



Anyway, as I was saying last week, I was looking for a simple gift for a new, or nearly new, baby. By the time I get around to lookin' for somethin' the newness wears off. Sometimes I'm one of THOSE people, the late ones!!?

I needed a neonatal pacifier for the kid, a specific request. One of those cutesy ones that look like what the baby wants instead of what they get. Teaches them a good lesson. Nobody gets what they want in this world anymore, at least not in the good ole USedupA.

So I went to three baby clothing ur-us etc. stores, they had none, nota, zilch. Not even a stupid one with a smiley face, with the nipple the size of a beach ball - to a little baby that is. What would a mother do in an emergency? I mean you gotta have those things sometimes.

It's not PC to do things like that out in public nowadays. I gave up trying to find one. Left it to the wife who knew more about such things.

Then on to the super market, bought what I needed and proceeded to check out. In Florida food is not taxed. Some consumables are, but food isn't. "Hey, you charged me tax on my fruit juice.

"That's right," the clerk argued instead of knowing her job, or asking.

As policeman of the world I replied, "If you do that with everyone you'll make a pretty penny at the end of the day."

I stormed to the office with self-righteous gusto. The clerk said, "If the computer did it, it's right." I asked for the manager, he agreed with me. I got my six-cents back after wasting fifteen minutes trying to straighten up the world.

I mean why do I do that; but, what if nobody did. I knew a salesman who stopped off at a hole-in-the-wall grocery, somewhere in Georgia, Bainbridge, I think. He noticed an extra charge on his ticket. After inquiring, he found the clerk charged him for a broom sitting next to the check out counter.

Looking about, he noticed a single broom standing at each cash register. Later, he found it common practice around the state, maybe even the world. They charge unsuspecting strangers what they can get. Usually it works!

If anybody complained they apologized, saying it was a mistake. No telling how

many times the same broom was sold. It made the clerks nervous though, to cheat customers, but they would lose their job if they didn't. Just like the fruit juice in Destin, Florida. What a life!??

Businesses should walk around their store, or look at the products they sell or make, asking, "What do we need to do to make our customers happier, serve them better and give a better product? Fat chance, they learn from the government.

Ha! Even G.I. JOE has problems now. A seven-year-old recently checked out his new gift only to find out he had a prissy-sissy instead of a hero.

When he pushed the talk section Joe said, "Let's plan my wedding."

"What?" we men say.

"What's wrong with that!" The feminists shout behind our back in unison.

Zounds where will it end... across town an ill-bred Barbie said, "Dead men tell no tales, and, "Vengeance is mine."

I mean who can you trust. It was the Barbie Liberation Organization (BLO) that did it, an offshoot group from the PLO, I suppose? The First Amendment protects their right to do that. Now some jerky kids are going to be filthy rich when they auction off their stupid gift.

Weird world huh?

AND THEN... I called the publisher of the books that are in the library. You know the ones. They're right up front. You look up subject matters, book titles, and publishers. There's about 12 books to the set called "Books In Print."

At the bottom of most every page, and I say that because I didn't look at every page, but the ones I looked at all had: "Boldface signifies complete catalog listing in PTLA."

I wanted to see this PTLA. The publisher I was looking up had the reputation for printing first-class but underground books. The electronic voice I called was short and sweet, what a pleasant surprise. I punched the number it said I wanted.

A real person answered. I told him the problem. He promptly said, I must talk to the editorial department.

What? I thought. Talk to an editor? Was this a difficult question or what?

They were at lunch. Lunch again, I thought. But this is such a simple question.

I told him what it was again, and that I was standing outside in the rain, using the pay phone, 'cause the library only has one phone and they wouldn't use it on such an unimportant mater. I thought it was important. They didn't agree. The lady at the counter must have known all

there is about libraries. She didn't ask anybody else. Sort of like the guys at the auto part store, they think they' gotta act like they own the joint.

Anyways this guy in "New York City" said he'd ask around. You guessed it, he came up with an answer. "Must be the Publishers Trade List."

"But, what about the A," I asked.

"Oh... just a minute," he said, coming back later, "Nobody knows what any of it means."

"Go figure it," I says to myself. "What in the world's wrong with the world?"

So what's next?