

FEAR followed by Loathing

Recently, one of my friends, now a former-friend, complained, “They are taking over.”

I asked who “they” were.

“Those people. You know the ones. The 7-11s, the convenience stores, the liquor stores. Everything. They are taking over.”

Well, I didn't have to wonder long how that happened. She clearly didn't understand the word – change.

It must be she missed something or forgot, or maybe never thought of it, but her parents were, likely, just aghast at the way things were and how they had become: the flappers, the clothes – short skirts, the boys' pants – hung low, and that's in the 40s.

She clearly reacted to the names now: girls named Shanika, Ashante, or boys named Ahmad, Damrko, Darius. What kinds of names are those? “We” don't name our children with odd names like that. Pretty soon there will be a plethora of Ayiz, Zarya, Kaarim, and odd names like that.

What ever happened to Bill, Bob, Roger, Tom, and simple names like that?

Alas, the world is not dominated by white Americans. The world has come to our doorstep. We are amalgamated. We have a vast array of people from every part of the world.

M'teo, Seau, Singh, Takayama, Kim, Choy, Tenku, Cha, Raja, Che, Nik, all from south east Asia.

Those are names which threaten those who cannot understand CHANGE.

The local grocer is no longer Old Man Henry or Gus or Charlie. It's now

Amahd, or Mohamed, or Muhd. The names change, the work they do remains the same.

“They” aren't “taking over.”

“They” are merely taking advantage of the American way of life: hard work, industrious, imaginative, and all the while, being clever.

“They” are the structure of the small businesses around the country.

Change is rampant. Hell, it was rampant all along, but this friend just didn't understand how quickly it came.

She ranted about the way “they” sing. The way “they” dress. The way “they” drive.

Songs are an expression of people. That there is a warble or other tremolo to the way a person sings, doesn't make it wrong, just different. Don't like it, don't listen.

However, the change is here. It's here to stay. Not going away either.

Fear? Don't. Your parents had the same complaints, but we survived all that Elvis and Beatles and Sinatra and Jerry and Rolling stones as well as the rest.

My father wondered how I could listen to Chances Are by Johnny Mathis. “Don't you know he's a queer?” I didn't care. Mathis has a great voice. Loved his songs. Still don't know if he really is queer, but what does that matter. He sings. He's a great singer.

Still, change frightens so many. Insecurities abound.

Do not fear “change.” Grasp it. Work with it. Make it part of the things we do every day.