

Well, I've Never Been To China...

...but I kinda like it infrastructure

When the very Junior Senator from Illinois, Barack Obama, first entered the race for President, he cited his having lived in Indonesia as “foreign policy experience.” Maybe he thought no one would take the time to find out that those years were 1961-1967, while he was still a child in elementary school memorizing the Quran. Obama’s time in Indonesia was no doubt a valuable experience, but it was certainly not foreign policy experience.

Fast forward to August 21, 2008. In remarks that sounded very reminiscent of, “I’m not a doctor, but I play one on TV,” Obama spoke about the Olympic Games and gushed over China’s wonderful infrastructure. (“I’ve never been to China, but I saw it once on TV.”) The easily-impressed Senator actually delivered this glowing praise, “Think about the amount of money that China has spent on infrastructure. Their ports, their train systems, their airports are vastly superior to us now, which means if you are a corporation deciding where to do business, you’re starting to think, 'Beijing looks like a pretty good option.'" Yeah, they make a great wall, too. It’s impressive what you can do with the slave labor of over a billion people. (And, not to be nit-picky, but if this guy is such a great orator, shouldn’t he have said “...are now vastly superior to ours”? Or does he need a teleprompter to be grammatically correct?)

Obama might be interested in learning that China’s Olympic construction team got a few discounts not readily available to the average American developer. Most notably, residents were kicked out of their homes and paid next to nothing in reimbursement in order to make way for all those beautiful new buildings Obama admires. (Obama’s liberal comrades on the Supreme Court recently expanded the government’s powers of eminent domain way beyond their Constitutional intentions, so maybe he has something similar in mind.) In addition to putting up new buildings for the Olympics, an ocean of fresh paint was liberally applied over much of Beijing to make its old buildings look less like the standard communist cement-block dungeons they are. Where paint (no doubt lead-based) couldn’t do the trick, huge walls were constructed to keep foreign visitors and the media from peering over to see where and how the average Beijing residents lived. And you can’t beat that labor pool of over a billion people making an average wage of \$40 per week.

But does this gullible Gilligan who wants to be President really believe China’s ports and trains and airports are vastly superior to those in the United States? The new Olympic stadium and its intricately-choreographed ceremonies may have been impressive (one misstep and face the firing squad after the cameras have gone), and Beijing at night might look pretty from a blimp (so might Detroit), but a map of China shows an awful lot of unpaved third-world territory outside the Olympic village. Memo to Obama: try to restrain your “America sucks” viewpoint just a little bit, a least until you’ve seen China with a resolution that’s better than Google Earth’s. (Avoiding your wife and your pastor might help in that regard as well.)

Because Obama was busy campaigning he may have failed to notice a little earthquake in the Sichuan province of China in May... the one that killed 69,197, injured almost 400,000, and left 18,340 missing. The number of people left homeless by the earthquake was somewhere between 5 and 11 million. Why were so many people killed, injured, and left homeless? Earthquake and building experts say it had a lot to do with the shoddy infrastructure and construction that so readily impresses Mr. Obama.

Although what he saw of China on television significantly impressed the Chicago community organizer and now Presidential-aspirant, Obama must actually have viewed very little of the Olympic coverage, because the news was overrun with reports about pollution in Beijing. Despite bans on automobiles and factory shut-downs, the air remained gray and dirty, mostly because of the thousands of coal-fired power plants in China, plants that would certainly not pass emission standards of the West. (Just wait until they see Al Gore's PowerPoint presentation.)

Just as liberals can't differentiate between a wall to keep people in (the Berlin wall) and a wall to keep people out (an Arizona border fence), only an economic ignoramus would look at China and think its infrastructure is what attracts business. Sorry, but "If you're a corporation deciding where to do business," you don't decide *in favor* of China because of its ports, trains, and airports. No, you decide *against* the United States because of incredibly high corporate taxes (the second highest of all the world's nations), incredibly burdensome regulations, frivolous lawsuits, and the high cost of union labor and health care. Obama's agenda includes adding more regulations, increasing taxes, preventing lawsuit reform, expanding union power by eliminating secret ballots in organizing campaigns, and an expensive nationalized health care system. Toss in his planned "global warming" taxes (via ludicrous and job-killing "cap and trade" legislation) for carbon dioxide emissions, and there won't be a business left in America. The corporations aren't being drawn by other countries as much as they're being driven out of the United States.

If Obama is impressed by China's infrastructure, I wonder how he likes its internet censorship, treatment of political dissidents, and human rights violations? Perhaps he's also been looking at China's practice of taking the organs of thousands of executed prisoners each year to sell for transplants? (Maybe that has a place in his health care system.) Most Americans would agree, however, that if Obama wants to replicate anything Chinese, we have a long border in the Southwest that could use another Great Wall.

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