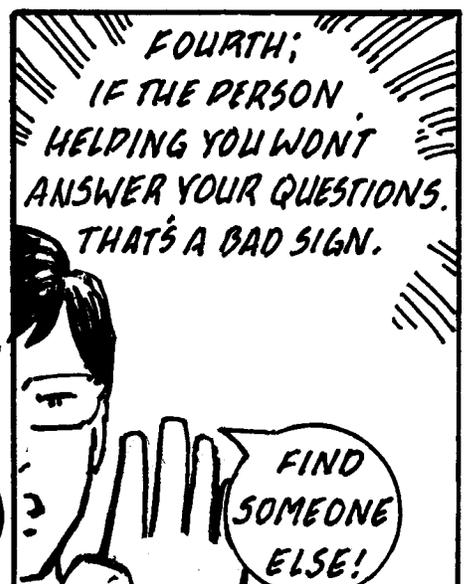
EVEN THOUGH SHE'S IN FLORIDA, BECAUSE SHE ENTERED INTO AN AGREEMENT WITH YOU HERE, SHE CAN STILL BE PROSECUTED HERE.



BUT IT WILL BE TRICKY BECAUSE YOU DON'T HAVE A STREET ADDRESS FOR HER



I MAY HAVE TO DO A LITTLE INVESTIGATING AND SEE IF ANYONE I KNOW HAS HEARD OF HER.  
BUT MEANWHILE YOU NEED TO TELL YOUR FRIENDS AND FAMILY NOT TO FALL VICTIM TO THOSE KINDS OF SCAMS



The "New Amnesty" Scam



IT MAKES ME SO ANGRY WHEN PEOPLE GET SCAMMED LIKE YOU DID.



I HAVE A FLYER THAT CONTAINS ALL THE INFORMATION I TOLD YOU PLUS MORE, HERE TAKE SOME COPIES AND PASS THEM OUT TO YOUR FRIENDS\*



\*See flyer on the last page of this booklet for more information on avoiding immigration fraud.

## *Summary Points for New Amnesty Scam*

### **REMEMBER:**

---

- Don't believe everything you hear.
- Just because people are talking about a new amnesty doesn't mean it is the law.
- Don't pay to sign up for a new amnesty without making sure that one exists.
- Always ask your immigration helper where he or she is licensed to practice law.
- If you can't afford a lawyer, find a non-profit organization that does immigration work (see the list of good organizations in this book).
- Some of these organizations are "accredited" and the people working for them are "accredited representatives." An accredited representative is authorized by the Board of Immigration Appeals to provide immigration services.
- If the person who wants to help you is neither a lawyer nor an accredited representative, be careful!
- You have a right to a second opinion, so don't be afraid to consult another lawyer or accredited representative before you pay any money or start any paperwork.
- Don't give your original documents like marriage certificates or birth certificates, to anyone. Give them copies ONLY.
- Review the attached Know Your Rights handout.



## NEED IMMIGRATION HELP?



### WATCH OUT FOR IMMIGRATION SCAMS!

Be careful when getting someone to help you with your immigration papers. Don't be fooled by false promises. You could lose your money *and* be removed or deported from the United States.

### DON'T BELIEVE ANYONE WHO SAYS:

- ❖ We can get you work permits right away.
- ❖ We offer no risk immigration.
- ❖ We can get U.S. visas for you and your family in a few weeks.
- ❖ We know people at CIS and can get your papers done quickly.

## THESE ARE LIES!

### THINGS YOU CAN DO TO PROTECT YOURSELF

- ❖ **Never** sign any blank application papers.
- ❖ **Never** sign any paper or immigration form that you do not fully understand. (Get someone you trust to translate it for you.)
- ❖ **Always** demand a written contract for any immigration services when you are not working with a recognized agency.
- ❖ **Do not** sign a contract that you don't understand.
- ❖ **Watch out** for anyone who wants you to pay immediately.
- ❖ **Always** get copies of the papers prepared for you.
- ❖ **Never** let anyone keep your original documents (example: birth certificates, marriage certificates).
- ❖ **Get** a receipt for any money you pay. (Make sure it has the amount paid, the date paid, your name, and the name of the person or business that you paid.)
- ❖ **Never** work with someone who will not answer your questions.





## KNOW YOUR RIGHTS!

**Anyone offering immigration help must follow certain laws. These are some of the most important ones:**

❖ A person who says he/she is a lawyer or attorney must have a license from the State Bar of any state. You can ask to see his/her license and write down the number, and you can call the State Bar where he/she is licensed to find out if the license is valid.

❖ A person who does immigration papers but is not a lawyer is called an immigration consultant.

### **An Immigration Consultant must obey these laws:**

1. Give you a written contract that:
  - ◆ is in your own language
  - ◆ that says you can cancel for any reason within 72 hours
  - ◆ that says how much money you have to pay
  - ◆ that says what kind of application the person will file for you
2. Pay a \$50,000 bond to the Secretary of State and give you proof of the bond.
3. Have a big sign in his/her office saying he/she is not an attorney and showing that the bond has been paid.
4. Never pretend to be a lawyer.
5. Never say he/she has special influence with CIS.
6. Never file any document for you without going over it with you and explaining it to you.
7. Never keep your original documents and refuse to return them unless you pay.
8. Never tell you to lie on an application.

### **What to do if someone has cheated you:**

- ❖ If the person cheating you is a lawyer, call the State Bar where he is licensed. In California, that number is: **(800) 843-9053**
- ❖ If the person cheating you is not a lawyer, you can call:
- ◆ Attorney General's Hotline (Office of Immig. Assistance): **(888) 587-0557**
  - ◆ And your city's police dept. *or* District Attorney's Office.