

## America's Most Powerful Weapon

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Forget nukes. Forget laser-guided missiles. Forget cluster bombs. The most powerful weapon in the U.S. arsenal is xenophobia. This ugly trait is possessed by the majority of U.S. citizens and is widely practiced.

You may ask how a thought process could be more devastating than the hardware the U.S. has used in killing foreigners in genocidal proportions. Xenophobia allows the U.S. government to venture into foreign realms for the purpose of annihilating the people without question by the public. And, if that's not bad enough, xenophobia triggers the public to cheer while the slaughter is occurring.

Many non-U.S. citizens have no idea of this aspect of the U.S. citizenry. When they denigrate the U.S. government, they fail to realize that the actions are supported by a majority.

At one time, people of dark skin or of non-Christian religions were the prime targets. In the past few years, the list has been vastly increased to include almost anybody who does not live in the geographical U.S., and those inside who do not agree with the status quo.

This morning's Opinion page of the *San Diego Union-Tribune* included letters that typify the attitudes now current in the U.S. toward foreigners. An astute psychiatrist could write volumes on these letters that included about 1,500 words in totality. On writing about the recent U.S. Supreme Court ruling outlawing the death penalty for minors, Bob Wood wrote: "I suggest that each minor convicted of a capital crime be sent to a European country and barred from re-entering the U.S. Both countries would be culturally enriched and we'll save a fortune on prison costs."

Europe, in general, is a bastion of horrible things in the writer's mind. I doubt he has ever been outside his own state, let alone to a country other than the U.S.

On the same issue, Paul Determan wrote: "We are left with a judiciary that fawns on and is inspired by the opinions of its morally decayed intellectual cousins in Europe. God save us from 'enlightened' intellectuals who won't be satisfied until the U.S. declines to the same level as France and Germany."

Again, Europe is the bad guy. I differ on his use of words. In referencing France and Germany in a cultural manner, I would use the word "ascends" instead of declines. Here's a take on the Dutch emigrating from their country in large numbers. Richard Ayers stated: "Almost anything goes in Holland — drugs, crazy sex and deviant behavior are all OK. Those people are going to Canada, New Zealand and Australia, not to the U.S. Bottom line, move to another country that is liberal and socialist like Holland."

This same writer probably would praise Australia for joining in with the slaughter of Iraqis. I find it problematic that he considers Australia to be a "socialist" country. Tell

that one to the Aussie opposition in the country's parliament and it would be met with guffaws.

On the tight security currently in place and the targeting of Muslims in the U.S., Sean Hixson says: "I don't feel all Muslims are terrorists, yet the case can be made that non-Muslims, whites, blacks, Latinos, etc. are not as inclined to be terrorist threats." Now that was nice of him to concede that not ALL Muslims are terrorists. However, his facts differ considerably from reality. Each year in the U.S., hundreds of terrorist incidents occur, such as the bombing of churches, office buildings and houses. In addition, kids in schools and adults in the work place have been violently killed in random terrorist acts. The overwhelming majority have been committed by white U.S. citizens.

Last week, a mass murderer was apprehended in the U.S. Midwest. Authorities had been seeking him for years. Currently, about a dozen murders have been attributed to him, with the possibility of many more. He is white, has a family and was an assistant pastor of a Lutheran church as well as a Boy Scout leader. I have not yet heard of an outcry from the public to scrutinize all Lutherans or Boy Scout officials. If he were a Muslim, we would be undergoing a witch hunt that would make that of Salem pale in comparison.

The U.S. government has performed a masterful job in creating an atmosphere of distrust and paranoia. Officials know this fully well and use the xenophobia to their benefits.

Now, we come to Iraqis. They are considered cannon fodder because they are not exactly human like most white flag-waving U.S. citizens. They do not have feelings nor do they have families or morals.

For 42 consecutive nights in 1991 I visited my local produce store that was owned by Tony, an Iraqi-American. On each of these nights, Iraq was heavily bombarded by every imaginable kind of projectile in the U.S. arsenal. I listened to and talked to anyone who would reciprocate — Iraqis, Jordanians, Syrians, Iranians, Egyptians, etc. This period enhanced my scant knowledge of Arab culture immensely.

One evening, when I entered, Tony was sitting in a chair and had an appearance of sadness on his face. I asked what happened and he answered, "Somebody just came in my store, called me a "camel jockey" and ran out. I'd never seen a camel in my life until I went to the San Diego Zoo." He then told me that there were few camels in Iraq and most were in the bleak desert areas. Most people from Baghdad had never seen a camel. Shortly after, a customer walked in and I asked, "Are you Iraqi?" He nodded in an affirmative manner. Then, I queried, "Have you ever seen a camel?" He quickly stated, "Yeah. On TV once."

The above incidents show American xenophobia at its worst. Many U.S. citizens refer to Arabs as "camel jockeys" or "sand niggers." Then, they include Iranians in the same mold. When confronted with the facts, some unflattering remarks ensue. I have told many people that Iranians are of Persian stock and Iraqis mostly are Arab. A common response is, "You know what I mean. Eye-rain-ians (Iranians), Eye-rackis (Iraqis) ... they're all fucking A-rabs. They're all the same."

I live in an area with over 40,000 people of Arab descent (mostly Iraqi with major contingents of Syrians, Lebanese and Palestinians) and the hatred toward them is very evident. Because I am of the Caucasian race, white people occasionally tell me of their distrust and hatred toward Arabs. When I tell them that they are bigots, they usually deny this fact. When I enter a conversation like this, I quickly terminate it. Make no mistake. Arabs in San Diego County have had their businesses blown up, ravaged, vandalized and shut down. It is no wonder that Iraqis are being treated with disrespect in their own country by U.S. officials and servicepeople when, for years, they observed the anti-Arab sentiments at home.

There are many terms used to demonize Arabs — thieves, dishonest, dirty, unreliable, etc. However, not one has any real merit. They are no more dishonest or unreliable than any of their American counterparts.

Neil Clark of *The Guardian* newspaper in Britain wrote an outstanding article ([The Return of Arabophobia](#)) that was published on October 20, 2003. His insight is formidable. Here are a couple of quotes from the article:

Arabophobia has been part of western culture since the Crusades, with Saddam Hussein and Osama bin Laden only the latest in a long line of Arab bogeymen. For centuries, the Arab has played the role of villain, seducer of our women, hustler and thief — the barbarian lurking at the gates of civilization. In the 20<sup>th</sup> century, new images emerged: the fanatical terrorist, the stone-thrower, the suicide bomber ...  
... The British and American officers who now talk of Iraqi 'dishonesty,' and seek to portray Iraq as a backward and savage land, would rather we forget that up until the imposition of sanctions by Britain and the U.S., independent Ba'athist Iraq, although a dictatorship, had the most developed infrastructure, the best healthcare and the best universities of any country in the Middle East.

Clark's astute assessment of Arabophobia makes the point of why the U.S. has killed, tortured, and humiliated about three million Iraqis since 1991. Now, the stakes have risen. The current craze of xenophobia in the U.S. will allow the government to go after any concocted adversary in the future, regardless of race or religion, except Israel, of course.