

PETALUMA PETE

Beenie interviews King George

By Richard Somers

Beenie M. Witherspoon III is a long-time friend of Pete's. He is a journalist of rare talent and had recently completed an interview with King George. After the interview, Beenie called Pete to report what had taken place.

First, the scene must be set. King George has a lot of power being the head dog for the Kingdom of Boosh. The family is steeped in politics, big dams, and oil. They are pals with other kingdom rulers. Many of them have beady eyes and the men tend to smirk quite frequently. One could say that the Kingdom of Boosh is quite well off, although you wouldn't know it, according to Beenie, who interviewed the mighty King George with the king wearing a Seinfeld-like pirate shirt and designer jeans. The interview apparently went something like this.

Beenie: "Good afternoon, Grand Poobah of the kingdom known as Boosh."

King George: "It is hard being King. By that I mean that it is not easy."

Beenie: "What took you so long to equate the war in Iraq with WWII?"

King George: "Both wars had people fighting on opposite sides. By that I mean that each battle consisted of one side fighting the other side."

Beenie: "Why did you decide to attack Iraq?"

King George: "They had weapons of mass destruction that were planned to be used against my kingdom. By that I mean that their leader was going to launch these weapons aimed at me and my



subjects."

Beenie: "But there weren't any WMD, were there?"

King George: "You must fight threats wherever they occur. By that I mean that their leader was tied into Al Qaeda."

Beenie: "I thought that had also been proven to be incorrect?"

King George: "No one knows how bin Laden was able to convince Saddam to create 9/11. By that I mean Usama, not those other bin Laden pals of mine who were allowed to fly out of my kingdom even though no other commercial or private airplanes were allowed to do so."

Beenie: "But there isn't any connection between Usama bin Laden and Saddam Hussein, either. Is there?"

King George: "Sorry, but I've got to get to the Golf Course. By that I mean that I must direct my Princes in rebuilding Katrina projects."

Beenie: "I believe that you mean Gulf Coast, not Golf Course, and it may not be politically correct to rename these buildings 'projects', as that might connote poverty-level dwellings."

King George: "My refugees will be better off after we create new homey huts out of that good old Mississippi mud. By that I mean my blessed subjects will be thankful once they can get back to dancing."

The interview ended with King George "smirking a friendly" at Beenie and flying off to his second home in WashTown. Is King George a great leader of a great country or what?

THE DEVIL'S ADVOCATE

Heaven or Houston

By Joe Tinney

When hurricane Katrina hit last month, it was the largest hurricane in history, doing enormous damage. It was estimated that it might take two to three hundred billion dollars to repair all the damage. Responding to the emergency, the Petaluma City Council offered to rush some of its members down there to show them how to turn that number into six hundred billion.

The hurricane turned New Orleans into a horrible, twisted mess, with dead bodies all over the place. It was a lot like Oakland.

Rescue efforts were extraordinary. When it was learned that a large number of college students were trapped inside their dormitory in New Orleans, things got so desperate it was thought by FEMA officials that it might be necessary to drop emergency supplies of pizza and beer.

Sadly, a large number of people in the region died. One of the few pieces of good news throughout the whole affair is that the death toll was not nearly as large as originally reported. At first we heard that there were "tens of thousands" dead, then maybe only a couple of thousand. At this writing, the number has dropped to several hundred.

It's not that the original totals were wrong. Since voodoo is practiced in the nearby swamps, a large number of the dead have been springing back to life. At this stage, they're referred to as zombies and they shamle about aimlessly, unable to communicate or do anything else effectively. It's hard to know just how many of these there are, since they are often mistaken for government officials.

Many people, especially religious ones, were wondering why this terrible tragedy struck the people of that region. However, after checking the newspaper and television reports, we now know that what caused the hurricane: It

was the government's fault, at all levels.

Many worried that if a hurricane could do this much damage in New Orleans, what about the next big earthquake in California? If a 1906-style earthquake hit in the bay area, the result could be as horrible for folks out here as the hurricane was for Louisiana residents. But now, after checking the media reports on the hurricane and finding out it's all the government's fault, we're more relaxed. The Federal Government hasn't yet figured out how to make an earthquake strike only the poor and minority people, like they did with Hurricane Katrina. Until they do, we're safe for a while.

It's not that hurricanes can't strike this region. When I heard about the hurricane, I called my daughters, Jayne and Kerry, who are sharing an apartment in Palo Alto. I got Kerry.

"Did you see the terrible destruction from Hurricane Katrina?" I asked her.

"That's nothing," Kerry replied. "Hurricane Jayne hit our apartment thirty minutes ago, and you ought to see this place."

I also checked with my history colleague, Skip Sommer, and he confirmed that the worst natural disaster in the Petaluma area was Hurricane Kenilworth, in 1870. It was said that racehorses and wrist-wrestlers were thrown all over town with windspeeds even higher than Bill Soberanes could talk. The Petaluma River flooded, and things were an awful mess. The streets were completely torn to pieces, and they have pretty much remained in the same condition since. The slow response was blamed on the Grant administration.

Well, I'm moving to higher ground. When the next national disaster strikes, come see me. I'll toss you some pizza and beer.

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