Mexican Americans in the Southwest have traditionally celebrated the 16th of September, the Independence Day of Mexico. Although many are former citizens of Mexico, most Mexican Americans celebrate for their cultural bonds with the Mexican nation. The flag of Mexico, for example, symbolizes an indivisible bondage between the Indians of Mexico and their mestizo descendants in the Southwestern U.S. On this flag appears the symbol of a mighty eagle perched on a cactus and holding a serpent in its beak.

This is the legendary symbol which the Aztecs revered five centuries ago. It was a sign given them by their god to end their epic migration from Aztlan, their native homeland, to the Central Valley of Mexico where they erected their imperial capital, now Mexico City. The legend further held that under the Fifth Sun, these children of Aztlan would return to their original homeland. According to anthropologists as well as to legend, the location of the Aztec homeland is the land covering all of the area of the present Southwestern U.S. Separated by political boundaries, Mexican Americans keep warm the feeling of brotherhood with the children of Aztlan.

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