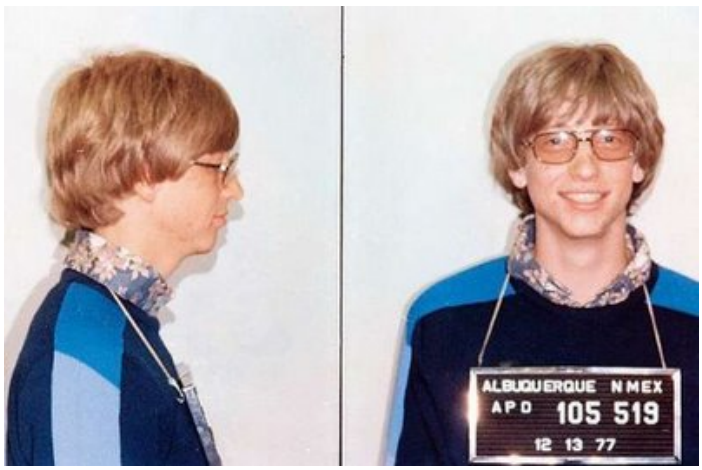

So how about them Cavs?

Last year's hangover is a distant memory as the keg is tapped on an exciting new brand of basketball being played in Cleveland these days. Kyrie Irving is for real - exciting, energetic, and he makes people around him better. Anderson Varejao is back and playing consistently solid-to-excellent low-post basketball, and even Antawn Jamison is showing up big on most nights. The good guys are 6-7, and if the postseason started today, they would be the 7 seed, ahead of an expensive Knicks team and the geriatric Celtics, who will be watching the playoffs on an IV drip in a nursing home. This certainly sucks a whole lot less than last year.

But before we get too giddy, let's remember that Cleveland is still one or more major playmakers away from competing. Varejao is a role player, nothing more, and he'll likely be gone at the end of the year. We did draft his potential replacement in Tristan Thompson, who is a "high energy" guy, which is basketball lingo for "plays like a drunken giraffe". And the rest of the team, well, they're D+ leaguers filling a roster.

At least with Irving, we can beat pretty much any crappy team out there, of which there are plenty in the East, which should guarantee .400 - .500 basketball for the forseeable future. So while it may not be all bourbon and bacon for the Cavs, there's potential, as long as they keep losing close character-building games to get better picks, and get good return for their tradable assets in March. Hopefully we can find someone stupid enough to take Jamison so he can drop a giant deuce* their playoff run like he did for us in 2010, and who knows, maybe we pull another Baron Davis deal and win the lottery again.

not referring to a two point basket

Anyway, off to the questions.

What is the deal with SOPA [the Stop Online Piracy Act]? Is it something we should be worried about? – John H.

As you may have seen, yesterday the Feds shut down Megaupload.com, and served the company employees with federal indictments on piracy charges. The timing of the action, the day after the internet-wide SOPA protest, should not be viewed as coincidental, but as more of a statement, the statement being “fuck SOPA, we can take down who we want when we want right now. Don’t mess with us you little piss ants.” And, oh yeah, they’re right.

While the language of SOPA is poorly conceived, improperly worded, seemingly arbitrary, and potentially able to be interpreted broadly to shut down just about every site on the internet, we must remember that *every* bill congress has passed for the past 100 years could fall into that categorization. This is because we have idiots serving us in Congress, elected in what has become a popularity contest of inane soundbites between egomaniacs only interested in their own personal goals. Gone are the days of scholars such as Madison and Monroe shaping our legislature. Now we have an array of panderers, corporate puppets, sex maniacs, criminals, thugs, and other lowly characters exploiting our governmental process for their fame and fortune. Newt Gingrich became filthy rich “serving” this country, all the while fucking everything that moved alongside fucking the voters that elected him. And he was one of the better and brighter congressmen! It makes me want to drink heavily the thought of either that eunuch Mitt Romney or the absolutely lost, clueless, detached, and overwhelmed Barack Obama as the leader of the free world for the next four years after 12 years of Obama and Bush. No wonder this country is in such an abject mess.

What was the point of that rant? Fact is, legislation today is less about how it is crafted and more about how it is enforced, and then ultimately much more about how it is adjudicated. And rest assured, the Feds have much better things to do than chase down every blogissist on the interweb to put them in jail for linking YouTube videos. The judicial system, which actually seems to care about such things as the Constitution, and takes its commitment to defend such seriously, will likely rule in favor of business and freedom of speech over a totalitarian Gestapo-like takeover of the internet. That’s what the whole “checks and balances” thing is all about.

So take off the tin foil hat, and stop worrying about SOPA. The government has most of the

useful the powers in the bill anyway, and they must carefully apply the wielding of such powers in order to be allowed to maintain them.

The Tribe hasn't done anything this offseason. Is there any chance they can revive some of the magic from the 1st half of 2011 and contend? –Scout Wahoo

I wouldn't go so far as saying they haven't done anything. I mean, we traded for the corpse of Derek Lowe to pay him $5 million of his $15 million salary for six or seven quality starts. Where's that bottle again?

Let's look optimistically on this for a second. Our rotation will be Ubaldo Jimenez, Lowe, Justin Masterson, Josh Tomlin, and Roberto Hernandez Heredia (aka Fausto Carmona). Hey, that isn't so bad assuming they stay healthy and pitch to their potential. Which is like saying a lottery ticket is a good bet assuming you pick the right numbers, as there are major questions on Tomlin's and Lowe's ability to stay healthy, and Jiminez' and Heredia/Carmona's ability to keep from imploding (or in the latter's case, to be allowed back into this country). Regardless of that, though, the bullpen behind these guys is probably the best in baseball. So we *could* be in most games with pitching alone.

The lineup has potential too. Carlos Santana, Jason Kipnis, Asdrubal Cabrera, Lonnie Chisenhall, Michael Brantley, Grady Sizemore, Shin-Soo Choo, and Travis Hafner all either have proven they can hit, or are fantastic prospects. But first base is a huge hole, and power is sketchy at best.

If I was Mark Shapiro, I'd do everything I could to sign Prince Fielder, who solves all these issues for the team. Which is like saying if I was single, I'd do everything in my power to bed Megan Fox. Shapiro has done nothing (to our knowledge) toward this goal, believing Fielder to be out of reach financially for his small market team. But Shapiro is absolutely dead wrong – the Indians can not only afford Fielder, but increase the profitability of the team and the overall value of the ballclub by signing him. Those are your primary objectives as President of the team, Mark, and since I know you're reading this, I'll do the math for you.

In 2010, the miserable Tribe averaged 17,500 or so a game, and didn't even open 2011 that

enthusiastically supported. When the team started winning, though, people came to the Jake. Back when the Jake (suck it Progressive, that's what I call the place) opened, it was 42K a game. Bottom line: the fans back a winner, and there just isn't sufficient buzz or excitement about the club to merit mass fan support right now. A lineup with Matt Fucking Laporta in it every day says to fans "find something better to do than watch this 80-win team hack through a season of not contending."

Winning Tribe teams have generated 181 million in revenue (2008), and losing teams have only generated 168 million (2011). Could a player like Fielder create excitement which allows Cleveland to maintain premium ticket prices AND fill seats? Absolutely. Fielder alone could account for that $13 million deficit, and if a culture of winning is established, another $10 million could easily float to the top of that.

$23 million a year. That's almost what Pujols got in California. But you could give Fielder the exact same contract Pujols got and make money every year of it, Mark. I'm assuming you're still reading, right? Pujols' contract is back loaded, and starts with $12M, $16M, and $23M for the first three years. At those numbers, you could build the revenue increases needed to pay for it through the goodwill you create with the community. And you lose Hafner's $13M a year albatross in 2013 as well, opening the coffers up for Fielder.

This makes too much business sense not to do it Shapiro. Get off your dupa and make it happen.

Would Mark Wahlberg really have stopped 9/11? – Makers Marky Mark

Here is one thing I know for certain: I wish he was on the flight like he had originally planned to be. Because either (1) he would have stopped it, or (2) he'd be dead and unable to run off his mouth, or pollute pop culture with his presence, and either way is a win in my book.

Face it Marky Mark, hindsight is 20/20. The pre-9/11 world was all about not making a fuss in times of peril – keep your head down, don't say anything, and it will all work out. That philosophy died that day, on Flight 93 to be precise, and had it died sooner 9/11 would never have happened. The terrorists *relied* on people thinking they were safe to comply with their takeover. Today, they try that shit and 99.9% of the plane goes Marky Mark on their asses. It

just won't happen again.

So revise history all you want, tough guy, but do it in your own home and show some respect to those that perished.

On a related note, here's a fantastic site showing all the other things in history Marky Mark would have stopped: What Would Marky Mark Do

Final question:

Real Genius. Andrew Clayman called it the most important movie of the 80s and I have to agree. But I've never been able to figure out how Chris, Mitch, Lazlo, and the gang were able to pull of the popcorn bomb operation that blew up William Atherton's house. The logistics make it seem impossible. Thoughts? - motherscratcher

YOUTUBE OF ENDING

We will assume that the whole "giant airplane laser" thing would actually work. It's not impossible if you completely align the light so it has almost no energy dissipation over distance, and if you start out with the appropriate intensity of light. Who knows, we may already be able to do this.

So we are left analyzing whether popcorn could destroy a house. First a little math. One layer of popcorn seeds in a pan will create six inches of popcorn. A single layer of popcorn will be about 2 mm high, yielding an expansive multiple of approximately 75. Kent, a big gangly dork, looks to be about 6' 4", and if you look at both :52 and 1:46 you can surmise the popcorn vessel to be about chest high, or about 5 solid feet in depth. From those same views, it looks like it is about 8 feet in diameter, leaving an unpopped volume of $5*\Pi*4^2$, or about 250 cubic feet of unpopped corn. Multiplying by 75 yields 18,750 cubic feet of fully popped popcorn.

So how big is the house? From :41 it looks like a “quaint” two story, not too big, maybe around 1,800 sq ft. The first floor has what appear to be standard 8 foot ceilings, where the arches and attic space can yield an average of a 10 foot ceiling in the upper floors. Average height is 9 feet, so there is 16,200 cubic feet of house to fill. Which is considerably less than 18,750.

The real question is would popcorn put such a strain on the walls so as to destroy the home in its entirety. And the answer is clearly yes. Expanding popping popcorn would exert a pressure somewhere between a wall of water and a strong gale of wind, due to it’s mass and the forces involved, both of which have sufficient force to knock down a wall or a door or a window.

Bottom line: the math foots, and that amount of popcorn properly heated would indeed destroy that house in that exact manner.

Please email questions to lars.hancock@yahoo.com , or DM them to me in the forae to LarsHancock.