

Was It Necessary?

Written by

Wednesday, 16 August 2006 16:00



Yesterday we had to go through both the American customs process and the Canadian customs process in order to import our new motorcycle. As I wrote yesterday, we encountered no problems at all; it was quick, easy and not as expensive as we expected however I feel compelled to share with you an incident that we witnessed in the Canadian customs office.

While we were being looked after at the counter by a very nice, young, male customs officer, a younger, casually dressed American “kid” came in and strolled up to a wicket where an overweight, scowling female officer was sitting. There is a yellow line about fifteen feet from the wickets; there were four wickets open for business and no other folks were there waiting to be served or actually being served besides us. In a loud voice, she immediately told him to get back behind the line, which he did, and then after 2 or 3 seconds she asked him to come forward. As in the first time he approached, he proceeded to explain why he was there. His grandfather had been to Canada a couple of weeks earlier and returned to the US last week. Apparently he’d asked his grandson (who evidently lived nearby) to pick up “some kind of tax form or something to get some money back”. Having been in the hospitality industry for 15 years, I immediately understood his request for a GST rebate form, as I am sure the “officer” did as well.

Instead of politely acknowledging his request she rudely feigned ignorance and told him to leave until he knew what it was he wanted. I so badly wanted to help him and would have except for the fact that I didn’t want to become her target and cause any unnecessary problems for us. The poor kid went outside and called his grandfather for clarification and returned a few minutes later. Luckily for him, “Lazy Bitch” (I just can’t think of a better description) was occupied with someone else and he was beckoned forward by a different, nicer female officer. “Nice Lady” (who was pregnant) got up and walked over to where the forms were and gave one to him. He politely thanked her and left.

Why is it that LB had to be so nasty? It was evident that she enjoyed belittling the kid (which she did quite loudly in front of us and her fellow officers) and that she was on a power trip. This

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particular woman needed the exercise that walking over to a counter to retrieve a GST form would have given her. She could have been nicer and less condescending to the kid but instead she chose to be rude and arrogant, completely unnecessary behaviour. I can't help but wonder what kind of impression someone like that gives to anyone visiting our country for the first time.

This is a picture of a much younger Jay; the second of four pictures I found earlier this week while cleaning out a trunk.