

May 28, 2007

JIMMY CARTER CAN'T SEE HIMSELF AS OTHERS SEE HIM

I had planned to ignore Jimmy Carter's latest blather about the Bush administration being the worst in history. For one thing, President Peanut is Exhibit A when it comes to bad presidential administrations, and he doesn't need my help in reminding you of that.

Instead, it had been my intention to ask my dear friend, Sen. Johnny Isakson, what in God's name was he thinking when he agreed to pose for a picture with Ted Kennedy recently? Except to those few mindless liberal weenies who think Kennedy is some kind of hero, there is nothing to be gained from even being in the same room with this guy — assuming someone else can fit in the same room with him.

(Before you Kennedy apologists respond in righteous indignation, please furnish me the names of all married U.S. senators who: [a] have driven their girlfriends into the water while drunker than a skunk, [b] let them drown and then [c] lied about the whole thing until finding out that their rich daddy couldn't bail them out of their mess. For bonus points, please add all the senators kicked out of college for cheating. I promise to publish the entire list of names in a future column. Thank you.)

However, the Woman Who Shares My Name said don't even think about fussing at Johnny Isakson. She loves him better than a goat loves grass. She said if I think I have been fed a lot of broccoli in the past, just criticize Sen. Isakson and I will be having the stuff for breakfast and my bedtime snack until hell freezes over or until France adopts a work ethic, whichever comes first. (My money is on hell.)

As for President Peanut, I am beginning to pity the man. How frustrated he must be that we all don't see him in the warped way he sees himself. What we see is a bitter man with a failed presidency trying desperately to rewrite his legacy; what he sees is a wise elder statesman with eagerly sought-after opinions on everything from our loyal ally, Israel (bad) to North Korea, a repressive dictatorship (not so bad).

The man has no shame. He writes a book accusing Israel, the only democracy in the Middle East, of apartheid and then refuses to publicly debate scholars who disagree with him. He also sees no irony in his pious pontifications at the funeral of Coretta Scott King after having refused to attend the funeral of her husband, Martin Luther King Jr., in 1968 because he was busy preparing to run a racist campaign for governor.

There is no need to belabor his bumbling term as president: The giveaway of the Panama Canal, his inability to deal with the nation's rampant inflation, the Cuban boatlift and, of course, the Iranian hostage crisis, which occurred after President Peanut had helped dispose of another American ally, the Shah of Iran. His one claim to fame is the Camp David accords between Israel and Egypt. That is akin to hitting a triple and then striking out every other time at bat. A one-hit wonder.

Jimmy Carter had a chance to rehabilitate his reputation after his debacle as president. His efforts to eradicate insidious diseases in Africa and his support of Habitat for Humanity have been commendable. But that's not enough to satisfy his oversized ego. He craves the spotlight. For that reason, he feels compelled to undercut the current administration at every opportunity. That is not only bad form for an ex-president, but it is dangerous to the rest of us because it emboldens our enemies — many of whom he helped create through his lack of leadership in the Iranian hostage crisis. Personally, I don't think he gives a damn. This isn't about the welfare of the United States. This is about Jimmy Carter being sure we know how smart he is.

The blowback from his latest pother should convince him to zip his lip and get back to writing bad poetry. However, I am not hopeful. It is obvious that Jimmy Carter just can't see himself as others see him. That's a pity.