

“Ice Buckets & Oracles” and “Christmas Might Come Early”

Let me confess that, aside from donating time or money, I rarely understand the odd things done on behalf of charities. For instance, even decades ago when I was an advertising copywriter, my fellow workers would often ask me to donate money based on how far they walked or ran on the weekend. I understood the part about donating, but I couldn't fathom why the distance they covered should have anything to do with the amount.

These days, a great many people are allowing themselves to be doused with a large bucket of ice water as a way to help finance one cause or another. Although I admit to experiencing a certain joie de vivre each and every time I see some left-wing show biz celebrity being given an ice bath, I fail to see the connection to charity.

Am I to assume that some people have added being assaulted with ice cubes to such bucket list items as enjoying the view from the top of the Eiffel Tower, wind-surfing in Hawaii and helping the Obamas pack up and move out of the White House?

That reminds me that I have some good news to pass along. It seems that two Hawaiian councilmen decided to name a local beach in Barack Obama's honor, but backed down in the face of public outrage. So it seems that contrary to the popular notion that everyone in Hawaii is a stoned, leftist, slacker, there are still some stoned slackers who haven't entirely lost their minds in the Aloha State.

One poor soul who must still be addicted to marijuana, even if he may have kicked the nicotine habit, is Obama. How else to explain that in an election year when every Democratic candidate is trying his or her best to distance themselves

from the White House, he decides to sabotage their campaigns by announcing, "I'm not on the ballot this time, but my policies are"? What's next? Will he begin funneling the loot he collects at his endless fund-raisers to the Republican National Committee?

Moving on, I have never understood the objection many people have to capital punishment. I mean, assuming that they themselves are not residing on Death Row, why would anyone object to justice being meted out to cold-blooded killers?

I know that some folks claim that the state should not be engaged in the taking of life. To me, that means they're so morally dysfunctional that they equate the taking of an innocent life with the taking of a guilty one.

In order to be consistent, would these self-righteous schmucks also object to executing the jihadists beheading Americans, Brits and Kurds, over in Iraq? If not, why not? And if so, what difference does it make to them where the butchery takes place, and what possible reason can they have for punishing murderers in the Middle East more harshly than murderers in, say, the Midwest?

Something else I can't figure out is why it's expected to take an entire year to train the Free Syrian Army so they can fight ISIL on our behalf. After all, these are the very same people who have been doing a decent job of fighting Assad's far more formidable army for the past three years!

Finally, when I ridicule Warren Buffet, it's not because I'm envious of his enormous wealth. The truth is I would like to be a little richer than I am, but not as rich as Buffet. For one thing, I would never want to devote that much of my life to the accumulation of money. For another thing, I would never want to be 84 years old and have to spend so much time keeping track of it and making sure nobody is stealing it while I'm distracted, busy sleeping or having a tuna fish sandwich.

But when the so-called "Oracle of Omaha" states that Hillary Clinton will win in 2016, I find myself wondering why anyone takes him seriously. I have no problem with his making a prediction, even one with which I happen to disagree. The problem is because he's very wealthy, a great many people actually think he knows what he's talking about. It even explains why he's called the Oracle of Omaha, instead of the Rich Old Coot from Nebraska.

It will obviously come as a thunder bolt to some, but being rich only means that some individuals have the knack for making money, just as some have an ear for music and others have a knack for wiggling their ears.

Bill Gates knows a lot about computers, Donald Trump knows a lot about real estate and Ted Turner knows a lot about sailboats and bourbon, but grown-ups are being childish when they take them seriously when they prattle on about matters outside their expertise. It's like those young dopes who take to heart every dire warning uttered by Matt Damon about global warming or accept as gospel the nonsense Sean Penn spews forth on the evils of capitalism.

In short, rich people know how to make money in the same way that beavers know how to build dams.

But only a schnook would ask a beaver to predict the outcome of a presidential election or refer to one as an oracle.

Christmas Might Come Early

I understand that many conservatives have come to believe that there is no difference between the two major parties. Some of them even stayed home on Election Day in 2012 and bragged about it to me, as if their refusal to vote for Mitt Romney,

thus making it easier for Obama to win a second term, somehow reflected well on them.

If the GOP wins back the Senate and banishes Harry Reid from his current position as the second most powerful politician in Washington, I swear I wouldn't ask Santa for anything more.

I believe that so many people have repeated the lie about Republican politicians being indistinguishable from Democrats that a lot of people who should know better have swallowed the bilge. One party voted 100% for the Affordable Care Act, the other party opposed it. One party has tried to sweep every scandal from Operation Fast & Furious to Benghazi and the IRS under the carpet, while the other party has tried to get to the bottom of them because, contrary to Hillary's self-serving lie, the truth always makes a difference. And a lie that is repeated a thousand times isn't magically transformed into the truth, even though demagogues and those involved in advertising might wish it were otherwise.

More than one person has written to me with the expectation that even if the GOP only gains five Senate seats in the midterm elections, there is a good chance that Joe Manchin (D) of West Virginia might agree to switch his party affiliation, especially if he were to be promised an important committee chairmanship.

My advice to Sen. Manchin is that he should make the switch before Nov. 4th. After all, the GOP stands a very good chance of winning the Senate without him. In which case, he loses his bargaining power and merely looks like the worst sort of political opportunist, sort of like that weasel Jim Jeffords, who switched in the other direction and was thereafter regarded with contempt by those on both sides of the aisle.

Speaking of weasels, no politician should ever have his name attached to anything – be it a bridge, a highway or a post office – unless he personally built it or paid for it. The

only exception is his tombstone.

In what has come to be known as American diplomacy, Joe Biden just announced that we are giving Gaza an additional \$212 million to help them rebuild everything the Israelis knocked down in retaliation for unending missile attacks. The truth is that most of the money will be spent, not on apartment houses, but to construct new tunnels and buy more Katyushas. So, once again, this administration tries, like so many past ones, to buy the friendship of terrorists. It's bad enough that it adds to our national debt, but the practice also adds to our national shame.

Interestingly enough, those who have campaigned to change Columbus Day to Indigenous People's Day believe that the white race has a great deal to be ashamed of when it comes to the way that Indigenous People, otherwise known as Indians, have been treated in this country.

According to the lunkheads, the natives were a kind and peaceful people who lived on loving terms with Mother Nature until Caucasians landed on Plymouth Rock. When you realize that all the tribes were basically Stone Age savages who would inevitably have been overtaken by the modern world, it makes you wonder if these dunces also believe that the blacks in Africa were residing in the Garden of Eden until the Europeans came along.

At least Columbus Day pays tribute to a superb seaman and reminds people to visit an Italian restaurant in the near future. What would a celebration of the Indigenous People look like? Inasmuch as they were notorious for scalping their enemies and devouring their internal organs, I'm sure the menu would leave something to be desired.

As for their creative heritage, when you get past blankets, trinkets, totem poles and wickiups, it hardly measures up to that of the European transplants whose heritage, even in the

1600s, already included Butler, Milton, Moliere, Vermeer, Rembrandt, Velasquez, Donne, Cervantes, Purcell, Bach and Shakespeare. Of course not everyone would agree with me. I'm sure that those whose religion is multiculturalism, and whose devotion to political correctness forever dooms them to be fatuous lunkheads, prefer cave paintings to Rembrandt.

Speak of the Devil, have you heard that in Nebraska, school kids are being told to call each other Purple Penguins because terms such as "boys" and "girls" might be offensive to transgendered eight year olds? It's all part of an agenda prepared by an organization calling itself Gender Spectrum, which seeks to make bathrooms accessible to one and all, no matter the nature of the individual's plumbing. Funny, one used to be able to assume a certain level of commonsense from Midwesterners, but that was before the Purple Penguin crowd moved in and took control of school boards and city councils, forcing normal people to park their brains at the curb.

But the lunacy unfortunately isn't limited to Nebraska, Iowa or any of those other flat rectangular states. In Washington, D.C., the resident space aliens refuse to stop incoming flights from West Africa, even though France and England have done so in an attempt to keep Ebola from taking root in their countries. The only reason we don't follow suit is because most of those flights are carrying black passengers, and no politician wants to risk being labeled racist, even though their cowardice might lead to an epidemic of terrifying proportions.

By deciding not to rule on the constitutionality of same-sex marriages, the Supreme Court allowed lower court rulings to stand, thus pretty much making it the law of the land.

In just about every state that has placed the issue on the ballot, the people have voted against it. Nevertheless, we're told that polls indicate that Americans have changed their minds. That may well be true. But I'd hate to think that most

Americans don't share my objection to unelected federal judges assuming the authority to override the laws of Congress and the stated will of the people, which in 1996 led the House and Senate to overwhelmingly enact the Defense of Marriage Act.

We appear to be trying very hard to turn ourselves into a Third World nation brimming over with indigenous knuckleheads of the sort who lack the most basic skills and have to import even our blankets and cheap trinkets from China.

I'm beginning to think I may have been a tad too hasty when I hopped off Santa's lap.

Burt's Webcast is every Wednesday at Noon Pacific Time.

Tune in at K4HD.com His Call-in Number is: (818) 570-5443

©2014 Burt Prelutsky. Comments? Write BurtPrelutsky@aol.com.

Warren Buffet Is an Idiot

I wouldn't want anyone to think I don't like Warren Buffet because he's rich. For one thing, I don't engage in class envy or any other kind. Maybe if I found out he could play the piano or do impressions of movie actors or even juggle, I might be slightly green. But the unvarnished truth is that I don't envy people like Buffet and Bill Gates their fortunes. I admit I'd like to be wealthier than I am because I don't like having to think about money at all. But once you get to be as rich as guys like that, I don't know how you have time to think about anything else.

When you have 30 or 40 billion dollars, I would imagine that just keeping track of it would keep you pretty busy. I bet billionaires spend countless hours meeting with boring guys in

suits who cart around attaché cases and are named Roger or Malcolm, talking about what to do with all that loot. I bet it keeps them busier than a Jack Russell herding sheep.

I also wager they spend a great deal of time worrying about people stealing their money. I mean it. How would they even know? It's not like they can keep it stuffed in their mattress.

Perhaps it's all that worrying that explains why Buffet says so many really foolish things. But even his stupidity wouldn't be so unbearable if he didn't insist on compounding it with his hypocrisy.

For instance, in 2006, he complained that he only paid his income taxes at a rate of 19%, whereas his secretary paid at a rate of 33%. "How can this be right?" he huffed.

Well, the answer is pretty simple. He paid at a lower rate because his money came to him in the form of capital gains and dividends, whereas hers was strictly salary.

The better question he should have asked is why did he have to pay at such a high rate, considering he had already been taxed on the money that he then invested in stocks and bonds, thus helping to grease the gears of a capitalistic economy, allowing businesses to expand and hire more workers. Talk about no good deed going unpunished!

What's more, when Mr. Buffet finally moves on to the big boardroom in the sky, the feds will scoop off even more of his money in the form of death or estate taxes.

In 2008, his worth was estimated to be \$62 billion – that's billion with a "b" – but, through the Bill Gates Foundation, he has since given away about \$25 billion to various charities.

What I don't understand is, one, why he is so anxious for the

feds to take an even bigger bite out of his pile; and, two, why, if he is so offended by the low tax rate for rich people, he doesn't simply write a bigger check on April 15th.

Even back in 2006, when he began bitching about his 19% tax rate, he only sent the IRS \$48 million. What stopped him from sending them \$96 million? There's no law that says that just because the rate is 19%, you can't pay 38% or 76%. Heck, he had \$62 billion stashed away. Would he really have missed \$30 or \$40 billion?

Wouldn't it have been a lot manlier of old Warren to just write a check that ended in nine zeroes than to gripe about what other people were paying? If I remember correctly, even his pal, Obama, only paid at a 20% rate last year. But at least he didn't go around whining that he and Michelle weren't paying enough.

But maybe Warren just isn't the sort of guy who wants all the attention that would go with writing a \$10 billion check. Still, what's to stop him from paying lots of other people's taxes? His secretary's, for instance?

I'll tell you what really isn't fair. It's not fair that although he claims he wants to send more money to Washington, he doesn't; whereas I, who don't want to send the schmucks a plugged nickel, can't get away with shortchanging the IRS without risking a lengthy spell in Leavenworth.

Not content with having helped finance Obama's re-election, Buffet has spoken out in favor of Obama's desire to raise the tax rate on capital gains to something like 45%. He insists with a straight face it would do nothing to curtail investment. Oh, sure, just like the financial cliff and ObamaCare haven't done anything to curtail investment. I knew that Buffet had a head filled with rocks, but does he also live under one?

Why on earth, and especially in this economy, would anyone

take the risk of investing in the stock market if 45% of his potential profit would wind up in the hands of Washington bureaucrats?

The question often put to opinionated people of moderate means is: If you're so smart, why aren't you rich?

The appropriate question where a goofus like Buffet is concerned is: If you're so rich, why aren't you smart?

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