

A Convenient Caravan: Cui Bono?

In an October 23 editorial, *Investor's Business Daily* claims that “[t]he ‘caravan’ of illegal immigrants from Guatemala, El Salvador and Honduras now making its way to the U.S. border is no accident. The timing, planning and financing of this tragic parade has but one intent: to disrupt and influence our midterm elections.”

An interesting assertion, but the piece doesn't offer answers to any of the questions implied other than to blame Democrats for all things evil.

Who planned the caravan? IBD names a group that supposedly planned a previous one.

Who timed the caravan? No answer from IBD.

Who's financing the caravan? IBD: “If only our friends in the mainstream media would do their jobs and find out.”

A conspiracy theory isn't much fun when the theorists can't be bothered to put meat on its bones in the form of factual claims that might possibly be verified or proven false.

Since IBD couldn't be bothered to do the heavy lifting, I guess I'll have to. I'll work with a standard wrench from the conspiracy theory toolbox: *Cui bono*? That's Latin for “who benefits?”

If the migrant caravan indeed “has but one intent: to disrupt and influence our midterm elections,” what individual, group, or political party benefits from that disruption/influence? IBD's complaints about Democrats come apart at the seams as soon as *cui bono* is invoked.

If the caravan disrupts or influences the 2018 US midterm elections, it does so entirely and exclusively to the benefit of the Republican Party.

The caravan is a perfectly timed hobgoblin for demagogues like Donald Trump (and the editors of IBD) to shake in the air like a witch doctor's fetish for maximum “Scare Our Base to the Polls” purposes.

As a conscript in the service of conspiracy theory, albeit one with better skills than whoever volunteered to embarrass IBD, I'd have to attribute the caravan's planning, timing, and financing, on *cui bono* grounds, to the Republican National Committee (or one of its subordinate committees) and/or to one or more of Donald Trump's three 2020 campaign committees.

Do I believe that? It's certainly tempting. But I'm more of an Occam's Razor guy than a *cui bono* guy. Occam's Razor says we should go with the theory that requires the least

speculation.

Individual immigrants pay as much as \$10,000 to “coyotes” to guide them across the US border — if they can make it through the narco-terrorist-infested wilds of Central America first. Most of the immigrants in question are poor. Getting together as a “caravan” is cheaper and traveling in a large group is presumably safer than risking it alone or in single family units.

You may have “caravanned” to a distant city for a concert or convention yourself. Four people to a car is cheaper than one. Four cars means that if one breaks down, the trip doesn’t come to a sudden end. And you probably organized it just like these immigrants probably organized it: By word of mouth.

Sorry to wreck your fun conspiracy theory, IBD. Better luck next time.