

Political Penguin

By Duane Plank

"Are you better off today than you were four years ago?" Those of you of a certain age should remember the man who spoke those words at the end of the final Presidential debate in 1980. It was one Ronald Reagan, who would defeat the incumbent, Georgia peanut farmer President Jimmy Carter, by landslide proportions.

Reagan's question, aimed at the weary American electorate, came at the tail-end of a Presidential campaign that led to the ouster of the one-term Carter. Mr. Carter presided over a country in the second half of the 1970s that was beset by high inflation, high interest rates, a stagnant economy, and an energy crisis that saw people parking their cars overnight at the local gas station so that they could be near the front of the line to get the petrol when the station re-opened in the morning. Remember it well--those were the good old days!

Oh, and the good old U.S. of A. wasn't faring too well abroad either. Iranian followers of the bearded fool Ayatollah Khomeini had taken over the American Embassy, holding 52 Americans hostage for 444 days. The Islamic terrorists paraded the hostages in front of the cameras on a daily basis, providing photo ops that could be beamed back home to America, reinforcing the perception that Carter was presiding over a foreign policy that had been basically castrated by the Islamic thugs.

Reagan stomped on Carter in the 1980 election, capturing a phenomenal 489 of the 538 electoral votes cast. His coattails would also prove to be quite long; the Republicans were able to gain control of the U.S. Senate for the first time in 28 years.

You remember that Reagan was the Governor of our Great Bankrupt State back in the late '60s and early '70s, don'tcha? And that he was an actor before taking the plunge into the political arena? Appeared in more than 50 films, including the 1952 flick, *The Winning Team*, in which the future Prez played the role of baseball great Grover Cleveland Alexander? On a completely semi-related note, Grover Cleveland, without the Alexander, served two non-consecutive terms as President back in the late 1800s. Just a little fun fact for my diligent readers.

Mr. Reagan is the only Cali chief executive who has been elected President. Don't look for another one to make the trip to Washington in the near future.

Notice some similarities between Dutch Reagan and our current Governor? Don't think Mr. Schwarzenegger is harboring any Presidential hopes, do ya? Don't even know if he is technically qualified to run for the highest office in the land. Probably should find out about that.

Back to the quote: "Are you better off today than you were four years ago?" Good for you if the answer is "yes." Job secure, house worth a lot more than your mortgage payments, credit card bills virtually non-existent? Congrats!

So our Guv has again been doling out fiscal threats, saying last week that he will shut down the state government in the very near future rather than stand in line at the state loan place, wherever that is, and take out a high-interest loan.

Reports are that the Golden State will run out of money in late July unless the Guv and the bureaucratic screw-ups hiding out in Sacramento somehow find some magic dust or something similar and miraculously figure out a way of nulling the expected \$24 billion budget shortfall.

Shockingly, it appears that labor unions and other deep-pocketed political players haven't been making life easier for the Guv, opposing any type of budget cuts that threaten their gravy train.

Said the great leader Schwarzenegger in an interview with the editorial board of a local

newspaper: "Do they (labor unions) want to protect the workers that provide the services, or do they want to protect the people that get those services? The choice is up to them."

So there. Take that, labor union guys and gals. Course why in the world would *any* powerful group do anything in this crappy economy to weaken their own position? To help the other guy? Gimme a break!

Mentioned the energy crisis of the late '70s, sitting in long lines, waiting to pay too much at the pump. Assume that you have noticed the prices at the old pump creeping upward again? Was going to say at the "gas station," but most of the places we now buy gas at are much, much more than gas stations, right? But for the better?

After you pump your own gas, wash your own windows, check your own oil, fill your own tires, except when the air dealie is "out-of-order," which seems to be about 75 percent of the time, you can enter the convenience store part of the establishment and buy some cancer sticks, or a warmed-over cheeseburger, or a losing lottery ticket.

I think I'd rather pay less for the petrol and let the attendant check under my hood, but that's just me, I guess.

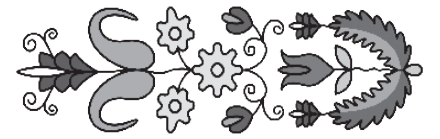
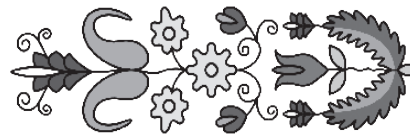
Now that the least expensive blend of gas

has again broken the three-buck-a-gallon barrier, the question is: Why? Apparently, speculation in the oil futures market is driving the price spike gouge. So get ready to bend over again as the oil barons continue to fatten their wallets at our expense. Deja vu all over again.

And a final postscript to the Carrie Prejean soap opera. Since I mentioned the lovely Miss Prejean a few weeks ago, I need to give y'all some closure.

Seems that the former Miss California, who created quite a flap at the recent Miss U.S.A. pageant when she gave what the lefties framed as the "wrong" answer on the subject of gay marriage, was canned by the people in charge of the Miss Cali beauty pageant exploitation thing. Something about alleged "contractual violations."

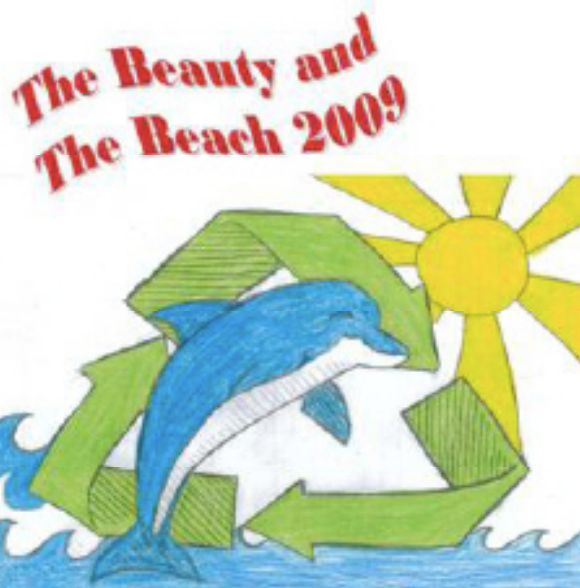
Case closed, I guess. Guess that the Politically Correct Police won this round. But I'll bet Prejean will end up "laughing all the way to the bank!"



THANK YOU

On behalf of El Segundo Power and the El Segundo Kiwanis we would like to thank you for attending the 2009 Beauty and the Beach clean-up. We picked up more than 250 lbs of trash from the beach. We hope everyone had a great time; this event is truly a community collaboration, from all the 130 young artists that submitted the art work for the T-shirt contest, to the volunteers that help set up the event, and most of all, ...all of YOU, because without you this event could not happen.

Again thank you for your support and we look forward to seeing you next year!!!!



EL SEGUNDO POWER, LLC & THE EL SEGUNDO KIWANIS CLUB

Art Contest Winner 2009 - TOBI KU