

PROJECT FREE-DOOM!

An Address to the U.S. Senate Appropriations Committee

Ted leaned back in his chair and gazed at the tapestried sprawl of the landscape. Outside his window, the gears of Washington D.C. ground on—indifferent, industrial, and blissfully unaware that three people in a cramped apartment were attempting to diagnose civilization over cold coffee and some crumpled poems.

"Does cynicism," Ted asked, turning the pages of a poetry book in his hand, "actually help anybody?"

Kris nodded slowly, the way people nod when they've been thinking about something for a long time and feel relieved someone finally asked. "I see many of the poems in this book as a cautionary message," she said. "This reminds me how far political rhetoric can drift before it stops sounding absurd as people accept nefarious lies as normal lingo."

Tim pointed a timid finger at the ceiling, adding, "Satire is a pressure valve," he countered. "A harmless way of venting something that would otherwise corrode you at the core. You laugh—or wince—and either way, something gets released."

Ted remained unconvinced. He cast a skeptical eye toward the text, where the bold, bloated words of the Honorable Horace A. Greenbauer stared back at him:

**We need smarter bombs, gentlemen —
proud and precise instruments of freedom,
engineered to erase our enemies
and guarantee global liberty
with acceptable margins of collateral error.**

**We need a bomb for each trusted citizen —
a personal, portable, patriotic protector -
to defend our values,
protect our principles,
and keep our glorious country free.**

**Let's all work together and marshal
the might of our military-industrial maze
to foster a stronger economy.**

**Let us demonstrate that we aren't afraid
to attack others in defense of our dividends,
our quarterly quotas,
and the sacred, time-honored principle
that scapegoats must pay.**

**Let us prove we aren't paralyzed by moral scruples,
Let us strike now in defense of our dividends,
and the sacred, stone-cold statute:
that quarterly quotas count.**

**And so, Honorable Congressmen
(and you dishonorable devotees as well)
I encourage you to vote for this resolution:**

**Bomb the living hell out of anyone
who looks at us sideways,
flouts our fiat,
or undercuts our margins.**

**This bill will fatten our pockets
and will give our enemies
a true taste of hell.**

[Applause. Standing. Savage. Sustained.]



The room went quiet.

Ted stared at the ceiling, his jaw working slowly, like a man chewing on a shard of glass that refused to be swallowed. When he finally spoke, his skepticism had mutated into a dark, heavy clarity.

"Sometimes," he said, "satire feels like a slow-acting poison." He paused. "Other times it is the only medicine left in the cabinet."

Tim nodded and wrapped his hands around his mug, bracing himself against an invisible chill. "Isn't that the truth of all tools?" he asked softly. "It all comes down to when, why, and where you're standing when the shrapnel hits."

Kris said nothing. She picked up the poem again, read the last line once more, and set it face-down on the table. Outside, the city continued — indifferent, grinding, carrying on.

- T Newfields

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