

Borders != Doors

Having locks on some doors does not mean that every door, every road, every shopping mall, every border should be locked and should require ID checks. I say this in response to BCFs (Border Control Freaks) who constantly draw a false analogy between sealed borders and a locked door.

The analogy is doubly false. First off, in a free country, access is valuable to many property owners; this is why shopping malls are usually open on the outside, closed at specific points, such as the employee break area, the manager's office, the bank vault.

Second, border controls are not just about the border itself; they restrict the property rights of everybody inside the border; if you happen to hire a person who does not have the right paperwork, your front door will be broken down by BCFs; your private property rights will be destroyed. BCFs, despite their analogy, are not the least bit interested in respecting your private property rights.

Consider a gated community. They do restrict access to the owners and those who have been granted access by specific owners. I've attended events at such gated communities; I needed only say "I am here for so-and-so's party," and Open Sesame, I was in. In more carefully restricted areas, the owner would place my name on a list. Or I might require an escort. In no privately-secured area that I know of, do all the residents vote and say things like "No people of category X may enter for any reason." Other residents don't vote on who may visit my property, in such a community. But BCFs want to be able to do that. You can't collectivize the property rights of the entire nation, and pretend that this is just an extension of private property rights. It's border socialism, plain and simple.

Another common sillygism is this "If the borders aren't sealed, this is not a nation." Well, folks, prior to the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1862, the borders of the US of A were not sealed. Was this not a nation then? This is no axiom if such an exception exists - especially when much of Europe had open borders. In those days, nations worried about the migration of armies, not of peaceful individuals. The special snowflakes of today's Right are incapable of distinguishing between the two.

Observe the border between the US of A and Mexico. Go south, and the Mexican guards smile and wave. Go north, and the American guards demand to see your paper. For folks of my age, this is reminiscent of Cold War movies - only the guards who demanded papers were German and Soviet, not American. The demand for papers was seen as a reminder of why our country was better. It was common, in those days, to say "It's a free country" whenever anybody asked if it would be OK to do something. One never uses that phrase nowadays.

Whatever it is that today's conservatives are supposed to be conserving, it evidently isn't freedom. They remind me of Sumner's famous essay, *The Conquest of the U.S. by Spain*. America won that war on the ground, but only by becoming the thing that it fought against: a worldwide empire. It lost its soul. Today's conservatives have no sense of history; they have buried that lesson.