

Arizona Ranchers Doing Government's Job

by Samuel Francis

Last week, the U.S. Senate voted to spend some \$1 billion on behalf of the nation of Colombia, to help it fight drug dealers. The money will go to train Colombian police and military and equip them with helicopters and other fancy stuff. Meanwhile, as the senators spout and sputter over poor little Colombia and its problems, not a single one of them has done, or plans to do, anything at all to help protect the borders of their own nation and the citizens of their own country against invasion.

The invasion is taking place in Arizona, where some 72,000 illegal aliens tried to sneak across the border last March alone. The invasion has been going on now for more than a year (I wrote a column about it more than a year ago), and to this day not a single action has been taken by the federal government to control it. Nor has any major public office holder called attention to it.

The reason for the invasion, apart from the weakness of national leadership, is that border security

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against illegal immigration has in fact improved in many other places. More fences, more patrols, more technology and more personnel have made illegal entries harder. So the illegals simply go somewhere else to cross — namely, the Arizona border.

The illegals get thirsty and cut water hoses to drink from, so the water tanks of the local ranchers run dry. They get hungry, so they steal and slaughter cattle that belong to the ranchers, who find dead steers with only a few handfuls of flesh carved out of them. One local remarks, “My brother’s ranch is like a garbage dump after the illegals come through. They leave behind tons of junk — dirty diapers, plus what’s in those diapers. You really have to watch where you step. It’d take 100 trucks, and you still couldn’t haul it all away.” The *Washington Post* reports that the landscape is now “littered with empty water jugs, discarded clothes and human waste.” The aliens also break into homes and steal food and money, and in at least one case last year murdered a law enforcement officer.

To this day, not only has the federal government done nothing to meet its constitutional responsibility of protecting the states against foreign invasion, but that paragon of good government, Sen. John McCain, who happens to

“represent” Arizona, has totally ignored the situation in his own state. Nor, for that matter, has Gov. George W. Bush or Al Gore done or said anything about the invasion. Both are too busy pandering to the Hispanic bloc. Of all the presidential candidates this year, only Pat Buchanan has actually demanded government enforcement of border security and toured the border area in Arizona. Polls in the state show him at 18 percent, higher than anywhere else in the country.

But, while the U.S. government worries about the Balkans and Iraq instead of its own territory and citizens, and while U.S. senators worry about the sad future of Colombia, the locals in Arizona are learning how to protect themselves. For the last year they’ve been forming vigilante groups that patrol the border for illegals, round them up at gunpoint and turn them over to the Border Patrol.

“The ranchers here are tired of nothing being done about it,” one rancher told the *New York Times* this week. “We’re tired of the garbage they leave, We’re tired of them tearing down our fences, We’re tired of losing cattle. We’re

tired of losing our way of life.” So far, the citizens’ patrols have nabbed about 3,000 illegals, and even their leader, a local rancher named Roger Barnett, says that sooner or later there will be violence.

That, of course, is why it ought to be the U.S. government that enforces its own laws on its own border on behalf of the safety and rights of its own citizens. But it doesn’t. Indeed, the Mexican government is jumping up and down about the ranchers’ patrols for threatening its own citizens, and the Hispanic lobby is whining about the “blatant race baiting” of the ranchers’ efforts

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to protect themselves and their homes and property. Everybody’s worried about their own people — especially our own government.

What is happening in

Arizona with the formation of citizens’ patrols to enforce the laws our government won’t enforce and our elected leaders are afraid to enforce is simply a response of human nature. It would be better if the government did what they’re doing, but since it won’t, the citizens have every right to do it themselves. And maybe, as government elsewhere in this country refuses to do what it’s supposed to do, other citizens in other places will start learning the lesson that the good people of Arizona have to teach us about governing ourselves. •