

Why the US Government Is Hated All Over the World

by Fred Reed via rialator - ICH *Wednesday, May 23 2007, 9:33am*

international / peace/war / other press

Something is wrong with the United States. I think most of us have noticed it. There is a mortal rot in the country, made manifest by many little rots that are hard to integrate mentally yet are, I think, somehow related. The change is grave, accelerating, probably irreversible, and fascinating. Things are not as they were.

The United States is the most hated country on the planet, followed by, to the extent that there is a distinction, Israel. So far as I know, there are no other contenders. You can say "Who cares?" as many will say, or "Screw'em if they can't take a joke," or "I'd rather be feared than loved." All very droll. Still, it is an interesting datum. No country ever lives up to its own PR, but there was a time when America was widely admired. Now, almost universally, it is seen as a rogue state. And is.

This carries a price. The US consulate in Guadalajara is part fortress, part prison, with barriers and cameras and bars and rentacops, and they take away a woman's lipstick if she is going to enter. Maybe a country that fears lipstick needs to think. The French consulate around the corner is wide open, like all others that I know of. The French, Chinese, Japanese and so on aren't hated.

(1) The US government now lives in its own, strange, insulated world.

(2) The United States is the most militarily aggressive country on the planet, followed closely by Israel. I am aware of no other contenders.

Some of this combativeness is obvious – attacking Iraq for no good reason, occupying Afghanistan, threatening Syria and Iran, attacking Lebanon by proxy, bombing Somalia, putting troops in the Philippines to hunt Moslems. The US is also looking for trouble with Venezuela, threatening North Korea, moving to "contain" China (Doesn't a container need to be bigger than its contents?), embargoing Cuba, pushing into Central Asia, increasing the military budget, and pushing NATO ever closer to Russia. (How stupid can you get? Very. Stay tuned.) And the Pentagon now has Africom, African Command. Africa is now America's business.

(3) Powerful domestic hostilities grip the United States. Maybe you have to be outside of it really to see it. I live in Mexico. You can go for...well, five years and counting, without hearing angry talk about this or that group. In America, women hate men and men are getting sick of American women. Blacks hate whites hate Hispanics. "Affirmative action" engenders intense hostility that doesn't go away. It isn't the normal friction found in any country. It is serious antagonism quashed by federal force.

And the black-white-brown thing has very real potential for getting nasty. This we don't talk about.

(4) A curious state of fear prevails in America, but it is a governmental creation, a calculated manipulative Disneyland. Perhaps soon we will have Terror Mouse.

Recently I was in Washington. Everywhere there were the artificialities of fear. The steel pop-up barriers in the roads, the stop'em-bombs steel poles on sidewalks, the endless warnings to report

suspicious behavior on loudspeakers in the subway. The searches of everything, the metal-detecting doorways even on buildings of county governments, of schools. (Schools, for Chrissakes. What is wrong here?) And of course the confiscation of shampoo at the airport. This is nuts.

(5) The bullying of people entering the US. Any country has the right to determine who enters. Fine. If you don't want them to enter, don't give them visas. If you issue a visa, try to be courteous.

Violeta had a visa, issued by the consulate, both times when we went to the US. Still she got bullied by the border Nazis. It was ugly. I am obviously not a Mexican, but I get the same hostile questioning as to where I am going, why I was in Mexico, and so on. It is none of their business where I go in my country. Or shouldn't be, but there are no limitations on governmental powers now. A friend, married to a Mexicana, again with a visa, got separated from her, and both got abusive questioning. She came out crying.

America was not like this. Now it is.

Compare this with the real world. I land in Beijing - evil commie Beijing, right? Maybe twenty seconds to see whether my visa was valid, clonk of stamp, thank you, no baggage search, into a taxi. Vi and I land in Paris, en route to Italy. Glance at passport, yep, it's a passport, no stamp, no nothing, on we go. Italy didn't even look at our passports. Grown-ups.

I am not ashamed of the United States. It is a hell of a country. Been there, done that, loved it. In two weeks in DC with Violeta, although she is clearly not American, she was everywhere, always, treated with perfect courtesy and friendliness, whether on Cap Hill or Farmville, Virginia. Americans really are good folk. The government isn't. It's the gravest problem we face, both internationally and domestically.

(6) The Constitution really is going away, or has gone. It never did work as well as it should have, but few things human ever do. Habeas corpus is dead, right to an attorney, congressional right to declare war - it's not even worth listing the list. Joe iPod in the burbs doesn't care because it doesn't affect him, yet. Git them Hay-rabs, ain't no draft, plenty sushi. Urg.

(7) The increasing, detailed, intrusive regulation of life, the national desire for control, control, control. Everything is the business of some form of government. Want to paint your shutters? The condo association won't let you. Let dogs in your bar? Never. Decide who to sell your house to? Racial matter. Own a dog? Shot card, pooper-scooper, leash, gotta be spayed, etc. Have a bar for men only, women only, whites or blacks only? Here come the federal marshals. What isn't controlled by government is controlled by the crypto-vindictive mob rule of political correctness. This wasn't always in the American character.

Add the continuing presence of police in the schools, the arrest in handcuffs of children of seven, the expulsions for drawing a picture of a soldier with a gun. Something very twisted is going on.

How much of the public knows what is happening, or even knows that something is happening? I don't know. But I don't think that it's going to go away. In ten years it will be an entirely different place with the same name. Almost is now.

Fred Reed is author of Nekkid in Austin: Drop Your Inner Child Down a Well and the just-published A Brass Pole in Bangkok: A Thing I Aspire to Be. Visit his blog. <http://fredoneverything.blogspot.com/>

Copyright © 2007 Fred Reed

<http://www.informationclearinghouse.info/article17747.htm>

Cleaves Alternative News. <http://cleaves.lingama.net/news/story-514.html>