



Myth vs. Fact: Caravan

<https://www.dhs.gov/news/2018/11/01/myth-vs-fact-caravan>

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Below are the facts surrounding the “caravans” en route to the U.S. Southwest border.

Q: Do we know who is in the caravan?

A: We continue to be concerned about individuals along the caravan route. In fact, over 270 individuals along the caravan route have criminal histories, including known gang membership. Those include a number of violent criminals – examples include aggravated assault with a deadly weapon, armed robbery, sexual assault on a child, and assault on a female. Mexican officials have also publicly stated that criminal groups have infiltrated the caravan. We also continue to see individuals from over 20 countries in this flow from countries such as Somalia, India, Haiti, Afghanistan, and Bangladesh. There is a large segment of this population that we know nothing about and we must be prepared to defend our border and enforce our laws to protect the citizens of our country.

Q: Are there criminals in the caravan?

A: Yes – so far, there are over 270 individuals along the caravan route that have criminal histories, including known gang membership.

On October 29, the Mexican ambassador to the U.S. described some of the caravan members as “very violent.” “Unfortunately, some of the people in the caravan have been very violent against authority, even though they have offered the possibility of entering in compliance with immigration law and refugee status.”

On October 30, Mexico’s Interior Minister Navarrete Prida speaking on Radio Enfoque (Focus) 100.1 FM, confirmed that some criminal groups have infiltrated the caravan: “I have videos from Guatemala that show men dressed in identical clothing, sporting the same haircuts, handing out money to women to persuade them to move to the front of the caravan...We know, for a fact, that some members of the caravan threatened [Mexican] Migration Institute personnel and we have images showing many of them preparing Molotov cocktails.”

Q: Is the caravan only women and children?

A: No, reports on the ground from our foreign partners suggest that approximately 50 percent are single adults. However, the Guatemalan Intel Minister said that the caravan is employing tactics to push women and children to the front to act as human shields as the caravan pushes against its military forces.

Q: How many troops will be deployed to the Southwest border?

A: By November 2, there will be approximately 5,200 deployed to support U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) at the Southwest border as part of Operation Faithful Patriot. This is in addition to the 2,000 National Guardsmen currently deployed for Operation Guardian Support.

Q: When do you expect the caravan to arrive at the border?

A: Current estimates indicate that the caravan could arrive between four days and two weeks (from October 31) depending on the mode of transportation and whether they make any prolonged stops.

Q: Why do you need to deploy the armed forces to the border?

A: The potential for large groups – who have already showed a propensity to using violence to achieve its objective – presents a unique safety threat to our nation and Border Patrol personnel as well as to the security of the American people. We have already witnessed these groups forcibly encroach upon foreign borders and have engaged in violence when confronted by those governments.

Q: Why are we seeing caravans heading towards our Southwest border?

A: Our nation is experiencing an unprecedented crisis on our Southern Border that is the result of loopholes that prevent the detention and repatriation of illegal alien minors and family units. FY18 is the highest number of family unit apprehensions on record – it is more than 40% higher than any previous year on record. As a result of these loopholes, when illegal alien minors or adults traveling with minors unlawfully enter the United States, rather than being detained and removed, they are released into American communities. Once released, those who have no legal right to stay are almost never removed. Knowledge of these loopholes has led to a dramatic transformation in the population of those seeking to enter our country illegally.

Q: Will you allow the caravan to enter the United States?

A: We will not allow a large group of illegal migrants attempt to enter into the United States if they have no lawful right to gain entry.

Q: Will the caravan be allowed to seek asylum?

A: Our goal is to provide protection to those individuals who qualify for asylum under our laws. Individuals who want jobs or want to reunify with family members in the U.S. aren't eligible to qualify for asylum.