Creating the Minutemen

A Small Extremist Group’s Campaign Fueled by Misinformation
The following is a report prepared by the ACLU of Arizona, the ACLU of New Mexico and the ACLU of Texas in collaboration with hundreds of legal observers who have dedicated their time to following the Minutemen to prevent abuse, document civil liberties violations, and highlight the real problems on the border.

This report is a review of 581 print articles and editorials that have appeared in major U.S. newspapers between January 24, 2005 and February 28, 2006.¹

The report details the inconsistencies found in the print media’s coverage of the Minutemen and the reality as experienced by legal observers. Legal observers for the Minuteman Project were originally trained by the American Civil Liberties Union of Arizona and the American Friends Service Committee of Arizona. During the month of April 2005, when the Minutemen patrolled in Arizona, over 150 volunteers were sent into the desert with two-way radios, video cameras and cell phones to stand up for human rights and human dignity.²

The leaders of the Minuteman Project seek to portray to the media the image that they are a large neighborhood watch group made up of mainly senior citizens sitting in lawn chairs who are only concerned about national security. However, the reality of the Minuteman Project witnessed by legal observers is a much smaller, radical group with ties to white supremacists and anti-government militias. While these vigilantes have failed to muster wide support on the ground, based on our review it appears that the Minutemen spin doctors have been successful at manipulating the media.

This report finds six areas of consistent misperception and inaccuracy in media coverage of the Minuteman Project:

- the extremist, xenophobic motivations of the Minutemen and participation and promotion of the Minuteman Project from the white supremacist community is significantly under-reported
- the estimated number of volunteers the Minutemen claim they would have, and have since claimed they actually had, is significantly inflated
- a lack of reporting on militia members within the Minutemen (only 1% of articles)
- the media ignored the arrest of a Minuteman cofounder and a Minuteman accused of putting migrants in his car while on patrol (only 1% of articles)
- the media overlooked the KKK as the original civilian border patrol group (only 1% of articles)
- the media did not report on violence and illegal activity by the Minuteman Project and other vigilante groups

Minutemen Come Together to Stop Invasion by “Illegal Aliens and their Offspring”

The original call for the Minuteman Project posted on their website made it clear that they were going to be patrolling the border to protest the changing demographics of our nation. The call for volunteers was probably not very different from the call for volunteers for the previous civilian border watch project organized by the Knights of the Ku Klux Klan (KKK) in October of 1977.³

At the current rate of invasion the United States will be completely over run with ILLEGAL aliens by the year 2025...only 20 years away. ILLEGAL aliens and their offspring will be the dominant population in the U.S. and will have made such inroads into the political and social systems that they will have more influence than the U.S. Constitution over how the U.S. is governed. That ugly consequence is already taking place. The United States of America is under invasion.

Future generations will inherit a tangle of rancorous, unassimilated, squabbling cultures with no common bond to hold them together, and a certain guarantee of the death of this nation as a harmonious “melting pot.”

The result: political, economic and social mayhem.

Historians will write about how a lax America let its unique and coveted form of government and society sink into a quagmire of mutual acrimony among the various sub-nations that will comprise the new self-destructing America.⁴
With language as strong as this it is no surprise that the Aryan Nation listed the Minuteman Project as a "White Pride Event." When questioned about this fact by Alan Colmes on Fox News’ Hannity and Colmes, Minuteman Cofounder James Gilchrist responded by saying he has no control over what others write and posted a warning on his website saying supremacist groups were not welcome. However, he went on to ask Colmes, “Why are you picking on them (white supremacists)?”

White Supremacists Promote and Participate in the Minuteman Project

While the presence of organized white supremacist groups supporting and participating in the Minuteman Project is well documented, the mainstream media omits this information in their articles and editorials. Only 29 of the 581 articles read mention that white supremacists participated in or promoted the Minuteman Project (see figure 1).

The lack of coverage of white supremacist activity created by the Minuteman Project is particularly disturbing given the severity of the comments made on white supremacist websites.

We are being invaded by mexicans who when the gray train stops ain’t gonna be so thrilled with the gringo. If you ain’t gonna sign up for this project I don’t want to hear no bitchin’ about the illegal immigrant problem we got in this country.

No doubt about it, we are at war, it is not the conventional white mans war, but they are taking our resources, and land by force. We must stop it.

I am a missionary for racism and I see fertile recruiting ground!

What happened to the white man? What happened to our outrage that has spawned Heroes, and Martyrs. If I get arrested for defending my Country’s Borders than so be it

Stopping that invader of our country will be the highlight of my white nationalist career. When my comrades and I are standing over an illegal we bagged and tagged in a citizens arrest I will finally see some sort of action that although miniscule has changed the course of our nation for the better, not some dumb flyer drop, or some secret meeting, but action.5

White Supremacist activity associated with the Minuteman Project has gone far beyond postings on their websites. The Southern Poverty Law Center documented the presence of members of the Phoenix Chapter of the largest neo-Nazi group in the United States, National Alliance. National Alliance members were photographed while on patrol with the Minutemen on the “Naco Line” in Arizona during the first week of April.6 Dressed in full camouflage and Minutemen t-shirts stating “Undocumented Border Patrol Agent,” they displayed a handmade poster showing a map of North America with arrows coming from Mexico and pointing to different points throughout the United States. This same graphic is found on a National Alliance billboard in Las Vegas, Nevada, and on National Alliance flyers that were distributed throughout Southern Arizona in the days preceding the Minuteman Project.
The newspaper media data shows that the Minutemen have been successful in convincing mainstream media to buy into their newly created image describing their efforts as intended to stop terrorists and drug dealers, which is very different from their original call for action. However, extremist groups continue to look for ways to form alliances with the Minutemen and certainly remember their call to save the country from “ILLEGAL ALIENS and their offspring.”

The media’s depiction of the Minuteman Project as a patriotic group “protecting their country” led individuals to join the Minuteman Project, only to learn the underlying motivations of the organization. The racist motivations of the Minutemen volunteers in Texas led the man who was President of the Goliad Chapter to resign.2 Bill Parmaney quit his post as director of the Texas chapter and alleged that the Minuteman members were plotting to overthrow the County Sheriff, who is Hispanic. He also stated the Minutemen were “a recipe for disaster.”

Other volunteers did not seem dissuaded by the Minutemen’s motivations. According to an article in SF Weekly, a Minuteman told his commanding supervisor, Papa Bear, “I was in town today, and I almost wanted to catch some of the Mexicans who are already over here!” At a rally at the end of April, a Minuteman volunteer thanked Gilchrist for being a 21st Century Minuteman and another volunteer suggested he was a modern-day Paul Revere. The volunteer then threw his hands in the air and shouted, “The Mexicans are coming! The Mexicans are coming!”

Minutemen Numbers Fail to Meet Lofty Predictions

The media’s coverage of the Minutemen has given the public the perception that the group is a much larger organization than it actually is. According to firsthand accounts, there were certainly more legal observers and press during the first weekend of patrols than there were Minuteman volunteers. While the media who attended the first weekend of the Minuteman Project tended to report the dismal turnout, the printing of Minutemen’s exaggerations leading up to that date and the Minutemen’s inflated lies after the media left Cochine County, Arizona, gave the public the perception that the Minuteman Project actually had hundreds and hundreds of volunteers on the border.

While the actual number of Minutemen was difficult to count, we estimate that throughout the entire month only a couple of hundred vigilante volunteers showed up. Despite the firsthand account of over 150 legal observers who monitored the Minutemen, the media continuously reports the Minutemen’s exaggerations.

Estimates of Volunteers Grow as Patrols Near

The coverage of the Minutemen before their starting date led the public to think that a large number of vigilantes were going to be coming to Arizona in April. Prior to the start of the Minuteman Project on April 3, 2005, the numbers circulating in the media tended to range from a few hundred to 1,500. The first report in January, from Jerry Seper of the Washington Times, claimed 240 volunteers.2 Reports in February ranged from 240 to 1,0002 (Appendix 1).

The estimates in the first two weeks of March ranged from 500 to 900 with the San Antonio Express-News estimating 1,0003 and the Washington Times’ Seper reporting that the number of volunteers had more than tripled and included volunteers from every state and 16 aircraft.2 (Appendix 2).

As April 1 grew closer, the Minutemen’s estimates grew larger and the media continued to report their numbers. The last two weeks of March show fifteen articles or editorials that claim the Minutemen will have at least 1,000 volunteers, with the highest estimate from those weeks being “over 2,000” (Appendix 3).

Despite the predictions, the articles from reporters who were actually in Arizona the first week of the Minuteman Project tell a different story.

Articles from First Week Report Dismal Turnout

The 85 articles and editorials analyzed from the first week of the Minuteman Project, April 1-7, ranged from saying the Minutemen had 50 volunteers4 to 1,200.5 Estimates of the number of people who showed up for the rallies and talks on the first weekend ranged from less than 1006 to nearly 4507 with The New York Times, Tucson Citizen, Houston Chronicle, Chicago Tribune, and Los Angeles Times putting the numbers between 100 and 200.

In an article published April 8 in LA Weekly, Marc Cooper writes, “Despite organizers’ claims that 450 people showed up the first day (befittingly on April Fool’s Day), reporters visibly equaled or outnumbered the actual participants.”8 Even Jerry Seper did not buy into the Minutemen’s exaggerations, as evidenced by his article, “Border-vigil Volunteers Big in Spirit, Not Number,” in which he writes that fewer than 100 Minutemen showed up.9

Unexplainable Leap in Reported Number of Volunteers

After Majority of Media Leave

The Minuteman Project never came close to matching the number of people they had their first weekend of patrols. The vast majority of volunteers left after the first few days and others would occasionally trickle in. Yet, by the end of the month the Minutemen were claiming they had 857 volunteers.

![Graph showing the predicted number of Minutemen prior to April 2005 and the reported number of Minutemen from first week of April 2005.](image)
Beginning the second week of April, subsequent news coverage of the patrols relied on estimates provided by the Minutemen, since most reporters had already left the scene. In an April 10 article, the San Antonio Express-News quotes Minuteman Project cofounder James Gilchrist as saying that 1,500 had registered but fewer then 500 showed up. In an April 12 article, Minutemen organizers claimed that 1,000 more volunteers were on the way to serve as replacements. An April 14th article from the Press Enterprise quoted Minuteman security chief James Chase claiming they had 600 to 700 volunteers staffing lookout posts around the clock and that organizers had to turn away 10,000 more because they were unable to process their applications. But legal observers say these numbers were greatly exaggerated.

Chase would often approach legal observers and identify himself as the sector chief of the Huachuca Line and tell confusing stories about his days in Vietnam, the “ninja turtles” he was trying to stop, and the dangers of the border. It was quite apparent to the observers that Chase was overseeing only a handful of vigilantes and not 600 to 700. In fact, during the weekend of April 16-17 there were 32 legal observers and a count of 36 Minutemen.

During April 16 through 25, the unexplainable surge in the amount of volunteers the Minutemen claimed continued. On the 16th of April, Washington Times reporter Jerry Seper wrote that over 600 volunteers had completed a four hour training session and spent at least one eight hour shift on the border. According to Seper’s earlier report this would have required more than 500 volunteers showing up within thirteen days of when he reported fewer than 100 had shown up the first weekend. A 500% increase in volunteers would certainly have been noteworthy, but in Seper’s articles on April 8, April 11, April 12, and April 13, he does not even mention how many Minutemen volunteers were on patrol. Three days later he adds another 200 volunteers and stays around that number until after the end of the month.

It did not take long for this unexplained leap to appear in other media sources. Three days after Seper’s article, the Arizona Republic quotes Minuteman Project cofounder Chris Simcox as saying they have had 760 volunteers since the beginning of the month and that there were 10,000 volunteers for future patrols. Simcox and his colleagues repeat this exaggeration in numerous other interviews.

In an article published the same day, Gilchrist claims there are 1,200 Minutemen volunteers and that organizers have trained 770 volunteers. Another Seper article, also from April 19, claims that nearly 800 volunteers had been on patrol at one time or another throughout the month. Despite the large numbers that were now being reported, the following weekend saw a count of 36 legal observers and 31 Minutemen.

The final week of April started with another Seper article claiming a total of 820 volunteers had completed the training and spent time in the desert and that Simcox reported he would have 15,000 volunteers for patrols in October. In an article the next day, Seper repeated Simcox’s statement that he had more than 15,000 volunteers and stated that more than 800 volunteers had patrolled. The San Francisco Chronicle soon followed that lead and on April 30 published that the Minutemen had 857 volunteers.
Minuteman Project Ends, But Estimates For Next Patrol Keep Growing

Articles from the month of May tended to put the number of volunteers between 800 and 900, with the Denver Post claiming there were over 1,000 volunteers. Articles from the remaining months tended to avoid quoting actual numbers, with the exception of those written by Seper. According to ACLU research, the Washington Times’ Jerry Seper was the first reporter to write about the Minutemen in an article that appeared January 24, 2005. Since his original article, and until the end of February 2006, Seper has written about, or mentioned, the Minutemen 52 times, an astounding 38 times more then the next closest journalist. Coincidentally, he was also the reporter that legal observers witnessed most often fraternizing with Minutemen volunteers.

Even after the month of April, Seper continued to print outlandish numbers put out by the Minutemen. While other journalists seemed to stay away from printing the Minutemen’s inflated predictions of how many volunteers they would have after they were duped into reporting large numbers before April, Seper continued.

The Minutemen planned on duplicating their effort in October and setting up posts all along the southern and northern borders. In three articles (April 26, April 27, May 13), Seper printed that the Minutemen expected 15,000 volunteers. On June 2 he dropped that number to 10,000. On three more occasions (June 17, July 15, and July 22) Seper again raised the number to 15,000.

Minutemen Fail Even Worse in October than in April at Reaching Stated Number of Volunteers

Based on estimates from legal observers and media reports the Minutemen were able to turn out even fewer people in October than they did in April. However, on October 1 Seper wrote that more than 4,000 volunteers were expected throughout the month. A report from the Seattle Times claimed that there were 15 Minutemen on patrol in Washington and organizers expected between 60 and 100 people throughout the month, but this number could not be verified. The Minuteman battalion in South Texas was claiming they had 300 people on the ground, but a report with the San Antonio News-Express was only able to verify 22. Meanwhile, in Arizona a reporter writing about three Colorado state legislators volunteering with the Minutemen reported that there were 30 people in the training session. According to a report from the Associated Press, the New Mexico Minutemen claimed they had 200 volunteers throughout the entire month. However, legal observers noted that there were less then two dozen every day and most of the time they were the same people. The only other state where Minutemen activity took place was California, and the Minuteman group there reportedly had fewer then 100 volunteers.

Despite the dismal turnout during the Minutemen’s second month of patrolling, on January 13, 2006, Seper claimed that over 2,000 civilian volunteers showed up during the month of October.

From Right-Wing, Anti-Government Militiamen to Mainstream Minutemen

The Minutemen recently announced their national leadership and the media did not report that the position of Director of National Training went to a man who is also the Commander of the 1st Brigade New Mexico Militia (Bob Wright). In fact, the presence of militiamen like Wright, Steve Studley (Master Sergeant, 1st Brigade New Mexico Militia), Mike Vanderboegh (Colonel, 1st Alabama Cavalry Regiment, Constitutional Militia), and Chris Simcox (Founder, Civil Homeland Defense) is significantly overlooked in the mainstream media, with only three of the 581 articles and editorials read mentioning the militia ties (see figure 2).

It is not difficult to understand why militia members are strongly attracted to the Minuteman Project. As Studley put it in an article in the Albuquerque Journal, “If you stop and think about it, this is a direct job the militia’s supposed to be doing anyway.” In the same article Wright noted the militia mentality behind the Minutemen. “The job of ensuring a safe nation belongs to every citizen,” Wright said. “It is not the job of the government... That is just a delegation of that power.”

In October of 2002, the headline on Minuteman co-founder Chris Simcox’s newspaper, the Tombstone Tumblerweed, stated in bold print, “Enough is Enough! A Public Call to Arms! Citizens Border Patrol Militia Now Forming.” Simcox’s bold call for a border patrol militia originally drew media attention but only a small number of volunteers. It was not until he partnered with James Gilchrist and re-framed his outfit as a “neighborhood watch group” instead of a militia that he was able to gather national and international media attention.

It appears that the militia members have given themselves a makeover to appeal to the mainstream media in an attempt to win public support for their extremist agenda. While they certainly still have a strong base in the “Timothy McVeigh” crowd,
they have now found their way into the homes of millions of Americans through their numerous quotes in newspapers and appearances on television and radio shows. The anti-immigrant climate has gotten so bad in America that far-right wing militants are being looked to as reasonable voices in our nation’s debate about what we should do about immigration and our borders.

**Minutemen Leader and Volunteer Violate the Law**

Another aspect of the Minutemen that has been overlooked is the previous arrest of Simcox and the suspicious activity of a Minuteman volunteer patrolling in New Mexico.

Only five of the 81 articles made mention of either the arrest of Simcox or the incident involving the Minuteman patrolling in New Mexico (see figure 3).

While on patrol with his Civil Homeland Defense Militia, Simcox was arrested on January 26, 2003. According to a report by the Anti-Defamation League, the chief ranger of the Coronado National Memorial in Hereford, Arizona, issued Simcox three citations for carrying a loaded weapon in a national park, disorderly conduct, and conducting a special operation without a permit. 42

In January of 2004, U.S. Magistrate Judge Nancy F. Fiora found Simcox guilty of carrying a firearm on the grounds of Coronado National Memorial while on one of his patrols for migrants, and lying about it to a park ranger. Simcox claims he was arrested by the agent because she was Hispanic.

In a personal interview with the arresting agent, who is not Hispanic, she stated she asked Simcox if he was carrying a weapon and he lied to her and said “no.” Simcox was sentenced to two years probation and has since been unable to carry the shotgun he previously used to patrol the border.

Not only was the incident of the leader of the Minutemen lying to a federal agent not widely reported in the media, neither was the October incident of a Minuteman who put two migrants in his vehicle while on patrol with Bob Wright’s New Mexico Minutemen.

In early October, a Border Patrol Agent knocked on a legal observer’s window to thank them for their presence. The Border Patrol Agent then told the group of legal observers that he thought the Minutemen “are crazy” and said one of his fellow Border Patrol Agents had arrested a Minuteman a few days before.

According to the Border Patrol Agent, the Minuteman had two migrants in his car but when asked by the officer if he had any migrants he said he did not.

The Border Patrol investigated the incident and sent a report to the United States Attorney’s Office. A Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request was denied but when Commander Wright was asked to talk about the “arrest” on two separate occasions on New Mexico Public Television programs, he claimed the Minuteman mistakenly put the migrants in his car thinking they were ranch hands.

The Border Patrol Agent was less forgiving than the National Director of Training for the Minutemen and wondered whether the Minuteman was trying to take the migrants further out into the desert to harm them. The Minutemen have since denied requests from the media to speak with the Minuteman who put the migrants in his vehicle.

**Minutemen Mimic the KKK, Original Border Watchers**

The media has also overlooked the fact that Gilchrist and Simcox are not the original masterminds behind using private citizens to patrol the border in an effort to garner media attention. That distinction goes to the Knights of the Ku Klux Klan (KKK).

According to a report put out by the Center for New Community, the KKK launched their patrols on October 16, 1977. Leading the charge in California were Grand Dragon Tom Metzger and Imperial Wizard David Duke, while Louis Beam headed efforts in Texas.

The rhetoric of the KKK at the time was virtually identical to the current rhetoric of the Minutemen. The Imperial Wizard thought that the Border Watch was a necessary part of “the battle to halt the flow of illegal aliens streaming across the border from Mexico.” 43

In addition to the Minutemen’s rhetoric being similar to the KKK’s, their stated goal seems to be almost identical to the words Gilchrist and Simcox have been repeating throughout the country.

More important than actually stopping border crossers, the Klan Border Watch was conceived as a way to “arouse public opinion to such a degree that they [the Federal Government] would be forced to better equip the beleaguered U.S. Border Patrol.” 44

Despite the virtually parallel action, some media outlets claim that the Minutemen are the first group to engage in such patrols. Only three of the 81 articles and editorials read allude to the previous patrol by the KKK (see figure 4), and some even credit the Minutemen as having the original idea.

In an article from the San Antonio Express-News, Hernan Rosemberg writes, “...the Minuteman Project, an unprecedented civilian border watch group...” 45 Similarly in an article from the Press Enterprise, Sharon McNary writes, “The Minuteman Project, April’s unprecedented mass volunteer patrol of the Arizona-Mexico border...” 46 By making such statements, the media has helped mainstream the Minutemen instead of allowing the public access to all relevant information so they can determine the real origin of the Minuteman concept.

**Incidents of Violence and Illegal Activity from Minutemen**

While the media has given heavy coverage to the Minutemen, they have not given much attention to allegations of unlawful actions by the Minutemen or vigilante activity along the border. The lack of coverage of documented cases creates an image that the Minutemen are purely good-old-fashioned, law-abiding citizens staying within the rule of the law.
It is occasionally reported in the media that there were no reported incidents of violence during the Minuteman Project in April 2005. However, a public records request to the Cochise County Sheriff’s Office revealed three cases.

Incident number 05-06473 recounts a story from a woman who alleges that on April 2, 2005, between 12:30 a.m. and 1:00 a.m., three vehicles cornered her vehicle and a man in the vehicle in front of her exited and pointed a pistol at her. Men in the other vehicles also got out and brandished weapons at her claiming that they were Minutemen and wanted to search her vehicle for illegal drugs and undocumented aliens.

In Incident number 05-06490, Ray Ybarra of the ACLU states that he was assaulted by Minuteman volunteer Joe H. McCutchen. McCutchen, who the Southern Poverty Law Center claims was reportedly a member of a leading white supremacist group and stands behind anti-Semitic comments he has made to various reporters, attempted to use his flashlight to knock a video camera out of Ybarra’s hand.

In a separate incident involving a documentary filmmaker named Cameron Sawyer, Minutemen “Security Personnel” made threatening remarks to the filmmaker and physically restrained him. In an argument over a tape in Sawyer’s camera, a Minuteman security person stated, “In a minute or so, there are going to be six people here with guns on you and we are going to take you into the basement, handcuff you, and take the film from the camera.” Sawyer stated he felt he was in danger and gave the tape to the “Security Personnel.”

One of the persons named in the report is the Minutemen’s Director of National Vetting, Connie Foust. Sawyer declined to seek prosecution after the Sheriff’s officers talked to the Minutemen “Security Personnel” — including Foust, Ken Hofstra, Will Marriott, and Gilchrist — and was assured that the tape would be returned.

In an additional incident that was reported to the Cochise County Sheriff’s Department but was not received as part of the public records request, a legal observer was assaulted by a Minuteman volunteer named Tammy. Tammy was aggressively questioning legal observers, and legal observers were adhering to their policy of non-violence and non-confrontation. Frustrated by her inability to get a charged response from a legal observer, Tammy grabbed the forearm of the legal observer and shook it violently. Tammy continues to be involved and is often seen harassing day laborers in Phoenix, Arizona.

Vigilante activity on the U.S.-Mexico border, and particularly in Cochise County, is nothing new. Previous Freedom of Information Act requests and Public Records Requests by the ACLU revealed a string of disturbing incidents dating back to 1999. Some of these incidents include migrants reporting being shot at, bitten by dogs, hit with flashlights, kicked, taunted, and unlawfully imprisoned.
Conclusion

The reality of the Minuteman Project that legal observers have witnessed is a much smaller, more radical group than that portrayed in the media. The vigilantes try to portray to the media that they are a large neighborhood watch group made up of mainly senior citizens sitting in lawn chairs who are only concerned about national security. As this report shows, the media has for the most part propagated the image the Minutemen are attempting to portray.

When the media was no longer around, the younger, more militant vigilantes would come out with bows and arrows and night vision goggles. While no one is stating they do not have a right to express their points of view, the media should be accurate in portraying the reality of the situation and fully investigate allegations made by these individuals, especially those coming from a man who was put on probation for lying to a federal agent.

The Minutemen’s extreme rhetoric about the destruction of America because of the invasion of “illegal aliens and their offspring” drew a volunteer base and supporters from the white supremacists and militia movements. Their ability to hide facts, such as the origins of civilian border patrols, arrests of their leader, the Minuteman who put migrants in his vehicle, and reports of violence and illegal activity, have allowed them to mainstream hate and a violent response to immigration.

As our nation prepares to possibly pass another anti-immigrant piece of legislation, community groups throughout the country are organizing to demand respect for human rights and human dignity. They are protesting against more than 3,600 deaths that have occurred on the U.S.-Mexico border since the mid-90’s, against the Minutemen, and most importantly, for a positive solution.

The Minutemen are certainly a polarizing force. While they remain a small group of extremists attempting to achieve mainstream acceptance, to some they are a symbol of the hatred and oppression that people of color have faced in the Americas for centuries.

On March 10, 2006 an Immigrant’s Rights march in Chicago attracted an estimated crowd of 100,000-450,000 people. Even at the lowest estimate, there were more people on the streets of Chicago standing up for human rights than legal observers have witnessed at all vigilante patrós, protests, rallies, and conferences combined throughout the entire country in the last year. The number of people participating in this traditional form of unarmed, mass demonstration continues to escalate, with an estimated 10,000 people in Milwaukee; 20,000 in Phoenix; 50,000 in Denver; and 500,000 in Los Angeles. While anti-immigrant groups appear to be winning the battle in the media, those standing up for human rights and human dignity appear to be winning the battle in the streets.

Communities across the country are organizing for respect and dignity and one can only hope that the media will give them as much attention as they have given to a small group of militant extremists.
Data Analysis

The following data is based on an analysis of 581 articles and editorials from major U.S. newspapers. For more on methodology see footnote 1.

**Table 1**

Articles written by Jerry Seper and published in the Washington Times that focus on or mention Minutemen, including description of number of Minutemen printed in article.

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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<td>1/24/2005</td>
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<tr>
<td>2/9/2005</td>
<td>444 men and women from 41 states, has doubled, has nearly doubled</td>
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<td>2/17/2005</td>
<td>a 500 person blockade</td>
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<td>3/8/2005</td>
<td>list of volunteers has more than tripled, reps from every state, 16 aircraft</td>
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<td>3/16/2005</td>
<td>more than 1,000 volunteers are expected</td>
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<td>3/21/2005</td>
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<td>the 1,000 “Minutemen Project” volunteers who this weekend will begin...</td>
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<td>Volunteers - more than 600 of whom have completed a four hour training session and spent at least one eight hour shift on the border</td>
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<td>4/18/2005</td>
<td>At eight observation posts... two to four men and a few women gather</td>
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<td>4/19/2005</td>
<td>Nearly 800 Minuteman volunteers have been on duty at one time or another</td>
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<td>Nearly 800 Minuteman volunteers have participated</td>
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<td>4/26/2005</td>
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<td>15,000 new volunteers are ready</td>
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<td>820 volunteers completed a four-hour training session and spent at least one eight hour shift on the border</td>
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<tr>
<td>4/27/2005</td>
<td>15,000 new volunteers are “ready, willing and able to do the job our president and Congress will not do”</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>More than 800 Minutemen volunteers have been on duty along the border</td>
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<tr>
<td>5/2/2005</td>
<td>more than 800 volunteers manned observation posts</td>
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</tbody>
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Footnotes
1 The report focuses only on articles and editorial stances taken by newspapers, it does not include opinion columns, letters to the editor, magazines, television or radio coverage. A search was done on the "Major Newspapers" tab on the LexisNexis search engine for the respected dates and the words "Minuteman Project" next to each other.
2 The legal observer project was replicated in San Diego by a coalition of four groups American Civil Liberties Union of San Diego, American Immigration Lawyers Association, La Raza Lawyers of San Diego and National Lawyers Guild of San Diego. Additionally, in October of 2005 legal observers trained by the ACLU of Texas and the ACLU of New Mexico followed Minutemen in their respective states. Legal observers have also continuously monitored Minuteman activity in front of day labor centers in Phoenix, Arizona, and training has been given to monitor Minutemen at other sites in Austin, Houston, and Maryland.
3 See page 13, Minutemen Mimic the KKK, Original Border Watchers.
4 Original Minuteman Project website, March 19, 2005. Interestingly enough, this language can no longer be found on their official website.
5 Taken from White Supremacists website, www.stormfront.org. March 10, 2005
7 See "Minutemen Chief Disputes Texas' E-mail," San Antonio Express-News, Herman Rosenburg, July 28, 2005.
11 See "Rice in Mexican Capital for Fox Meeting; Talk will set the stage for Bush's March Summit," San Antonio Express-News, Dan Schiller, March 4, 2005. See also "Border Group Plans Infiltration by Supremacists; Volunteer Patrols, FBI Wary As Raids Kneel," Arizona Republic, Susan Carroll, March 5, 2005, claiming Minutemen have attracted more than 700 volunteers, and "1000 Border Watchers Now Expected," Tucson Citizen, Claudine Lohman, March 4, 2005.
14 "Migrants keep eyes on Minutemen, the group, about 50 strong, being month long 'patrols' during weekend with SUVs, binoculars and an official denouncement from Border Patrol," Tucson Citizen, Claudine Lohman, April 4, 2005.
15 "High Noon," Pittsburgh Tribune-Review, Editorial, April 2, 2005, claiming, "But this drama in the Arizona desert features a cast of 1,200 volunteers for the Minuteman Project."
18 "Lawn-chair Militia," LA Weekly, Marc Cooper, April 8, 2005.
19 "Border-vigil volunteers big in spirit, not number," Washington Times, Jerry Seper, April 3, 2005. In an article two days later Seper increases his estimate and writes that less than 200 Minutemen had shown up, "Civilian Black ops Effective at Border," Washington Times, Jerry Seper, April 5, 2005. See also "Mexican Cop Warns Migrants at the Border," Washington Times, Jerry Seper, April 7, 2005, when Seper again says about 200 Minutemen have shown up. In articles written by Seper on April 8 on 11, 12, and 13, Seper did not give a count of the volunteers.
21 "Controversial volunteers try to deter illegal immigrants," Ventura County Star, Zeka Barlow, April 12, 2005.
22 "The Buza on the Border: Sifting hooligans from hard facts can be tricky, but Minuteman Project has succeeded in key goal - shifting nation's eyes to illegal immigration," Los Angeles Times, Chris Richard, April 14, 2005.
29 "Tancredo Assails Border Patrol Agent, the Colorado Congressman Demands his resignation, claiming officers were told to minimize detentions so it wouldn't appear that a citizen patrol was successful." Denver Post, Michael Roky, May 22, 2005.
30 It is worth nothing that a subsequent search on the LexisNexis database in the "Major Newspapers" section using the search words "minuteman and Seper" reveals nine more articles written by Seper about, or mentioning, the Minutemen that did not show up in the original search of "Minuteman Project." The San Antonio Express-News (TX) reporter Hector Romanberg wrote 14 articles that focused on or mentioned the Minutemen, Sara A. Carter also had 14 articles printed but many of her articles were the same ones printed in different California newspapers. Other journalists who have reported frequently on the Minutemen are Deborah Bullock of the Desert Morning News (CA), Claudine Lohman of the Tucson Citizen (AZ), Leslie Berstein of the San Diego Union Tribune (CA), Sharon McNary of the Press Enterprise (CA), Susan Carroll of the Arizona Republic (AZ), Brenda Gaines with articles printed in the San Bernardino Sun and Island Valley Daily Bulletin (CA), and Rene Rome of the Albuquerque Journal (NM).
31 See "Border Vigil Group Calls For Immigration Reform," "Minutemen to push Congress," and "Border Patrolled Told to Stand Down in Arizona.
32 See "Governor of Texas to allow Minuteman vigil at border.
33 "U.S. Coalition To Check border crossings," "Thousands to Join Vigil Along both U.S. borders," and "Department brass back border chief on civilian patrols."
34 "Civilian monitors on both borders, more than 4,000 Minutemen look for illegal aliens," Washington Times, Jerry Seper, October 1, 2005.

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“Minuteman Group to Leave New Mexico Border,” Associated Press, October 31, 2005. This article did not appear in the Lexis-Nexis search for articles and was therefore not analyzed in this report.

“Measuring the Success of Border Watchers,” North County Times, William Ron Bennett, October 8, 2005. This article did not appear in the Lexis-Nexis search for articles and was therefore not analyzed in this report.


“Some Border Watchers are Involved in Militias,” Albuquerque Journal, Rene Romo, October 2, 2005.


Ibid. For more information on the Klan’s Border Watch see The Crusader, Issue 27, November 1977.


Not included in this report is information on Legal Observers in California being shot at and on a separate occasion being threatened with a weapon. See “Border observers to carry GPS units for their safety; Decision made after gun-waving incident,” San Diego Union-Tribune, Leslie BENNIS, October 19, 2005. These incidents occurred when observing James Chace’s Minutemen group, which he created after having disagreements with the original Minuteman Project.

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