

## Donny in Oddz

At the last meeting of the Make America Be Best Again National Committee, a topic was finally addressed that has been of great concern to all its members since the President turned 122 years of age. Though He and His party have been able to retain power throughout His 47-year tenure despite never having won the popular vote, the voters' attitudes were changing, and the Committee members were not sure they could manipulate the Electoral College system to suit their benefit next election, or even inspire enough patriots to seize power through a popular insurrection.

Younger people, having become decadent by their soft MABBA lifestyle, were beginning to feel the effects of having no healthcare or social programs to fall back on when their bellies ached and their lattes cooled off. They had begun to question the poverty they saw their elders suffering since the abolition of Social Security, the illegalization of unions, and the demise of corporate and government pensions. They were beginning to resent the idea that someday they themselves would become elders and face the same bleak, latte-less, belly-aching future. And so, the members of the MABBA N.C. huddled together and came up with a plan sure to convince the spoiled and entitled children of today that His Most Exalted Elective Majesty will be their best option when they come of voting age just in time for the election 13 years from now.

The Committee had all kinds of ideas. Offering the children free breakfast and lunch in school came up but was rejected by almost all of them. Restoring Art and Music education in the public schools was nixed. Rehiring school nurses and librarians was shot down. Likewise, bringing back summer recreation and employment. All this would have drawn criticism from the elite side of the MABBA base: The wealthy donors, who knew these luxuries would involve federal interference in what was essentially personal responsibility, and worse, an increase in taxes and the creation of more wasteful government programs.

As for the undereducated, underpaid, underemployed and unemployed, uninsured, overtaxed side of the MABBA coalition- the redcaps who passionately remembered how the liberals had deserted them and who railed over the unfairness of their abandonment at His Most Exalted Elective Majesty's many rallies- the Committee recognized His compelling appeal and persuasive genius and ignored them, having no concerns over losing their support.

The elite would continue to contribute. The divested poor were well in hand. But could the Committee count on children who would be of voting age so soon?

A reasonable person would have trusted that the restoration of prayer in public schools decades earlier would have satisfied the youngsters and left them complacent. But no: This younger generation of future voters was already showing signs of discontent, albeit prayerful discontent, and the Committee realized that something had to be done before these infants became rebellious.

So, the MABBA N.C. thought and thought, debated for days, and finally came up with an idea that could not fail to both entertain and instruct these future voters: The members decided to hire a top writer to rejuvenate "The Wizard of Oz" in the MABBA style with His Most Exalted Elective Majesty Donny the First as the hero uber allen.

Bearing this sound plan in mind, the Committee dispatched three decorated soldiers of the MABBA Militia to deliver a subpoena to the acclaimed revisionist of fairy tales, the author Jean Bergerac,

with instructions to deliver him to the MABBA Propaganda Commissar Heiny Doerbbels, or, in the remote case he should prove unwilling to make his appearance voluntarily, detain him, so to speak, until he came to his senses.

A half hour later, Bergerac found himself ushered into the sanctum of Commissar Doerbbels. He helped himself to a tumbler of good Scotch from a crystal decanter he saw in a skillfully carved mahogany cabinet and flopped onto a plush damask couch. Feeling quite at ease, he hoisted his feet onto a coffee table made of more exotic wood from the Amazon rainforest, lit a Balkan Sobranie he found in an ornate ivory cigarette box and studied the opulently furnished office suite. Three cigarettes later, the door burst open and the Commissar himself entered, followed by his shadow-like adjutant bent over from carrying a weighty, bulging portfolio labeled "J. Bergerac."

"Make yourself at home, Bergerac. I'm happy to see you made it here safely! Are you comfortable?" the bear-like Commissar asked cordially.

The writer put down his glass, extinguished his smoke and rose to shake the Commissar's outstretched hand. "It's overwhelming, Commissar. It suits you very well."

"Thank you. It does. Melatonia VII herself furnished it. Such exquisite, trendsetting taste she has! How fondly I remember Her Christmas décor, the inspired row upon row of blood-red Christmas trees, so evocative of the yuletide spirit! And who could forget the coat she wore on the occasion of her holiday visit to the caged illegal children. The one with the message printed on its back that spoke so well of the times we live in! How it melded glamour and insight into a cohesive whole!" He took a deep melancholy breath. "But enough pleasantries. Let's not shilly shally, eh wot Waldo?"

The diminutive figure straightened up. "No indeed, Sir! We'll neither shilly nor shally! No indeed, Sir, we surely shan't shilly nor shally!"

The Commissar was not amused by his lackey's silly shilly shallies. "Quiet, Waldo. You're being extraneous again. That was a rhetorical question not requiring your superfluous alliteration. How many times do I have to tell you that? Just keep your dopey mouth shut and stop sucking up all the oxygen in the room."

"But I bought one of those coats too!" protested Waldo in his own defense. "And I contributed toward the boxes of Cracker Jacks She passed out!"

"Everybody did, Dummy. Just shut up, will you? Try to remember what happened to the last moron you replaced."

Waldo removed the thumb from his mouth. "Yes Sir, H.D.! I'll shut up right now."

"Good! Do that," his superior retorted sharply.

"You can depend on me, H.D. If you want me to shut up, I'll shut up."

The Commissar glared at the little man and turned his bushy brows to the famous writer.

"It takes a saint to tolerate this numbskull. Now, J.B.- I hope you won't think me too familiar if I call you J.B.- to get to the heart of the matter, J.B., I have brought you here on a matter of such urgency that you will need to put aside any trivialities you may be occupied with currently. Tell me, J.B., can the

Committee count on you to accept a most vital project that may spell the happiness of the nation, or perhaps even the order of the world?"

The famous author shook his heavy head gravely. "Well, I am always busy as you might well already know. I've just completed an update of 'Hansel and Gretel' that I call 'Donny and Melatonia VII.' And of course, my publisher is raving about the financial success of 'The Chick in the Dressing Room.' 'Stormy Goodhead' is still selling strongly." (Here Waldo could barely restrain himself despite the Commissar's icy scowl; he clapped his hands and ecstatically crooned "OOOOOO how I loooooooved that one!") "And 'Stinky Fingers,' my tribute to gender parity, has been on the top 10 list of children's books for 2 solid months. But I'm always ready to forego my insignificant ambitions for the sake of the nation. So tell me, Commissar: How can my humble ability serve my country today?"

The Commissar was pleased. "Your attitude is commendable, J.B. Your talent is beyond reproach or question, and so far- and when I say so far, I mean so far as you know- your contribution to the state of the state, so to speak, has been well-received. Ergo, and on behalf of the Committee, I would like to commission you to update the text of 'The Wizard of Oz' which as you know has fallen out of fashion with our youth in recent years. In modernizing the story, we want you to center it around the exploits of His Most Exalted Elective Majesty with the purpose of educating the youth as to His wonderful character and qualifications. You see, J.B., they are becoming spoiled and restless; they need to be reminded of their great fortune enjoying the benefits of the MABBA lifestyle. It is only reasonable that they should be grateful for their many blessings, and, in turn, support the source of them. Our task is to remind them how good they have it and to warn them of the dreadful consequences they are facing if MABBA is rejected in the next election." He paused to scratch a bothersome hair that was itching his nostril.

"And frankly," he continued, "in this MABBA Age of Masculinity, the idea of a female lead or heroine is contra-indicated. Women certainly have their place, of course, but let's face it: It's not their job to run the nation and save the world. They are the weaker sex after all, empty, dependent cups that men must pack with their juicy primal life essence to make their existence fulfilling. That is their purpose and cherished desire." He paused to observe the effect his words were having on the writer Bergerac. Satisfied, he resumed his dissertation.

"So you see, your work will be simpler and the tale so much more realistic if you just eliminate the Dorothy character entirely. She is unnecessary. And that mutt Toto too. Who needs a mutt when you've got a lion? With His Most Exalted Elective Majesty as lead, the story won't drag, and it will be so much more believable. Children will relate to it. Besides, Dorothy's an orphan, and orphans are depressing. There's too many of them anyway, and our kids are depressed enough without hearing her trifling problems. You will do the nation and indeed the world a great service by putting the narrative into a positive light with the modern MABBA perspective".

He paused again to scratch the hair that had migrated to his buttocks. Relieved, he looked deeply into the writer's eyes. "So J.B., what do you think? Can you do this? Will you accept the project?"

"No problem, H.D. As a matter of fact, I had the same idea myself," the author replied somewhat pompously. He poured himself another Scotch and lit a cigarette.

The Commissar's hands beat a lively tattoo on his desktop. He smiled blissfully. "It's all settled then? Can we count on you to commence expeditiously?"

"I've already started!" the writer exclaimed agreeably. But he sniffed his glass warily.

"Well then, the matter's settled! How long do you think it will take? We don't want to hurry your creative process, but the need of the nation is pressing."

"I fully appreciate your concern, Commish." (Here Waldo, aghast, interrupted with a meek but outraged "That's 'Commissar,' not 'Commissioner!'") "Give me a few days, a week at most, and I'll have it to you in a golden binder."

The Commissar was pleased. "I and the Committee thank you J.B., for your patriotism and loyalty. You can expect a rich reward for your service, perhaps an Iron MABBA Cross or a free overnight stay, except for meals, drinks and traveling expenses, at His Most Exalted Elective Highness's fabulous White House away from the White House, Mierd-a-Lago, where you'll be able to both hob and nob with the exclusive MABBA elite and, perhaps, overhear a Top Secret or two. We'll hear from you shortly then?"

"Certainly, Commissar. You can always depend on me."

True to his word, the writer set aside all his other work, focused on the project he had been assigned, and two weeks later found himself seated in the Commissar's grand suite, eager to discuss the Committee's reaction to "Donny in Oddz."

He didn't have to wait long. Before he'd finished his second cigarette- the crystal decanter had somehow disappeared- the door flew open and in rushed the Commissar himself followed by a bent-backed Waldo tottering under the weight of a mighty stack of script and notations.

"Magnificent!" cried Commissar Doerbbels, waving his hands wildly above his head as he greeted the great writer. "Brilliant! It will endure the ages, J.B.! Boulders will erode in the oceans before the people lay this masterpiece down! Men will flock to prostrate themselves before His Most Exalted Elective Highness Donny! Women will weep uncontrollably and toss their panties to Him! And above all, the latest voting block can anticipate a bright MABBA future ahead of them! A trifecta, J.B.! Let me say, Sir, that you put the 'Jean' in 'genius,' yessir you did!"

"He did; he did! You put it so well, H.D.!" warbled the adjutant Waldo.

"Zip it, Waldo, you prodigious suck-up. Nobody's talking to you!" He harkened back to the writer. "Now, J.B., as I was trying to say before that nitwit interrupted, the Committee was impressed and thrilled with 'Donny in Oddz'! You had them rolling in their loungers! After reading it, a few of your admirers actually recommended that we ban the outdated original 'Wizard' from the libraries, but we all soon realized that the children will benefit by examining the contrasts between your inspiring version and Baum's soul-sucking original. I tell you J.B., the crowd went so far as to suggest you revamp 'To Kill a Mockingbird' by replacing Atticus Finch with His Most Exalted Elective Majesty! Maybe we can interest you in that after we make a few minor edits in the present script."

Bergerac grimaced. He appreciated the adoration of his readers and the notion of another assignment, but was hardly ever appreciative of their literary advice. Still, he gritted his teeth and waited patiently to hear the functionary out.

“Every writer needs a proper editor, H.B. What’s on your mind?” he asked, forcing a Cheshire-cat smile.

H.B. noticed the gritted teeth. “Don’t get me wrong, J.B.! I’m merely the mouthpiece of the organization. I like the script as it is, truly I do, but even Ayn Rand and Norman Vincent Peale, Steve Bannon and Q had their limitations. We can’t all be like His Most Exalted Elective Majesty! I hope I’m not witnessing an excess of hubris on your part, J.B., to mar this happy occasion.”

Bergerac winced. “No indeed, H.B. I’m as humble as any of them, except for His Most Exalted Elective Highness, of course. It’s my privilege to hear the Committee’s reaction.”

His words reassured the Commissar. “That’s what we wanted to hear! Let’s proceed then, by all means.”

“By all means! By all means!” repeated his ebullient shadow.

“Will you please pipe down, Waldo! Spare us all your redundant echolalia. Now J.B., to begin, the Committee loved how you replaced the dreary grey landscape of Kansas with the cheerfulness of the Big Apple! And who needs clods like that very unattractive Aunt Em (a ‘3’ at best on the auntie scale) and that grubby failure of an uncle? Losers like that are not particularly inspirational. They do not represent the ideals we are trying to present. Besides, His Most Exalted Elective Majesty likes farmers who don’t lose their crops to drought. So, it was a dazzling move on your part to forego shithole Kansas and start the story in the sophisticated penthouse of Donny Towers in the heart of Manhattan. It’s just that if the building gets blown away by a tornado and crashes into Mnuchkinland, that won’t be saying much for the quality of its construction, which is supposed to last 1,000 years.”

He paused to gauge the writer’s reaction to this reasonable criticism. “And perching His Most Exalted Elective Majesty on a golden commode in the eye of a tornado with chickens and dollar bills fluttering around him isn’t exactly the image we want to convey.”

“But I liked that H.D.! All that stuff flying about and His Most Exalted Elective Majesty sitting serenely on a toilet!” protested the pocket-sized adjutant. “It’s so regal!”

“Get a grip on your whiny lip, Waldo. Nobody cares what you like or don’t like!” barked the Commissar.

“Well, he has to get to Oddz somehow,” argued the writer.

“Indeed! But the committee recommends that you drop the penthouse idea. We don’t want Donny Towers investigated for not being up to code. Certain people who were enriched, let us say, wouldn’t like it either. Then there’s the concrete angle.”

“And the unions, too!” added Waldo. “Gee, I wish I was in a union!”

“Unions? What unions, you blubbing Socialist! There are no unions! What is going on in that pustule you use for a brain? Surely I must go insane!” the Commissar shrieked contemptuously.

“Sorry, H.D. I forgot to remember,” whimpered the distraught apparatchik.

“Well, remember not to forget!” the Commissar upbraided him. Twirling his forefinger, he faced the writer.

“Lunatic! No, we’d best leave the Towers out of it. Why don’t you have Him seated on His throne aboard his Boeing 757 VIP instead, enjoying a diet Coke and a breakfast McMuffin when a random hurricane blows the plane off course? We can blame it on pilot error and have the traitor die when the jet crash lands. And, if you like, we can execute the weatherman for filing a fake report.”

“Sic semper victus!” cried a somewhat revived Waldo.

“Ipso facto, you’re an imbecile, Waldo. Even your Latin sounds asinine. How’s that strike you, J.B.?”

“What about if we replace the toilet with His throne? And use larger denominations of bills?” suggested the writer.

“We’d still have that problem with code violations and payola.”

J.B. nodded his reluctant assent. The Commissar continued.

“And then, when the jet crashes in Mnuchkinland and everyone aboard dies except for His Most Exalted Elective Majesty, why did you make everything blue? I mean everything: the houses, the clothes, even the Mnuchkins’ little blue skins.”

“It’s in the book, H.D. Blue is the Mnuchkin official color,” explained the writer.

“Well, we’ll need to change that. It’s not the MABBA color. Make it red. Blue’s for the losers on the other side.”

The writer smacked his forehead with his palm. “Of course, H.D. How’d I miss that?”

“Perfect, H.D.! Perfect!” declared the enthralled Waldo.

“What liberal did I free from prison to deserve this dodo bird hanging around my neck? Will you please shut your trap, Waldo, you insufferable nincompoop?!” The Commissar growled.

His snarling expression changed to honeyed adulation as he again turned to the popular artist.

“And what’s more J.B., those blue hats the Mnuchkins wear can be replaced with our red designer MABBA baseball caps. It’s a win/win, don’t you see? Especially at \$79.99 per,” he joyfully added.

“Machine made in slave-labor China!” cried Waldo, trying to be helpful.

“I told you never to mention that, you meddling miscreant!” howled the enraged Commissar. “Do you see, J.B., how a little knowledge is a dangerous thing?”

“Yes, but at least slaves can’t form unions,” replied the writer, doing his best to pacify the outraged functionary.

His words succeeded in appeasing the Commissar. His color went from a bright red to his usual cirrhotic eggnog yellow. He forced a wan smile signifying weary tolerance and continued.

“Now you should also know that the Committee was absolutely charmed when that witch got sucked up into the jet’s turbine and sprayed out the exhaust...”

“That was great!” interrupted Waldo rapturously, stamping his feet and pounding the table.

“Will you kindly keep that loquacious sphincter of yours shut? You’re making me crazy with your blithering!” He unclenched his fists and turned his attention back to the great author, “...but what about those Hermes Crocodile Himalayas that were left behind? Why did the shoes have to be a competitor’s brand? Can’t you change them for a pair of His own gold sneakers? Or Evilanka’s?”

“Especially since His are not selling well,” added Waldo slyly.

“Goddamit shut up already you toady twit!” And then to the famous writer, “That’s what I get for letting him read Top Secret documents! Anyway, can we do that?”

“Certainly. It’s just that the Hermes go for almost \$13,000 a pair. His feet deserve nothing less.”

“Granted, but don’t you see what a value that makes His are at only \$9,999.99?”

“I hope to own a pair myself someday,” replied the author.

“We all do. Now in terms of the Mnuchkins. You have done very well to retain their servile midget status. We should all be so humbled before Him. And of course, your gold bricks are a perfect touch- and later we can claim we’ve renovated the infrastructure. But it’s a pity that He shall have to tread on His bone spurs because our little red Mnuchkin friends are too short to carry Him in a golden litter. Yet another sacrifice He’ll gladly make for the Cause! At least He’ll be able to ride the Lion later in the story.”

“And what about the good witch Glinda, H.D.?” reminded Waldo.

“Must you constantly disrupt your betters, you nattering noodlenoggin?”

He threw his hands up in frustration and addressed Bergerac. “One of these days I’m going to deport him to Guantanamo and have him waterboarded.” He paused to regain his composure. “I’d make him Bubba’s cellmate, but he’d like that. Now to return to important matters... oh yes!- the witch! Why does she have to be so frowsy? She’s barely an 8 on the good witch scale. Maybe a make-over can hide the face-lift scars. Melatonina VII can give you her hairdresser’s number.”

“Too much hubba, and not enough Bubba,” added a smirking Waldo.

“I’m beginning to lose patience with your maddening malaprops, you pernicious carbuncle!” roared the Commissar. He ground his teeth in vexation, rubbed his temples with both hands and repeated: “Oh the pain... the pain...” A minute later he was able to continue.

“And that dog pound outfit she wears! Come on! Strictly out of the Sears catalog! Why don’t you give the kids something to look at!? You know: Heels and cleavage! Some tight, bulging, muscular booty. And lots of leg! You know His Most Exalted Elective Majesty is a big leg man!”

“Indeed he is!” grinned Waldo lasciviously.

“You shut up you eunichular nonentity!” He turned to the writer, “And don’t worry about being censored or banned. We’ll stack the library shelves with dozens of copies and to hell with what those Mothers for Freedom might say.”

“I’ll do it,” agreed the writer willingly. “By the way, how’d you like the way I depicted the Scarecrow?”

“Well, frankly, your approach to characterization is another sensitive issue that concerned the Committee. What’s this obsession with brains? Do you really want people to be too smart? Or even middling smart? And the same goes for the Tin Man and the Lion. Don’t you think that hearts and courage are overrated? Even dangerous? We’ve got a rebellion brewing- the last thing we need is people with brains and hearts and guts. Let’s emphasize MABBA ideals: Cunning, ambition and loyalty. And by loyalty I especially mean subservience.”

“He sure does!” agreed Waldo nodding his head vigorously.

“For fuck’s sake shut up, Waldo! And stop wagging those fetid fetlocks! You’re stirring up dust!” He counted to 10 and returned to the writer.

“What did I do to be so accursed with this termagant toad? It’s so unfair...so unfair...” He unclenched his fists, wiped away a tear and returned to his main point.

“To get back to what we were discussing before the unwelcome interruption: The brains, heart and courage have to go. We can’t tolerate them in a civil population. Too risky. Remember: Cunning, ambition and loyalty. Or subservience. Same thing.”

“Will do, H.D., but I think ‘loyalty’ has a better ring to it,” the writer offered.

“As you wish. You’re the artist. Now I must add that you outdid yourself by having His Most Exalted Elective Majesty develop the Poppy Field into luxury donnyminiums, especially how he cleverly bypassed the local zoning ordinances by eliminating low-cost rentals and stiffing the non-union Mnuchkin contractors. Well done, Maestro!”

“I loved that part!” gushed Waldo.

“Shut up, Waldo,, and stop breathing on me,” wheezed the Commissar. “If I get another asthma attack...”

“But you know how He hates anything that reminds Him of condoms!” reiterated the adjutant in a vain attempt to justify himself.

The Commissar waited a minute to calm down and then, ignoring his flunkey, continued in a softer voice.

“It was great. Then when they finally reached Emerald City, what a Cecil B. DeMille spectacle! The cheering crowds! The opulent setting! A fitting tribute to the Great Man! Just one thing, though: When His Most Exalted Elective Majesty makes the deal with the fake wizard, you seem to have forgotten who’s in charge. Remember please, that nobody makes a better deal than His Most Exalted Elective Majesty, especially some fake wizard. Can’t you change that around so that when His Most



Exalted Elective Majesty travels to the yellow land of the Winkies, he kills the Wicked Witch of the East out of the goodness of His heart? After all, who would believe that a lousy shaman could pressure Him into knocking her off? Come on now! How's that punk creep going to boss His Most Exalted Elective Majesty around? Nobody extorts Him! That's what He does to them!"

"That's right! Nobody!" seconded Waldo sententiously.

"Nobody asked you, Waldo! And about those filthy flying monkeys. Why do they have to be reeking monkeys when we've got all those Black Lives Matter rioters we can use? Throw in the gays and immigrants too, if you want. Kids like monkeys, after all. We don't want to confuse them."

"I like monkeys," added Waldo.

"Who cares what you like, Waldo? Kindly keep your perverted proclivities to yourself until you are indicated." He turned back to Bergerac. "And His Most Exalted Elective Majesty melting that witch with water was a masterstroke! But don't you think you can use Donny Bottled Water instead of a bucket of city water? Just think about what the commercials will say: 'Try Donny Bottled Water: Removes rust AND witches! And you can try to drink it too!'"

"I tried it. Once." admitted Waldo.

"That explains how you got your I.Q., Dummy." He returned his attention to Bergerac.

"So far, so good! Now let's come back to that lefty, Mnuchkin-humping fraud of a fake wizard. Aren't you glad you got rid of that flea infested mutt? The last thing we needed was to have a stinky pooch expose that phony! You did a great job having His Most Exalted Elective Majesty pull the curtain down on him to reveal what a sniveling loser he is!"

"Loved it!" cried Waldo.

"Shuuuuut up!! This retard is killing me! My blood pressure is exploding!" The Commissar had to wait a moment to catch his breath and simmer down.

"Then when His Most Exalted Elective Majesty hops out of the balloon just as it is lifting, and exiles that fake fraud from Oddz to who-knows-where so that He can take control of the Emerald City and all those lovely emeralds... well, that's simply inspirational! You should have heard the Committee when we got to that part! People stood on their chairs and cheered and applauded for 5 full minutes! I'd be surprised if the MABBA Pulitzers don't award you top prize this year! "

"I am humbled and cannot speak," sputtered the brilliant author.

"Well, be sure to recover your voice before you give your acceptance speech. But confidentially, that part where the residents of Emerald City rebel against an 'immigrant dictator' went a bit too far. His Most Exalted Elective Majesty is never an immigrant no matter where He lives. And for that matter, neither is Melatonia VII. Immigrants are vermin, as you know. Even the suggestion that His own mother was an immigrant is a repulsive calumny. You'll need to bury that one if you know what's good for you."

"Glad you caught it," breathed Bergerac with a sigh of relief, "but He sure put them in their place!"

"John Wayne couldn't have done better! Except maybe at the Alamo," cooed Waldo.

"I told you never to mention that fiasco!" screamed the Commissar flailing his arms like windmills in a hurricane.

"But I thought Donny hated Mexicans..." whimpered Waldo.

"Yeah- but they won, Dummy!"

"I didn't think about that. Sorry."

"You've just begun to be sorry. Why don't you make yourself useful- like volunteering to be a bull's-eye during target practice?"

"Geez, H.D. That was harsh."

"Now shut up once and for all, you insufferable dingus, and let me think!" He stood awhile scratching his head. Then his expression brightened, and he remembered what he wanted to say.

"I wish there was some way to incorporate how he put the rebellion down into the script. This is a cautionary tale after all."

"Let me think about that, H.D. I'm sure I can do it," offered the writer.

"You can be certain of His Most Exalted Elective Majesty's gratitude if you do."

"Maybe we can find another wicked witch He can partner up with... Or stir up some trouble between the Mnuchkins and the Winkies..." the writer suggested.

"That's a thought! He never liked those yellow bastards and their all-yellow rendition of Kansas. You can call them 'chinkies' and accuse them of starting the uprising..."

"Chinkies! Chinkies! Chinkies!" parroted the elated Waldo.

"Jesus Christ, will you ever understand the meaning of 'shut up!' you mental logjam! You know how long it took us to get His Most Exalted Elective Majesty to stop calling those nig... I mean the Blacks... nig... I mean, the 'N' word??? You want him to alienate yet another voting bloc? Idiot!" the Commissar ranted, not remembering at all that it was he who had come up with the C-word in the first place.

"I'll work on it, H.D. Don't let it bug you," promised the writer placatingly.

"How can I help it when I'm surrounded by dolts like that? I wish we'd banned abortion AFTER he was already born!"

"Well, it's too late now. But don't worry, H.D.- I'll figure it out."

"I and the Committee know we can count on you, J.B. Now tell me, do you think it was a good idea to end the story in the traditional fairy tale fashion? You know: His Most Exalted Majesty takes charge of the Emerald City and they all live happily after? Can't we mention all the helpful changes He will make after He takes over? The Committee suggested including all the beneficial policies that His Most Exalted Elective Majesty will institute. You know, like getting rid of Wizcare? And building a wall around Mnuchkinland?"

“And making the Mnuchkins pay for it!” Waldo exclaimed gleefully.

“Shut up, Waldo. Just shut up,” the Commissar said wearily.

“I already thought about that, H.D. Great minds think alike! The problem is that He’ll do so much, and our story is already so long, that telling our children about all His great achievements after he conquers Oddz will require another full-length book. We don’t want to make our story too protracted—you know how short their attention span is.”

“You mean a sequel, J.B.?” asked the Commissar.

“A sequel! A sequel! A sequel!” cried Waldo.

“Spare me the chit and the chat, Waldo, I’m thinking...”

“Exactly, H.D.! A sequel!” said the writer.

“Hmmm...A sequel... the story of how He brings prosperity, contentment and peace to the failing land of Oddz...” murmured the Commissar to himself.

“That’s right, H.D. Someone’s gotta do it,” agreed Waldo.

“Pipe down, Waldo. Down, down, boy! Shush already!” He looked at Bergerac with admiration. “And who can do it better, eh J.B.?”

“Exactly.”

“Exactly! Exactly! Exactly!” cheered Waldo.

“Shut up, you cranial bone-spur!” H.D. paused. A bright smile lit his face up like lights on a Christmas tree. “How about that?” he laughed, ‘You cranial’: ‘Ukrainial! Get it? Ha Ha Ha! Now those were the days!’ he gloriously recalled.

“Ha Ha Ha! Those WERE the days!” repeated Waldo and the writer in one voice.

“Ha Ha Ha! We’ll do it! The Committee will love it!” the Commissar exclaimed, delighted by sharing his own wit with another creative paragon.

“I think so too, H.D. We can even make a subtle change everyone will understand: MOBBA. Make Oddz Be Better Again.”

“MOBBA! MOBBA!! MOBBA!!!” cried Waldo in awe of the genius surrounding him.

“Perfect! Then we’ll end it right here and you can make the edits and start thinking about the next volume!”

The writer arose and shook the Commissar’s hairy hand. The Commissar patted him on the back. Waldo opened the door and bowed as the great author passed by him.

“Well,” thought the Commissioner, “I believe we have a real winner here.”

“Well,” thought the famous writer, “looks like I’ll be eating this winter.”

Gene Burshuliak and Friends

March, 2024

This story is dedicated to the activist Frank C. Rohrig, who is a great friend to the Cause, on the occasion of his 90<sup>th</sup> birthday. Thank you, Frank, for your friendship and inspiration!