**Why I Love and Why I Do Not Love America**

When Peter (Kasalovsky) asked me to write my personal reasons for “why I love and why I don’t love” the U.S.A., I thought that one would need to write a book to describe and illustrate such a complex topic. However, since I have only 30 minutes, I will try to be brief and describe the most important factors that have influenced my views of the United States.

After I emigrated from the former Czechoslovakia, I have been living in the United States for many years. I attended a university, both undergraduate and graduate, in my new country, I married an American girl, and my children were born here and consider themselves American. I have worked for American companies, created and owned many businesses in America, and I have employed many American workers and managers. I do have extensive experience in the American way of life, but somewhat my heart is still European. Perhaps this makes me a more objective observer of the American experience. In some way, it may appear that in this presentation, I am giving you a non-American point of view that can in some points appear to have a bias of an anti-American sentiment without appearing "anti-American" myself.

To begin, let me indulge in some positives. Although I find plenty to complain about the United States, and I strongly believe that this nation's freedoms, economy and leadership could use some major reforms, there is still a lot to like about the USA. Here are some of the things that I love.

# The heart of the American people

Nothing pulls together the strength of the American people better than a disaster-scale event. For example, the last large-scale hurricane Katrina not only devastated New Orleans, but it also brought out some of the most determined, capable and good-hearted people. Volunteer helicopter pilots from cities across the country flew all the way to New Orleans and conducted rooftop rescues at their own expense. A college student and his roommate stole a press badge and drove many hours right into the thick of the disaster -- posing as a journalist -- to rescue victims and give them a ride out of the chaos. An elderly woman was seen handing out bottled water to people in distress. Strangers were rescuing and adopting strayed home pets.

## It was a scene of everyday Americans--truck drivers, firefighters, bartenders, teachers, and of course cops and many others from various professions and economic spectra--doing the right thing. There is an abundance of heroism bundled up in the American people, and it only takes the appearance of a natural disaster to unleash it. It feels comforting to live in a country where even if the government is incompetent, the people can collectively find solutions to almost anything. It is the average man and woman on the street that make a huge difference. Most of the time, they are the heroes that save lives despite the devastating conditions and the utter failure of the government agencies, such as FEMA in the case of hurricane Katrina.

## Americans are the most altruistic people in the world. They adopt more children from many poor countries than any other nation in the world. They are the largest donors to charitable organizations at home and around the world. There are a countless number of foundations, such as The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, that helps address and solve life issues of less fortunate people. “Doctors Without Borders” is an organization consisting of volunteer doctors who travel to poor countries in Africa and Asia to offer medical help free of charge to poor people who have no other way to obtain it. And yes, it is also an American charitable organization. No other country can match American generosity.

## Americans are a forgiving and generous people. It is not uncommon to get a second chance, be it in personal life, business or politics. Many business entrepreneurs who declared bankruptcies “came back” with a new, second chance and reached incredible successes. Many politicians who were caught in improper activities and behaviors got second chances after they repented. Remember President Clinton and his “Monica affair?” The American people have forgiven him this abhorable transgression and cherish him as one of the greatest presidents. There are many other examples I could mention here that would illustrate this national trait, but take my word for it.

# The cultural diversity

The people in the United States are remarkably creative; they are independent thinkers, and they bring together the wisdom of many different cultures and backgrounds. I have traveled, lived and visited many countries and I have not seen any other place in the world where you can get the same cultural mix that we have in the United States. It is truly wonderful to have the cultural influences of Hispanics, African Americans, Eastern Europeans, Asians, South Americans and many others.

Racial diversity is one of the things that make America great. It is far less interesting and stimulating to live in a country that has a homogeneous culture with no international influences. It is very gratifying to have the diversity of many world cultures. Americans like to meet [people](http://www.naturalnews.com/people.html) from different cultures and different backgrounds. After all, America was built by emigrants from all over the world. I can also be one of many examples; I am Slovak and my wife is Chinese American. Our children have an incredibly rich heritage having both parents from vastly different cultures and backgrounds. America is a real “melting pot” in the most positive aspect.

**The free market**

The next thing to love about America is the free market. The competitiveness of the American market results in the creation of highly efficient businesses that deliver necessary products and services in ways that simply cannot be achieved under a centralized government system. Yes, there are also many problems with the American [free](http://www.naturalnews.com/free.html) market system; it can create corporate abuses and corporate ethical atrocities. After all, this is a system that has created Enron and WorldCom and Big Pharma, the internet bubble, the housing and financial collapse, and the list could go on and on. But it's also the same system that has created an environment with the best distribution system in the world, the system that has allowed the creation of many new inventions, technologies and companies that have and continue to transform the world and our lives where only a few years back we only dreamt about it. It is a market system that also spurs creativity and competitiveness, and it inherently promotes innovation.

# Inventiveness

Speaking of innovation, the next best thing to like about America is its inventiveness. American economic and free market system encourages creativity. America has a highly innovative population, more than in any other country in the world. Per capita, Americans create more patents than any other country. Americans are inventive people. Every day, Americans come up with many new revolutionary ideas and inventions that ultimately advance our knowledge base and make our lives easier. Americans are masters of science and technology. The telephone, airplane, phonograph, personal computer, the internet, radio, television, cold fusion technology, etc. are only a handful of examples that were invented in America and that have changed the world.

Americans are also great inventors of software and web-based application services. Companies like Microsoft, Oracle, IBM, Apple and many others produce the most innovative software in the world. Facebook, Twitter, Google and Yahoo are some other examples of companies that have transformed the way we communicate and how we get our information. The American market and the corporate system have unleashed creative energies that no other country has, and many are trying to duplicate.

**American Universities**

The top twenty universities in the world are in America. There are more students per capita that go to universities in America than in any other country. American universities are the envy of the rest of the world. They are innovative think-tank centers making America the engine of progress. They are centers of creative liberal thinkers and social scientists who greatly influence how Americans think and conduct their everyday lives. Many foreign students come to America to learn business, science, medicine and art, and many stay and create successful companies. Nowhere in the world are opportunities as reachable as in America.

# Creative expression and Hollywood

The next thing to love about America is the entertainment industry. Our movies, music, literature and theater are ambassadors of American culture and are ubiquitous throughout the world. Even though one may say that Hollywood produces a lot of violent movies and a lot of questionable-quality movies, there are also many artful movies that deeply touch the human spirit. Some of the most talented movie makers in the world are from, or live and work in [America](http://www.naturalnews.com/America.html).

Our music inspires countless listeners throughout the world. On my recent trip to India and Italy, two very different cultures, car radios played mostly music from America. The same goes for American movies. Posters promoting new American movie releases can be seen in almost every country in the world, with the exception of North Korea and Iran. We have more movie, music and theater star celebrities known all around the world that any other country. The talent of American artists is mesmerizing throughout the world, as it is in America.

# Grassroots activism

The next thing to love about America is grassroots activism. In America, citizens feel the need and have the motivation to stand up and speak out about a great many issues. People hold public rallies and marches at grassroots events. They will rally together for important causes, such as saving the environment or saving the whales or overturning unjust laws. Americans tend to be activist-oriented, and that could be seen as a sign of a high level of freedom in a country. However, many times, these activists are suppressed (as it happened during the WTO meetings), but by and large, activists are able to get their say in America.

It's important to recognize the value of activism, whether or not all citizens agree with the particular agenda. It can get sometime out of control, when peaceful activism turns into a violent demonstration, and many times, people get hurt and property gets damaged. However, most of the time, people feel quite tolerant of the other activists in America, even if they don't share the same points of view. As Noam Chomsky said, "If we don't believe in freedom of expression for people we despise, we don't believe in it at all."

America not only tolerates activism; it actually seems to welcome it. People like to get involved, raise their voices and be heard. This may keep the government a little more honest, if at all possible. It helps keep public policies somewhat more sane and provides some check on the legislative and judicial systems. And now with the help of the internet and online activism, it provides an even more powerful way to connect people who share a common passion. For that reason, online activism is becoming a very powerful force for social and political change in this country.

# Things that are troublesome for me

I have briefly described the main traits why I love and admire America. There are many other things to appreciate about this country, of course, but these are the ones that stand out for me as things the United States does particularly well.

Now comes the hard part. What is troublesome in America? What are the things that I do not love, or even abhor? Do the negatives outweigh the positives? Can things be improved? Can Americans learn from past misdeeds?

**CIA as a tool of American imperialism**

Abroad, America is a bully. It markets itself as the champion of freedom, justice and peace. It is a clever marketing propaganda that portrays American policies abroad as the only right system that can achieve democracy and equality. But the reality cannot be further away from these doctrines and propaganda. Let me describe how the CIA propagates American control and influence throughout the world.

Since its inception in 1947, CIA operations have followed the same recurring script. First, American business interests abroad are threatened by a popular or democratically elected leader. The people support their leader because he intends to conduct land reform, strengthen unions, redistribute wealth, nationalize foreign-owned industry, and regulate business to protect workers, consumers and the environment. So, on behalf of American business, and often with their help, the CIA mobilizes the opposition. First, it identifies right-wing groups within the country (usually the military), and offers them a deal: "We'll put you in power if you maintain a favorable business climate for us." The Agency then hires, trains and works with them to overthrow the existing government (usually a democracy). It uses every trick in the book: propaganda, stuffed ballot boxes, purchased elections, extortion, blackmail, sexual intrigue, false stories about opponents in the local media, infiltration and disruption of opposing political parties, kidnapping, beating, torture, intimidation, economic sabotage, death squads and even assassination. These efforts culminate in a military coup, which installs a right-wing dictator. The CIA trains the dictator’s security apparatus to crack down on the traditional enemies of big business, using interrogation, torture and murder. The victims were said to be "communists," but almost always they were just peasants, liberals, moderates, labor union leaders, political opponents and advocates of free speech and democracy. Widespread human rights abuses follow.

This scenario has been repeated so many times that the CIA actually teaches it in a special school, the notorious "School of the Americas." (It opened in Panama but later moved to Fort Benning, Georgia.) Critics have nicknamed it the "School of the Dictators" and "School of the Assassins." Here, the CIA trained Latin American military officers how to conduct coups, including the use of interrogation, torture and murder.

The Association for Responsible Dissent estimates that by 1987, 6 million people had died as a result of CIA covert operations. Former State Department official William Blum called this an "American Holocaust."

In the past, during the cold war, the CIA justified these actions as part of its war against communism. But most coups did not involve a communist threat. Unlucky nations were targeted for a wide variety of reasons: not only threats to American business interests abroad, but also liberal or even moderate social reforms, political instability, the unwillingness of a leader to carry out Washington’s dictates, and declarations of neutrality in the Cold War. Indeed, nothing has infuriated CIA Directors quite like a nation’s desire to stay out of the Cold War.

Now the narrative has changed. Now, the CIA uses the same methods and techniques to fight terrorism. As the saying goes, “The more things change, the more they stay the same.”

The ironic thing about all this intervention is that most of the time, it has failed to achieve American objectives. Often the newly installed dictator grew comfortable with the security apparatus the CIA has built for him. He became an expert at running a police state. Despite billions of dollars being spent, or rather wasted, to support dictators in power to be a ”yes man” to American interests, the truth is eventually revealed. Be it Iraq, Afghanistan, or even the Arab Spring, the results are usually the same. Examples of this "boomerang effect" include the Shah of Iran, General Noriega and Saddam Hussein. The boomerang effect also explains why the CIA has proven highly successful at overthrowing democracies, but a wretched failure at overthrowing dictatorships.

I have done a little research and the following timeline illustrates some of the most egregious CIA activities in the last century:

**1947**

**CIA created** — President Truman signs the National Security Act of 1947, creating the Central Intelligence Agency and National Security Council. The CIA is accountable to the president through the NSC — there is no democratic or congressional oversight. Its charter allows the CIA to "perform such other functions and duties… as the National Security Council may from time to time direct." This loophole opens the door to covert action and dirty tricks.

**Greece** — President Truman requests military aid to Greece to support right-wing forces fighting communist rebels. For the rest of the Cold War, Washington and the CIA will back notorious Greek leaders with deplorable human rights records.

**1948**

**Covert-action wing created** — The CIA recreates a covert action wing, innocuously called the Office of Policy Coordination, led by Wall Street lawyer Frank Wisner. According to its secret charter, its responsibilities include "propaganda, economic warfare, preventive direct action, including sabotage, anti-sabotage, demolition and evacuation procedures; subversion against hostile states, including assistance to underground resistance groups, and support of indigenous anti-communist elements in threatened countries of the free world."

**Italy** — The CIA corrupts democratic elections in Italy, where Italian communists threaten to win the elections. The CIA buys votes, broadcasts propaganda, threatens and beats up opposition leaders, and infiltrates and disrupts their organizations. It works -- the communists are defeated.

**1949**

**Radio Free Europe** — The CIA creates its first major propaganda outlet, Radio Free Europe. Over the next several decades, its broadcasts are so blatantly false that for a time it is considered illegal to publish transcripts of them in the U.S.

**Late 1940s**

**Operation MOCKINGBIRD** — The CIA begins recruiting American news organizations and journalists to become spies and disseminators of propaganda. The effort is headed by Frank Wisner, Allan Dulles, Richard Helms and Philip Graham. Graham is publisher of *The Washington Post,* which becomes a major CIA player. Eventually, the CIA’s media assets will include ABC, NBC, CBS, *Time, Newsweek,* Associated Press, United Press International, Reuters, Hearst Newspapers, Scripps-Howard, Copley News Service and more. By the CIA’s own admission, at least 25 organizations and 400 journalists will become CIA assets.

**1953**

**Iran** – CIA overthrows the democratically elected Mohammed Mossadegh in a military coup, after he threatened to nationalize British oil. The CIA replaces him with a dictator, the Shah of Iran, whose secret police, SAVAK, is as brutal as the Gestapo.

**Operation MK-ULTRA** — Inspired by North Korea’s brainwashing program, the CIA begins experiments on mind control. The most notorious part of this project involves giving LSD and other drugs to American subjects without their knowledge or against their will, causing several to commit suicide. However, the operation involves far more than this. Funded in part by the Rockefeller and Ford foundations, research includes propaganda, brainwashing, public relations, advertising, hypnosis, and other forms of suggestion.

**1954**

**Guatemala** — CIA overthrows the democratically elected Jacob Arbenz in a military coup. Arbenz has threatened to nationalize the Rockefeller-owned United Fruit Company, in which CIA Director Allen Dulles also owns stock. Arbenz is replaced with a series of right-wing dictators whose bloodthirsty policies will kill over 100,000 Guatemalans in the next 40 years.

**1954-1958**

**North Vietnam** — CIA officer Edward Lansdale spends four years trying to overthrow the communist government of North Vietnam, using all the usual dirty tricks. The CIA also attempts to legitimize a tyrannical puppet regime in South Vietnam, headed by Ngo Dinh Diem. These efforts fail to win the hearts and minds of the South Vietnamese because the Diem government is opposed to true democracy, land reform and poverty reduction measures. The CIA’s continuing failure results in escalating American intervention, culminating in the Vietnam War.

**1956**

**Hungary** — Radio Free Europe incites Hungary to revolt by broadcasting Khruschev’s Secret Speech, in which he denounced Stalin. It also hints that American aid will help the Hungarians fight. This aid fails to materialize as Hungarians launch a doomed armed revolt, which only invites a major Soviet invasion. The conflict kills 7,000 Soviets and 30,000 Hungarians.

**1957-1973**

**Laos** — The CIA carries out approximately one coup per year trying to nullify Laos’ democratic elections. The problem is the Pathet Lao, a leftist group with enough popular support to be a member of any coalition government. In the late 50s, the CIA even creates an "Armee Clandestine" of Asian mercenaries to attack the Pathet Lao. After the CIA’s army suffers numerous defeats, the U.S. starts bombing, dropping more bombs on Laos than all the U.S. bombs dropped in World War II. A quarter of all Laotians will eventually become refugees, many living in caves.

**1959**

**Haiti** — The U.S. military helps "Papa Doc" Duvalier become dictator of Haiti. He creates his own private police force, the "Tonton Macoutes," who terrorize the population with machetes. They will kill over 100,000 during the Duvalier family reign. The U.S. does not protest their dismal human rights record.

**1961**

**The Bay of Pigs** — The CIA sends 1,500 Cuban exiles to invade Castro’s Cuba. But "Operation Mongoose" fails, due to poor planning, security and backing. The planners had imagined that the invasion will spark a popular uprising against Castro -– which never happens. A promised American air strike also never occurs. This is the CIA’s first public setback, causing President Kennedy to fire CIA Director Allen Dulles.

**Dominican Republic** — The CIA assassinates Rafael Trujillo, a murderous dictator Washington has supported since 1930. Trujillo’s business interests have grown so large (about 60 percent of the economy) that they have begun competing with American business interests.

**Ecuador** — The CIA-backed military forces the democratically elected President Jose Velasco to resign. Vice President Carlos Arosemana replaces him; the CIA fills the now vacant vice presidency with its own man.

**Congo (Zaire)** — The CIA assassinates the democratically elected Patrice Lumumba. However, public support for Lumumba’s politics runs so high that the CIA cannot clearly install his opponents in power. Four years of political turmoil follow.

**1963**

**Dominican Republic** — The CIA overthrows the democratically elected Juan Bosch in a military coup. The CIA installs a repressive, right-wing junta.

**Ecuador** — A CIA-backed military coup overthrows President Arosemana, whose independent (not socialist) policies have become unacceptable to Washington. A military junta assumes command, cancels the 1964 elections, and begins abusing human rights.

**1964**

**Brazil** — A CIA-backed military coup overthrows the democratically elected government of Joao Goulart. The junta that replaces it will, in the next two decades, become one of the most bloodthirsty in history. General Castelo Branco will create Latin America’s first death squads, or bands of secret police who hunt down "communists" for torture, interrogation and murder. Often these "communists" are no more than Branco’s political opponents. Later it is revealed that the CIA trains the death squads.

**1965**

**Indonesia** — The CIA overthrows the democratically elected Sukarno with a military coup. The CIA has been trying to eliminate Sukarno since 1957, using everything from attempted assassination to sexual intrigue, for nothing more than his declaring neutrality in the Cold War. His successor, General Suharto, will massacre between 500,000 to 1 million civilians accused of being "communist." The CIA supplies the names of countless suspects.

**Dominican Republic** — A popular rebellion breaks out, promising to reinstall Juan Bosch as the country’s elected leader. The revolution is crushed when U.S. Marines land to uphold the military regime by force. The CIA directs everything behind the scenes.

**Greece** — With the CIA’s backing, the king removes George Papandreous as prime minister. Papandreous has failed to vigorously support U.S. interests in Greece.

**Congo (Zaire)** — A CIA-backed military coup installs Mobutu Sese Seko as dictator. The hated and repressive Mobutu exploits his desperately poor country for billions.

**1966**

**The *Ramparts* Affair** — The radical magazine *Ramparts* begins a series of unprecedented anti-CIA articles. Among their scoops: the CIA has paid the University of Michigan $25 million dollars to hire "professors" to train South Vietnamese students in covert police methods. MIT and other universities have received similar payments. *Ramparts* also reveals that the National Students’ Association is a CIA front. Students are sometimes recruited through blackmail and bribery, including draft deferments.

**1967**

**Greece** — A CIA-backed military coup overthrows the government two days before the elections. The favorite to win was George Papandreous, the liberal candidate. During the next six years, the "reign of the colonels" — backed by the CIA — will usher in the widespread use of torture and murder against political opponents. When a Greek ambassador objects to President Johnson about U.S. plans for Cypress, Johnson tells him: "Fuck your parliament and your constitution."

**Operation PHEONIX** — The CIA helps South Vietnamese agents identify and then murder alleged Viet Cong leaders operating in South Vietnamese villages. According to a 1971 congressional report, this operation killed about 20,000 "Viet Cong."

**1968**

**Operation CHAOS** — The CIA has been illegally spying on American citizens since 1959, but with Operation CHAOS, President Johnson dramatically boosts the effort. CIA agents go undercover as student radicals to spy on and disrupt campus organizations protesting the Vietnam War. They are searching for Russian instigators, which they never find. CHAOS will eventually spy on 7,000 individuals and 1,000 organizations.

**Bolivia** — A CIA-organized military operation captures legendary guerilla Che Guevara. The CIA wants to keep him alive for interrogation, but the Bolivian government executes him to prevent worldwide calls for clemency.

**1969**

**Uruguay** — The notorious CIA torturer Dan Mitrione arrives in Uruguay, a country torn with political strife. Whereas right-wing forces previously used torture only as a last resort, Mitrione convinces them to use it as a routine, widespread practice. "The precise pain, in the precise place, in the precise amount, for the desired effect," is his motto. The torture techniques he teaches to the death squads rival the Nazis’. He eventually becomes so feared that revolutionaries will kidnap and murder him a year later.

**1970**

**Cambodia** — The CIA overthrows Prince Sahounek, who is highly popular among Cambodians for keeping them out of the Vietnam War. He is replaced by CIA puppet Lon Nol, who immediately throws Cambodian troops into battle. This unpopular move strengthens once minor opposition parties like the Khmer Rouge, which achieves power in 1975 and massacres millions of its own people.

**1971**

**Bolivia** — After half a decade of CIA-inspired political turmoil, a CIA-backed military coup overthrows the leftist President Juan Torres. In the next two years, dictator Hugo Banzer will have over 2,000 political opponents arrested without trial, then tortured, raped and executed.

**Haiti** — "Papa Doc" Duvalier dies, leaving his 19-year old son "Baby Doc" Duvalier the dictator of Haiti. His son continues his bloody reign with full knowledge of the CIA.

**1972**

**The Case-Zablocki Act** — Congress passes an act requiring congressional review of executive agreements. In theory, this should make CIA operations more accountable. In fact, it is only marginally effective.

**Cambodia** — Congress votes to cut off CIA funds for its secret war in Cambodia.

**Wagergate Break-in** — President Nixon sends in a team of burglars to wiretap Democratic offices at Watergate. The team members have extensive CIA histories, including James McCord, E. Howard Hunt and five of the Cuban burglars. They work for the Committee to Reelect the President (CREEP), which does dirty work like disrupting Democratic campaigns and laundering Nixon’s illegal campaign contributions. CREEP’s activities are funded and organized by another CIA front, the Mullen Company.

**1973**

**Chile** — The CIA overthrows and arranges the assassination of Salvador Allende, Latin America’s first democratically elected socialist leader. The problems begin when Allende nationalizes American-owned firms in Chile. ITT offers the CIA $1 million for a coup (reportedly refused). The CIA replaces Allende with General Augusto Pinochet, who will torture and murder thousands of his own countrymen in a crackdown on labor leaders and the political left.

**CIA begins internal investigations** — William Colby, the Deputy Director for Operations, orders all CIA personnel to report any and all illegal activities they know about. This information is later reported to Congress.

**Watergate Scandal** — The CIA’s main collaborating newspaper in America, *The Washington Post,* reports Nixon’s crimes long before any other newspaper takes up the subject. The two reporters, Woodward and Bernstein, make almost no mention of the CIA’s many fingerprints all over the scandal. It is later revealed that Woodward was a Naval intelligence briefer to the White House, and knows many important intelligence figures, including General Alexander Haig. His main source, "Deep Throat," is probably one of those.

**CIA Director Helms Fired** — President Nixon fires CIA Director Richard Helms for failing to help cover up the Watergate scandal. Helms and Nixon have always disliked each other. The new CIA director is William Colby, who is relatively more open to CIA reform.

**1974**

**CHAOS exposed** — Pulitzer prize winning journalist Seymour Hersh publishes a story about Operation CHAOS, the domestic surveillance and infiltration of anti-war and civil rights groups in the U.S. The story sparks national outrage.

**Angleton fired** — Congress holds hearings on the illegal domestic spying efforts of James Jesus Angleton, the CIA’s chief of counterintelligence. His efforts included mail-opening campaigns and secret surveillance of war protesters. The hearings result in his dismissal from the CIA.

**House clears CIA in Watergate** — The House of Representatives clears the CIA of any complicity in Nixon’s Watergate break-in.

**The Hughes Ryan Act** — Congress passes an amendment requiring the president to report nonintelligence CIA operations to the relevant Congressional committees in a timely fashion.

**1975**

**Australia** — The CIA helps topple the democratically elected, left-leaning government of Prime Minister Edward Whitlam. The CIA does this by giving an ultimatum to its Governor-General, John Kerr. Kerr, a longtime CIA collaborator, exercises his constitutional right to dissolve the Whitlam government. The Governor-General is a largely ceremonial position appointed by the Queen; the Prime Minister is democratically elected. The use of this archaic and never-used law stuns the nation.

**Angola** — Eager to demonstrate American military resolve after its defeat in Vietnam, Henry Kissinger launches a CIA-backed war in Angola. Contrary to Kissinger’s assertions, Angola is a country of little strategic importance and not seriously threatened by communism. The CIA backs the brutal leader of UNITAS, Jonas Savimbi. This polarizes Angolan politics and drives his opponents into the arms of Cuba and the Soviet Union for survival. Congress will cut off funds in 1976, but the CIA is able to run the war off the books until 1984, when funding is legalized again. This entirely pointless war kills over 300,000 Angolans.

**"The CIA and the Cult of Intelligence"** — Victor Marchetti and John Marks publish this whistle-blowing history of CIA crimes and abuses. Marchetti has spent 14 years in the CIA, eventually becoming an executive assistant to the Deputy Director of Intelligence. Marks has spent five years as an intelligence official in the State Department.

**"Inside the Company"** — Philip Agee publishes a diary of his life inside the CIA. Agee has worked in covert operations in Latin America during the 60s, and details the crimes in which he took part.

**Congress investigates CIA wrong-doing** — Public outrage compels Congress to hold hearings on CIA crimes. Senator Frank Church heads the Senate investigation ("The Church Committee"), and Representative Otis Pike heads the House investigation. (Despite a 98 percent incumbency reelection rate, both Church and Pike are defeated in the next elections.) The investigations lead to a number of reforms intended to increase the CIA’s accountability to Congress, including the creation of a standing Senate committee on intelligence. However, the reforms prove ineffective, as the Iran/Contra scandal will show. It turns out the CIA can control, deal with or sidestep Congress with ease.

**The Rockefeller Commission** — In an attempt to reduce the damage done by the Church Committee, President Ford creates the "Rockefeller Commission" to whitewash CIA history and propose toothless reforms. The commission’s namesake, Vice President Nelson Rockefeller, is himself a major CIA figure. Five of the commission’s eight members are also members of the Council on Foreign Relations, a CIA-dominated organization.

**1979**

**Iran** — The CIA fails to predict the fall of the Shah of Iran, a longtime CIA puppet, and the rise of Muslim fundamentalists who are furious at the CIA’s backing of SAVAK, the Shah’s bloodthirsty secret police. In revenge, the Muslims take 52 Americans hostage in the U.S. embassy in Tehran.

**Afghanistan** — The Soviets invade Afghanistan. The CIA immediately begins supplying arms to any faction willing to fight the occupying Soviets. Such indiscriminate arming means that when the Soviets leave Afghanistan, civil war will erupt. Also, fanatical Muslim extremists now possess state-of-the-art weaponry. One of these is Sheik Abdel Rahman, who will become involved in the World Trade Center bombing in New York.

**El Salvador** — An idealistic group of young military officers, repulsed by the massacre of the poor, overthrows the right-wing government. However, the U.S. compels the inexperienced officers to include many of the old guard in key positions in their new government. Soon, things are back to "normal" — the military government is repressing and killing poor civilian protesters. Many of the young military and civilian reformers, finding themselves powerless, resign in disgust.

**Nicaragua** — Anastasios Samoza II, the CIA-backed dictator, falls. The Marxist Sandinistas take over government, and they are initially popular because of their commitment to land and anti-poverty reform. Samoza had a murderous and hated personal army called the National Guard. Remnants of the Guard will become the Contras, who fight a CIA-backed guerilla war against the Sandinista government throughout the 1980s.

**1980**

**El Salvador** — The Archbishop of San Salvador, Oscar Romero, pleads with President Carter "Christian to Christian" to stop aiding the military government slaughtering his people. Carter refuses. Shortly afterwards, right-wing leader Roberto D’Aubuisson has Romero shot through the heart while saying Mass. The country soon dissolves into civil war, with the peasants in the hills fighting against the military government. The CIA and U.S. Armed Forces supply the government with overwhelming military and intelligence superiority. CIA-trained death squads roam the countryside, committing atrocities like that of El Mazote in 1982, where they massacre between 700 and 1000 men, women and children. By 1992, some 63,000 Salvadorans will be killed.

**1981**

**Iran/Contra Begins** — The CIA begins secretly and illegally selling arms to Iran at high prices, using the profits to arm the Contras fighting the Sandinista government in Nicaragua. President Reagan vows that the Sandinistas will be "pressured" until "they say ‘uncle.’" The CIA’s *Freedom Fighter’s Manual* disbursed to the Contras includes instruction on economic sabotage, propaganda, extortion, bribery, blackmail, interrogation, torture, murder and political assassination.

**1983**

**Honduras** — The CIA gives Honduran military officers the *Human Resource Exploitation Training Manual – 1983,* which teaches how to torture people. Honduras’ notorious "Battalion 316" then uses these techniques, with the CIA’s full knowledge, on thousands of leftist dissidents. At least 184 are murdered.

**1984**

**The Boland Amendment** — The last of a series of Boland Amendments is passed. These amendments have reduced CIA aid to the Contras; the last one cuts it off completely. However, CIA Director William Casey is already prepared to "hand off" the operation to Colonel Oliver North, who illegally continues supplying the Contras through the CIA’s informal, secret, and self-financing network. This includes "humanitarian aid" donated by Adolph Coors and William Simon, and military aid funded by Iranian arms sales. In addition, the CIA starts cooperating with Columbian and Central American drug cartels and assists them in smuggling illegal drugs to American citizens, creating wide-spread drug addiction among many young people. The profits from these drug sales are being used to purchase arms for the Contras.

**1986**

**Eugene Hasenfus** — Nicaragua shoots down a C-123 transport plane carrying military supplies to the Contras. The lone survivor, Eugene Hasenfus, turns out to be a CIA employee, as are the two dead pilots. The airplane belongs to Southern Air Transport, a CIA front. The incident makes a mockery of President Reagan’s claims that the CIA is not illegally arming the Contras.

**Iran/Contra Scandal** — Although the details have long been known, the Iran/Contra scandal finally captures the media’s attention in 1986. Congress holds hearings, and several key figures (like Oliver North) lie under oath to protect the intelligence community. CIA Director William Casey dies of brain cancer before Congress can question him. All reforms enacted by Congress after the scandal are purely cosmetic.

**Haiti** — Rising popular revolt in Haiti means that "Baby Doc" Duvalier will remain "President for Life" only if he has a short one. The U.S., which hates instability in a puppet country, flies the despotic Duvalier to the South of France for a comfortable retirement. The CIA then rigs the upcoming elections in favor of another right-wing military strongman. However, violence keeps the country in political turmoil for another four years. The CIA tries to strengthen the military by creating the National Intelligence Service (SIN), which suppresses popular revolt through torture and assassination.

**1989**

**Panama** — The U.S. invades Panama to overthrow a dictator of its own making, General Manuel Noriega. Noriega has been on the CIA’s payroll since 1966, and has been transporting drugs with the CIA’s knowledge since 1972. By the late 80s, Noriega’s growing independence and intransigence have angered Washington… so out he goes.

**1990**

**Haiti** — Competing against 10 comparatively wealthy candidates, leftist priest Jean-Bertrand Aristide captures 68 percent of the vote. After only eight months in power, however, the CIA-backed military deposes him. More military dictators brutalize the country, as thousands of Haitian refugees escape the turmoil in barely seaworthy boats. As popular opinion calls for Aristide’s return, the CIA begins a disinformation campaign painting the courageous priest as mentally unstable.

**1991**

**The Gulf War** — The U.S. liberates Kuwait from Iraq. But Iraq’s dictator, Saddam Hussein, is another creature of the CIA. With U.S. encouragement, Hussein invaded Iran in 1980. During this costly eight-year war, the CIA built up Hussein’s forces with sophisticated arms, intelligence, training and financial backing. This cemented Hussein’s power at home, allowing him to crush the many internal rebellions that erupted from time to time, sometimes with poison gas. It also gave him all the military might he needed to conduct further adventurism — in Kuwait, for example.

**The Fall of the Soviet Union** — The CIA fails to predict this most important event of the Cold War. This suggests that it has been so busy undermining governments that it hasn’t been doing its primary job: gathering and analyzing information. The fall of the Soviet Union also robs the CIA of its reason for existence: fighting communism. This leads some to accuse the CIA of intentionally failing to predict the downfall of the Soviet Union. Curiously, the intelligence community’s budget is not significantly reduced after the demise of communism.

**1992**

**Economic Espionage** — In the years following the end of the Cold War, the CIA is increasingly used for economic espionage. This involves stealing the technological secrets of competing foreign companies and giving them to American ones.

**1993**

**Haiti** — The chaos in Haiti grows so bad that President Clinton has no choice but to remove the Haitian military dictator, Raoul Cedras, on threat of U.S. invasion. The U.S. occupiers do not arrest Haiti’s military leaders for crimes against humanity, but instead ensure their safety and rich retirements. Aristide is returned to power only after being forced to accept an agenda favorable to the country’s ruling class.

In a speech before the CIA celebrating its 50th anniversary, President Clinton said: "By necessity, the American people will never know the full story of your courage."

Another common apologetic is that "the world is filled with unsavory characters, and we must deal with them if we are to protect American interests at all." There are two things wrong with this. First, it ignores the fact that the CIA has regularly rebuffed alliances with defenders of democracy, free speech and human rights, preferring the company of military dictators and tyrants. The CIA had moral options available to them, but did not exercise them.

Second, this argument begs several questions. The first is: "Which American interests?" The CIA has courted right-wing dictators because they allow wealthy Americans to exploit the country’s cheap labor and resources. But poor and middle-class Americans pay the price whenever they fight the wars that stem from CIA actions, from Vietnam to the Gulf War to Panama to Iraq and Afghanistan. The second begged question is: "Why should American interests come at the expense of other peoples’ human rights?"

Winston Churchill said, "However beautiful the strategy, you should occasionally look at the results..." and this virtual truism should perhaps inform the greatest question the world should ask: What IS the United States after that justifies such terrible results?

**­­Military spending, lobbying and elected officials**

The U.S. spends twice as much on military as Russia, China and EU combined. But despite such military might, despite over 190 U.S. military bases stationed around the world, the U.S. was defeated in Vietnam and has not achieved desired military objectives in Iraq and Afghanistan and has not stopped the rise of terrorist groups, such as the Taliban and lately ISIS. And despite such egregious spending, many politicians lobby for increased spending, even though Pentagon generals are not even asking for it. For example, there are so many tanks in the arsenal that the Pentagon officials requested to cancel new deliveries. However, since tanks were already approved by the Congress in their military budgets, they had to be produced and delivered. The result is that since there are no sufficient facilities to store new additional tanks, they are being stored in the Nevada desert, rusting and deteriorating. A similar situation exists with military planes that also litter the Nevada desert. Billions of taxpayers’ money are being wasted, while arms manufacturers are reaping profits. Why is the spending so wasteful? One would have to examine, who are the companies that supply the U.S. government with arms and how do they obtain such lucrative government contracts. They are Boeing, Raytheon, Rockwell Collins, United Technologies, Northrop Grumman, et al, -- companies that are among the largest donors and contributors to Presidential and Congressional elections represented by multiple lobbying companies and groups seeking the influence among elected government officials. One could define “lobbying” as legalized corruption, since it directly influences how the elected official behaves and votes once he or she assumes the elected office. Without the financial backing of special interest groups, which are corporations seeking influence, they would stand little chance of winning. It is known that elected officials spend 70% of their efforts on raising funds for their next election. This means that they devote only 30% of their time on relevant affairs that benefit citizens, while rich corporate donors write or at least influence laws and budgets that benefit them at the expense of the American taxpayers. This is also why the military budgets have been increasing year after year, and with the increased budget, the wastes also grow larger.

**Foreign Aid**

While Americans are one of the most generous people in the world, the U.S. government in the stingiest of the 22 most developed countries in terms of foreign aid. The USA claims to be, in absolute terms, the world's biggest giver and this is true. However, as a proportion of its wealth, the USA gives least when compared to all 22 of the world’s most developed countries.

American people are regularly told by politicians and the media that America is the world's most generous nation. However, it is the most conventional piece of “knowledgeable ignorance.” For example, Japan gives more even in absolute terms.

Absolute figures are less significant than the proportion of gross domestic product (GDP, or national wealth) that a country devotes to foreign aid. The true fact is that the US ranks twenty-second of the 22 most developed nations. As former President Jimmy Carter commented: “We are the stingiest nation of all.” Denmark is top of the table, giving 1.01% of GDP, while the US manages just 0.1%. The United Nations has long established the target of 0.7% GDP for development assistance, although only four countries actually achieve this: Denmark, 1.01%; Norway, 0.91%; the Netherlands, 0.79%; Sweden, 0.7%. Apart from being the least generous nation, the US is highly selective in who receives its aid. Over 50% of its aid budget is spent on middle-income countries in the Middle East, with Israel being the recipient of the largest single share.

Some of the foreign aid that the U.S. government contributes is comically wasteful and illogical. For example, since the normalization of relations between China and the US, the US government has been assisting the Chinese government with aid of approximately $800 million annually. Since no government bureaucrat has bothered to examine this particular assistance to China after China become the second largest world economy, it is still on the books and annually disbursed. The problem is that the U.S. government has to borrow this money from China in order to pay her because we still have to repay this loan with interest.

**The Homeland Security Agency and gun laws**

Since September 11, 2001, 65 American have died due to acts of terror in America. Since that time, The Homeland Security Agency was established to fight and prevent terrorism at the cost of 1 trillion dollars to date.

Since September 11, 2001, there have been 650,000 Americans murdered by legal and/or illegal guns. The American government has spent 0 dollars to eliminate or reduce this gruesome statistic by initiating and instituting radical changes in the current gun laws.

It is quite obvious that gun manufacturers have much more effective lobbies than the terrorist in influencing how government officials address this issue.

No further comments on this subject are needed—the facts speak for themselves.

**Economic disparity**

After World War II, American society had a thriving middle class that comprised 50% of the population and 5% of the wealthiest controlled only 2-3% of the wealth. America was the envy of the rest of the world. No other country in the world could match such egalitarian distribution of wealth.

Currently, 5% of the wealthiest population controls 60% of the economy, while the middle class has been steadily vanishing and transforming into the class of poverty.

What is the reason for such a drastic social and economic transformation? The answer lies in the growing power of American corporate elites. Through their lobbying efforts, they have been able to influence government officials into passing laws that have allowed them to outsource manufacturing to overseas countries with cheap labor, creating unimaginable profits in the process. The tax laws allow them the use of various tax loopholes that are unavailable to middle class taxpayers. With more manufacturing outsourcing and tax and financial benefits, fewer jobs became available to Americans. With higher profits, the influence on the government by powerful corporations and their owners has also increased. This corporate malfeasance has created economic and social imbalances that have been rendering the thriving middle class into third-world economic status. This is also the reason that the government protects the elite, while it dictates the rest of the population. This is also the reason why most of the government officials become millionaires, even though they belonged to the middle class before they entered public service. Money corrupts power and power controls the masses. This is not America of yesterday, and the question is what America of tomorrow is.

I could go on and on, almost endlessly what I do not like in America. In fact, it calls for a separate book with many, many pages. So why do I live in this country? Do the negatives outweigh the positives? Is the direction that this country is heading into the future a direction of the abyss? Is there hope that America will regain its strong middle class and the government will be more transparent?

I do not have answers to many of these questions. But one thing I know that despite a government that is more and more dysfunctional and hypocritical, despite institutional corruption that robs most Americans of fair representation and protection, there are American people who are optimistic, altruistic, generous and kind, and for me, this is the real America that I love and revere. America is a country of two parallel worlds--the American government that pretends to justly govern and the American people who pretend to elect government officials and obey the laws. In between these two worlds, one can find a great life that is difficult to find elsewhere in the world. I believe that the American people deserve a better and fairer government, and hopefully one day in the not-too-distant future, they will have it. And I want to be here to witness it.

As Americans love to say, God Bless America.

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