



Friends Of The Border Patrol

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Ramirez comments on Governor's visit to San Diego Border, and why it took place

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Yesterday, Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger proved that one person can make a difference and that commentaries and opinion sections can result in action but he still does not understand how the borders work.

The Governor is running for re-election, and has been receiving a lot of publicity for finally deploying the CA National Guard. FBP Chairman Andy Ramirez has had numerous meetings with the U.S. Border Patrol's San Diego Sector representatives who informed Mr. Ramirez that Governor Schwarzenegger had not met with the Border Patrol. In fact, according to SDC Officials, the most contact they've had with the Governor was phone calls from staff asking questions about border issues. All this changed yesterday.

It is about time that the Governor met with Chief Patrol Agent Darryl Griffen of the Border Patrol's San Diego Sector since up to this point, he had not. Essentially, Arnold has made numerous statements without any facts whatsoever as he had not investigated the border personally. But the "Gov" needs to understand that while he'll get better info from San Diego Sector than most other BP sectors, it's still primarily pre-scripted, not due to an attempt to misinform the public by local Chief Griffen. No, in fact it is due to the micromanaging style of David V. Aguilar Chief of the Border Patrol who follows his orders well to the detriment of his agency's responsibility.

Governor Schwarzenegger needs to understand as we do that border perception is easily manipulated. As I have learned from our numerous sources, and personal experience, when the US and Mexican Governments need the public to gain a certain perception, such as low border traffic attempts and apprehensions, Mexico has no qualms about ordering their military and law enforcement personnel to detain border crossers and transport them to other portions of the border where there isn't a dog and pony show in action. Additionally, Mexican officials will just hold the border crossers until the show is over at which point the crossers resume their northbound trek with a slight deviation.

Was the Governor informed about how long it takes to recruit prospects, train cadets, and get boots to the ground? Was he told about the student capacity for the academy and how many classes can be graduated? Was he told about the difference between actual boots on the ground and authorization numbers? Was he told what personnel San Diego Sector actually has available? Was he told about the 6-week deployment shell-game that HQ plays? Was he told about the years of plans of infrastructure that has not been implemented? Was he told about the remote video surveillance cameras and how DHS admitted in Congressional testimony that they've been a \$429 million dollar tax-pit that can't be integrated with ground sensors? Was he told that the USBP has to be neutral when civilians offer help that their own HQ and parent department of DHS will not provide? Was he informed that DHS has an environmental waiver that Congress authorized for fencing at Smuggler's Gulch, and yet not one yard of construction had been implemented, and that the property purchase had been held up for some time?

Many questions that needed to be asked, but I'll bet were not, and that Friends of the Border Patrol would have provided to him without his needing to ask in the first place.

A simple fact is that Governor Schwarzenegger needs to do more than just attend a pre-scripted and approved dog and pony BP show, and we'll be happy to provide him a tour as we have for other elected officials so he can see things from the ground level with people who do not have to answer to David Aguilar or face retirement or transfer to other sectors as punishment. We'll introduce him to some of the very people who's trust he has to earn in order to continue in his position past this year, local community leaders in San Diego's East County. I know these folks and have broke bread with many of them who will tell Arnold what they face as a result of the lack of resources and manpower that San Diego Sector had stripped away due to the publicity received as a result of civilian border operations in Tucson Sector.

The only thing that yesterday's SDC dog and pony show, red-carpet on tour proved was he still has no idea what is taking place. How in the world can he even think to suggest that the Guard be on the border without armaments? It is a war on the border, which is what every last resident of East County would tell him. I am certain if he spoke with border residents, and saw that they have to carry firearms on their property due to increased violence in East County, and the fear they face from Mexican Military incursions as well as smugglers he'd realize the dangers people face and would order the troopers to carry their firearms. The fact remains that Governor Schwarzenegger and many politicians simply do not get it. The War on Terror does not end at the borders of Iraq and Afghanistan, but include the borders and interior of the United States. When they finally get it is when we'll see our borders secured.

One final fact, if the public does not believe one person does not make a difference. Then they need to read my commentary that was published by the Daily Bulletin on June 11. I stated that the Governor had not met with the Border Patrol and identified many facts that he was unaware of as they are insider information. My commentary was published, it was obviously read and forwarded to his key staffers, or him personally, and we have the result, he met with Chief Griffen. However, he's only got it partially right, now he needs to meet with people who aren't providing information pre-scripted by David Aguilar and Karl Rove.

Now Arnold needs to talk with those folks who face this issue every day, and I'll gladly set that at a secure and private location, and I'll provide him the same briefing I've provided Members of Congress, and our own State Legislators including those in leadership such as Sens McClintock, Hollingsworth, and Runner, as well as ASMs Plescia, and Wyland to name a few. The invitation issued last Summer stands one year after it was originally issued.

Visit FriendsOfTheBorderPatrol.com for more information, and review the commentary below as originally published by the Daily Bulletin on June 11, 2006.

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