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From America's point of view, the world is in a state of disarray.

Saddam Hussein is up to his usual monkey business. Fidel Castro refuses to do America a favor and finally decide to die a much-awaited death. The yen plummeted but is now on the way up after the Japanese government began peddling the secret to the Orient for only \$19.95, "Be a Ninja in Six Weeks," available on VHS or Audiobook format. And finally, in the "oral" office, the adventures of our hillbilly president just get wackier every day.

Amid all this hoopla, America's way of life is being undermined and overrun by a strange and foreign nation.

No, it's not Russia. Even though the country is run by the mob these days, it is so broke that it's selling off fighter jets for less than the cost of a used Pinto.

It's not China either. It is too busy making running shoes, trying to change Mother Nature with the Yangtze Dam project and oppressing the Buddhist monks in Tibet.

I'll give you a clue. It's the second largest nation (area-wise) and many of its citizens already walk among us



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The whole damn country has committee-itis.

If you have a problem with the modern world of any size, shape or form, all you need to do is form a committee or a task force to better study the problem. Hogwash.

When I saw that the state of Nebraska was proposing a bill that would "establish a hate crimes task force," I knew we had gone too far. Surely they had to be kidding, I thought to myself.

Then again, I also thought G.B. Trudeau was pulling my leg when I first read about California's "Self-Esteem Task Force" in Doonesbury.

Both of these, amazingly enough, are true.

The state of California actually has a "Self-Esteem Task Force" and our beloved state of Nebraska is trying to form a "Hate Crimes Task Force."

Part of the problem here is the phrase "task force."

A task force, in my mind anyway, brings back images of films I watched in the '80s, along with "Mission: Impossible" reruns. I think of a military strike group organizing to complete a task of national security. But this concept holds little similarity with what the task force means according to our government.

A task force is another way of saying "committee." No more, no less.

Committees almost never do anything.

*Standard Committee Operating Procedure:*

*Get together, agree there is a problem, say "There isn't much we can do about it now; we should study the problem further."*

*Adjourn for a few months.*

*Repeat.*

Let me put it to you this way: I have never seen a committee do much of

undetected.

Brain still hurting from the weekend?

Our secret and unknown threat is our sneaky neighbor to the north - Canada.

Yes, Canada.

For years now, those cantankerous Canadians have been doing a mean Borg impersonation and have been slowly but surely assimilating America into their flock of Canucks. If you don't believe me, keep reading.

After an hour of intense research and deep analytical thought, I have gathered enough indisputable evidence that proves that if America isn't careful, we all will someday be answering questions with an eh?, and will lose the ability to pronounce the letter "O." Please hold the catcalls of "paranoid psycho" until you read the following manifesto.

Let's start from the beginning.

For myself, the pro-Canada propaganda started with my second career choice. After the realization that becoming the engineer of the train at the Henry Doorly Zoo was reaching for the pie in the sky, I decided for a more attainable career. I wanted to become a Royal Canadian Mountie and ride around on a trusty steed named Steed just like my hero Dudley Do-Right. My mother shattered my heart when she said you had to be Canadian. So, I decided to become the next best thing: a truck

driver who hauls nothing but pigs; a pig-truck-driver if you will. That probably will never happen either, so I guess broadcasting will have to do.

The blitzkrieg from the north continued further into our formative years with the lovely Canadian program "You Can't do that on Television." How many young, once wholesome, American minds were warped and twisted by Moose McGlade and company? The neurosurgeon who performed my lobotomy at age 11 said my brain was reduced to a lifeless pulp thanks to that show.

Today, though, the onslaught of Canadians into the American media continues to swell. Michael J. Fox, Mike Meyers, k. d. Lang, Alex Trebek and Paul Schaffer are just a few celebrities from the great white north.

Guys, how many of you have posters or adult magazines that feature Pamela Lee? Destroy them now. That "Baywatch" babe is a Canadian going incognito in the United States. Each time you think of her in that special way, you are neglecting your native country's women.

The most glaring example of Canadian infiltration of American media can be found in the anchor of ABC's "World News Tonight." Yep, Peter Jennings. Each night a native of Canada tells the news to millions of Americans. Watch him sometime. When he nods his head in that way he does, read his lips. He is saying

"Someday you will all bow to Canada" ever so subliminally.

In the realm of American sports, Canada is beginning to dominate. Look at how many hockey teams are springing up in the United States. Conversely, do you see an explosion of American sports teams in Canada? There are a total of four - two in basketball and baseball. Football doesn't count since they have their own rules up there.

Heck, last week, gracing the hallowed pages of the Daily Nebraskan, was a story about the Canadian athletes at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. The latest is an I-back recruit named Dahrran Diedrick. I thought that coveted position went only to either a native Nebraskan or a speedster from the bad part of Los Angeles.

While we're on the subject of sports, I'd bet that more Americans know more words to Canada's national anthem than "The Star Spangled Banner." The last time I heard "O' Canada," it was stuck in my head for days, it's just so catchy.

Global warming is coming and so is a Canadian invasion. According to scientists, who are a lot smarter than myself, global warming, believe it or not, will be the cause of the next ice age. Canadians are used to experiencing winter for 11 months of the year, but an ice age might be too much to deal with. More than 90 percent of Canada's population lives along the

border. That means they could storm into the United States at a moment's notice. They will probably wait until we are just a little more like them, though.

What can the American people do to stop the assimilation into a continent of Canadians? There are two options.

If you like the idea of becoming Canadian, go check out the Canadian government's home page. It has everything you need to know about becoming a citizen, including a guide to everyday living, such as meeting people, shopping and using public transportation. It's actually an interesting site; I've never seen a country advertise for immigrants.

Or, if you think the American way of life is the way to fly, just keep up the good work. Make sure you litter at every opportunity, practice bad manners, refuse to use mayonnaise, drink plenty of American beer, and punch anyone in the nose who uses the metric system. Most importantly, buy plenty of guns for your own protection, and support the militias in Montana, Michigan and the other states that border Canada. When the day comes, they are our first line of defense.

I don't know about you, but I'm already studying for the Canadian Citizenship Aptitude Test. Anyone know what "DeGrassi Jr. High's" Spike's real name was?

## I'll make a note of that Committees are a sure-fire way of getting nothing done

anything of worth, mainly because committees don't do much. They sit and argue a lot. They claim they're doing the will of the people. They say that all of this is for our benefit. We, on the other hand, never see much of any results.

Do you see why they're hiding behind the word "task force" now?

Committees think and ponder and argue and discuss and take months of time to do very little. Take, for example, the city of Grand Island. When Gov. Ben Nelson proposed building another state prison in Nebraska, a committee was formed to decide where in the state to place it.

No wait; this gets better.

Grand Island then formed another committee to decide whether or not they should be considered as a possible site for this prison. After a period of months - months, mind you - the committee decided to propose a location within Grand Island as a possible site for the new prison.

So we have one committee deciding whether or not the other committee can even consider it, and this takes up another few months. A committee's main goal is to consume time and give people something to be good about.

A committee discussing hate crimes can be there all day. They'll all agree how wrong hate crimes are. Someone will say "I don't understand how these people can do these kinds of things," and everyone will shake their heads. One person will say "We should do something." And another will agree.

Then someone will ask "But what?"

One person will recommend stiffer penalties for hate crimes, but then someone will object, asking who will define hate crime. Another will propose a law that puts weighty fines on hate-mongers, but another will point out that it would be unconstitutional the way the law is written, because that law's definition of "hate crime" interferes with "free speech."

People will argue for hours and hours and hours.

Then, come the end of the session, all the people involved will agree how much "progress" they made this ses-

sion. They'll all smile as they get up, sound in the idea that they are doing a good thing for the community by helping in the decision-making process. They pat each other on the back and feel good about themselves.

No decisions are ever made. Or if they are, they are unsatisfactory to the general populace at large.

Sooner or later, someone might come to the task force asking for a recommendation, and the response will be the same each time - "We're still discussing it."

Eventually the task force will be disbanded as people either lose interest or get frustrated with the lack of progress, or they'll suggest something that will immediately be struck down by the people and then become disheartened.

"We wanted to make a difference," the members of the task force will say.

I know - I have been down that road.

When I was younger, I was appointed to a task force. The superintendent of our school district decided to form a task force to better keep in touch with the students. I, being second in command of my high school's newspaper, was asked to join it, which I did.

About four months into it, I left the task force.

We weren't making a difference - we were there to make the superintendent feel better.

I sat, having breakfast with him and about 20 other students every second and fourth Tuesday of the month, and we discussed the state of affairs in our schools. There were honors students and students who barely had a digit in their GPAs.

Each time I would bring up a problem, the superintendent would say "That's inte-

esting. I'll make a note of that." And nothing ever got done about any of it. I would ask every so often and he would tell me they were "studying the problem." No one ever acted.

See, I wasn't the one with the power in this setting. I couldn't change the schools, no matter how much I wanted to. I was not the superintendent.

Forming a hate crime task force isn't going to do much good because it's not going to change people's opinions. You can add penalties and hefty fines galore, but it's not going to change people. We've been issu-

ing speeding tickets for how long? The task force is not in charge of what it is trying to change.

So gather your committees and lawyers. Pass resolutions and file suits. Prepare every bit of action you can come up with. Get every court in readiness for your prosecution.

Then give it all up.

Lawyers and laws won't change the way the people think - only people can do that...



AMY MARTIN/DN