

Bello

贝优

Dallying with a monster

玩火自焚

In failing to snuff out vigilantism, Mexico is running big risks

自发群众运动遏制失败，墨西哥厝火积薪

THE rule of law has long been a stranger to the sweltering lowlands known as the Tierra Caliente in the Mexican state of Michoacan. The site of battles over land in the 1940s and 1950s, the area suffered an exodus of migrant workers to California. In the 1970s the drug trade took root there, attracted by the proximity of the port to Lázaro Cárdenas and the remoteness of the federal government in Mexico City. Not content with trafficking methamphetamines, the latest mafia to lord it over the Tierra Caliente, the whimsically named “Knights Templar”, established a tight grip over its invertebrate society, co-opting local authorities, extorting protection money and raping women.

在墨西哥米却肯州名为 Tierra Caliente 的闷热低地，法律法规早为人熟视无睹。20 世纪 40 年代至 50 年代，这一地区饱受土地战争洗礼，大量工人涌至加利福尼亚。因毗邻拉萨罗卡德纳斯港，远离墨西哥城联邦政府，70 年代毒品交易于此根深蒂固。最近，“Knights Templar”黑帮在此盘踞，其名称极为古怪，继冰毒走私无法满足其胃口，又紧锣密鼓的占领了这一软弱无力的地区，选出地方政府，敲诈保护费，凌辱妇女。

That proved too much for the Tierra Caliente's ranchers and lime-growers. A year ago they rebelled, forming “self-defence groups”. These vigilantes now control 26 of Michoacan's 113 municipal districts. When earlier this year they threatened to storm Apatzingan, a town of 99,000, President Enrique Peña Nieto dispatched a federal official, Alfredo Castillo, and a squad of federal policemen. Mr Castillo struck agreements with the vigilantes: they will be vetted, in theory at least, and then join an ill-defined “rural defence corps” under the army's aegis.

当地的牧场主及酸橙种植户忍无可忍，于一年前揭竿而起，成立自卫组织。如今这些自发群众已控制米却肯州 113 个地区中的 26 个。今年伊始，他们威胁称着手攻克阿帕钦甘——99000 人的镇。总统裴纳尼托派遣联邦官员 Alfredo Castillo 以及一中队联邦警察处理此事，Castillo 与自发群众达成协议，至少从理论上而言，他们要接受审查，并编入农村防卫军接受军队保护，但该防卫军定义模糊。

The vigilantes have attracted sympathy from right and left in Mexico, which see them as legitimate expressions of popular desperation in the face of mafia violence and official neglect. The government seems perplexed. Mr Castillo said he would restore order “in 15 days”, but there is no sign that he has a thought-out strategy to deal either with the vigilantes or the lawlessness that spawned them.

墨西哥左派和右派对自发群众深为同情，认为他们在黑帮的暴力与政府的不作为中，以合法的方式，传达出普遍的绝望。政府似乎手足无措，Castillo 称他将在 15 天内恢复秩序，但他并没有一个经过深思熟虑的方略，处理这些自发组织的群众，解决酿成此事的法律缺失。

That is alarming, especially since the germ of vigilantism has appeared elsewhere in Mexico. Experience in other Latin American countries suggests that Mr Peña's people risk dallying with a monster. Colombia is the most notorious case. In the 1980s landowners and ranchers, faced with attacks by left-wing guerrillas, organised vigilante groups. These quickly mushroomed into the United Self-Defence Forces of Colombia, a national organisation of over 20,000 paramilitaries who slaughtered tens of thousands of civilians and stole their land while morphing into

drug-trafficking outfits. Although most disbanded after a government security build-up, remnants have murdered more than 60 farmers to thwart efforts to restore stolen land to its rightful owners.

自发运动在墨西哥其他地区出现之后，尤其触目惊心。其他拉美国家的经历表明墨西哥人民将玩火自焚。哥伦比亚便是一个臭名昭著的例子。80年代，地主和牧场主遭到由群众自发组织的左翼游击战攻击，后来发展为哥伦比亚联合自卫队，这一国家组织由超过2000名准军事成员组成，并逐渐演变为毒品走私组织，屠杀了成百上千名平民，夺走了他们的土地。虽然政府安全部队建立后，自卫队大多解体，但残余势力仍杀害了60名农民，企图阻挠土地回归合法拥有者。

On the face of things, Peru's experience of vigilantism was more successful. Villagers in Cajamarca, in the country's northern Andes, formed rondas campesinas (a sort of neighbourhood watch in the 1970s, to tackle cattle-rustling and rural crime. Further south, around Ayacucho and the Apurimac valley, in the 1980s and 1990s the army fostered lightly armed peasant self-defence committees. These helped defeat the Shining Path, a Maoist guerrilla group.

表面来看，秘鲁的群众自卫组织经历更为成功。70年代，该国安第斯北部 Cajamarca 省的群众自卫组织对周边起到了一种监视作用，处理偷牛及其他农村犯罪案件。在80年代和90年代的 Ayacucho 和 Apurimac 山村，在军队的支持下，这里成立了轻武装农民自卫委员会，这对抵御光辉道路游击队，即毛派人游击队大有裨益。

Although the Shining Path has long since faded, the vigilantes are stronger than ever. In the Apurimac valley, they have turned into well-armed militias of coca growers. In Cajamarca the rondas are now led by rural schoolteachers from a far-left party; they battle mining companies and are the real power in the land, says Rubén Vargas, a security consultant.

虽然光辉道路游击队很久以前就衰弱，但自那以后群众自卫组织的势力日趋强大。在 Apurimac 山村，他们已成为武装精良的古柯种植者。在卡哈马卡，监视部队如今受极左党派和学校教师领导，安全顾问 Rubén Vargas 说，他们与矿业公司对抗，独霸一方。

The common element in all three countries is the weakness of law enforcement in rural areas. That is what tempts governments and security forces to ally themselves with vigilantes. This can bring short-term results against guerrillas or drug-traffickers, but in the long run it makes things worse. As Mauricio Romero, a political scientist at Javeriana University in Bogota, points out, once vigilantes acquire coercive power, the temptation to use this for private ends—revenge attacks, drug-trafficking or other criminal activities—is simply too great.

三国的共同点在于农村法律缺位，这也是政府和安保部队与自发群众部队联合的原因。短期内，此举有助于抗击游击部队和毒品走私贩，但长远的境况只会江河日下。如 Bogota Javeriana 大学政治学家 Mauricio Romero 所言，一旦这些自发部队获强制权，为己所用，从事复仇行动，毒品走私及其他犯罪行为的诱惑无从遏制。

The embryo of the monster is already implanted in the Tierra Caliente. The self-defence forces turn out to have members with dubious pasts and the kind of weaponry—assault rifles and improvised armoured cars—that is the trademark of narcos. They have split into warring factions, and are imposing and ejecting mayors.

恶魔的胚芽已在 Tierra Caliente 植根，自卫军中，部分人经历可疑，装备有突击步枪类的武器以及拼凑而成的装甲车—贩毒的标志，他们分化成对立的小股部队，欺压和排挤市长。

Mr Peña entered office with one big new idea on security: speedily to set up a rural gendarmerie of at least 40,000 troops, retrained as policemen, from Mexico's unnecessarily large army. By putting bodies on the ground and protecting the politicians and judges, this force would have been tailor-made for Tierra Caliente. But the army and state governors killed the plan. Instead, a much

smaller gendarmerie of 5,000 civilian recruits will launch later this year. That seems too little, too late. For all its recent successes against drug kingpins, the political defeat over the gendarmerie may come to haunt Mr Peña and his administration.

Peña 总统怀揣着一个有关安全问题的宏伟想法走入办公室，即加快步伐，从墨西哥的冗兵中抽调至少有 40000 人，建立一农村宪兵队，作为警察发挥效用， 抗击威胁，保护政客法官，这支武装力量对 Tierra Caliente 负责。但军队及州政府否决了这项计划，他们将在今年年底通过平民招募成立一支远远要小的武装，只有 5000 人来取而代之。此武装似乎力量 单薄，成立过晚。考虑到它最近打击毒枭的功绩，Peña 政府可能为宪兵队上的政治失利耿耿于怀。