



Living in a globalised world

Losing workers' rights

Narrator:

The Machiladoras may be built to American standards, but without the presence of strong American unions the workers do not enjoy the same conditions of employment. It is part of the price they have to pay to keep their jobs.

Diana Washington Valdez is a journalist on the El Paso Times, who has made a study of workers conditions in Whares.

Diana Washing Valdez, El Paso Times:

The workers don't really have any rights at all. About fifteen years ago I had an assignment to get hired to go into the Mechiladores and I did, and just to get an idea of what it was like to work there. And I remember back then the wage per day was four dollars average. Today, the wage per day is still four dollars. The same. It hasn't changed, in nearly fifteen years. There were attempts at the beginning of the Machiladora industry, in its beginnings to organise workers. There were unions who went in there and they tried to organise workers. Because it was felt by these unions back then, that the workers would have even less protections with the multi nationals than they had even under the old Mexican CTM government sanctioned, government authorised union. And in fact those efforts to organise one by one eventually were stamped out. It was not so much the multi national companies themselves doing this, but it was the Mexican government doing it for them. And to this day there isn't a driving independent union in Mexico.