

In Praise of Illegal Immigrants

“One Voluntarist’s Perspective” is an original column appearing most Mondays at Everything-Voluntary.com, by the founder and editor Skyler J. Collins.

Most conservatives and many “libertarians” decry the presence of illegal immigrants in the United States and elsewhere. They seemingly consider them to be less than human, calling them “illegals” with an air of contempt. It also seems that, to them, one of the worst crimes one could commit is the act of immigrating, that is “moving,” without permission from the state. Are “illegals” less than human? Is their crime among the worst that can be committed? I give a resounding “NO!” in answer to both questions. In fact, I consider “illegals” to be the best residents a country can have. Here’s why.

The Proper Attitude

It is true that some illegal immigrants come to this country and initiate acts of aggression against peaceful people. It is also true that many illegal immigrants come to this country and accept tax-funded welfare. But plenty of Americans do likewise. The former is partly a problem that would be fixed by ending the War on Drugs, and the latter by abolishing the Welfare State. The vast majority of illegal immigrants are peaceful people. Not only are they peaceful, but they are also committed to ignoring an unjust law enforced by an illegitimate authority. The state, or the actors that comprise the state, haven’t the authority to tell anyone what to do or prevent anyone from engaging in peaceful cooperation. Their unjust laws are meaningless words scribbled on a piece of parchment (or the modern equivalent), and illegal immigrants are risking everything they have to ignore and elude them. They have the proper attitude toward both the state and its unjust laws. One of my greatest desires is for every resident of a given country to adopt this attitude of disrespect toward the state and its decrees; building and maintaining their lives on an act of civil disobedience.

Natural Agorists

Agorism is the libertarian strategy that encourages participation in black and gray markets in order to build the institutions needed to replace the state, and to deprive it of resources. It means ignoring what government says you can or can’t do and living your life trading and cooperating with others on the basis of peace and mutual benefit. Illegal immigrants are natural agorists because their presence and everything they do in their new country is “illegal.” Their lives are sustained through production in black and gray markets as they are largely paid under the table, avoiding income and payroll taxation. Their consumption is a mixed market because many will craft or create things at home and sell them directly on the street, ringing their bell and announcing their presence as they walk up and down

neighborhoods. This is agorism at it's finest, and voluntaryism is the proud mother of agorism.

Final Thoughts

I do not decry the presence of illegal immigrants in my country or elsewhere. On the contrary, I praise it as beneficial to the cause of liberty and freedom. The state and it's laws are unjust and should be ignored by everyone the world over. Illegal immigrants have the proper attitude toward the state in two respects, 1) they were brave enough to pack up their things and leave their old state, and 2) they are brave enough to ignore the new state and its decrees and live their life according to their conscience. Liberty won't be found in the halls of Congress, but on the streets and homes of neighborhoods. Illegal immigrants have been and are a beautiful example to me of the type of people that we would all do well to emulate.