

Emptying the Attic

After you finish this bonus article, be sure to read "Wrangling With Rangel."

In this fast-moving world, it is next to impossible to keep track of all the zany stuff that takes place on a daily, sometimes hourly, basis. It's a lot like finding yourself in a movie whose cast combines the Three Stooges with the Four Marx Brothers.



Vladimir Lenin in Seattle?

For instance, I often find myself wondering why left-wingers continue to promote communism. I mean, speaking of people named Marx, it would be different if Karl had just recently introduced *Das Kapital* to the world. But that happened way back in 1867. In the intervening 145 years, as we've seen his philosophy morph from mere words in a book to one bloody tyranny after another in the real world, how is it that anyone can see what it has led to in Russia, China, Cuba, Cambodia, Venezuela and North Korea, and continue defending it?

In a related matter, I just learned that in the Fremont neighborhood of Seattle, there stands a 16-foot statue of Vladimir Lenin. The good news is that during Gay Pride Week, it's dressed in drag. If you happen to be a left-wing atheist, the bad news is that it is adorned every December with Christmas lights. One can only ponder which of the two decorative motifs would have been the more offensive to the Father of the Russian Revolution.

While watching this year's Oscar show, it occurred to me that if you were a show business celebrity, 2011 would have been a good year in which to adjourn to the Big Studio in the Sky. Judging by the number of below-the-line technicians

acknowledged during the In Memoriam interlude, there were very few major names who took their leave this past year. But once the show ended, I realized that not only had gorgeous Elaine Stewart, who had lit up the screen in *The Bad and the Beautiful* and *Brigadoon*, passed away, but also my old colleague, Harry Morgan, of *The Ox-Bow Incident*, *Dragnet* and, most memorably, *M*A*S*H*. I can only assume that somebody at the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences had fallen asleep at the switch.



Burt missed Harry
Morgan

Mainly because I have spent the past six years or so hearing dire warnings about Iran's being a year, a month or a week, away from having a nuclear bomb, I have been forced to come up with an alternate theory. I'm not suggesting that Ahmadinejad and the mullahs shouldn't join bin Laden and Gaddafi in Hell, but I keep thinking about Leonard Wibberley's 1955 Cold War satire, *The Mouse That Roared*. Briefly, the book dealt with the Duchy of Grand Fenwick, a tiny European monarchy that finds itself in economic straits. In order to rectify that situation, they decide to declare war on the United States and then to quickly surrender, figuring they will receive the sort of financial largesse that Germany received after losing World War II.

Through a strange set of amusing circumstances, they somehow manage to make off with a doomsday device along with its peace-loving inventor. In the end, Grand Fenwick puts the world on notice that they will unleash the mighty Q-bomb if the superpowers don't come to their senses and quit rattling their atomic sabers.

While lodging his deadly invention in the bowels of Grand Fenwick's royal castle, Dr. Kokintz discovers the Q-bomb is a

dud. He wisely decides to keep that his little secret.

That is what got me thinking about Iran. If it had a nuclear bomb, would they be likely to drop it on Tel Aviv, knowing full well that it would unleash a nuclear holocaust from the United States? I'm not suggesting that the Iranians don't hate Israel, but the fact remains that those five million Jews are worth their weight in gold to Iran, Syria, Saudi Arabia and the rest of those creepy places in the Middle East. After all, whenever something bad happens, the Arab and Muslim leaders get to blame Israel. Whenever their citizens wonder why they are poor, ill-educated and living no better than their camels, the leaders get to blame the world's all-time favorite scapegoats, the Jews.

In a way, if Israel didn't exist, Iran would have had to invent it.

Speaking of inventions, Obama, who despises oil and coal nearly as much as Muslims hate Jews and Christians, has now proposed that \$14 million in tax dollars be used to subsidize turning algae into a bio-fuel. He hasn't explained why if it's possible to turn pond scum into energy, the private sector can't be trusted to provide the funds. He has also neglected to explain why they can't use the likes of Harry Reid, Nancy Pelosi, Sheila Jackson Lee, Henry Waxman and Eric Holder, in a pilot project and see if the five of them, after being properly processed, can propel a motorbike down Pennsylvania Avenue.

I only recently discovered that over and above their salary and franking privileges, every senator has an office budget of \$3 million. Senator Rand Paul set a good example when he kicked back \$500,000, but that still left him spending \$2.5 million-a-year on a squad of sycophants. And please keep in mind that senators aren't paying rent on their palatial office suites. In retrospect, it seems to me that our Founding Fathers went off half-cocked when they revolted over something

as benign as taxation without representation.

Finally, after months of hearing people like Herman Cain, Tim Pawlenty, Michele Bachmann, Jon Huntsman, Rick Perry, Newt Gingrich and Rick Santorum, running as the alternative to Romney, it will be a relief when we can all focus our attention on getting rid of the real alternative to Mitt Romney; namely, Barack Obama.

©2012 Burt Prelutsky. Comments? Write BurtPrelutsky@aol.com!

The Silly Season

by BurtPrelutsky

With football season finally over, we face the rest of the year, during which victories and awards are not usually determined by actual talent, true grit or any other standard that can be measured objectively. Instead, we will have some group of generally goofy individuals determine who will cart home Oscars, Nobel Peace Prizes and the U.S. presidency.



The Academy snubbed
Jimmy in 1939...

In fact, I'm convinced that the reason that so many people are addicted to sports is because they remain just about the only meritocracies in existence. While it's true that injuries occasionally play a role in which team wins the World Series

or the NCAA basketball tournament, it is nearly always the best team that cops the trophy.

When it comes to Academy Awards, there is a long history of mind-boggling injustices. For instance, "Sweet Leilani" beat out the Gershwins' "They Can't Take That Away From Me"; James Stewart got the Oscar for *The Philadelphia Story* to make up for his losing it the previous year to Robert (Mr. Chips) Donat, when he starred in *Mr. Smith Goes to Washington*; *Going My Way* and its director Leo McCarey beat out *Double Indemnity* and Billy Wilder; *The Greatest Show on Earth* beat out *High Noon*, *The Quiet Man* and *The Bad and the Beautiful*; and, lest we forget, the Academy members, in their infinite stupidity, decided that "It's Hard Out Here for a Pimp," performed on the Oscarcast by the group that composed it, the 3-6 Mafia, was voted the Best Song of 2006. It thereby took its place on a list of honorees that included "The Lullaby of Broadway," "The Way You Look Tonight," "Over the Rainbow," "The Last Time I Saw Paris," "White Christmas," "It Might as Well Be Spring" and "Moon River." If you close your eyes, you can almost picture some bureaucrat in Heaven telling the likes of Harry Warren, Jerome Kern, Harold Arlen, Irving Berlin, Richard Rodgers, Oscar Hammerstein, Henry Mancini and Johnny Mercer, to be sure and make room in their clubhouse for the dudes in the 3-6 Mafia.

I keep hearing that Newt Gingrich is a great idea man. That begs the question why he should be the president. It seems to me that if someone is an innovator, you don't make him the CEO of the company, you put him in charge of the lab. In Newt's case, I think he might make an admirable Secretary of State or, maybe better yet, as a John Bolton-like ambassador to the U.N.



... so they gave it to him in 1940.

When it wound up taking Iowa weeks before deciding that Santorum and not Romney had won the caucus – but even then they couldn't be sure because they had somehow misplaced a ton of ballots – I expected Florida's governor, Rick Scott, to send Iowa's Governor Terry Branstad a one-word telegram: "Thanks!" After those folks botched the counting of a mere 121,000 votes, it couldn't help but take the onus off Florida. Iowa didn't even have all those blankety-blank hanging chads to contend with.

Speaking of which, one of the absurdities of the primary system is how much attention it focuses for months on end on states such as Iowa, New Hampshire and South Carolina. In addition to the 121,000 caucus votes cast in Iowa, there were 248,000 cast in New Hampshire and roughly 600,000 in South Carolina. In short, we have devoted endless time and energy to analyzing less than a million votes when, in the general election, more than 140,000,000 votes will be cast. To me, that makes about as much sense as judging a book by its first paragraph.

Finally, as dumb as Obama's nixing the Keystone XL oil pipeline is, it's even dumber that we're not drilling for oil in Alaska and in the lower 48. I still recall when Bill Clinton was railing against the endless demands that he "Drill, Baby, Drill!" In 1996, he actually had the gall to argue that even if they opened ANWR to the oil industry, it would still take 10 years before the oil would reach our local gas pumps. At the time, I pointed out that it would eventually be 2006 in any case, and wouldn't it be nice if we no longer had to depend on the likes of Saudi Arabia, Iran and Russia, to supply our energy needs.

The fact is, because of environmental Nazis and their advocate in the Oval Office, we have pretty much shut down the oil and coal industries. It seems to me that should be a constant source of shame for every member of Congress, including those on the right side of the aisle.

The very idea that America is still dependent on foreign oil makes about as much sense as Mexico having to import tortillas, Italy having to import olive oil and France having to depend on Luxemburg to supply them with snails.

©2012 Burt Prelutsky. Comments? Write BurtPrelutsky@aol.com!

Get your personally autographed copy of *Liberals: America's Termites* or *Portraits of Success* for just \$19.95, postpaid.
Get both for just \$39.90.

