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### Our Land

The rights of Mexican Americans. To gain back all that had been lost, against those who took it from them. Farm workers rights, education, voting rights, political rights, and the return of land grants are the main overview of what they wanted as citizens of the U.S. A subject that I will be discussing is the Land and Land Grants taken away from Mexicans during and after the Mexican American War of 1846-1848.

I know for a fact that much of the Land that the U.S. has placed much of their infrastructure once belonged to Mexico. Those who lost this land were promised that they would still be treated like any other citizen, and for years were told that same exact lie. But when they asked to be given what is rightfully theirs, they were met with opposition from multiple races. Some that had no relation to them at all either as enemies or friends challenged them for their homes.

Previously the Treaty of Hidalgo in 1848 should have seen some merit of truth from those words, but from previous chapters I've read from **Mexicanos: A History of Mexicans in the United States** by **Manuel G. Gonzales**, the Gold Rush changed those thoughts of equality to ones of greed and prejudice. I believe that the Treaty should have been enforced and that if white people allowed for people of other nations to come into the U.S. to seek for gold, there should have been no reason at all to treat Mexicans so badly.

The land on which they lived held countless generations of blood, sweat, and tears drenching the land with their dreams, a Holy place for them. We in the U.S. hold our own national monuments with genuine care and pride for what we have accomplished, but when it comes down to any form of traditional site or otherwise belonging to other nations, we hold them with little value. Most likely due to the belief that we think we are superior or because it means nothing to us.

Going along reading that any form of Grant for that land was protected under Spanish and Mexican Laws, which many a time the U.S. did not acknowledge as viable. For these actions many heirs of land resented the actions of the U.S. for not protecting their rights. Losing their property either through the court or by force. One such grant that held much resentment was the Tierra Amarilla Land Grant, which was only signed by one heir who held the rights to it, while the others did not partake in the signing. Afterwards the grant was taken illegally from that family. Much land was taken from people through this method.

Though it is easy to see that unfairness going on with how Chicanos were mistreated throughout the 1960s and 1990s. I have seen through the words of others the injustices

committed, the amount of cases where entire livelihoods were taken away because of greed and neglect of other people's basic human rights.

World War II saw a massive increase of Hispanics being forced to leave their homes, and head elsewhere mainly towards the west. Manuel Ganzalez states, "During World War II---a trend initiated during the Depression, Hispanos were forced to leave their traditional villages---Many displaced villagers headed to California, but the majority made their way to the cities nearby, notably Albuquerque." I can easily see that this would cause mass dirtiness for those forced to move, but an unease against any other race that sees these massive groups of people move in next to them. Prejudice easily being a major factor for this resentment, especially in the cases of white people who believe Chicanos as inferior to them.

The Video titled **Chicano! A Quest For Homeland**, speaks of a man called Reies Lopez Tijerias, leader of the La Alianza Federal de Mercedes(Federal Alliance of Grants) to keep a promise held by a treaty between the U.S. and Mexico. He was ultimately arrested for these actions, but wanted to use that attention and point out that a group of people did in fact legally own a portion of Northern New Mexico, which he believed was in fact a part of the Treaty of Hidalgo. If I had his confidence, in this day and age that kind of attention through any media platform would have angered thousands if not millions of people for the mistreatment brought on by the U.S. government. He started his path through a prophetic dream he had. I'm not one to believe that someone can look into the future, I think he was just tired of all the misery that was occurring around him. Seeking a path of equality through the support of many, not just by a vision with no proof of it being real or not. Sadly in the end he turned to aggression to claim the land back. Never under any circumstances should he have turned to violence as a means to better the lives of all the people who followed him.

Something I do not understand is why our own government does not follow its own laws. They didn't follow up with their promises in the treaty, no matter what mass movement occurs they make laws for it that don't adjust with the times, go against their own rules, and take away property illegally. The worst part is that today these acts of taking someone else's land are still going on, and not just by the U.S. Canada as well is taking land away from its own native citizens.

I find it surprising that so many instances of the Equal Rights movements occurred at the same time. As if the U.S. during these times were a boiler that could no longer contain its contents, and exploded, so the movements we saw during the eras of the 50s, 60s, and 70s was the after effect of that explosion. Similar to the events of the last year, riots and strikes are going against the government to deliver justice to those that have been in unfortunate events. About 60 to 70 years and yet another explosion has happened. Showing that the measure taken last time to ensure equal rights for all, didn't work out to the extent that many expected.

Too much blood has been shed. Constant riots, many aggressors against Hispanic people. At this point any form of prejudice against those of my race are filled with unneeded anger. We need to move forward, not that I mean we should forget the incidents from the past, but that we need to use them to better our current perspectives and not make the same mistakes again.

Honestly going off my own family history I believe it wasn't until my mothers and fathers generation that we had any relatives move into the U.S. Coming here as many other immigrants would say, "A better life for our family." I couldn't even begin to comprehend what these people went through. Reading through the textbook, watching the videos, and reading other articles, I had never known what actually occurred in Mexican American history. The most I knew about any Hispanic movement, it had to do with Cesar Chavez and his well known Huelgas.