



Written by [Raven Clabough](#) on September 2, 2010

News Contradictions: Americans Must Pursue Truth

Francois-Marie Arouet, better known as Voltaire, was once quoted as saying, “I disapprove of what you say, but I will defend to the death your right to say it.” It is this enlightened philosophy that helped shape the greatest governmental document ever written, the United States Constitution, and in fact the quote well articulates the First Amendment of the Constitution’s Bill of Rights, which grants American citizens the right to freedom of speech. However, what most Americans do not realize is that the freedom of speech is both a blessing and burden, as it allows them to express their thoughts freely, but also places them in the position of having to decipher truth from fiction among waves of reports, a task many Americans reluctantly accept.



Take for example the recent story found in the *American Free Press* written by Jeffrey Smith, entitled “[Mexican Police to Patrol NY?](#)” The article addresses a variety of alleged “bias attacks” against Mexican nationals by black and Asian Americans that have prompted the Mexican authorities to resort to dramatic measures. According to Smith: “In a series of events which has caused wide notice and a storm of protests, the government of Mexico, through its consulate in New York in the United Nations, has announced it will begin patrolling the New York City borough of Staten Island to ‘safeguard’ its nationals there.”

Smith asserts that he received his information from both the *Catholic Examiner* and NBC, both of which “reported the Mexican government’s intention to mount surveillance, patrol and police in and around the Staten Island community of Port Richmond, which in recent years has seen a large influx of Mexican illegal immigrants.”

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When *The New American* contacted Ambassador Ruben Beltran at the Mexican Consulate in New York City, however, Beltran told a different story than that reported by Smith: “I don’t even know where this story came from. The Mexican authorities have no intent to police anywhere in the United States. The competent authority to protect the nationals is the NYPD, an organization [for] which I have nothing but words of praise.”

Beltran went on to say that while he has been in contact with NYPD Commissioner Ray Kelly, with whom he very kindly discussed sending more police personnel to the area in question, he trusts that the safety of the Mexican nationals is in “good hands.”

Smith addressed the NYPD’s apt involvement in the handling of the crimes in Staten Island when he wrote, “New York City police had been monitoring the situation and investigating the reported assaults as local crimes.” As a result of the increasing crimes in the neighborhood, Mayor Michael Bloomberg



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and Police Commissioner Raymond Kelly ordered “what many observers say is the most concentrated police mobilization since the World Trade Center disaster.” However, Smith attributes the decisions made by the mayor and the police commissioner to “the actions of the Mexican government.”

A similar article found on [NBC’s website](#) claims that “the Mexican government is now getting involved,” as well. However, in NBC’s article, the Mexican government’s involvement appears limited. Ambassador Beltran is quoted by NBC as saying, “We will act decisively in order to protect our citizens and will actively promote that those guilty of these vicious attacks are brought to justice expeditiously. We are working hand-in-hand with local authorities on all levels.”

NBC indicates that the [Staten Island Advance](#) reported that the Mexican Consulate posted personnel in Staten Island.

According to the *Staten Island Advance*, Ambassador Beltran sent an e-mail to a reporter at the publication that reads, “In response to the escalating violence against Mexicans in Port Richmond, Staten Island, the Consulate General of Mexico in New York is posting personnel that will remain in the borough until further notice.”

Yet Beltran now states that there is no truth to the story.

Facing a barrage of contradictory reports, Smith did note in his article that since the *Examiner’s* coverage of the incidents, “councilor officials, city hall and the local press have begun to carefully de-emphasize any possible role of Mexican law enforcement or military in efforts to secure the neighborhood.”

According to NBC, there have been at least six violent attacks against Mexicans, often involving racially charged anti-Mexican epithets.

Residents in the area claim that the fights between the ethnic groups began years ago and often take place on the main street of Port Richmond. St. Phillips Baptist Church hosted a community gathering where neighborhood and borough residents were able to address the violence. Smith explains, “Speaker after speaker from the black community told of horrendous conditions the largely illegal immigrants had brought to their community. Speakers described the pattern in communities affected by an influx of illegals. Community residents, many of whom are black first-time homeowners, told of constant disputes, alcohol and drug sales, late night disruptions, trespassing and public urination.”

Contradictory reports on such a significant national issue prove that Americans must always vigilantly pursue the truth. Media bias and blatant untruths often skew information presented to the public, forcing Americans to dig deeper than that which is on the surface to find the truth.

Still, Americans are better off allowing the free exercise of speech, even when the speech is inaccurate and untrue, rather than having their freedoms stifled by placing the control of the “truth” in the hands of a single individual or organization, since truth can often be relative or molded to suit a particular agenda.

Like Moses, we must stand in the fiery blaze of the truth, which burns but does not consume. The individual’s pursuit of the truth is often difficult and tumultuous, but rewarding in the end, and should therefore be embraced.

So, while we may not always approve of what is said, we should defend to the death the right to say it.

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