

How America is viewed by the rest of the world.

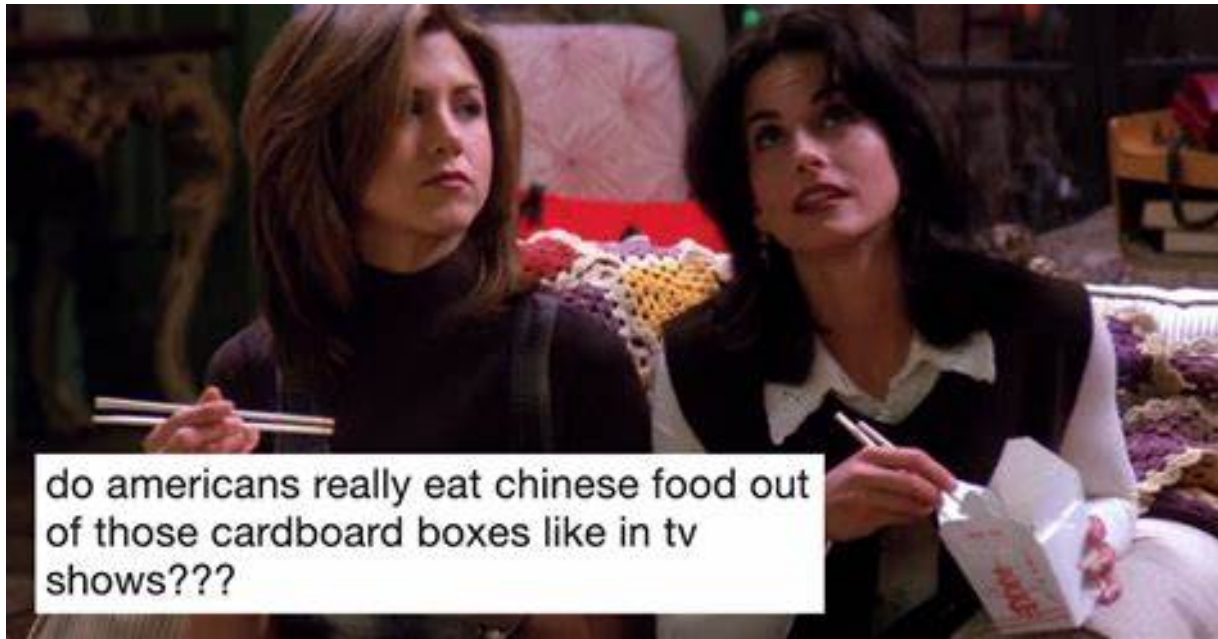
Most Americans don't care how others view America. They believe, incorrectly, that everyone thinks that America is the best nation on the face of the earth. They believe that everyone wants to move to America. They believe that America has "*freedom*", and "*democracy*". Well, it's a big lie. It's kind of true that *some* people do want to come to America; the uneducated, the poor, the slothful, and the criminals. But for educated, learned, skilled and talented folk... no so much. It's a big problem. America has become the dumping ground for the world's riff-raff instead of a beacon for the best and brightest. Here we talk about that.

We also talk about how just fucking *weird* America looks to the rest of the world.

'merica /'merəkə, 'mərəkə/

Noun:

- 1) A humorous way to say America, meant to point out things that are stereotypically about the country or the people. "In 'Merica, we like God, guns, and sticky buns."
- 2) Stereotypical way rednecks say America. "Woo! Merica!"
- 3) The way to sum up over-the-top parts of American culture.



America is really strange. As Americans, we don't realize how weird and strange our lives are.

This is a reprint of the most wonderful article titled "The View from Abroad – America as Others See it " by Fred Reed . It was written June 13, 2019. All credit to the author. Included are my photos, interjections and comments. Edited to fit this blog format.

The View from Abroad – America as Others See it

By Fred Reed, with interjections from Metallicman.



American Homeless picking their way through garbage .

Americans are brought up to believe that the United States is a shining city on a hill, a light to mankind, that the world envies us for our values and freedoms, and hates us because we have them.

This is ground into us from birth.

Those of us now long in the tooth remember the Fifties when Superman jumped out of a window while the announcer spoke of a strange visitor from another planet fighting for "truth, justice, and the American way," then (all) thought to be related.

The weirdly intimate toilet stalls.

Toilet stalls are thoroughly private everywhere around the world, with the walls extending all the way down to the floor. It's only in America that you get to enjoy the lovely view of your stall-neighbor's feet whilst peeing.

As one who has traveled much and lived in several countries, I can tell you: It ain't so.

The world does NOT regard America with admiration.

The outrageously expensive college tuition.

In most of the world's countries, school is school. You go to school to study. The university experience in the US is far more than just school. It comes with athletics, student facilities, living and boarding, recreation space, social events and so much more. Creating a rich student life experience is often a deciding factor in choosing a college, making the cost incredibly high. University tuition in the U.S. can range anywhere from \$10,000 to \$35,000 per year, as opposed to many universities outside of the U.S., with tuition costs at \$6-7,000, sometimes even less, sometimes even free.

Today the internet profoundly affects the world's view of America.

The Web makes graphic and easily found things that in earlier times would have been out of sight from abroad.

The customary unit system.

Besides Burma (Myanmar) and Liberia, the United States is the only country that doesn't currently use the metric system of measurement, because we apparently prefer dealing with wacky conversions instead of nice, neat multiples of 10.

For example, people in Kathmandu and Moscow can see horrifying and entirely truthful photos of the homeless living in piles of garbage in Los Angeles,

San Francisco, Seattle, Portland, and dozens of other American cities.



Functionally and practically, America has ZERO freedom of speech.

America goes to war everywhere.

"My image of America is a country that goes to war anywhere in the world," according to an 82-year-old retired agricultural lab technician from Tokyo, Japan. And at least one Italian has a similar view: "Trump, fast food, NY, Hollywood and wars."

They can read of trade conventions avoiding San Francisco because of needles and excrement on the sidewalks.

Such scenes are rare even in most upper-Third World countries.

To the orderly Japanese, accustomed to spotless cities and responsible government, such things are, in the strict sense of the word, incomprehensible.



In America, you must obey all rules and laws without question. This is some-

thing that is taught at an early age and enforced through discipline.

Driving literally everywhere. EVERYwhere.

Everyone has a car. And everyone drives his or her own car. Alone. Public transportation is so heavily relied upon in most other countries, whereas in most of the US, people have this vital need for personal space.

Home of the brave, land of the free, the envy of the world. Just ask us.

The estimated homeless population of LA is 58,000 and climbing.

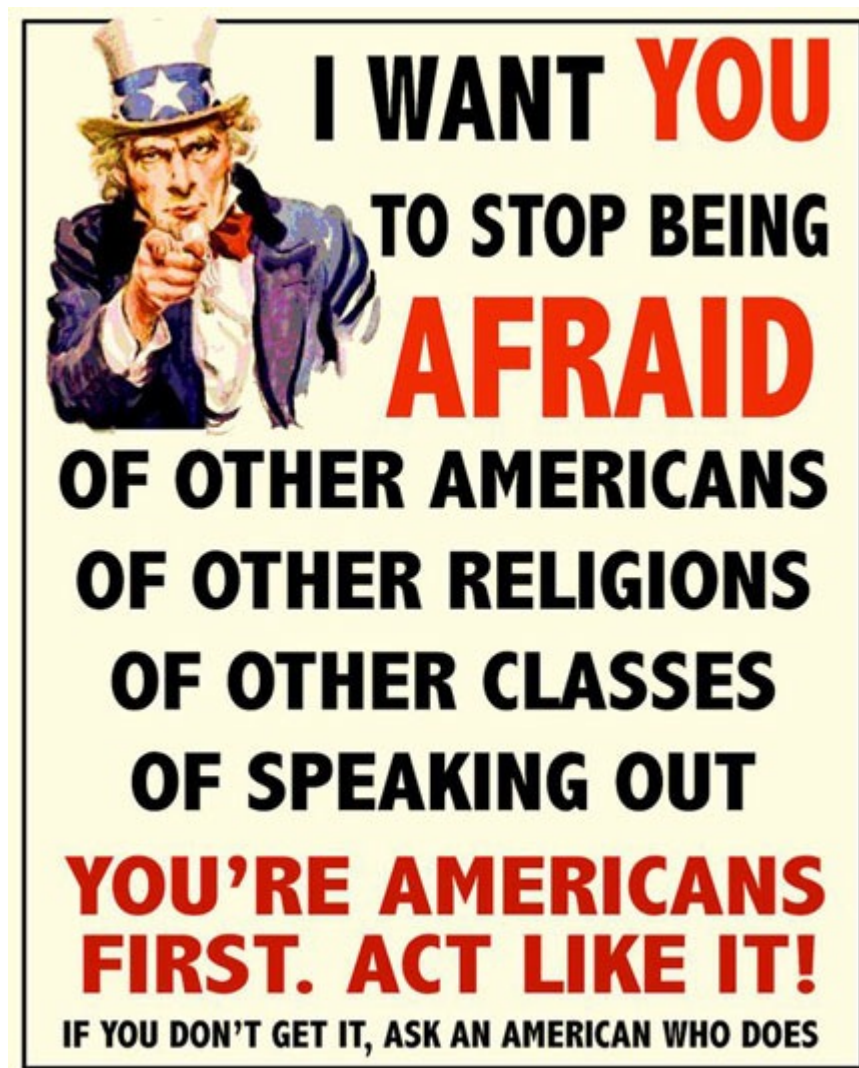
Swarms of flea-carrying rats, which certainly exist, are said to cause outbreaks of typhus, a medieval disease. Anyone with a smartphone can see this.

Confusing tipping rules.

Do you always tip 15 percent? Or 20 percent? Or 10 percent? Do you tip regardless of the quality of service? Are you supposed to tip at cafés where you order up front? Do you tip delivery drivers or does the extra delivery charge count as the tip? Are there even rules?

The frequent mass shootings in the United States astonish most of the world. Opening fire on a country music concert, randomly shooting to death people in a gay nightclub, seems to most of the world a breakdown of civilization.

It is.



Stop being afraid.

The skewed meaning of "How are you?"

If you are a foreigner in the US, don't be fooled when an American says "Hi, how are you?" He or she doesn't actually care how you are. You're just supposed to say "I'm doing great!" and move on.

"How are you" is synonymous with "hello". It's just the way it is.

Many of these *matanzas* involve children gunning down their classmates.

Even in a country like Mexico, accustomed to recurring slaughters of narcos by other narcos, the school shootings are a shock.

The ginormous food portions.

Entrées and common portion quantities are often enough to serve three, or at least two people for one meal. And Americans wonder why the rest of the world calls them 'fat.'

Americans are now used to things that in any other country would be unthinkable: bulletproof backpacks for high-school students, police walking the halls, metal detectors, proposals to arm teachers, "active-shooter" drills.

To the rest of the world (or to Americans who were in high school in the Sixties) this is *insane*.



Bogus fears can produce real servitude. If America is to have a rebirth of liberty, it must begin with a rebirth of courage.

James Bovard, The Freeman, "Fear-Mongering and Servitude," June 2011

We need a rebirth of courage.

But normal in the Indispensable Country.

Extra charges for tax.

In most of the world, tax prices are included in the list price, which actually makes a lot of sense. How is it at all logical to decide on buying something without knowing how much its actually going to ring up to when checking out?

The now-predictable annual harvest of 700 successful homicides in Chicago, the 300 in Baltimore, plus thousands of wounded, seem to outsiders like something out of Blade Runner.

Much of the civilized world looks with wonder on an American overflowing with guns and using them on each other.



Barney Fife.

Only in America.

Interestingly the most heavily armed countries in the world, Israel and Switzerland, have virtually no gun crime.

Rarely taking a vacation

In most countries outside the U.S., vacation time is a highly utilized way to get away from work for a few weeks (or even months) every year. In America, on the other hand, taking time off is often treated like a sin. Many people's vacation days tend to pile up as the months of 50-hour workweeks roll on. Our collective workaholism is totally bizarre to outsiders—and quite frankly, we can see why.

This is the country Americans believe the world wants to imitate.

No.



America's legacy is there for everyone to see.

From outside, it seems more a country in political and cultural free-fall.

Carding people who are obviously not under 21

Whether you're heading into a bar or buying a six-pack at the grocery store, there's a good chance you'll be asked for your ID in the United States—even if you're well into your 50s. This is baffling to many foreigners, especially since, by the time they're in their 30s, they've been drinking legally for more than two decades.

Americans are nothing if not by the book about the little things, so most foreigners quickly learn that it's wise to keep some form of ID on them at all times if they plan on having a drink.

To everyone else, the militarism of the United States, its absurd military expenditures, its huge number of nuclear weapons, its desire to upgrade them, to develop small tactical nuclear weapons, its preparation for nuclear war with specialized flying bunkers—seems nutty.

No other country does this.

None wants to.

America has been a warring nation—a military empire intent on occupation and conquest—for so long that perhaps we, the citizens of this warring nation, have forgotten what it means to live in peace, with the world and one another.

We'd better get back to the fundamentals of what it means to be human beings who can get along if we want to have any hope of restoring some semblance of sanity, civility and decency to what is progressively being turned into a foul-mouthed, hot-headed free-for-all bar fight by politicians for whom this is all one big, elaborate game designed to increase their powers and fatten their bank accounts.

-Johnathan Whitehead

In Mexico people roll their eyes. What the hell is wrong with the gringos?



Doomsday Plane.

“Affectionately known as the “doomsday plane,” the modified Boeing 747 is used to transport the Secretary of Defense and is born and bred for battle. It stands nearly six stories tall, is equipped with four colossal engines, and is capable of enduring the immediate aftermath of a nuclear detonation.”

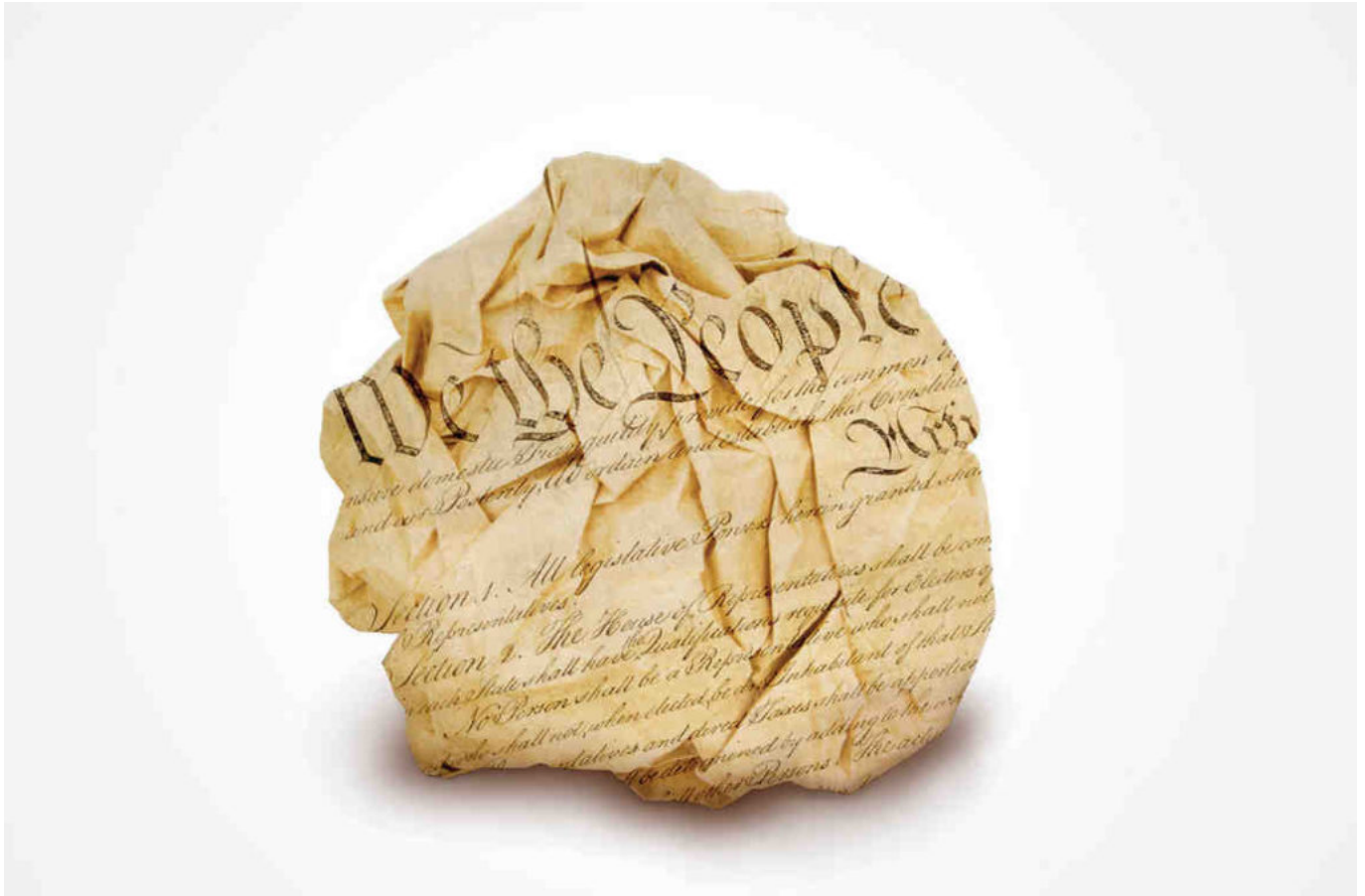
The language is that of a little boy of twelve watching Star Wars. It is the attitude of much of America.

America is unhealthy food.

People all over the world associate America with supersized food portions. Many foreigners also link America's fast food culture to health problems and the demise of small family farms.

Easily found online: the racial disaster in the US, the dozens of cities with domestic Sowetos in their hearts, the huge, hopeless, entirely black

regions where whites dare not walk.



Americans no longer possess Rights.

In these, entirely black schools turn out millions of barely literates who for the remaining fifty years of their lives will be unemployable.

This is all online with photos and statistics.



"Man, just out of jail, arrested in rape of woman, 78..." Another face of race in America.

These stories, common as potatoes—a similar gentleman just threw a white child of five from three floors up—are suppressed to the extent possible by the American media, but often show up in British dailies.

Such things almost never happened in Europe before the arrival of African and Muslim immigrants.

The whole world can see.

Having drive-throughs

In most other countries, you take the time to at least park the car and walk through the front doors of the place you're patronizing—not in America, though! Here, we're far too busy to waste time, so we have drive-through restaurants, coffee shops, grocery stores, liquor stores,

and more.

Freedoms?

More sophisticated readers abroad know of our intensifying censorship, the words that can get you fired, the controlled press, the surveillance.

Americans know what you can't say and who you can't say it about.

We know the police are militarized and out of control.

We see the cell-cam videos of beatings.

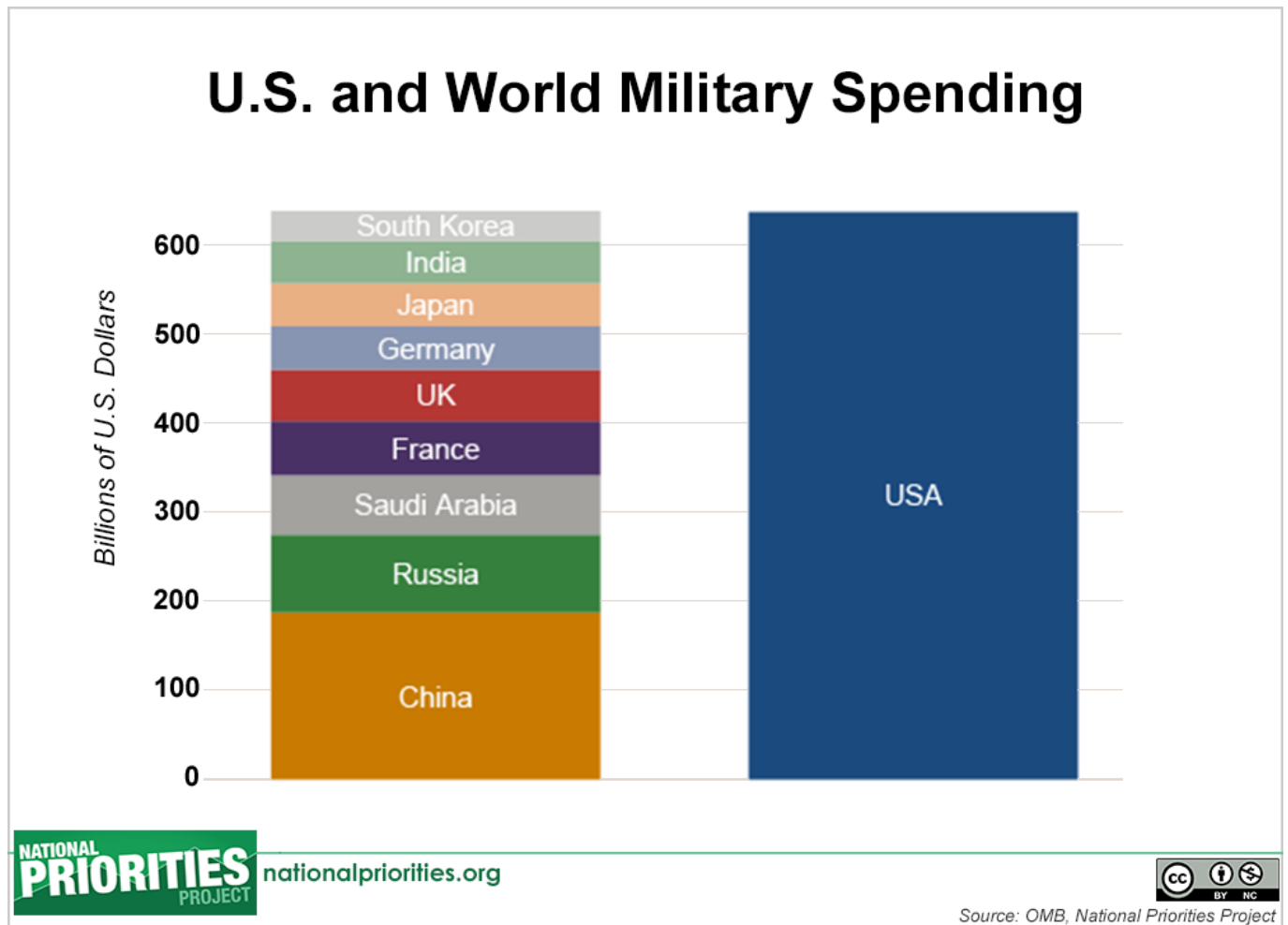
So does the world.

Having lawyers that advertise

There are few countries in which you'll encounter a billboard or bus ad for a divorce attorney or see several personal injury spots while watching half an hour of daytime TV. In America, however, these advertisements are everywhere—and unsurprisingly, they confuse foreign visitors.

America's foreign policy makes it hated in most of the world.

It seems murderous, thuggish, brutal, a menace to everyone.



America's military is hated all over the world.

For example, the U.S. killed over a million people in Iraq. This does not bother Americans.

Since 2000 it has destroyed Iraq, Syria, Libya, enters its eighteenth year of butchering Afghans, bombs Somalia, sends troops to Africa.

It militarily threatens North Korea, Venezuela, Iran, seeks to destroy the economies of Iran, Venezuela, Cuba, Russia, China. It sanctions Europe.

No other country does this.

Americans put too much ice in drinks.

You ask for water and you get ice with some water. The same goes for soda or other soft drinks. Americans also love to put ice in whiskey and even wine. America's obsession with ice cubes dates back to the 1800s when a man was trying to expand his ice harvesting business by convincing people to use it to cool their drinks.

This is not the griping of Fred. It is what the whole world sees, daily, in detail.

Prescription drug makers that advertise

Another oddity of American advertising are those spots you see for prescription medication during every commercial break. Foreigners might not realize right off the bat that those soft-focus commercials featuring happy couples prancing through corn fields are advertising medications for diabetes and back pain. However, if the commercial itself isn't clear, the long list of side effects the narrator rattles off at the end should at least tip them off.

Number of wars started since 2000 by Iran: 0. Russia: 0. China: 0. North Korea: 0. America...?

Number of countries openly running torture sites while talking of human rights? 1. The country with the largest prison population? The answer is left to the reader as an exercise.

TRUMP'S NUCLEAR WARFARE



How to Protect

YOURSELF • YOUR FAMILY • YOUR COMMUNITY

VOTE NOVEMBER 8TH

Democrat anti-Trump propaganda.

Even today, many Americans speak of American Values, of the country's devotion to democracy and human rights and freedom.

Maybe Americans believe it.

No one else does.

The United States has a horrendous history of installing or supporting hideous dictators, supporting repressive regimes, overthrowing elected governments.

Human rights? In Saudi Arabia? Israel? The world is not blind.

You shouldn't have to pay more than expected.

It's confusing to many non-Americans that the price you see on an item is not necessarily the one you end up paying at the register. Basically, you have to have a degree in math to calculate how much your final bill will be. This is because stores don't include tax on price tag, and tipping is, technically, not mandatory.

Americans, self-absorbed, perhaps the most historically ignorant of First-World peoples, shrugs such things off.

"Oh, get over it." Whatever it was.

The nations involved do not shrug them off.



The names of the Presidents might change, but their policies do not.

You can bet the Chinese know about Legation days, America's role in forcing the opium trade on China, extraterritoriality.

Deep-frying everything

Sure, fried chicken is *hardly* a foreign concept—but try explaining chicken-fried steak or deep-fried Oreos to a non-American. Finding creative ways to fry things that probably shouldn't be fried is an American specialty and something that definitely confuses tourists.

From abroad, America is a feral, amoral, remorseless empire, rotting from within, willing to do anything to maintain its dominance.

From inside the U.S., it seems otherwise.

Do you, an American reader, want to kill Afghans? Buy another trillion dollars of nuclear weapons? War with Iran? Russia?

But Americans have no influence over what Washington does, and the world judges by what it sees.

Americans are arrogant.

Many people in Southern Europe, Greece, France, and Italy think Americans look down on people, according to Norwegian journalist René Zografos, author of "Attractive Unattractive Americans: How the World Sees America." Ignorant and arrogant are other descriptions foreigners sometimes associate with Americans.

describe the USA in four words



This picture pretty much describes America, sort of.

Other Stuff

While China is often politically reprehensible, its engineering is amazing. This, on the Hong Kong Macau sea bridge, is long at twenty minutes and a bit rayrah. It is representative of the huge scale and ambitiousness of Chinese infrastructure programs.

Conclusion

Fred did get on a bender ranting on so.

But listen to what he is saying.

- The world views America as a dangerous out-of-control bully.
- Americans are blind to this reality

With that in mind, I'll chime in with my "two cents";

- This situation is not sustainable.
- If anyone thinks that Trump or his successor can suddenly change the course that America is on, they are delusional.
- The only thing that is going to change the path that America is on today, is rapid and abrupt (internal) change. NO OTHER SOLUTION IS POSSIBLE.

I'm outraged at what has been done to our freedoms and our country. You should be, too.

We have been subjected to crackdowns, clampdowns, shutdowns, showdowns, shootdowns, standdowns, knockdowns, putdowns, breakdowns, lockdowns, takedowns, slowdowns, meltdowns, and never-ending letdowns.

We've been held up, stripped down, faked out, photographed, frisked, fracked, hacked, tracked, cracked, intercepted, accessed, spied on, zapped, mapped, searched, shot at, tasered, tortured, tackled, trussed up, tricked, lied to, labeled, libeled, leered at, shoved aside, saddled with debt not of our own making, sold a bill of goods about national security, tuned out by those representing us, tossed aside, and taken to the cleaners.

We've had our freedoms turned inside out, our democratic structure flipped upside down, and our house of cards left in a shambles.

We've had our children burned by flashbang grenades, our dogs shot, and our old folks hospitalized after "accidental" encounters with marauding SWAT teams.

We've been told that as citizens we have no rights within 100 miles of our own border, now considered "Constitution-free zones."

We've had our faces filed in government databases, our biometrics crosschecked against criminal databanks, and our consumerist tendencies catalogued for future marketing overtures.

We've seen the police transformed from community peacekeepers to point guards for the militarized corporate state. The police continue to push, prod, poke, probe, scan, shoot and intimidate the very individuals—we the taxpayers—whose rights they were hired to safeguard. Networked together through fusion centers, police have surreptitiously spied on our activities and snooped on our communications, using hi-tech devices provided by the Department of Homeland Security.

We've been deemed suspicious for engaging in such dubious activities as talking too long on a cell phone and stretching too long before jogging, dubbed extremists and terrorists for criticizing the government and suggesting it is tyrannical or oppressive, and subjected to forced colonoscopies and anal probes for allegedly rolling through a stop sign.

We've been arrested for all manner of "crimes" that never used to be considered criminal, let alone uncommon or unlawful, behavior: letting our kids walk to the playground alone, giving loose change to a homeless man, feeding the hungry, and living off the grid.

We've been sodomized, victimized, jeopardized, demoralized, traumatized, stigmatized, vandalized, demonized, polarized and terrorized, often without having done anything to justify such treatment. Blame it on a government mindset that renders us guilty before we've even been charged, let alone convicted, of any wrongdoing.

In this way, law-abiding individuals have had their homes mistakenly raided by SWAT teams that got the address wrong. One accountant found himself at the center of a misguided (armed) police standoff after surveillance devices confused his license plate with that of a drug felon.

We've been railroaded into believing that our votes count, that we live in a republic or a democracy, that elections make a difference, that it matters whether we vote Republican or Democrat, and that our elected officials are looking out for our best interests. Truth be told, we live in an oligarchy, politicians represent only the profit motives of the corporate state, whose leaders know all too well that there is no discernible difference between red and blue politics, because there is only one color that matters in politics: green.

We've gone from having privacy in our inner sanctums to having nowhere to hide, with smart pills that monitor the conditions of our bodies, homes that spy on us (with smart meters that monitor our electric usage and thermostats and light switches that can be controlled remotely) and cars that listen to our conversations, track our whereabouts and report them to the police. Even our cities have become wall-to-wall electronic concentration camps, with police now able to record hi-def video of everything that takes place within city limits.

We've had our schools locked down and turned into prisons, our students handcuffed, shackled and arrested for engaging in childish behavior such as food fights, our children's biometrics stored, their school IDs chipped, their movements tracked, and their data bought, sold and bartered for profit by government contractors, all the while they are treated like criminals and taught to march in lockstep with the police state.

We've been rendered enemy combatants in our own country, denied basic due process rights, held against our will without access to an attorney or being charged with a crime, and left to waste away in jail until such a time as the government is willing to let us go or allow us to defend ourselves.

We've had the very military weapons we funded with our hard-earned tax dollars used against us, from unpiloted, weaponized drones tracking our movements on the nation's highways and byways and armored vehicles, assault rifles, sound cannons and grenade launchers in towns with little to no crime to an arsenal of military-grade weapons and equipment given free of charge to schools and universities.

We've been silenced, censored and forced to conform, shut up in free speech zones, gagged by hate crime laws, stifled by political correctness, muzzled by misguided anti-bullying statutes, and pepper sprayed for taking part in peaceful protests.

We've been shot by police for reaching for a license during a traffic stop, reaching for a baby during a drug bust, carrying a toy sword down a public street, and wearing headphones that hamper our ability to hear.

We've had our tax dollars spent on \$30,000 worth of Starbucks for Department of Homeland Security employees, \$630,000 in advertising to increase Facebook "likes" for the State Department, and close to \$25 billion to fund projects ranging from the silly to the unnecessary, such as laughing classes for college students and programs teaching monkeys to play video games and gamble.

We've been treated like guinea pigs, targeted by the government and social media for psychological experiments on how to manipulate the masses. We've been tasered for talking back to police, tackled for taking pictures of police abuses, and threatened with jail time for invoking our rights. We've even been arrested by undercover cops stationed in public bathrooms who interpret men's "shaking off" motions after urinating to be acts of lewdness.

We've had our possessions seized and stolen by law enforcement agencies looking to cash in on asset forfeiture schemes, our jails privatized and used as a source of cheap labor for megacorporations, our gardens smashed by police seeking out suspicious-looking plants that could be marijuana, and our buying habits turned into suspicious behavior by a government readily inclined to view its citizens as terrorists.

We've had our cities used for military training drills, with Black Hawk helicopters buzzing the skies, Urban Shield exercises overtaking our streets, and active shooter drills wreaking havoc on unsuspecting bystanders in our schools, shopping malls and other "soft target" locations.

We've been told that national security is more important than civil liberties, that police dogs' noses are sufficient cause to carry out warrantless searches, that the best way not to get raped by police is to "follow the law," that what a police officer says in court will be given preference over what video footage shows, that an upright posture and acne are sufficient reasons for a cop to suspect you of wrongdoing, that police can stop and search a driver based solely on an anonymous tip, and that police officers have every right to shoot first and ask questions later if they feel threatened.

Are you outraged yet?

You should be. So what are you waiting for? Get out there and right these wrongs.

Stop waiting patiently for change to happen, stop waiting for some politician to rescue you, and take responsibility for your freedoms: start by fixing what's broken in your lives, in your communities, and in this country.

Get mad, get outraged, get off your duff and get out of your house, get in the streets, get in people's faces, get down to your local city council, get over to your local school board, get your thoughts down on paper, get your objections plastered on protest signs, get your neighbors, friends and family to join their voices to yours, get your representatives to pay attention to your grievances, get your kids to know their rights, get your local police to march in lockstep with the

Constitution, get your media to act as watchdogs for the people and not lapdogs for the corporate state, get your act together, and get your house in order.

Appearances to the contrary, this country does not belong exclusively to the corporations or the special interest groups or the oligarchs or the war profiteers or any particular religious, racial or economic demographic.

This country belongs to all of us: each and every one of us—"we the people"—but most especially, this country belongs to those of us who love freedom enough to stand and fight for it.

-Johnathan Whitehead

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