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Interview

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Art Fer Guvner

A “B” Western movie star running the state government? Perhaps in California. But Iowa? It could happen, especially if Iowa write-in gubernatorial candidate Art Roamer has his way. So what does this cowboy of sorts, the alter ego of Des Moines artist Gene Hamilton, have to offer the state of “Ioway?” ethos asked this fictional “man with a mission” about his candidacy, his platform and a few of his favorite cowboy words.



e: Why did you declare your candidacy for governor of Iowa?

AR: Well, I think folks are lookin' fer more than Gobber ... Gopher ... or a life time governor fer Ioway. I'm an option fer really good people. I don't care about money. I spit on it. You can quote me on that. I spit on it. It's like I always say, if you are goin' to get buffaloed, let Art do it.

e: You are a movie star running for office ... did other actors inspire you to run for office?

AR: Gobber, he's runnin'. He was on that boat show. Ronald—he was an actor in Westerns. Sonny Bono is one of the best actors to get elected. And Clint, too. If they can do it, why can't I. Who's better, a “B”-movie star or a guy who emptied waste baskets? I jumped on the backs of bandits and shot guns out of the hands of bad guys. I'm fightin' fer justice and law and order, while Gopher was carrying a beer to some rich guy.

e: How do you feel about the other candidates?

AR: Well Bonnie—she's a right perk girl. Terry—well, he's like the Papa Doc of Ioway. It's time fer him to get out of the road. He can't even get out of the way of a sled. How can he run a state? Reichardt—he dresses like a rich man.

e: So are you looking for the blue-collar vote?

AR: I'm goin' fer the honest folks who are honest with themselves. I got the guts to be up front and working hard.

e: What about your taxation policy? Isn't taxing 98 percent of someone's income pretty steep?

AR: I'm allowing folks to keep 2 percent of their income because that's about all we need. I'm tellin' ya right off the line about it.

e: But where is all of that money going to go?

AR: It will be used to perpetuate the lifestyles of the government workers. It will all go to the pensions of retired federal, state, county and local workers and officials.

e: So is that why you want to be governor?

AR: You betcha! David Good-Deer—he was in the movies with me—he said “Art good man. He good fer leading state of Ioway. Not what in brain, but in heart that matters.” I'm not smart, but I've got heart.

e: Well, honesty and character are important.

AR: “Honest” ain't in the dictionary no more. It's “hurry up” and “wait” and “get as much as you can” now. People used to wave at you as you drove down the street, but now you have to duck in case someone is wavin' a gun at'cha.

e: So how do you feel about crime?

AR: My policy is that I'm gonna add four balls to the present “three strikes” rule, and maybe two fouls. I haven't decided. I also want to take out all of the revolving doors in the prisons and replace them with regular doors with deadbolt locks.

e: So what do you mean by two fouls?

AR: Well, I haven't firmed that up yet. I suppose it depends on whether it is a man or a woman.

e: How do you feel about gambling in Iowa?

The governor is gonna sign a law for expanded gamblin'. He's takin' money right out of the pockets of the Indians. Now, I have lots of Indian friends. We took their lands and now we are gonna take their revenue. I'm on the side of the Indians. If I was governor I would get with the Indians so that we could figure out how to get them full rights to gamblin'. I'll meet with any chief that wants to talk about it. Let the Indians have a few gamblin' dollars. More power to the Indians, I say! I'm deeply ashamed of the Legislature because they lassoed the last bit of hope from the Indians.

e: Why do you have a list of favorite cowboy words?

AR: Some words are gettin' lost. I don't hear the old words that people used to say. I want folks to see what some pretty cowboy words look like. What happened to words like buckskin, tommyhawk, and horseshoe? The military uses some of the lingo. They are using good words fer weapons. When the government sends a tommyhawk missile they are sending a message from the United States government that carries the old Western spirit on each one.

e: How did you meet your campaign manager, Hoppy Hopkins?

AR: It began when I was doin' charity events fer the American Cancer Society. So I probably met him there.

e: Have you and Hoppy considered ads?

AR: Hoppy and me are talkin' about havin' a fundraiser. It might be a cowboy Western rave, but we need a place to hold it. Or we can do a bar-b-que because there is an Art Roamer Bar-B-Que sauce, along with t-shirts and coffee mugs, but it don't matter much.

e: What party would you say you belong to?

AR: Parties are fer people who want to be in the in-crowd. I don't need nonsense like that. I'm a human being. Let 'em call themselves Republicans and Democrats. I'm a part of the Human-Being Party.