The Restructuring of the Steel Industry in Mexico: The Impact on Workers

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Starting in the 1980s, the Mexican government reduced its participation in the steel industry, a sector which had been one of the engines of national economic growth. The government closed, restructured and privatized large steel plants, including Fundidora Monterrey in 1986, Minera Cananea in 1989, and Altos Hornos de México (AHMSA) and Siderúrgica Lázaro Cardenas-Las Truchas in 1991. Steel production played a highly significant role in Mexico's industrialization, driving the expansion of mining, the formation of the working class and the rise of the labor movement. The restructuring of the steel industry left thousands of workers jobless and without employment possibilities elsewhere. In this presentation, Professor Martínez analyzes the employment and unemployment experiences of former metallurgic workers from AHMSA and Fundidora Monterrey in the context of the restructuring of the steel sector, the larger modernization and privatization of the national industrial base, the dismantling welfare provisions and the liberalization and globalization of the Mexican economy.

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