

June 30, 2008

### THERE ARE SOME QUESTIONS EVEN THIS COLUMNIST CAN'T ANSWER

You'd better sit down for this one. I must confess that I, your modest and much-beloved columnist, don't have all the answers. (I can hear the gasps from Adel to Zebulon.) True, I have most of the answers, but occasionally something just doesn't compute. This is where you come in. I have the feeling that someone reading this will be delighted to cut a sprig from the Tree of Knowledge and plant the answer in my befuddled brain.

Let's start with this one: Has anyone seen Iowans looting local stores and hauling off liquor and big screen TVs in grocery carts after the recent deadly floods that ravaged the state? How about Missouri? Have you heard of police officers there abandoning their posts? Has Leonard DiCaprio flown in to announce he is going to rebuild Cedar Rapids? Anybody seen Spike Lee? Al Sharpton? Joe Lowery? Georgia's 12th District Congressman David "Rooftop" Scott? Most importantly, have you heard Midwesterners whining about racism and complaining about the federal government?

Next question: (And I invite the editors to join in on this one.) I have an acquaintance from South Africa who is now a citizen of the United States. Does that make this person an African American? If not, why not? And does it matter if the individual is white? If so, why?

Talking to Sen. Chambliss last week about the energy crisis brought to mind this question. In 1963, Pres. John F. Kennedy announced we would put a man on the moon by the end of the decade, and we did. Question: Why can't we announce that we are going to be totally independent of foreign oil in five years and then do it? That can't be as hard as going to outer space was back in the '60's. Why can't the greatest nation on earth develop alternative fuels like celluostic ethane or hydrogen or biodiesel and tell the Arabs and the satraps in South America to stick their petrodollars where the sun doesn't shine? Are we dumber than we used to be? Have we lost our will? Are we controlled by special interests that don't want to see us less dependent on oil? Maybe our next president will challenge us to be great again. The current one seems to have gone into hiding.

Remember the Haditha "massacre"? That was Time Magazine's description of the death of a group of Iraqi civilians in 2005, based in large part on a questionable film by someone claiming to be a journalism student who turned out not to be. So far, seven of the eight Marines who were accused of brutally murdering innocent civilians have been acquitted. I wonder if Time will do an "Oops! We Rushed to Judgment with Poor Sources and Were Exposed for the Biased Elitists We Really Are" cover story? I wouldn't rush to the newsstands to find out, if I were you.

Why isn't Jefferson in Jefferson County instead of Jackson County? And why is Jackson in Butts County and not in Jackson County? Why isn't Madison in Madison County? Or Decatur in Decatur County? No wonder Georgia is full of so many intelligent people. You have to be very smart to know where you are going.

Here's a toughie: Can you name one institution of higher learning in the nation that offers a better blend of academic excellence (the only public university in the nation to have two Rhodes Scholars this year, six since 1996 and 21 over all) and athletic achievement (national champions in women's gymnastics, men's tennis, and equestrian; runners up in baseball's College World Series; SEC titles in baseball, equestrian, women's gymnastics, and women's and men's tennis and a tournament title for men's basketball. And word is that the football team is supposed to be pretty fair this year, too.) Wait! Wait! I think I can answer this one!

And now, for the final question of the day: How many humorless liberal weenies are going to get their shorts in a wad over something I have said today and jump on me like a Rottweiler on a ground squirrel? Wait! Wait! I think I can answer this one, too!