

Q: Should US citizens be allowed to travel to Cuba? Must we wait for Fidel to join the late Che before the ban on US citizen travel is lifted? Everyone knows the law has been sidestepped, evaded, ignored, avoided and violated every day for decades. Any American can get to Cuba from Canada, Mexico, the Caribbean or through air or sea bookings.

US charitable, social, academic and music groups have been welcome in Castroland for years. The only Americans forbidden by the 50-year ban are tourists, who could greatly enhance the Cuban economy. But, Washington still says no. Not everyone pays attention. A elderly celebrity known for his familiar stogie puffing recently did a news bit while touring Cuba's famous cigar-making plants. He wasn't hassled by the Feds, but two other smokers were fined \$999.45 and \$510 collectively for buying Cuban cigars on the Internet.

The US cracks down harder on some violators. Travelocity, was fined \$182,750 for its violations. According to Treasury snoops, the Gnome broke the law 1,500 times between 1998 and 2004.

Tragically, Cubans trying to escape the oppressive political regime and poor economy still come to the US for asylum. Maybe if we let some US tourist dollars circulate around the beautiful tropical island, Cubans would decide to stay home and earn some of them. When will all this idiocy end?

A: What's with the big speech? Come down off your soap box. We agree with you. It looks like there may be some positive movement with the Cuba situation by the Obama presidency. He has stated his intent to meet all leaders with no preconditions, and the end to US isolation of Cuba may be one of the new administration's priorities. Just be patient a little while longer.