

SPEAKING SOUTHERN A GREAT ADVANTAGE IN DEALING WITH IRAN'S LEADER, BLESS HIS HEART

According to recent news reports, that little weasel who runs Iran — the one who looks like he ought to be ironing shirts in a dry-cleaning plant — has decreed that foreign words can no longer be used in his country, as if that is the biggest thing on his mind these days. If I were him, I would be more concerned about Israel getting a belly full of his saber-rattling jive-talk and blowing him and his mullah buddies flat off the planet.

Mr. Poobah frets that foreign words are gumming up the Persian language, and he just won't have it. For example, it seems real important to him that "pizzas" be referred to throughout the land from now on as "elastic loaves." ("Hello, Papa John's Elastic Loaves." "Yes, I'd like an elastic loaf, extra crust, but hold the anchovies and the goat meat." "You got it. Our driver will be there as soon as he straps on his suicide bomb. No need to tip him. He won't be around long enough to spend it. Neither will you.")

This decree could definitely crimp my ability to describe this nutcase to you in terms that you can understand and appreciate. I earlier referred to the guy as a "weasel." That is a word he would probably ban, even though I'll bet the farm that he wouldn't know a weasel from a wallaby. Just to be on the safe side, maybe it would be best if I call him a "carnivore with yellowish underparts who eats vermin — AND who looks like he ought to be ironing shirts in a dry-cleaning plant." Admittedly, that doesn't have quite the same ring — except for pointing out his yellowish underparts.

Fortunately, speaking Southern is a great advantage when having serious discussions about Persian word merchants and their loony-bin followers. Iran can't ban Southern phrases because they don't have the foggiest idea what we are talking about. After all, if we can befuddle Yankees with the way we talk, we sure as shootin' can fool that guy with the yellow underparts. A good place to start would be to send former U.S. Sen. Zell Miller to Iran as some kind of special emissary. Since his boy, Ralph Reed, crashed and burned in the primary elections, our plain-talking mountain man should have plenty of free time on his hands these days.

If the guy in Iran thinks he's tough, wait until Zell Miller gets hold of him. Zell would peel him like a Georgia peach: "Let me tell you something you log-licking son of a dadburn cow patty. You don't amount to a snuff can full of crowdads. You keep running that smart-alecky mouth of yours, and some good ol' boys I know are gonna pluck you and your crowd like a Sunday dinner chicken. Besides, you need to shave and put on a clean suit. You look like you've been sleepin' in some South Georgia honky-tonk."

("What in the name of Allah does he mean?" "I'm not sure, Your Excellency, but he's getting red in the face. I suggest we go rant at the British for a while. This guy scares me.")

We've got so many unique expressions in the South that we could abuse this pompous jerk for a couple of eons and he would never know the difference. Picture an angelic-looking, gray-haired Southern grandma walking up to him during one of his frequent all-day harangues against the Great Satan, smiling and saying "bless your heart" — as in, "I know you are the leader of Eye-ran and all, but bless your heart, you look like something the cat drug in." ("In the name of Allah, have I just been insulted?" "I don't think so, Your Excellency. After all, she said 'Bless your heart.' I thought that was very sweet.")

And I can imagine my late, beloved momma's reaction to the little weasel making everybody in Iran say "elastic loaves" instead of "pizzas." Momma, a lady who didn't mince words, would have put it this way: "If brains were dynamite, he couldn't blow his nose." Figure that one out, Mr. Yellow Underparts — bless your heart.