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Potash and Perlmutter Discuss Lords, Commons and Baseball Players

BY
MONTAGUE GLASS

"Of course, Mawrus, my judgment in such things ain't worth a nickel one way or the other, y'understand." Abe Potash declared, a few mornings after the papers were filled with the story of Lord Northcliff's adventures in Washington, "but in my opinion, y'understand, and I admit that nobody gives a pants button what my opinion is, understand me, even if Lord Northcliff said what this here Lord George said he said, Mawrus, they shouldn't have put no stop order on the supper."

"What supper?" Morris Perlmutter asked.

"The supper which this here English ambassador shouldn't ought to have put a stop order on the supper and then called off at the last moment on account of a death in the family when he would have been stumped to produce so much as a sick second cousin, y'understand." Abe Potash replied, "but I suppose Lord Northcliff didn't deserve no better, considering what Lord George said he said about him."

"Why, what did Lord George say he said?" Morris inquired.

"There you've got me," Abe admitted, "because I didn't take it so particular to read what it was Lord George said he said."

"Well, what was it that Lord Northcliff said which Lord George said he said?" Morris asked.

"That I don't know neither," Abe said.

"Then why do you think the English ambassador shouldn't ought to have put a stop order on the supper?" Morris inquired further.

"Well, this here Lord Northcliff and Lord George had been a couple of lords together in the old country for years already, and so long as this here Lord Northcliff had been invited to the supper, and had his license to practice as a lord and everything," Abe began when Morris interrupted him.

"Say, listen here, Abe," Morris said, "do you think a lord has got to have a license to practice as a lord the same like a doctor or a lawyer?"

"Say, for my part, a lord could have to have a 1921-1922 license to go around unmuzzled as a lord; the same like a toy Pomeranian or a Boston bull terrier, y'understand."

Abe said, "because what I don't know about lords ain't a marker to what a whole lot of American newspaper readers don't know about them, and quite a number of Canadian newspaper readers also, which you couldn't blame me exactly if I skipped all but the headlines about this here Lord Northcliff getting done out of a supper on account of what he said about Lord George. In fact, Mawrus, for all the interest I take in lords, y'understand, any lord—I don't care which one—could go to bed without his supper for the rest of his life, and I would oser schenck him to so much as crackers and milk even. I am an American sitson, Mawrus, and I don't take no stock in lords and all that kind of schmooses."

"But this here Lord Northcliff has been running a chain of newspapers for years in the old country," Morris said. "I seen his pic-

ture in the paper and he looks all right. Couldn't a lord be also a decent respectable feller?" Morris demanded.

"Say, anybody who ain't scared off from looking over brown illustrated Sunday supplements because of the way the printing ink smelt and rub off on your clothes, Mawrus, has got a pretty good idea from the pictures in them what a lord has got to do in the old country," Abe retorted. "As I understand it by them pictures, Mawrus, a lord is a sort of tenth assistant deputy king, and when it comes to opening a dog show or a bazaar, y'understand, if the king couldn't be there, then they send the prince of Wales, and if he's all dated up then they ring in the duke of York, and if he couldn't attend, y'understand, then there's nothing to do but to fill in with a lord."

"And this is all you know from lords, Abe?" Morris inquired again.

"What else is there to know?" Abe said.

"Didn't you never hear tell of the house of lords even?" Morris continued.

"It seems to me I did," Abe replied. "If the United States senate had senators which was Gott soll haben elected for life, Mawrus, then that would be the equivalence

of the house of lords, ain't it?"

"Excepting that in the house of lords, a lord is a sort of senator which is not only a life senator, y'understand, but his eldest son is also a life senator, and his eldest son also, and so on, until one of the eldest sons couldn't find time enough between drinks to get married, Abe, and the family dies out."

"But do you mean to say, Mawrus, that if this was England, not only would Senator LaFollette be a senator for life, but his eldest son would also be a senator and so on down the line for the next couple of hundred years?" Abe exclaimed.

"That's the idea," Morris agreed. "And the English people stands for such treatment," Abe said.

"What do you mean—treatment?" Morris said. "Ain't it a whole lot better to have a bunch of senators appointed for life which everybody knows what they are, than to have a new bunch of senators wished on you every few years which heaven alone knows what they are?"

"Still, once in a while we get a pretty good senator in the senate at that, Mawrus," Abe remarked, "but you take them lords which is lords only on account of their fathers being lords, and compare them to a young garment manufacturer who is

only a garment manufacturer on account of his father having been a garment manufacturer, y'understand, and if it works out the same way in the house of lords as it does in the garment trade, Mawrus, I see where that house of lords might do business up to the fall and winter season of 1923-24 before the petition in bankruptcy is filed, Mawrus."

"But seemingly that is just the kind of lord that the English like to have in the house of lords, Abe," Morris said. "It's the lord that used to be in the brewery business or the soap business which the English people objects to, Abe, even though such a lord was made a lord on account of the ability he has shown in the soap business, y'understand."

"Well, you can't blame them, Mawrus," Abe replied. "Take Leon Sammet for instance, and nobody is going to accuse him that he ain't shown ability in the garment business, Mawrus, but if that crook was made a lord and we wasn't, Mawrus, we'd put up a pretty big holler, too, Mawrus, which if the United States government would go to work and make lords out of every American sitson who had shown ability in business,

y'understand, the American house of lords would make the Woolworth building look like a portable California style bungalow."

"And if the government would add to that American house of lords all them people which considered they had a right to be American lords on account of being the eldest sons of sitsons who had shown ability in business, Abe, there would have to be branch houses of lords established in every federal reserve district," Morris said.

"At that, Mawrus, I don't think that such an American house of lords would be a popular success over here, y'understand, on account it's very hard to put over in this country something which has been so to speak an old established amusement in the old country. Take for instance polo, and while the newspapers made a big fuss over the international polo matches which took place over in England, Mawrus, and which the American polo players won, y'understand, how many people is really and truly what you might call polo fans in this country?" Abe said.

"Polo is a rich man's game, Abe," Morris said. "For one polo player to be equipped in an up-to-date way, Abe, he's practically got to start in by buying out a livery stable and a sporting goods store, and he's got to have all his polo clothes made from imported patterns on account of there being practically no demand for polo pants than there is for submarine divers' clothing."

"Well, golf is a rich man's game, too, and look how many people are playing golf nowadays, whereas you take polo, Mawrus, and I bet there ain't a single polo player in the entire cloak and suit district," Abe said. "Also, Mawrus, while as I understand it, the first polo match for the championship of the world was played way back in the seventeenth century, no case on record where anyone tried to make a book on a polo series or that a single polo player was ever tried for throwing a world championship polo series."

"Polo players come from too good a class of sitsons to do a thing like that," Morris declared.

"So do baseball players, Mawrus," Abe said, "or anyhow that's what the jury decided out in Chicago where them ball players was tried."

"But I thought these baseball players confessed that they threw the world championship series," Morris said.

"Suppose they did," Abe retorted. "What difference does a little thing like a confession make to a jury?"

"Maybe the jury was right at that, Abe," Morris said. "Maybe they figured that they couldn't believe a word them baseball players said, and if they players confessed that they threw the series, that was pretty good proof that they didn't, whereas if they had denied that they threw it, then to my mind the jury would have been right in finding them guilty."

"But I see where the managers of the baseball clubs wouldn't give them players their old jobs back," Abe said.

"Well, maybe them baseball managers was afraid that if any of them players got back in the game

and struck out or something, the people sitting in the dollar seats might figure that the jury got carried away by the speeches that them players' lawyers made, and didn't bring in the right verdict," Morris said.

"After all, Abe, a juror which is anxious to get home to supper or back to the store before closing time, can afford to make a snap decision, but a baseball manager who is depending on the sale of dollar admissions to baseball games for his living, might look at the matter from a charitable viewpoint, y'understand, but in self protection, he's got to consider that charity begins at home."

"Then who do you think 're right?" Abe inquired. "The jury or the baseball managers?"

"Well, polo is a good game to watch, Abe—or anyhow, that's what people who seen polo match tells me, because I never seen a polo match myself, y'understand, on account of polo matches in this country being practically pulled off as often as kings' coronations and total eclipses of the sun—and things like that, but if them baseball managers had agreed to let bygones be bygones and had allowed the baseball players to get their old jobs back, y'understand, world series polo championships would seem like continuous performances, whereas

baseball world series would come round as often as this here Halley's comet which happens every eighty years, and would get about as much gate receipts, Abe. Which them baseball players may think they got off easy before that jury which tried them, Abe, but there's a jury of several million baseball fans still to be heard from, and anybody can prophesy what the verdict will be."

"Of course, Mawrus, I never went to a world series in my life and never expect to do so, no matter how much on the level baseball players might be, y'understand, but wouldn't you think that 're juries is going to let off baseball players who admit they threw baseball games for money—even if baseball managers wouldn't take them players' backs—it's bound to keep baseball fans away from championship series, because them fans would figure that the players could throw the series if they wanted to and get away with it, too."

"Well, baseball has got a whole lot of popularity on account of them crooked players, Abe," Morris concluded, "but baseball players has got to be a whole lot crookeder than them championship throwers, before the game of baseball will have as little interest for the American people as polo, or the English house of lords."



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