

# Not Entirely Idle Thoughts

Some people collect stamps, others collect sea shells, and I collect notions. Unfortunately, unlike those others, I can't just stick mine in albums or glass jars. I have to stick them in my articles.

First up is illegal immigration. Before Obama or Congress gets around to pulling any stunts, they should enforce the laws already on the books. Nobody is entitled to sneak into our country any more than they have the right to sneak into your house. Anyone caught sneaking in should only be deported after serving a six month stretch in one of those Tent City prisons overseen by Arizona's Sheriff Joe Arpaio.

Nobody lacking a green card should ever be hired. Anyone caught hiring illegals should be sentenced to the same six month term as illegal aliens, giving them ample time to consider the error of their ways.

Every president of a nation south of our border should be compelled to get the word out to his people that the gravy train has been put in mothballs, and anyone caught trying to sneak into Los Estados Unidos will be shot. If they refuse to get the word out, all future aid from the U.S. will be stopped.

As you may have noticed, in his post-election press conference, Obama announced that our mission in the Middle East is to forge a border between Syria and Iraq, thus once again establishing Iraq's sovereignty. It's a shame that he is so much more concerned with Iraq's sovereignty than he is with our own.

As we saw on November 4th, the Democrats attempt to divide the electorate along racial and gender lines didn't work nearly as well as it has in the past. This is not only a good sign for the GOP, but a better one for America.

When I read that Albert Camus once wrote that "Too many have dispensed with generosity in order to practice charity," I immediately thought of billionaires like Bill Gates, Ted Turner and Warren Buffet, who set up foundations in order to fund left-wing causes, but never consider bestowing huge bonuses on the people whose labor has provided them with their wealth.

I have often had similar thoughts regarding Hollywood big wigs. Some actor who is paid \$10 or \$20 million to appear in a movie will turn around and, one, condemn capitalism and, two, attend a \$35,000-a-plate fundraiser for Barack Obama. What he won't do is donate a couple of million to the members of the crew, blue collar workers to whom \$25,000 would be a massive windfall.

Speaking of actors, I don't really have a problem with them taking advantage of their First Amendment rights to sound off on things they know nothing about. However, the hypocrisy of people who make more money in a single year than most folks will earn in a lifetime promoting socialism is extremely annoying, as is the parroting of Al Gore's claptrap about global warming by knuckleheads who never even took high school science. But the First Amendment doesn't distinguish between the wise and the foolish. On the other hand, as John Kindseth recently reminded me, in 1927, when Jack Warner suggested that Warner Brothers finance "The Jazz Singer," promoting it as the first sound movie, his brother Harry very sensibly asked: "Who would want to hear actors talk?"

In the wake of the recent elections, my friend Steve Maikoski asked me who came up with the idea of calling liberal states blue and conservative states red when, historically, red was not only the color closely associated with the Soviet Union, but communists and socialists, alike, were commonly referred to as Reds. It took a while, but then I recalled it was the late Tim Russert, who mis-colored the states during the 2000 election. At the time, I assumed he was colorblind, but

perhaps he was merely mischievous or stupid.

Will Rogers was regarded as something of a homespun sage when it came to political commentary. Part of the reason is because, like Bob Hope in the 40s and 50s, he was seen as non-partisan, taking good-natured swipes at both parties. In 2014, those innocent days seem as distant as Mars. America has become so polarized over the past few decades, the differences between Democrats and Republicans are wider and deeper than the Grand Canyon. And, sadly, anyone who says he votes for the man and not the party just sounds like a drooling idiot.

Still I believe that something Will Rogers said back then clearly delineates the difference between the two parties. "I would rather," he said, "be the man who bought the Brooklyn Bridge than the man who sold it." From my perspective, the Democrats are always trying to sell someone a bridge they don't own and, too often, Republicans are the ones pulling out their checkbooks.

Finally, I'd like to pay my respects to Tom Magliozzi, who recently died at the age of 77. For years, he and his brother Ray hosted a radio show I loved called "Car Talk." What made this rather extraordinary is, one, the show was on NPR, the home of everything left-wing and, two, the show consisted of people calling in seeking advice about their cars. Considering that I hate everything associated with the Left and that my disinterest in cars is rivaled only by my disinterest in golf, Brittany Spears and the accordion, my having been a fan astonishes even me.

But the Magliozzis never talked politics, at least not while I was listening, and they were very funny. From personal experience, I know it's pretty easy to get laughs when your subject is Barack Obama or Hillary Clinton, or when you're writing dialogue for Hawkeye Pierce or Lou Grant, but being able to get laughs about cars is a rare gift.

But there were times when Tom would expand his subject matter, as when he disclosed the secret of his successful marriage: “I know I’m always right, but it’s more important to be happy. So whenever my wife and I disagree, I tell her she’s right. As a result, she thinks I’m a big dummy, but she loves me anyway. So I’m happy.”

I’ll miss Tom, but at least now God will know whom to turn to the next time He needs a good laugh or has trouble with His carburetor.

**Burt’s Webcast is every Wednesday at Noon Pacific Time.  
Tune in at K4HD.com His Call-in Number is: (818) 570-5443**

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## **California Prison Hunger Strike – So What’s It Really All About?**

✘ On July 8<sup>th</sup>, a reported 30,000 prisoners started a hunger strike in California prisons, most in Pelican Bay State Prison. At the end of the month, only about 600 inmates were still refusing two of their three daily meals. This so-called “hunger strike” was the brainchild of convicted killer, Todd Ashker, a member of the Aryan Brotherhood, and three other inmates, representing the Mexican Mafia, Nuestra Familia and the Black Guerilla Family, four of the most violent and influential prison gangs in California, according to a recent op-ed piece in the L.A. Times.

When I first read about this hunger strike, I said to myself,

“what kind of hunger strike allows you one meal a day?” To me, a hunger strike is a hunger strike – you give up food during the strike, thus the word “hunger” is applicable. As far as I’m concerned, if you’re eating one meal a day, it’s not a hunger strike.

I guess their big complaint is that too many of these animals are kept in “solitary confinement.”

According to the op-ed piece, the Security Housing Units at Tehachapi, Corcoran and Folsom allow for direct sunlight and at Pelican Bay, they have skylights.

In all the facilities, they have FREE radios and color TVs. I have to pay for my radios and color TVs.

They have FREE access to cable channels. I have to pay for my cable television.

They have FREE weekly access to a law library. I have to pay a monthly subscription fee for my access to an online law library in addition to the books on appellate and dependency law I need in my office.

They have FREE daily exercise time. I have to pay for my annual gym membership.

They have FREE computers. I had to pay for every piece of equipment in my office.

They can earn degrees for FREE. Killer, Todd Ashker, earned a paralegal degree behind bars. I had to pay for my law degree.

Since 1987, Mr. Ashker has filed or been party to 55 federal lawsuits against the CA prison system, winning the right for inmates to order books and collect interest on prison savings accounts. I’d bet money that he didn’t have to pay one filing fee for any of these lawsuits, yet, I would have to pay thousands of dollars in filing fees for 55 lawsuits.

They can send letters for FREE. I have to pay for my own postage.

Their FREE food is the same kind and amount as the general population inmates. I have to pay for everything I eat.

Their utilities are provided to them for FREE. I have to pay for my own electricity, water, oil, propane and garbage disposal.

They are provided with FREE clothing. I have to pay for all my own clothes.

They are provided with FREE laundry services. I have to pay for all my water, detergent, softeners, bleach and dry cleaning services.

They are provided with FREE air conditioning. If I had air conditioning, I would have to pay for it myself.

They are provided with FREE medical and dental services and free prescriptions. Prisoners are now expecting the taxpayer to pay for their hormone therapy and sex-change operations. I have no dental insurance so I have to pay for my own dental work as well as medical insurance, services not covered by insurance and prescriptions.

If they're getting interest on their savings accounts, they're earning money. Are they paying Social Security like the rest of us?

I love how these guys complain about the inhumane conditions under which they purportedly have to live in a place like Pelican Bay. I have absolutely zero sympathy for any of them. I'm more concerned about the inhumane and cruel punishment they inflicted on their innocent victims.

Having your food, clothing, medical and dental, utilities, postage, computer access, educational opportunities, fitness equipment and everything else paid for by the American

taxpayer can hardly be considered punishment.

As I expected, it wasn't all about unwarranted "solitary confinement" in the SHUs, but rather the gangs' need to assert their power in prison. According to the op-ed, many of the inmates "say they want to resume eating but are afraid of the retaliation they will suffer at the hands of the other inmates acting on orders from their gang leaders." These four gang leaders are directly responsible for at least five murders, 35 violent assaults, including stabbings, and have racked up more than two dozen violations for possession of weapons and other contraband.

If I were Empress of the World, I'd have Arizona Sheriff Joe Arpaio in charge of each and every one of these prisons in California. I'd also have each of these prisoners doing hard labor on chain gangs and not hanging around pumping iron on the taxpayers' dime.

I don't get it, but if you do, God bless you.