

# Illegal Immigrants

*Let's not make them into 'celebrated martyrs'*

by Linda Bowles

A pickup truck packed with 21 illegal immigrants sped through a border checkpoint near San Diego. They led the police of Riverside, Calif., on a wild and dangerous 80-mile chase along crowded highways. During the chase, they threw various objects on the highway, including parts of the truck itself. In an attempt to wreck the police car pursuing them.

When finally apprehended, those in the back of the truck scurried down an embankment and into the brush. Two illegal immigrants in the front seat were pulled out and pummeled with aluminum batons for 15 seconds by the arresting officers.

There are two issues here: police brutality and illegal immigration.

There is little point in dwelling too long on the apparent overreaction of a couple of California sheriff's deputies. The FBI and other government officials have been dispatched to find out if rights guaranteed to illegal immigrants by the U.S. Constitution have been violated. The president of the United

States has expressed his concern. The Mexican government has lodged a protest. The American Civil Liberties Union and lawyers who specialize in the rights of illegal immigrants are preparing lawsuits. The Mexican Political Association, the Coalition for Humane Immigrant Rights of Los Angeles, the Mexican American Legal Defense and Education Fund, the National Council of La Raza, and a vast network of assorted Mexican organizations in California have sprung into action.

All of this is to say that the two arresting officers will be tried as many times as is needed to convict them. This is necessary for two reasons: to assuage troubled liberal consciences, burdened with pervasive guilt over God knows what unrepented sins, and to prevent riots.

There is not a shred of evidence that this sorry episode had anything to do with race. It was simply a confrontation between law officers and law breakers. Nevertheless, leftwing political opportunists will bullhorn a familiar message: Policemen are routinely brutal to minorities, America is a racist nation and opposition to immigration, illegal or otherwise, is rooted in bigotry.

However, the real problem highlighted by the incident on the California highway is illegal immigration.

When the word "immigration" is heard in places like Illinois and Indiana, and apparently in Washington, D.C., the Hollywood implanted mental image is often that of some newly arrived immigrant- let's call him Antonio - standing on the deck of a ship, awestruck when he first sights the Statue of Liberty.

Tony's eyes fill with tears. He puts his hand over his heart and falls to his knees, overcome with gratitude and happiness. He can't wait to get a job, work hard, learn the language and become an "American," indistinguishable in every way from all other Americans.

In California, the word "immigration" has a slightly different connotation.

More than 7 million people presently living in California were born in foreign countries. Between 2 and 3 million of them are here illegally. Their sheer numbers have generated a bottomless pit of human need.

The overload is feeding street gangs, filling jails, fueling anti-American multiculturalism, depressing wages, swamping the educational system, flooding social services, populating ghettos and provoking racial separatism.

Over half of the cocaine smuggled into the United States comes through the Mexican border.

Sixty percent of the births in the community hospitals of Los

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Angeles are to parents illegally in this country.

Approximately one million students in California public schools have little or no knowledge of the English language. California's schools, once a paragon of excellence, are now among the worst in the nation.

The people of California are angry that immigration laws are a farce, and they are angry at being compelled by federal law to provide illegal immigrants free medical treatment, free public education and other costly services.

It is true that illegal immigrants can't legally collect welfare or receive food stamps, but hundreds of thousands of them do, using beautifully forged documents, the manufacture of which is a thriving industry.

Illegal immigration flourishes and festers because some politicians don't want to interfere with a source of cheap labor and because cowardly politicians allow themselves to be shut up and shouted down by cries of racism and bigotry.

If political cowardice holds true and nouveau American justice obtains, the two officers involved will be thrown to the mob and the two illegal immigrants who broke a dozen laws will not be charged. They will instead become rich and celebrated martyrs of a successful invasion from south of the border.