



ISIS isn't invading from Mexico, but the rumor itself is rather damaging

By Ken Braun

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President Obama endures well deserved criticism from conservatives for his free spending ways. Up through 2013, total federal spending on his watch raced upward from [\\$3.0 trillion to \\$3.5 trillion](#), a government price hike of 17 percent during an era when total inflation was half that much. While 2014 spending is set to jack up to \$3.7 trillion, it's also fair to note that President George W. Bush cranked the spending dial up 67 percent during his eight years, versus total inflation of 25 percent.

For some of these conservatives there's a great irony - even hypocrisy - in their critique. While many on the Right denounce President Obama for not doing enough to "secure the border," the free-market Cato Institute notes the President's border patrol spending shot up [54 percent](#) through 2013, dwarfing that total government spending increase of 17 percent, to say nothing of mere inflation at 8 percent. This big government President has been a *gargantuan government* President with his border security spending, but many supposedly small government conservatives still think he's traitorous for not doing and spending even more.

In a Facebook post commemorating 9/11 last week, Michigan GOP National Committeeman Dave Agema demonstrated a typical example:

"Obama said 'I have made it clear that we will hunt down terrorists who threatened our country, wherever they are' - REALLY Mr. President. What about our southern border? You have let them flood across our borders and even encourage it."

Earlier in the month, bombastic [Sheriff Gary Painter](#) of Midland County, Texas, made the rounds of cable television news outlets, claiming he had "received an intelligence report" that ISIS terrorists were active in Mexico and promising that he'd "send them to hell" if they showed up in his jurisdiction.

“We know that there are Muslims that have come across and been smuggled into the United States,” Painter assured a [Fox News](#) audience as he dramatically asserted that “people along the border” had ominously found “Muslim clothing” and “Koran books” strewn along the trailways.

Shortly after Painter’s TV appearances, the [Department of Homeland Security](#) issued a statement saying there is “no credible intelligence” linking ISIS to a strategy of entering the U.S. from the south.

Similar to “secure the border” conservatives ignoring the ever-growing piles of cash being burned up for border patrols, there’s little logic in the “ISIS is invading from Mexico” mythology. We should be so lucky as to have Islamic enemies so brazenly stupid they’d leave “Koran books” conspicuously scattered along an illegal path of entry used mostly by Spanish-speaking Mexicans. (Though such littering does seem like a fun prank for devious local teenagers to pull off if their sheriff is gullible enough to have acquired his police training from the *Dukes of Hazzard*.)

Real counterterrorism experts say the greatest threat continues to be terrorists who infiltrate quietly, under cover of legal entry with a valid passport, hiding among the millions of peaceful visitors and citizens from every nation on Earth who cross into America each year. An investigative reporter for the conservative journal National Review [demonstrated in 2002](#) that at least 15 of the 9/11 hijackers were in the country holding legal visas that were issued in error by the U.S. State Department.

Comprehensive immigration reform is the solution for a southern border being “invaded” by mostly Catholic job seekers. They are not a national security threat that justifies this fantastic squandering of tax dollars. But the Big Government Conservatism that argues otherwise is precisely the sort of distraction America’s real enemies rely upon to get where they don’t belong.