

America - Love It or Leave It?

Contributed by Steve Gillman
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America - love it or leave it. It may seem like a catchy bumper sticker to some, but what does it really mean?

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You have probably seen the bumper stickers that say, "America - Love It Or Leave It." Most polite people won't put it that bluntly, but many share the sentiment. They think that if a person doesn't like the system here, they have no right to be here.

{bot_wrgoogle}What an ignorant and hateful idea! To show what this is really saying, let's consider for a moment a man who doesn't like the system in any country on the planet. If it were up to him, he would like a purer socialism, or a country based on his religion, or perhaps a country that truly respects freedom. Does this mean he has no right to live anywhere?

Essentially, those who say "love it or leave it" are saying that if you don't agree with the "our" ideas, we want to punish you and take away your rights. They seem to believe that rights come with citizenship, and only with what they define as "good" citizenship. But where did they get that idea of rights?

Those who founded this country didn't for a second think that a person had to "buy" his rights by agreeing with a government. They very clearly and repeatedly said that "all men are "created" equal, with certain "unalienable rights," and that "among these are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness."

Nor did they ever suggest that such rights were limited to citizens. They believed that they were inherent in the nature of all humans. The conception of rights upon which this country was founded was not that they are "gifts" from society or government.

Only in ignorance of this could people think that "bad" citizens in America have no right to life. That is what that bumper sticker is really saying, by the way. It isn't just no right to be here, but no right to be alive and free. Again, what if a man disagreed with all political systems on Earth? If he has no right to be here because of this, he has no right to be in any country. What else can this mean except that he has no right to life or liberty?

It is no crime to point out what one sees as the flaws in a country. It is no crime to protest or to believe in things that others do not believe in. It is not even a crime to be unpatriotic if one wishes to be.

America - love it or leave it? How about, America - where you have the right to feel the way you want about it and say what you like, and have your right to do so protected. Maybe this won't make a great bumper sticker, but it is a better idea.

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