

Crimes and Misdemeanors

✘ As I sit here, I have no idea how things will play out for Charles Rangel and Maxine Waters, although I find it highly unlikely that either of them will end up in a congressional trial, no matter how much the defendants claim they wish to have the air cleared. When Nancy Pelosi insisted that under the Democrats, the swamp that is Capitol Hill would be drained, she should have kept in mind that after such a draining it's not treasure chests and fields of four-leaf clovers that are uncovered, but creepy, crawly things.

Although I have no use for either of the two Democrats being investigated, I have a special loathing for Rep. Waters. For one thing, even after a story in the San Jose Mercury was shown to be a hoax, she persisted in claiming it was the C.I.A. that had introduced crack cocaine into black communities. She also championed the teaching of Ebonics in California schools. So it figured that as soon as the Congressional Ethics Committee targeted her, she would insist it was all the fault of political racists, even though half the members of the committee are liberals. On the other hand, back in the 90s, when it was Newt Gingrich who was charged with ethics violations, Rep. Waters couldn't contain her glee, as she happily announced, "What's good for the goose is good for the gander." And vice versa, Rep. Waters.

Still, I find it odd that neither she nor Mr. Rangel, nor the mainstream media for that matter, see anything even slightly racist about belonging to the Black Congressional Caucus, a group that denied membership to Rep. Stephen Cohen, a Democrat from Tennessee, simply because he's white even though his district is 60% black!

For my part, I can't figure out how the Ethics Committee determines whom to target. The way I see it, they could probably go after every single member of the House, including

themselves, with the expectation of striking gold. Or perhaps I should say striking dirt. I'm reminded of the NCAA. Every once in a while, they decide to penalize a college for infractions involving bribes and other perks bestowed by over-zealous alumni associations on student athletes. The truth is, no matter how good the football or basketball player is, he is going to join the professional ranks in a few years. Thus, the only way to ensure that a college team is going to remain a national power year after year, decade after decade, is to entice the best high school players in the country. Although the colleges aren't above using attractive, obliging coeds as lures, nothing beats cash on the barrelhead. Back when I was a kid, I would hear the wise guys say that one All American jock after another had to take a cut in pay when he left college and turned pro. Such, alas, is not the case when it comes to professional politicians.

Something I've never understood is how permissive America is when it comes to acts of treason. For the life of me, I don't understand why PFC Bradley Manning and Wikileaks chief honcho, Julian Assange, aren't on trial for their lives. However these two punks feel about the war in Afghanistan, there can be no justification for letting the Taliban know which Afghan citizens have cooperated with the U.S. military. What makes their activities all the more reprehensible is that they believe they command the moral high ground. It is a delusion shared by those who oppose all wars, those who oppose capital punishment and, of course, by Jane Fonda.

Whenever I see career politicians, I feel my gorge rising. The fact that these sloths, whose main activity is deciding how to waste other people's money, insist on calling themselves public servants and get to hold fund-raising testimonials on their own behalf is all the more galling. I have been to a few of those events and it's a good thing that the food is so unappetizing because, otherwise, it would be impossible to keep one's dinner down. Even if you skip the over-cooked

chicken, you'd have to have a cast-iron constitution to stomach the blatant hypocrisy as you listen to cronies and flunkies enumerate the politician's alleged virtues in a way denied everyone who hasn't first had the decency to die.

Here in California, we have more rotten politicians per capita than any other state in the nation. One of the worst has been Jerry Brown. He is presently running for governor, a job he has held in the distant past. This creep has been recycled more often than a plastic bottle. Even though he's 72 years old, he has never held an actual job in his entire life. He began his current campaign by announcing that his opponent, Meg Whitman, had a great deal in common with Nazi propagandist Joseph Goebbels. His reason was that she had a lot of her own money to spend on her campaign. It seems to me that's like comparing Charlie Chaplin's Little Tramp persona to Adolf Hitler because they both had tiny moustaches. But that's par for the liberal course.

Jerry Brown also had the nerve to claim that Ms. Whitman was going to use the governorship as a steppingstone to the presidency. That's not a crime where I come from. But in any case, it's an odd insult coming from the man who used his own governorship to run for president in '76, '80 and '92.

The fact remains that over the past 50 years, Brown has run for president, senator, governor, chairman of the California Democratic Party, state attorney general, California secretary of state, L.A. Community College District Board of Trustees and mayor of Oakland. The truly weird thing is that, more often than not, he's won those races, even though in a personality contest with a clam, a cobblestone and a tin can, Brown would come in a distant fourth.

The fact remains that the man who was dubbed "Governor Moonbeam" by the late Chicago columnist, Mike Royko, has spent his entire adult life running for everything but the bus.

©2010 Burt Prelutsky

Write to: BurtPrelutsky@aol.com.