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“We Should All Give Thanks”

by
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Just five days from now we'll be celebrating one of this country's most honored holidays... Thanksgiving. For a long time I had heard that it was also the most traveled holiday in the United States during the year, with Christmas coming in second, however, checking with AAA the all-knowing, all-seeing entity dealing with travel and travelers they say that Christmas is projected to result in 64.9± Million individuals who will travel over 50 miles during the holiday while Thanksgiving will only result in 38.3 ± travelers.

I trust that all of you will have a truly Happy Thanksgiving, using the time to enjoy the remembrance of things with which you've been blessed and thanking Him as the One who did the blessing. Regardless of what many say these days about our country and our leaders we should all thank the good Lord every day for the favor He showed us by allowing us to be born in such a great nation. Yes, we have our troubles and woes from time to time but there will never be a country that offers its citizens the opportunities we have.

There are those who measure the greatness of this country by what other countries think and say about us... never taking into consideration the countries who say those things have forgotten the many times we have protected them over the years and delivered many of them from servitude to dictators and tyrannical despots. Many countries would not be in existence today if the United States of America and our brave military had not intervened on their behalf. And, as bad as people think we are, we are still the number one country where more people are trying to get into than any other.

I would like to share three, purportedly true, anecdotal scenarios concerning the world's impression of this country which you can use to rebut those who try to disparage the USA. I thank my good friend who supplied me with them.

1- When in England several years ago at a large conference, then Secretary of State Colin Powell was asked by the Archbishop of Canterbury, in a voice heard by many in the room, if our plans for Iraq were just an example of empire building by George Bush. Secretary Powell answered by saying, “Over the years the United States has sent many of its fine young men and women into great peril to fight for freedom beyond our borders. The only amount of land we have ever asked for in return is enough to bury those that did not return.” It became very quiet in the room.

2- There was another conference in France where a number of international engineers were taking part, including French and American. During a break one of the French engineers came back into the room saying, “Have you heard the latest dumb stunt your President Bush has done? He has

sent an aircraft carrier to Indonesia to help the tsunami victims. What does he intend to do, bomb them?”

A Boeing engineer stood up and replied quietly: “Our carriers have three hospitals on board that can treat several hundred people; they are nuclear powered and can supply emergency electrical power to shore facilities; they have three cafeterias with the capacity to feed 3,000 people three meals a day; they can produce several thousand gallons of fresh water from sea water each day, and they carry half a dozen helicopters for use in transporting victims and injured to and from their flight deck. We have eleven such ships; how many does France have?” Once again dead silence filled the room.

3- A U.S. Admiral was attending a naval conference that included Admirals from the U.S., English, Canadian, Australian and French Navies. At a cocktail reception, he found himself standing with a large group of officers that included personnel from most of those countries. Everyone was chatting away in English as they sipped their drinks but a French Admiral suddenly complained that, “whereas Europeans learn many languages, Americans learn only English.” He then asked, “Why is it that we always have to speak English in these conferences rather than speaking French?” Without hesitating, the American Admiral replied, “Maybe it’s because the Brits, Canadians, Aussies and Americans arranged it so you wouldn’t have to speak German.” Needless to say you could have heard a pin drop.

I have no way of knowing if these events actually happened, though they probably did. Actual events or not, the rhetoric applied is factual and accurately portrays the role our country has played in the history of the world. We should be proud of our involvement, since our country’s foundation, in our friendship with and protection of foreign countries from evil forces wishing to dominate them. Where would the world be today had we not been around for the last two hundred years?

Think on that as you celebrate this holiday and give the Lord an extra “thank you” for allowing you to be a citizen of such a plentiful and compassionate country as the United States of America.

Happy Thanksgiving.

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