**A Success at the Border  
Earned Only a Shrug:  
Summary and Update**

* Pew Center Links
* http://pewhispanic.org/unauthorized-immigration/
* http://pewresearch.org/pubs/1714/annual-inflow-unauthorized-immigrants-united-states-decline
* Silvestre Reyes
* Born Nov. 1944 in El Paso, Texas
* Vietnam (1966-1968)
* Hired by INS in 1969.
* Eventually became Assistant Regional Commissioner for13-state Dallas region.
* Named Chief of McAllen, Texas sector in 1984.
* Transferred to El Paso sector in early ‘90s.
* Border Patrol Sectors
* One long border
* El Paso, Texas
* Population: 700,000+
* Western tip of Texas
* Just across Rio Grande from Ciudad Juarez, Mexico.
* “Operation Blockade”
* In September 1993, Reyes ordered his agents to change their focus from apprehending illegal border crossers to deterring them from attempting to cross in the first place.
* He did this by stationing 400 officers on the border, virtually stopping all illegal crossing in the El Paso sector.
* “Operation Blockade”
* Based on brief trial several years earlier when Reyes headed the McAllen sector.
* Requested $525,000 from INS headquarters to continue program, but he was rejected.
* Had to take a back door to get the needed money: contacting a friendly financial officer for INS.
* September 19, 1993
* New strategy implemented on a Sunday.
* Thousands of illegal immigrants couldn’t cross as they usually did on Sundays (in preparation for the work week).
* Immediate Aftermath
* Massive public support
* Reduced crime rate
* Less need for INS to be intrusive in rest of El Paso
* Complaints from Washington
* Made INS look bad for not doing this sooner
* Upset Mexico, threatened pending NAFTA
* Official Approval
* Despite problems, Reyes’ plan clearly was working and began to draw official support.
* One concession: Name changed to “Operation Hold the Line” to appease Mexican government.
* Success!
* It has become the model for Border Patrol strategy for the entire southwestern border.
* Reyes received numerous accolades from all levels of government and private interest groups.
* Program Expansion
* In 1994, then-Attorney General Janet Reno announced the plan to expand Reyes’ methods throughout the southwest, starting with the vulnerable areas, most notably San Diego, calling the effort Operation Gatekeeper.
* It’s Called a RE-ORG:
* **Department of Homeland Security**
* U.S. **Customs and Border Protection** (CBP) is the unified border agency within the Department of Homeland Security (DHS). CBP combined the inspectional workforces and broad border authorities of U.S. Customs, U.S. Immigration, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service and the entire U.S. Border Patrol.
* On March 1, 2003, service and benefit functions of the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) transitioned into the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) as the **U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services** (USCIS).
* **U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement** (ICE), the largest investigative arm of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), is responsible for eliminating vulnerabilities in the nation's border, and with economic, transportation and infrastructure security.
* Where to cross?
* With increased enforcement in other areas, the desert of Arizona is now the hotbed of illegal crossings.
* Until DHS has the resources to expand this “gain, maintain, expand” policy along the entire length of the border, illegals will continue to just change their crossing location.
* The Law of Unintended Consequences
* **Fortifying the easy spots to crossing is prompting illegals to attempt crossing in more dangerous areas, such as the mountains east of San Diego.**
* **Hundreds die trying each year.**
* **1998 saw the creation of the Border Safety Initiative (BSI).**
* Minuteman Movement
* Militia?
* Armed conflicts?
* http://www.minutemanhq.com/
* http://www.minutemanproject.com/
* The Amazing Pendulum of Policy
* http://www.cbp.gov/xp/cgov/border\_security/border\_patrol/border\_patrol\_ohs/overview.xml (note apprehensions count…)
* So what happened to  
  Silvestre Reyes?
* He’s a member of Congress
* He retired from INS in 1995 to run for the U.S. House in Texas’ 16th District (the El Paso area).
* He’s currently serving his sixth term in office as a Democrat.
* Chair of Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence
* Member of:
* Armed Services Committee
* Veterans’ Affairs Committee
* Congressional Hispanic Caucus
* http://wwwc.house.gov/reyes/
* Reyes in Congress