

THE GENERAL MUST HAVE PINEAPPLE

About a month ago, I bought a pineapple from Costa Rica at Meijers. It was over 5 pounds and cost something like \$1.50.


The fruit was lovely. But the price got me thinking about how pineapple has become one of those things in globalization that must be too good to be true. If they can grow, ship to Michigan, and market a 5 pound pineapple to me for just \$1.50, then someone—probably multiple someones, but especially the people harvesting these heavy, spiny footballs—aren't getting paid nearly enough to bring me my pineapple (to say nothing of the invisible subsidies shipping must include).

Pineapples used to be a \$7 delicacy everywhere but the most expensive hotels but now, with globalization, they've become cheap and easy.

Which is why, after having a great laugh at the list of demands David Petraeus makes on CIA stations around the world when he visits, I also got cranky.

Among the items:

- *Fresh pineapple each night before he goes to bed (not canned)*
- *Sliced bananas for his cereal in the morning*
- *Someone to accompany him on his morning runs, and a route devised that preferably avoids crossing any streets.*
- *Also, he noted, the*



former General doesn't open doors. "All doors have to be open when he arrives," the former senior CIA officer said.

It appears the war hero can't keep up his legendary running pace if he has to cross streets like normal people (though I agree the CIA Director should be accompanied on his runs lest he end up in a gym bag somewhere). But it's the comment one of Laura's sources makes, that Petraeus demands that CIA personnel in places like Tblisi and Helsinki—where pineapple isn't at the Meijers for \$1.50—bring him that pineapple every day in any case that brought back my \$1.50 pineapple.

It seems appropriate, I guess, that Petraeus demands what to me has become a symbol of too good to be true globalization rather than make do with whatever local fruit is available, like berries in Helsinki. We can't have our CIA Directors interacting with the unique spots they visit in such a way that they develop an understanding of the place. Better to rely on the underpaid laborers in Costa Rica and the harried office workers at the station to ensure you have a generic, now cheapened pineapple every day.