Former Congressloon Allen West's Plagiarized Nuts Sparks eBay Bidding War!

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'Look, I meant "NUTS!" in only the nicest way.'[/caption]

During his two undeserved years in Congress Congressloon Allen West ought to have followed the rule he used in his letter responding to the Florida Chapter of the Council on American-Islamic Relations' polite appeal to him to cut his ties with well-known anti-Islam extremists. His one-word reply, "NUTS!", was a model of decorum for a clinically insane

Congressman with an Olympic class big mouth. I'm sure the readers at CAIR were relieved to have such a short encounter with a letter once held, if only briefly, by Mr. West.But did it *confuse* them? "NUTS!" in this context had not one, but *two* meanings.There is, of course, the routine meaning. West shouted "NUTS!" to CAIR's request that he disavow anti-Muslim extremists. Fairly straightforward, that. Quite in character for the character West. Mr. West, though, is also a sly man; were his "NUTS!" loaded with more meaning?

You see, it's dangerous to have NUTS! in West's hands. Perhaps he was referring to *himself*, and doing only what most Congresspeople do, avoiding a response to a difficult request or question. Or, just maybe, he was giving himself "cover" should the winds change direction: West could then say that, indeed, the word "NUTS!" had been a reference to himself, *not* a rude summary dismissal of the quite civil CAIR request.

The letter is now on sale on eBay**.** At last check two history buffs had bid on it, and the top bid stood at $1,575. Eight days remain to bid, and I look forward to keeping readers abreast of the battle. The last few minutes ought to be fun. Can you imagine it: top bidder after top bidder trying to hack eBay to *remove* his/her bid!

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Allen West learns that NUTS! is more than just a greeting.[/caption]

But there may be reason to keep one's bid for West's letter at the top. There is the plagiarism issue, you see. And possessing not only the shortest reply in Congressional history, but a *plagiarized* reply to boot might be worth a fight to the finish. You see, West, a former military man until he was very nearly court martialed, used the very same noun -- "NUTS!" -- as once did Brig. Gen. Anthony McAuliffe in his correspondence. Then acting commander of the 101st Airborne during the siege of Bastogne in the Battle of the Bulge, McAuliffe, on December 21, 1944, after a furious pounding by the German army, received a surrender demand from the German high command, with a characteristically precise German deadline of exactly two hours. McAuliffe, in an understandably testy and feisty mood that day, famously replied with but one

choice word, "NUTS!" When put into writing, then sent through the lines and received by the Germans, they being unfamiliar with American greetings didn't understand what he meant! Was he asking for cashews, for macadamias?

> *"Was ist dieses "Nuts"? Cashewnüsse? Hoden? Kokosnüsse?? Haben wir Kokosnüsse? Wer hat eine Englisch auf Deutsch Wörterbuch? Ordnungsgemäße, Telefon Hitler sofort!"*

See how the word NUTS! can confuse? McAuliffe so disconcerted the Germans that day that the entire senior staff wasted valuable time wrestling with dictionaries and thesaurusi, and even called in from the eastern front a philologist or two. Thus did a simple word, paradoxically loaded with many meanings, win the day for our stout American and allied troops! The story is little known, but quite quite true.

Enough of that. Turning back to West's letter, here's the nub: his uncredited and unfootnoted usage of General McCauliffe's text is a plagiarism, quite beneath the dignity of a Congressman, or even a disgraceful and vile former one presently under scrutiny. If McAullife were here today, he's certainly have but one word to describe Allen West, both the man and his plagiarizing . . .

Note that **They Will Say ANYTHING!**'s phone calls for comment on his literary theft have thus far gone unanswered. We will stay on this, Mr. West! With your addiction to headlines, you, sir, cannot hide. We may call in Keith Olberman.More on the bidding, and on our new **They Will Say ANYTHING!** investigation as each develops. For now, if I knew a few dozen people who among us could raise $1,576, our syndicate would be on eBay after that letter like ugly on an ape. . .