

High Hopes

Let's face it, no matter who you vote for a few weeks from now, you are doing it on hope. President Bush firmly believes democracy will prevail in Iraq—lots of hoping going on in that analysis. John Kerry wants us to believe that he can persuade allies like France and Germany to help stabilize Iraq. For that to be even remotely possible, the Senator will have to speak softly and carry a big checkbook, because turning that kind of hope into reality is likely to cost plenty.

The sad truth is that many countries dislike America, and it has little to do with the USA's proactive policy in fighting perceived terror threats. The acrimony is caused by severe differences in philosophy and priorities.

First, there's the economy; it is steadily growing in the USA, but essentially flat in the European Union. The reason is that Americans work longer hours and have fewer work restrictions. Europe is deeply into entitlements, and those extend into the marketplace. If you don't want to work in Scandinavia, for example, the government will support you. And even if you do work, taxes are so high in many European countries that after a while, wage earning isn't worth it. So many ambitious and creative people simply hit the sauna, limiting their accomplishments.

And then there's the secularist philosophy. In the Netherlands they have legalized euthanasia even for children. If you want drugs, you will find them sold openly in Amsterdam. After you score, you can walk on over to the red light district and have sex with a government-approved prostitute. Then you might want to use your drugs in a public coffee shop. No problem. Going Dutch no longer means splitting the check, now it means party hardy.

In Spain, the new socialist prime minister mocks the Catholic

Church and surrenders to Al Qaeda. Across the border in France, Jacques Chirac refuses to provide help needed to safeguard elections in Afghanistan and Iraq. In Russia, Putin shuts down the press and incarcerates potential rivals. And John Kerry's going to rally these guys to our cause?

Canada has gradually turned into a secular paradise with socialized medicine, an increasing acceptance of drug use and trafficking, and a bitterly anti-American press. Mexico remains poor and corrupt, and then blames its neighbor to the north for the chaos. That's hilarious when you consider that the U.S. government allows millions of Mexican citizens to live and work here, many of them illegally. In fact, money sent home by Mexican workers accounts for that country's second largest industry after oil.

The truth is that the USA is disliked by many countries because of our Judeo-Christian traditions, as well as our economic and military power. This charade that Chirac and Gerhard Schroeder simply disagree with us about Iraq is nonsense. These men play to their left-wing base and to the anti-American media. In fact, they are both in office because of their anti-Americanism. The German and French economies are a mess. These guys mask that by criticizing the barbarians in the USA.

So good luck, John Kerry, in finding common ground with foreign politicians who personally benefit from giving the USA a hard time. The envy and shortsightedness that is gripping the world is Al Qaeda's best friend. The USA has unquestionably made mistakes in Iraq, but consider this: if the entire world was united against terrorists and brutal dictators, they could not exist. But the world is not. And all the hope on earth won't change that.