

What To Do About A Caravan Of Rag-tag Migrants

The narrative appears to be that thousands of oppressed peoples spontaneously decided, all at once, to flee a murderous, corrupt government in Central America, and walk to the U.S., in time for election day, to plead for asylum and begin to work hard for a better life in the U.S. (Take note: it is a "caravan" not an "army.")

We see photos of a mass of walking people, including women, some carrying babies. There are photos of a resting crowd, some tending to infants.

Some are waving flags of the purportedly evil regimes they are fleeing—such as Honduras. Some are receiving cash from men in white T-shirts. Some are reportedly receiving gifts of sandals or food from charitable Mexicans.

But there are some questions that surely have occurred to the Trump Administration, and even to the mainstream media.

The distance from Honduras to the U.S. border is about 2,000 miles, and from Mexico City to the border about 1,000 miles. How far can soldiers on a forced march travel in a day, day after day? How about an impoverished woman carrying a baby?

Where is the supply caravan? People are not carrying heavy back packs full of provisions. It is said that an army marches on its stomach. What about these people?

No sanitary facilities are visible. What does the trail look like after the crowd has passed?

What happens to people who faint or just can't walk any farther? Are they being trampled and left on the ground? Are Doctors Without Frontiers on the scene?

Apparently Mexican police tried to stop the throng on the southern border, but the barrier was violently torn down and some police officers assaulted. The migrants got around a blockade on a bridge—some by swimming.

It is understandable that a thousand federales could not stop a mass of several thousands, at least if not willing to fire on a multitude that puts women and children in front. So, what to do?

Obviously, the horde will not make it in a few weeks by walking. There are reports of flatbed trucks or other transportation vehicles.

How can law enforcement stop a truck? How about a road block? How hard is it to arrest the driver for transporting persons who entered Mexico illegally, and to impound the truck? It could be sold to pay for chartering a fleet of southward-bound buses. How about women and children first, with food and water available on board once the doors are closed and the bus is rolling? Violent persons or those who try to run away could be detained in Mexican jails.

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Why wouldn't the authorities do this? Were they threatened or bribed? By whom?

By Dr. Jane M. Orient

Are there not laws to freeze funds flowing to organizations that bribe officials or support persons evading the law?

Some people in the caravan are drug smugglers, terrorists, or human traffickers. Many are likely guilty of sexually abusing the women in the caravan. Some of the strong men of military age may just be looking for work, but some may be soldiers in an invading army. How do we know? The rest are probably hostages and human shields, likely duped by false promises, a front group exploited to capture sympathy. If they really are legitimate asylum seekers, who cannot safely return to their country, how about a UN-run displaced persons (DP) camp, like the camps that sheltered millions after World War II until they could go back home or to a new, legal home?

A background check to identify criminals, public health screening and a period of quarantine to rule out incubating diseases, examination and interviews to detect abuse, medical treatment, removal of ectoparasites such as lice and fleas, clean water, decent food, adequate sanitation, and a safe environment—all this would protect the migrants as well as the people of the country that ultimately receives them.

Why aren't the self-proclaimed advocates for the poor and downtrodden advocating a solution like this? Is their aim to help these people, or to destabilize the U.S. system of government and the rule of law? Why do they want to endanger Americans by releasing possibly violent criminals or persons carrying deadly diseases? Incidentally, the incubation period for diseases like measles is longer than the 20-day limit for detaining children under the Flores doctrine.

How about redirecting foreign aid to DP camps—which are refuges, not detention facilities—rather than to governments that oppress their people or facilitate law-breaking?