

25. Dr. Who?

Like most business owners, Ted is a Republican. He does not like paying taxes and in fact, perhaps because of his species background, he does not even understand the concept of taxes. He points out that, if a bear catches a salmon, they get to eat it themselves, or give it away to a less fortunate bear, or do anything at all that they want with it. No one comes along to take 37% of the salmon for the greater good. Of course, there is always the danger that a larger bear will take 100% of the salmon, but then you can always catch another one while the larger bear is eating the first one. (And the larger bear does not pretend that his taking of the salmon is for the greater good.) Ted thinks that if Democrats took charge of ursine salmon fishing, bears would need a permit to catch salmon. The permit would be expensive and would only be valid for a limited time and limited number of fish, and permits would be allocated according to subspecies (so many for brown bears, so many for black bears, so many for grizzlies, ...). An environmental impact statement would be needed before any permits were issued, and the rights of salmon would be considered. The government would take 20% of the salmon to put in a food bank for people deficient in omega-3 fatty acids. An on and on and on.

Kristin, on the other hand, is a Democrat. This is partly because she is an academic and fears that her tenure could be revoked if she could be proven to have Republican sympathies. But it is also due to the fact that she finds the Republicans' record on gender issues to be despicable. Ted does not fully appreciate this last point because in his species there are no gender issues.

Piotr is an Independent. Like many people from the ex-Eastern Block (or from China, or for that matter North Dakota), he does not understand the point of having two political parties. One is more than enough. Also, because he spends so much time exercising, cleaning house and

trying to keep Kristin satisfied, he does not have adequate time to think about politics. He simply waits until a few weeks before an election, looks at a few TV ads, and votes for the more muscular of the two candidates. Or, if they are female, the one with the larger breasts. He is only undecided if one candidate is male and one is female, though in that case he usually votes for the female, so long as she is attractive.

Ann Arbor is in the 15th US Congressional District, which is heavily Democratic. In fact, it is so staunchly Democratic that the Republicans have trouble finding serious candidates (or even any candidates at all) to run for Congress from this district. They were therefore grateful to get a message from Dr. Albert T.E. Bear indicating his interest in obtaining the Republican nomination for this congressional seat. With a PhD in veterinary psychology and lots of successful business experience, he might appeal to both the traditional Republican business crowd and the less rabidly liberal academic types.

The local Republican leaders were less enthusiastic when they met with Ted and discovered that he was not human. In fact, there was some question in their minds as to whether a bear was eligible to be a congressman. Fortunately Ted had researched this issue and had brought a copy of the United States Constitution with him. He directed their attention to Article 1, Section 2, where it says: *The House of Representatives shall be composed of Members chosen every second Year by the People of the several States...* So, while the voters must be people, the constitution does not say that the Members of Congress must be people. There was also an issue of age and citizenship, which Ted resolved by pointing them to the very next paragraph, which says: *No Person shall be a Representative who shall not have attained the age of twenty five Years, and been seven Years a Citizen of the United States...* Ted pointed out, correctly, that this

sentence does not impose any age or citizenship limitations on a Representative who is not a Person.

Once it was established that Ted was eligible to be a Member of Congress, there remained the question of whether people would vote for him. Some of the party leaders felt that speciesism is still more prevalent than racism or sexism, and that in the end many people, even Republicans, would vote for a person rather than a bear. The early support that Ted enjoyed could evaporate overnight once his species identity became known. But Ted had a wonderfully simple strategy to deal with that: *They don't have to know.* In the absence of any opposition in the Republican primary election, party leaders could name him as the candidate. They would then issue the following statement.

The Republican candidate for Congress from the 15th Congressional District will be Dr. Albert T.E. Bear of Ann Arbor. No further information is available at this time.

This would fit well with the modern nature of campaigning. Personal (or bearsonal) appearances by candidates are no longer common, since candidates run the risk of being revealed to be stupid or ill-spoken or ugly (or ursine!). Campaigning is now done mostly by TV advertising. Also, since the “attack ad” has proven to be so devastatingly effective, most TV ads mention only the opponent, naturally in unflattering ways. So Ted’s ads wouldn’t need to mention anything about him at all. And, since his opponent (like the voters) would know absolutely nothing about Ted, there would be nothing to attack. He supposes that they could attack the fact that he is a Republican, but clearly that would be partisan politics at its worst.

The Republican National Committee supplies candidates with sample attack ads. Here is an example.

Help save our country by stopping the Obama-Jones agenda. Jones has consistently supported Obama's policies of high taxes, wasteful spending, an apologetic defense policy and secular-humanistic moral weakness. He has voted to raise taxes 382 times and has supported 620 cuts in the defense budget. He has destroyed countless jobs by supporting excessive regulation and taxation and has done his best to wreck our health care system. He does not support traditional Christian values. Return our country to its former moral, economic and military greatness. Say no to Obama by getting rid of Jones.

Like 43% of the non-incumbent Republican congressional candidates, Ted couldn't figure out who Jones was. He finally read the part of the instructions that said *Substitute opponent's actual name for Jones. If the opponent's name is actually Jones, no change is necessary.* A little research revealed that Ted's opponent was John Dingell. With that change, Ted thought the ad wasn't bad, but that he could improve on it a bit. Here is his revised ad.

Help save our country by stopping the Obama-Dingell agenda. Dingell has consistently voted in favor of having a government and making you pay taxes. He also thinks that, like taxes, death is inevitable. He wants to get rid of our army, but he supports the right of other countries to have armies of their own, even if they don't do what we want them to. He supports the practice of non-Christian religions on our sacred soil. He was born on another planet (Venus, not Mars) and secretly worships Satan. He wants the government to not give your grandmother the drugs she needs to live. Return our country to its former moral, economic and military greatness. Say no to Obama by getting rid of Dingell.

Unfortunately, even with such great strategy and clever advertisement, and even in the fall of 2010, a Republican could not win a congressional election in the 15th Michigan congressional district. Ted came very close – he lost by only 23 votes. He categorically denies

all charges of voter fraud. (There were reports of an unusually large number of very short, rather fury voters who arrived at the polls wearing motorcycle helmets that obscured their features.)

Although Ted did not succeed in his bearsonal political career, he did go on to have great success as a consultant to the Republican National Committee. If a Republican should become president any time soon, he hopes for an appointment as US Ambassador to the United Nations. Since he already occupies a seat there, as representative of the Ursine Outer Azores, he could then be a powerful voting block and collect graft beyond his wildest dreams.