

Political Wisdom in the Bridge Column

[This is a short letter I sent to friends on Sept. 4, 2010. –Scott H.]

Hi everybody,

Today, while reading the newspaper, my eyes strayed onto the quotation at the head of the column devoted to the game of bridge. I have no interest whatsoever in bridge, but for whatever reason they do sometimes have an interesting quotation introducing this column. Today the quotation was:

“A *Roman* Master stands on Grecian ground,
“And to the people at the Isthmian Games...
“Proclaims *the liberty of Greece...*”

—William Wordsworth

Isn't it interesting to think that a Roman orator might say such an ironic thing? Wouldn't he have recognized his own hypocrisy?

Actually, *no*, he probably wouldn't have. To understand why, just think about what American military and political leaders are now saying about how their invading army is “introducing freedom” into Afghanistan.

Imperialists themselves seldom understand that their conquests of foreign countries do anything but “promote liberty” there! Self-delusion is an amazing thing.

Scott