



# **To the Line of Fire!: Mexican Texans and World War I (C. A. Brannen Series)**

*José A. Ramírez*

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Winner of the 2009 Robert A. Calvert Prize

In January 1917, German foreign minister Arthur Zimmermann sent a telegram to Germany's Mexican ambassador, authorizing the offer of U.S. territory in exchange for Mexico's alliance with Germany in the Great War.

After the interception of this communication, U.S. intelligence intensified surveillance of the Mexican American community in Texas and elsewhere, vigilant for signs of subversive activity. Yet, even as this was transpiring, thousands of Tejanos (Mexican Texans) were serving in the American military during the war, with many other citizens of Mexican origin contributing to home front efforts.

As author José A. Ramírez demonstrates in *To the Line of Fire!*, the events of World War I and its aftermath would decisively transform the Tejano community, as war-hardened veterans returned with new, broadened perspectives. They led their people in opposing prejudice and discrimination, founding several civil rights groups and eventually merging them into the League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC), the largest and oldest surviving Hispanic civil rights organization in the United States.

Ramírez also shows the diversity of reaction to the war on the part of the Tejano community: While some called enthusiastically for full participation in the war effort, others reacted coolly, or only out of fear of reprisal.

Scholarly and general readers in Texas history, military history, and Mexican American studies will be richly rewarded by reading *To the Line of Fire!*

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