

BEWARE OF GREEKS DROPPING GIFTS

Cast: Narrator, Three Veterans, King Agnewixon, Herodotus the Herald, and Superpig

Props: Crutches, cape, Trojan Horse, Nixon mask (or smile-face mask) Cheerleaders cone

NARRATOR: Ladies and gentlemen: Most people now know that American history textbooks thoroughly distort what has happened, but few people are aware that ancient history texts are full of lies and inaccuracies, too. To remedy this unfortunately situation, the Historical Division of the Committee for Just Rewards proudly presents the drama, "Beware of Greeks Dropping Gifts," our version of Homer's Illiad.

We take you back to Ancient Greece, to the Nation of Attica. Remember Attica? We are in a small village of the Far Western part of Attica, listening to two veterans of an Asian War, the War in South Illium.

DEMETRIUS: (Vet. 1, on crutches, holding out cup) Well, Patroclus, any luck finding a job?

PATROCLUS: No, Demetrius, my friend, times are tight. And how about you? Any charities today?

DEMETRIUS: (Turns over cup, out falls cigarette ashes) Nothing. All the people say they'd like to help, but taxes are going up and the price of fish has doubled in the past two months. I don't know, but you'd think the King would take better care of his veterans. We fought for him.

PATROCLUS: No, Demetrius, we fought for our country. Now that the King is relying on mercenaries and catapults for the War in South Illium, he has other things on his mind. I wish he could win that war so he could bring all the riches of Illium back to Attica.

DEMETRIUS: Nonsense, Patroclus. The war has destroyed most of the riches of Illium. And those that are left, the King will keep for himself. Look, here comes our friend XENOPHON.

(the three greet each other)

✓ XENOPHONE: Guess what? I've got a job!

DEMETRIUS: Praise be to Zeus. Doing what?

✓ XENOPHONE: I've got a job shredding papyrus for Itianti, the merchant.

PATROCLUS: Shredding paper for Itianti? What good does that do?

✓ XENOPHONE: It doesn't make much sense, but at least it's a job.

You know, a funny thing happened to me on the way to the forum today.

Demetius: Ah come on, you said that yesterday.

✓ XENOPHONE: No, Really,-- I was walking by the grove of trees where all the long-haired youths hang out. I heard two of them talking.

I hid behind some bushes, so they wouldn't know I was listening, and you know, those unwashed philosophers seem to be making a lot of sense.

PATROCLUS: What did they say?

✓ XENOPHONE: They were saying that taxes were high because of the war. And that the price of fish had increased because of the war. And that as long as the King was in power many citizens would be unemployed.

PATROCLUS: Do you really believe that?

✓ XENOPHONE. I didn't at first. But now I do. What they said is different from everything I've been told before. But it sure made sense. Oh. One more thing, they said that the war brings nothing but sorrow for the people of Attica, but the King continues because he and his friends hope to win riches and more power from it.

DEMETRIUS: Hold it, buddy. Here's Herodotus the Herald.

(Herodotus runs up, panting and begins to shout through his bullhorn.)

HERODOTUS: Hear ye! Hear ye! It's time for the six o'clock news.

In Illium this week, we continue to win the war for the 325th straight week. Hundreds of enemy troops and 70 mercenaries

died this week. Meanwhile, two of our catapults were put out of action, and I'm sorry to report, our native Greek catapult operators were captured by the inhuman enemy. For this act of aggression, the 1008th protective reaction raid was launched. And back home. The king's secretary announced that the Gross Kingdom Product rose again this year.

DEMETRIUS: Wow! This kingdom has the World's grossest product!

HERODOTUS: The Secretary also announced that unemployment remained at 10% this week, but said that since many of those unemployed were women or former slave youths, it wasn't too bad.

PATROCLUS: Hey, Herodotus. Why are we fighting in South Illium, anyhow?

HERODOTUS: Well, son, to tell you the truth I'm not really sure. But is our's ^{isn't} to question why? I think the war started when the leaders of North Illium kidnapped Queen Jackie.

✓ ~~SPILLO~~ ^{SPILO}: Bullshit. We're fighting the people of South Illium, not the leaders of North Illium.

HERODOTUS: Who told you that?

✓ All 3 veterans: We were there.

HERODOTUS: Well, sons. Let me make this perfectly clear, no one is more concerned about ending the war than I am, except of course, the King, who tells me everyday to tell the people how fast he is getting us out of Illium. After all, remember, our king is a pacifist.

NARRATOR: A few hours later, Herodotus returns to Athens. And who does he meet but the two-faced King, King Agnewixon.

The kind is wearing the mask on the back of his head. He faces the crowd with the mask, and raises (& twists) his hands giving a "V" sign. He then turns around and growls)

KING AGNEWIXON: Well, ~~it~~ it isn't Herodotus the Herald.

HERODOTUS: (bowing & wringing hands & smiling) What a surprise! Good evening your majesty, King Agnewixon.

KING: Herodotus. I've heard that you've been telling the people bad things about the war and the economy. The people in the Far West, my spies tell me, are upset. You know, Herodotus, what I do with messengers who bring bad news. (makes neck-cutting gesture)

HERODOTUS: (wringing hands anxiously) Your majesty. I don't think that's fair. Remember free speech -- this is the cradle of democracy....

AGNEWIXON: Enough! How do you expect me to run a kingdom with lackeys like you who let ideals get in the way. You probably believe everything that tripped-out dame Cassandra says, too. I must do away with such rabble-rousers.

HERODOTUS: But your majesty, the people know that they don't have jobs. And those that were in South Illium know the truth about the war. We can't hide it any longer. ^{We can distort it though.} But your majesty, I am following your secretary's guidelines for fair reporting. I make it absolutely clear to the people that the war and the economy are absolutely unconnected.

AGNEWIXON: Very well. But I don't like it. ^{the people would concentrate their attention on the issue of the chartering of school children.} By the way I have some special news announcements.

I am going to speak in the Far West next week. And tomorrow morning I will reveal my secret peace plan.

HERODOTUS: What's that, your majesty?

AGNEWIXON: You promise not to leak it out too soon?

HERODOTUS: Swear to Zeus, your majesty.

(King pulls the sheet unveiling wooden horse.)

HERODOTUS: But your majesty, that horse's body is square.

AGNEWIXON: Ah yes. That's because it has eight points.

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NARRATOR: The next evening Herodotus returns to our village in the Far West.

HERODOTUS: Hear ye! Hear ye! It's time for the six o'clock news.

In Athens yesterday, King Agnewixon threatened to stop Herodotus the Herald from reporting the news truthfully, but your faithful Herald refused. I will continue to report uncensored news daily except Sundays.

The Economy -- the King's secretary said things will get better, and suggested that the unemployed enlist as slaves to raise national production. ^{indub} Unemployed shore workers rioted stealing barrels of fish being shipped to Athens for a royal banquet..

And now, to change topics to something entirely unrelated to the economy, King Agnewixon announced this morning that he has a secret Plan for Peace -- a wooden horse with eight points.

✓ Veterans: What's that's gonna do? All he has to do is bring the machines and the rest of our men back. He needs wooden ships, not wooden horses. He can end it by pulling out now.

HERODOTUS: Last bulletin.... His Majesty, King Agnewixon, will be coming to speak at Forum Cabana on Saturday to his loyalest supporters and keepers of the royal coffers. And that's the news.

✓ (Veterans smack their fists angrily)

PATROCLUS: You know, I'm beginning to think that those philosophers Xenophone heard are right. Unless we get all our friends out to tell the King what we think of his war...

DEMETRIUS: And the economy...

PATROCLUS: Things will just get worse.

✓ XENOP: Oh boy. Maybe I'll get a change to use some of the skills I learned while fighting in South Illium. I could really dig it mixing it with the King's guards.

(a caped figure runs by with badge on chest)

✓ XENOPHONE: It's a bird!

DEMETRIUS: It's a catapult!

PATROCLUS: IT'S SUPERPIG!

SUPERPIG: Hi boys and girls! (gives "v" sign) Hear me out.

You better not march
You better not strike
You better not speak
and you better not fight
Cause Agnew is coming to town

He knows when you've been thinking
He knows when you demonstrate
He knows when you've been bad or good
So be good for goodness sake.

(repeat first verse)

VETERANS: Well, we're gonna march
And we're gonna strike
We're gonna speak
And we're gonna fight
Cause Agnew is coming to town

We do not like his empire
The way he keeps us down
And if we want to free ourselves
We'll run him out of town

(repeat first verse)

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