

# An Open Letter to LA Housing Inspector Reichmann or: the Cringe Preemptive

11-16-23, v1

Date: 11/16/23

To: LA City Housing Inspector Thomas Reichmann, LAHD Investigator Maria Estrada, LAHD, Book Group, Others, AFJ Investment

**Subject:** The question of whether what is not forbidden is allowed or whether what is not allowed is forbidden. A puzzle, really, the answer to which depends on location, location, location. Or, as the joke goes, on whether we find ourselves in Germany or not. I say this because, in the past, I've sometimes had difficulty getting *any* written notification of my code violations or of City action regarding the bungalow I rent, making compliance a question of guesswork for me. To amplify on this last sentence: throughout the not inconsiderable turmoil surrounding the demolition of my pantry along with the complaint by the City of "unsanitary living conditions" in my bungalow, I've not received a *single* official document from anyone (except for a notice from AFJ Investment informing me that pantry demolition would start in three day). The landlord even expressed surprise, in front of a witness, when I said I had received nothing. Could the US Postal Service, itself the source of many recent headaches for me, be at fault here?

**Summary:** They say you can't fight City Hall. Very well then, in a preemptive capitulation, I provide here a list of possible violations for the next inspection

**Attachments:** Pictures of items of potential concern, their location, suggested potential infraction and a diagram of my apartment complex. The tactful array of little dog symbols in front of my bungalow, shown in the diagram, reminds me of an anecdote. During WWII, somewhere on the Russian front, a German soldier, quartered with a *muzhik*-class Soviet citizen, inquires with his limited Russian, as to the location of the WC. The Russian takes him to the back door of his isba, opens it and, his arm sweeping across an endless expanse of steppe, says: *Пожалуйста!* (*Bitte!* As my then-boss, with a smile, helpfully translated for me). This. Was. Said. To. A. Ger-man. *Ça a du faire très mauvais effet!* By the way, credit to my former boss in Bremerhaven, *Arno Grund*, for this bit of local color. Well I, too, seem to have my own steppe, just outside my front window, in fact. And, judging from the count of, ummmm, items (I once noted twelve) discretely symbolized by the silhouettes of dogs shown in the diagram, there must have been a whole lotta dogs invading at one time or another.

Lieber Herr Reichmann,

My name is Berg (as in Nuremberg) Hawkins, I've lived in this small complex of four bungalows and four apartments (see attached diagram) at 2626 S Cochran Ave, Los Angeles 90016 since 2010. Earlier this year, I received a visit from you regarding complaints I'd filed with LAHD about repairs not made by my landlord, AFJ Investment. As a result of your visit, along with AFJ being ordered to fix some things, I was found to be guilty of "unsanitary living conditions." So, as a now publicly known hoarder wishing to wash my good(?) name clear of this stain I took, months ago, the (for me) unprecedented step of getting rid of 80% of my stuff through donation, sale, or transfer to a nearby storage. However, *pobrecito que soy*, I can no longer afford the storage fees.

So, having brought back what little's left of my things (a move initially made to bring a definitive end to a veritable rolling barrage of City citations over the last several years), I've crammed it back into my 500 sq ft bungalow. And, as part of what I call my "Transparent Man Initiative" (I recently put my *entire* life in the public domain), I'm now making full disclosure to the City of what I suspect may be yet more code violations occasioned by this "repatriation." Therefore, in the interest of this here transparency, I've flagged several possible problems in and around my bungalow, each with a red tag and a blue label suggesting possible violations (see attached pics). Some of these may not amount to much while others, regrettably, could turn out to be in flagrant, I say again, flagrant contravention of City regulations.

## Figures:

1. Kitchen cupboard storing LCD displays for sale on eBay (According to you: "kitchen to be used to store utensils and food, no other storage allowed")
2. Kitchen cupboard storing LCD displays for sale on eBay (According to you: "kitchen to be used to store utensils and food, no other storage allowed")
3. A 10' folded mast made of wood, to be used for the Democracy Wall, it will scroll the contents of my book on a vertical LED display and a tripod for a video camera (Storage too near water heater) \*\*\*
4. Kitchen storage of wood to be used for a sauna build (According to you: "kitchen to be used to store utensils and food, no other storage allowed")
5. Kitchen cupboard storing transformers from disassembled microwave ovens, kept for various projects, power supplies for sale on eBay (According to you: "kitchen to be used to store utensils and food, no other storage allowed")
6. The likeness of singer *Fela Anikulapo Kuti*, framed, sitting on top of my water heater (Storage of items on top of water heater not allowed) \*\*\*
7. Space under kitchen sink storing LCD displays for sale (According to you: "kitchen to be used to store utensils and food, no other storage allowed")
8. An electronic unit to switch on/off 110VAC to a chest freezer converted to a fridge, not yet connected
9. In the kitchen, a folded display stand I call the Democracy Wall, about 6' by 30", made of wood with two 6' vertical metal supports. Unit is meant for a traveling display I use to advertising flog my book, *Schizophrenia Weaponized*, now in the public domain
10. A cable running from the remnants of an anemometer mast, clamped to the railing on my porch. It runs into the bungalow for hardware/software development of a product to be sold on eBay. (Type of potential violation unknown)
11. The base of the above-mentioned anemometer mast, broken off in an act of vandalism this October (Police DR NUMBER: 230319348)
12. The upper part of this same anemometer mast, lying on its side behind bushes along with the damaged wind cups formerly mounted on top.
13. Several lengths of PVC and copper pipe left outside, on the ground, by the back door of my pantry which was demolished months ago
14. A scavenged pallet placed on bungalow wall, to be used for a vertical garden at location of demolished pantry (Type of potential violation unknown)
15. Items stored in bathroom, behind bathtub (According to you: "bathroom use for storage not allowed")
16. Empty cardboard boxes and a 5 gallon bucket, on top of storage shelves, the top shelf of which, as you pointed out, cannot be used as it is too high
17. A composter from milk crates, by front steps, to be used when I figure out how to keep the darn flies out (Type of potential violation unknown)
18. The walk-in closet, loaded (to the gunwale, I confess) with ~~rubble~~ electronic parts and lab equipment
19. Stacks of electronics parts in bedroom which serves as lab (Height of 60", above the allowed 54" maximum mentioned by you on your visit)
20. A ladder to my loft bed (Possible lack of proper clearance between ladder and nearby wooden storage shelf)
21. A brace for my loft bed which was unaccountably damaged some years ago, the bed now requiring support. *Peccavi!*

## Diagram:

Layout of my bungalow showing location of various incidents over the years including the aforementioned "steppe" incidents

\*\*\* The water heater does not work as, out of an abundance of caution, I've had the gas shut off, turning my apartment into one of them so-called "safe zones."

I hope you will find this brief summary of use on your next visit, allowing you to go for the jugular direct, and not bother with preliminaries as you did last time. It, of course, goes without saying that I expect the City, in its majesty, reserves the right to add *further* violations to this list.

At the risk of appearing tiresome, I'll end with an apocryphal story, also with that certain flavor. On Judgment Day, both about to leave for their respective destinations, Hitler and Frederick the Great meet. Comparing his fate to Frederick's, Hitler complains of the unfairness of his verdict: "both of us worked to make Germany great, yet I'm the one going to Hell." Frederick replies: "Yes, but we had different styles. My *façon* (method, pronounced "fah-son") used a cedilla under the 'c' whereas yours used twin lightning bolts." So, *Herr Reichmann*, as I hope you can see, it's all about appearances, appearances, appearances.

Thanks.

I remain,

(signed)  
*Kampfmuzyhik!*

P.S. This stuff practically writes itself.

P.P.S. One of my blogs is now available at [BergendahlHawkins.com](http://BergendahlHawkins.com) | Anyone interested can join my email list, send a request to [berg.hawkins@protonmail.com](mailto:berg.hawkins@protonmail.com)



Figure 1: Kitchen cupboard storing LCD displays for sale on eBay



Figure 2: Kitchen cupboard storing LCD displays for sale on eBay



Figure 3: A 10' folded mast made of wood



Figure 4: Kitchen storage of wood to be used for a sauna build



Figure 5: Kitchen cupboard storing transformers from disassembled microwave ovens, being kept for various projects, and power supplies for sale on eBay

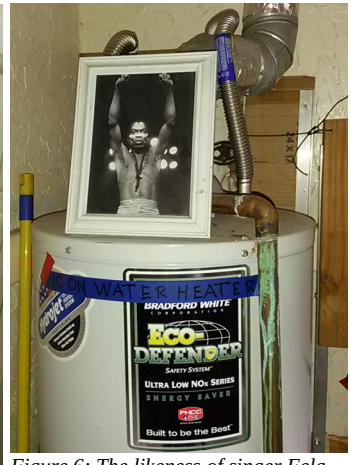


Figure 6: The likeness of singer Fela Anikulapo Kuti, framed



Figure 7: Space under kitchen sink storing LCD displays for sale



Figure 8: An electronic unit to control AC to a chest freezer converted to a fridge

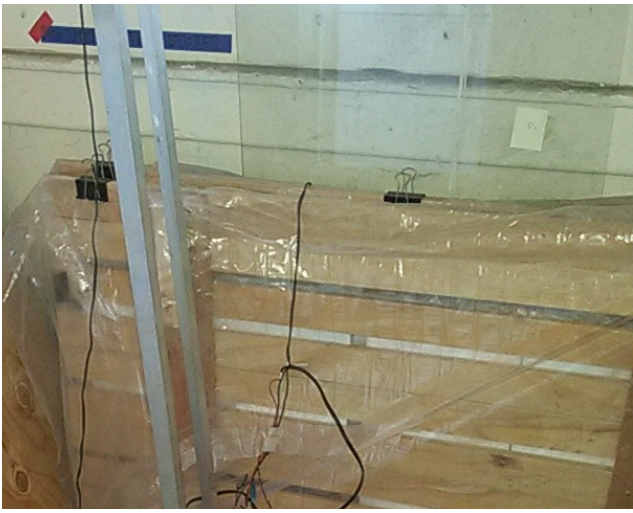


Figure 9: In the kitchen, a folded display stand I call Democracy Wall



Figure 10: A cable running from the remnants of an anemometer mast, formerly clamped to the railing on my porch



Figure 11: The broken base of the above-mentioned anemometer mast. To the right, the upper part of this ==> same anemometer mast, lying on its side behind bushes along with the damaged wind cups formerly mounted on top



Figure 12: Upper part of broken mast

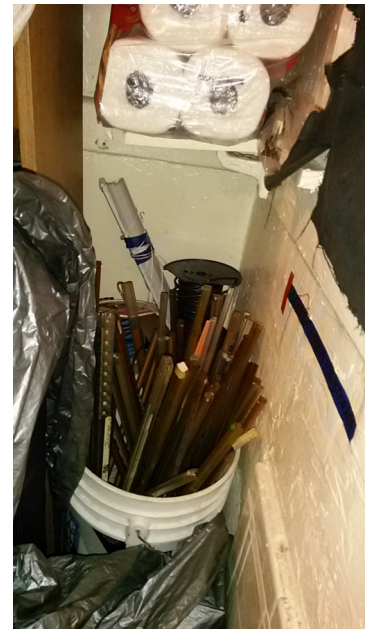


Figure 15: Items stored in bathroom, behind bathtub



Figure 13: Several lengths of PVC and copper pipe left outside, on the ground, by the back door of my pantry

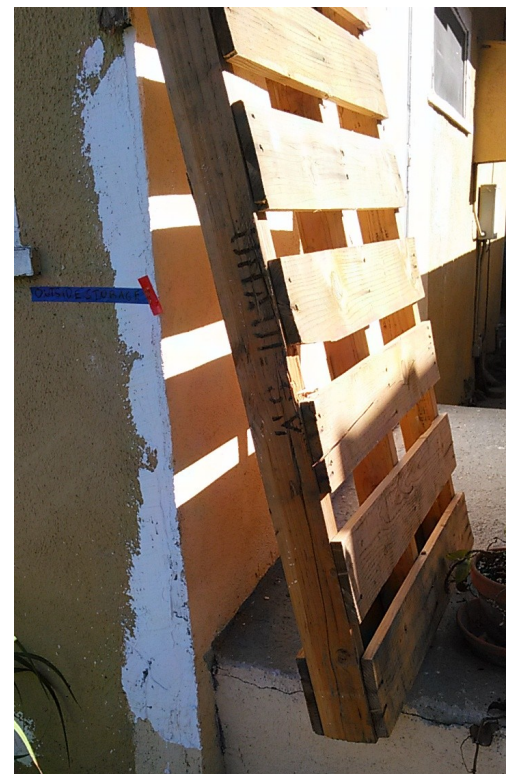


Figure 14: A scavenged pallet placed on bungalow wall, to be used for a vertical garden at location of demolished pantry



Figure 16: Empty cardboard boxes and a 5 gallon bucket, on top of storage shelves



Figure 17: A composter from milk crates, by front steps. 3 damaged anemometer cups can be seen on top of wood cover



Figure 18: The walk-in closet



Figure 19: Stacks of electronics parts in bedroom

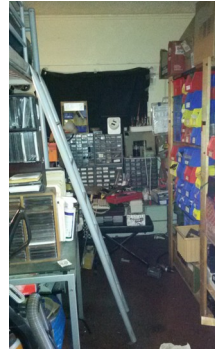


Figure 20: A ladder to my loft bed



Figure 21: A brace for my loft bed

"So you're the little woman that started this great war?" Abraham Lincoln to Harriet Beecher Stowe, referring to her book *Uncle Tom's Cabin* (apocryphal)

## My "West Addams" Neighborhood. The Complex at 2622-2626 S Cochran Ave, Owned by AFJ Investment, I've Lived Here 13 Years. (The Lay of the Land, 11-07-2023, v. 0.6)

*Ecco la Trappola!*

