


Newsreels

When I was a kid, next to the cartoon, one of my favorite things at the movies was the weekly newsreel. In fact, unless the cartoon starred Tom and Jerry, I often enjoyed the newsreel more. 

For those too young to remember, in the days before TV, these 10-minute films generally included some politician, usually FDR or Harry Truman, giving a speech or tossing out the first ball at an All Star Game; celebrities showing up for a movie premiere; bathing beauties water-skiing in Florida; highlights from an Army-Navy football game; an exhibition of trick bowling or pool shooting by Andy Varipapa or Willie Hoppe, respectively; and, on their birthday, an update on the status of the Dionne Quintuplets of Canada. At its conclusion, we would all be urged to buy War Bonds or, once WWII ended, to contribute to the March of Dimes in order to stamp out infantile paralysis.


Something else I recall from those long-ago movie-going days is how often movies had priests in feature roles. Just a short list of the major stars who took their turn wearing a turnaround collar were Bing Crosby, Gregory Peck, Spencer Tracy, Barry Fitzgerald, Montgomery Clift and Pat O'Brien. Some wag once observed that in those days, Jewish movie moguls told American Protestants how to be better Catholics.

Because my parents started taking me to the movies when I was just three or four, it was inevitable that I would sometimes draw the wrong messages from the newsreels. On one occasion which has become family legend, although I don't recall it, my folks looked outside our Pine Grove Avenue apartment in Chicago and saw me doing the goosetep on the sidewalk. One or both of them ran out and grabbed me before the neighbors saw me and decided that we weren't really Jewish, but were actually members of the Nazi Bund. I guess while watching

newsreels, I had decided that it was a very amusing way to walk.

It's hard to imagine now, when, between TV and the Internet, we get our news 24/7, that there was a time when newspapers, Time, Life, and such producers of newsreels as Hearst Metrotone, Pathe News and Fox Movietone , were all we had. In a way, I miss those times. These days, the bad news bombards us so relentlessly, there's barely time to catch our breath.

For instance, when the rapes, murders, anti-Semitic posters and drug use, at the Occupy Wall Street events were called to the attention of Rep. Maxine Waters, she said, "That's life and it happens." She felt that even mentioning such matters "is a distraction from the mission of calling attention to the unfairness of the system." I'm trying to recall if she ever said similar things about the Tea Party movement, which has a similar mission, but one they manage to conduct without the rapes, murders, drugs and anti-Semitism.

Sometimes, when tragic events such as the earthquake and  tsunami hit Japan, even religious people must find themselves wondering if God fell asleep at the switch. But then along comes the Keystone XL oil pipeline, and all doubts vanish. I mean, who else but God could have created such a dilemma for Obama? And what could be better than seeing Obama caught between a rock (wealthy environmental zealots) and a hard place (blue collar unions)? By kicking the oil pipeline all the way into 2013, Mr. Pass-My-Jobs-Bill-or-Else sends the message that 20,000 good-paying jobs and American energy concerns aren't nearly as important as keeping his big money Hollywood contributors happy.

It's not just Obama, Waters and their Washington cronies, who are in line for distemper shots. Consider PETA. Where do these people come from? I mean, nobody likes animals more than I do. But when the head of the group was a guest on Dennis Prager's radio show, she seriously insisted that even cockroaches have

rights. When Prager asked her how she felt about abortions, she said that PETA doesn't have a position on the unborn. So, as Mr. Prager concluded, according to PETA, a cockroach has more rights than a human fetus. And these people aren't embarrassed to be seen in public.

When Jon Corzine was running for re-election as the governor of New Jersey, Obama went there countless times to campaign for him, and Joe Biden referred to Corzine as his favorite financial expert. After Chris Christie defeated him, Corzine went on to be the CEO of MF Global, which not only went bankrupt nearly as quickly as Solyndra, but managed to misplace \$1.2 billion of its investors' money before going out of business. Makes you wonder what the "MF" stood for. And how do you manage to lose track of over a billion dollars? I mean, sometimes I forget where I put my car keys, but I'm pretty sure that even I could keep track of that large a pile of money.

Finally, am I the only person who appears to notice a strange pattern forming in our nation's capital? It appears that nobody involved with this administration will read anything but a menu. Several Democrats who voted for the trillion dollar Stimulus admitted they hadn't read the bill. Eric Holder confessed, after filing a federal lawsuit against Arizona's immigration bill, that he hadn't bothered to read the 13-page document. More recently, the Attorney General claimed he hadn't read any of several memos his underlings had sent him regarding "Fast & Furious."

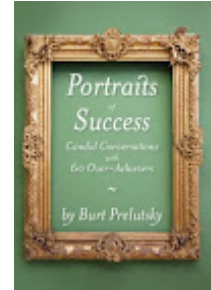
Energy Chief Steven Chu, while defending the half billion dollars given to Solyndra, claimed he hadn't read any of the memos his underlings had sent him, warning him that Solyndra's chance of success weren't half as good as that snowball that somehow found itself in Hell.

The most egregious example, though, is Barack Obama, who, rumor has it, once started reading the Constitution, but quit

as soon as he saw that it didn't deal with the redistribution of wealth.

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