

**#177 FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: March 31, 2011**

**Colonel Mo needs help**

By Curtis Seltzer

BLUE GRASS, Va.—The phone rang after midnight when Melissa and I were deeply asleep. “You,” she said, “should answer it, because that’s what boys are supposed to do.”

I fumbled and stumbled my way downstairs. Late calls rarely bring good news.

I stuck a toe into the dark waters. “Hello?”

“Is this the King of Blue Grass?”

“Whoozthiz? It’s too late or too early for prank calls,” I mumbled.

“Hold please for the King of Kings of Africa.”

Before I could hang up, a raspy voice came on. “This is Colonel Mo. I arrive at your Bed and Breakfast tomorrow...after dark.”

My head was starting to clear, notwithstanding that odd information was being stuffed through it like a clogged sieve. “I’m sorry. We stopped doing B&B 15 years ago.”

“OK. Forget breakfast. I need an asylum. I like yours.”

“Well, we did have a few characters stay with us.”

“I no mince words. Crusader imperialist planes drop boom boom. Obomba, he a bum. I want to relocate to Rigid Blue Mountains. I stay with you while I look around.”

“We’re no longer in business,” I said. “I can’t take your money.”

“Libya no longer in business, but I still take money.”

“We’re not licensed anymore.”

“Did Obomba blow up your palace, too?”

“He might if you took up residence. We can’t accept paying lodgers. The state would come down on me.”

“State coming down on me right now—this I know about. Fine, we bribe your tribal leaders.”

“Yo! Mo! There’s no room at the Inn, because there’s no Inn!”

“Good. I stay with you for free. All settled.”

“I don’t think you understand.”

“You no understand. Sand and rock arrive tomorrow. Oil the next day. We put in ground, then we drill it back up. Put cute little refinery in your back field. Colonel Mo always comes bearing gifts. I turn Blue Grass into garden spot of world, just like home.”

“But Colonel...”

“No but buts. Don’t reject a poor, political refugee. A man could get killed over here, just standing outside his tent in dawn’s early light helping the desert bloom.”

“I don’t want you here.”

"How can that be?"

"Well, for one thing, you're not a legal visitor to the United States."

"Hey. My people will talk to your people."

"For another, you're a criminal."

"Big fat lie. I kill enemies of my Nation just like George Washington killed enemies of his. Isn't crime just a matter of perspective and context?"

"Sometimes it is, and sometimes it isn't," I said. The only comfortable way to straddle an ethical fence is to have one foot planted firmly on the qualified opposite of the qualified whatever the other foot is firmly planted on. "When Washington was president, he didn't jail and kill his political opponents; he retired voluntarily after eight years; and he didn't enrich himself."

The Colonel gave my words a moment's reflection. "If your life's work is to look for nits," he said, "it's easy to pretend to find one or even two in my 42-year-long term of selfless, peace-loving public service. The \$32 billion in assets I earned during this magical time in Libya's history works out to less than \$1 billion a year. Scratchy chicken, as Americans say. Libyan people wanted me to take more than I have, but I haven't."

"Listen to my words. This is my house, and I don't want you here."

"Why you prejudiced against African royalty? Why you think British royal family is better than mine?"

"I'd say you were neck and neck."

"What if I just pitch tent behind your house? I will show your people how to turn dreadful green pasture into beautiful brown desert. I do this free of charge. Almost any soil problem in America is solvable, if you throw enough sand at it."

"Colonel, I have a better idea. I know a vast wasteland where you can pitch your tent and feel right at home."

"Sounds good. Is it rich with crude?"

"Yes, indeed. All you have to do is create a make-believe kingdom in reality television land, which is off-shore from everything. Name it something like "Mo Knows Best," or "Dancing with the Colonel" or "Libyan Chopper—The Ultimate Survivor."

"Will I be free to be myself?"

"The more warts, the better. Warts sell."

"Only in America," Colonel Mo sighed.

"Unfortunately."

We hung up.

Had Melissa answered, I'm sure her advice to Colonel Mo would have focused more on what he could do.

Curtis Seltzer is a land consultant who works with buyers and helps sellers with marketing plans. He is author of How To Be a DIRT-SMART Buyer of Country Property at [www.curtis-seltzer.com](http://www.curtis-seltzer.com) where his weekly columns are posted. He also writes for [www.landthink.com](http://www.landthink.com).

Contact: Curtis Seltzer, Ph.D.  
Land Consultant  
1467 Wimer Mountain Road  
Blue Grass, VA 24413-2307  
540-474-3297  
[curtisseltzer@htcnet.org](mailto:curtisseltzer@htcnet.org)  
[www.curtis-seltzer.com](http://www.curtis-seltzer.com)