

**THE DIOGENES REPORT**  
**The Wit, Wisdom & Wituperation of Emanuel L. Strunin**  
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**A NATURE FABLE**

Once upon a time there was a small village on the western shore of Asia. It was a peaceful village where the only concern of the villagers were the wild beasts that lurked in the dark forests outside of the village. To protect their families, the villagers hired hunters who new how to kill or capture any wild beast that attacked the village. For many years the guards did their jobs properly, and except for occasional incidents when one or more beasts managed to kill some villagers.

With the passage of time, some of the hunters became infected with the idea that the beasts would leave the village in peace if a small number of villagers would be turned over to the ravenous and poisonous animals as a sign of goodwill. A number of the hunters followed this environmental policy but the beasts, true to their nature, could not be appeased.

A large poisonous snake slithered into the village and bit a number of people including children so that they died. And, although the snake, in open sight, kept slithering through the village sinking its poisonous fangs into more and more people, the hunters did not try to kill the snake but attempted to gently wave it away and to frighten it away by telling it that its behavior could lead to grave consequences. Of course, these methods were useless but the hunters claimed that eventually they would work. Finally, the villagers, enraged by the incompetence and insanity of their protectors, replaced the hunter and his assistants, who also believed that the beasts should be placated.

A hunter was brought in who once protected the village from the predatory beasts and who was known to understand the true nature of the beasts. Unfortunately, the hunter, who had grown old, brought many of the former hunter's assistants to help him. The snake, in full sight of all of the villagers, continues to bite but the hunter does not take his ax and chop his head off. Instead, he and his assistants hiss back at the snake and tell it in no uncertain terms that it will face grave consequences if it continues with its behavior.

To encourage the hapless villagers, the hunter regularly performs a dance in front of the snake, stamping his feet loudly to scare off the poisonous beast, but the beast continues to act like a beast.

Suddenly a single thought comes over all of the villagers. They realize that the hunters have betrayed their trust and that they must act on their own to destroy the beast. Together, they grab the hunter's ax and chop the head off the beast. While they are killing the beast, the hunter continues to do his pitiful dance. End of fable.

## **WHAT ARE THEY TALKING ABOUT?**

On a walk through Manhattan I was utterly amazed at how few people did not have one end of a phone stuck in their ear and the other end in front of their mouth. It can not be possible that in a just a couple of years everyone has so much more to say. The high school kid on the way home is talking on a cell phone. The young mother pushing a baby carriage is talking on a cell phone. The insurance man who left his office three minutes ago is talking on a cell phone. The retail clerk standing outside of her store for a smoke is talking on a cell phone. The Con Edison man, whose pre-cell phone conversation consisted of grunting to his fellow worker and yelling obscenities at pretty girls passing by, now sticks his head up from a manhole with a cell phone in front of his face.

I have two questions: what are they all talking about?; and, how do they pay their phone bills?

## **INSTANT INFO**

The sudden meltdown in new age companies coupled with earnings and sales shortfalls at old line companies makes me wonder what American and worldwide business managers are doing with the incredible amounts of information that is now instantly available to them. I'll wager that there are as many bankruptcies taking place today, despite the information revolution, as there were centuries ago when an entrepreneur had to wait weeks and even months to learn whether his goods had arrived safely at their destination.

The bottleneck in our information age is not in the speed of the chips but in the judgment skills of the same old human brain that processes the data. I suspect that this problem will remain with us for some time to come.

## **HEADLINES AND COMMENTS**

Current headlines from the world press plus comments by Diogenes.

### **PENTAGON CONFUSION OVER CHINA CONTACTS**

Could this be characterized as an American fire drill?

### **BUSH ORDERS FEDERAL AGENCIES TO CONSERVE ENERGY**

The President is serving as a role model, he conserves energy by not doing any work. One commentator claimed that he makes Ronald Reagan look like a workaholic.

### **STUDENT REVIEWS MIXED AFTER GORE FINAL CLASS**

He should demand a recount.

#### TRIAL OPENS FOR FLORIDA BOY, 14, ACCUSED OF KILLING HIS TEACHER

Will the defense attorney claim that the murder was justified because the teacher was only certified to teach math but she was teaching the boy English?

#### INDICTMENT NAMES TWO EX-CHAIRMEN OF AUCTION HOUSES

The indictment accusing multimillionaires, Alfred Taubman of Sotheby's and Sir Anthony Tennant of Christie's of cheating the customers of the ritzy auction houses undermines the argument that rich people should be elected to political office because they won't be tempted by graft.

#### (ISRAELI) HIGH COURT OFFERS COMPROMISE REGARDING OMRI SHARON

He can continue to serve as an unofficial ambassador/messenger for his father but his mouth must be stapled shut. I call it a fair compromise.

#### ASSAD SAYS THAT ISRAELI RACISM IS "BEYOND NAZIS"

He knows it to be true because his uncle Adolf and his other uncle the Grand Mufti told him so.

#### 3 CHARGED WITH GIVING LUCENT SECRETS TO CHINA

Don't these guys know that only U. S. government employees are allowed to give secrets to China?

#### MORE SEXUAL ALLEGATIONS EMERGE AGAINST TEACHER IN THE BRONX

Sounds like a witch hunt. Whatever happened to academic freedom?

#### CHAIRMAN MAO CURE FOR CANCER

I wonder if it's the old Tiannamen Square hot lead treatment?

#### SPACE TOURIST RETURNS

What's so holy about space? I'm hearing a lot of complaints that Dennis Tito was able to buy his way onto a space flight. G. W. Bush bought his way into the White House. Every member of Congress bought his/her way in. Tourists bought their way onto the US Navy Circle Line sub for a jaunt around Oahu, What's so holy about space?

#### **DIOGENES IN ISRAEL**

During a virtual visit to Israel in its time of crisis Diogenes has been unable to find an honest politician no matter how brightly he turned up his lantern. He was able to detect the ex-Prime Minister, Benjamin Netanyahu and the current Prime Minister swinging wildly at each other in the usual Israeli-style political infighting, with each one hoping to deliver a knockout blow. Neither one seems willing to deliver a knockout blow to the gun-and-bomb-toting-Arabs who are killing their constituents. Perhaps, Diogenes could put his lantern to better use by using it to smash the skulls of both politicians, as well as

that of their crazy Foreign Minister. This would be a perfect example of the very old saying: "Beware of Greeks bearing lanterns."

## **QUOTES I LIKE**

All music is folk music, I ain't never heard no horse sing a song.  
Louis Armstrong

You cannot make a man by standing a sheep on its hind-legs. But by standing a flock of sheep in that position you can make a crowd of men.

Max Beerbohm

There is no such thing as bad publicity except your own obituary.

Brendan Behan

The price of justice is eternal publicity.

Arnold Bennett

Better to write for yourself and have no public,  
than to write for the public and have no self.

Cyril Connolly

A belief in a supernatural source of evil is not necessary;  
men alone are quite capable of every wickedness.

Joseph Conrad

Little minds are interested in the extraordinary;  
great minds in the commonplace.

Elbert Hubbard

Rock music is the kind that we keep thinkin'll turn into a tune.

E. Strunin (with apologies to Kin Hubbard)