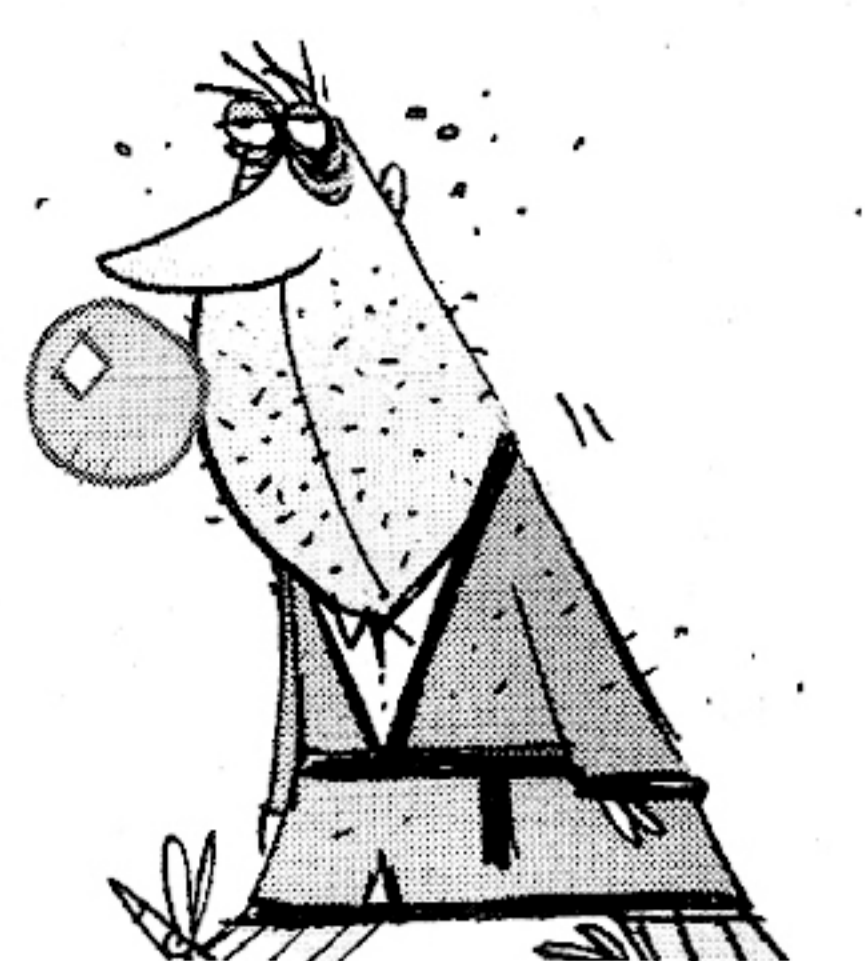
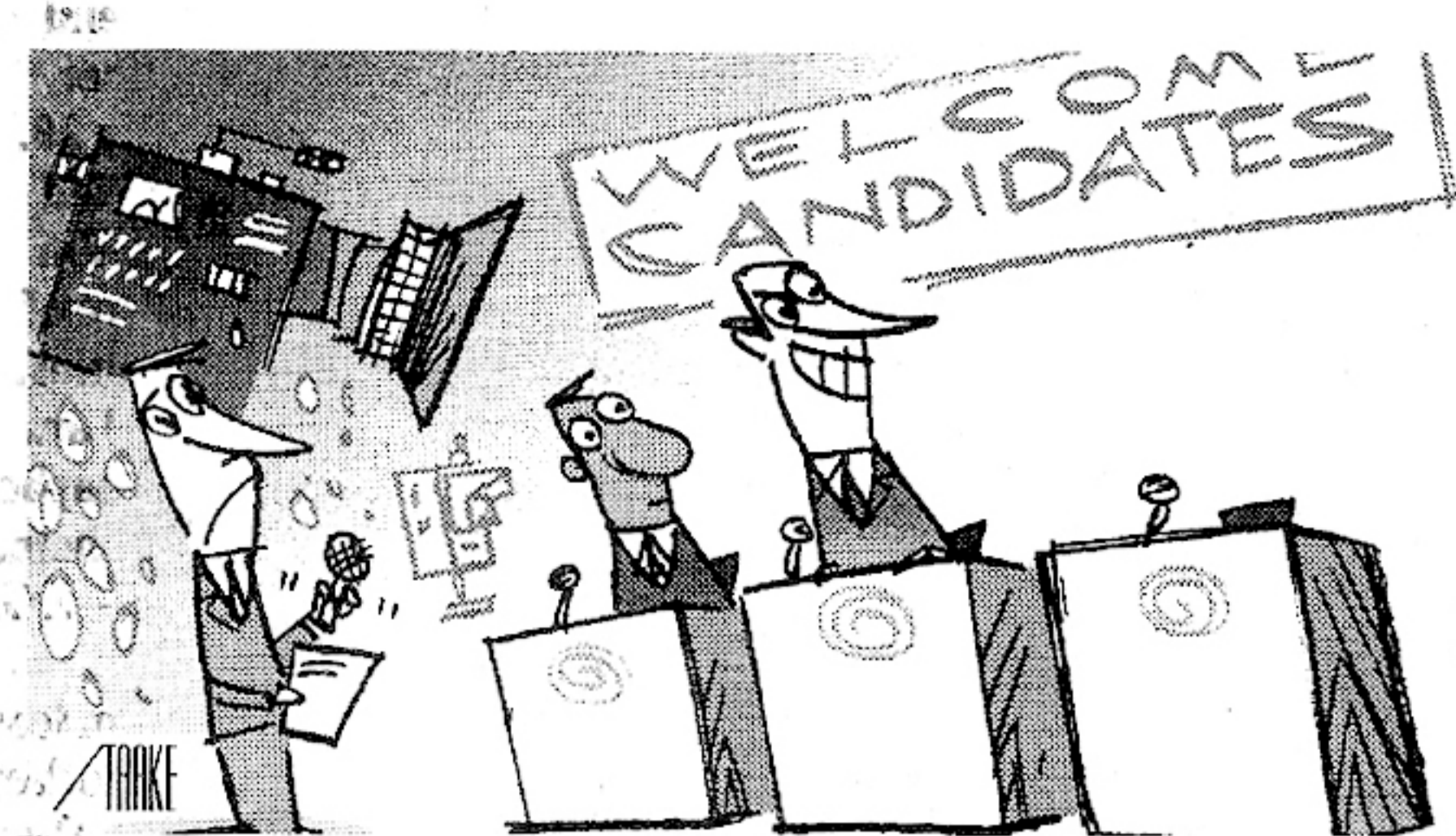


The Style Invitational

Week VI: Campaignful Developments



BY BOB STAAKE FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

The candidate arrives for the big debate in pajamas, and is chewing gum.

With six crucial upcoming primaries, the campaign announces that, for strategic reasons, it will be concentrating on American Samoa.

The candidate's spouse files for divorce.

The campaign schedules a press conference to announce an endorsement by Adam Sandler.

This Week's Contest: We thought of this contest after noticing that 1) Bill Bradley has not only stopped smiling but has actually adopted a shambling, disconsolate slouch, like Maynard G. Krebs, and 2) John McCain, in a canny strategic gambit, appears to have declared war on God. Your contest this week is to

come up with signs that a presidential campaign might be in trouble, as in the examples above. First-prize winner gets one of the odder government souvenirs we've ever seen, a vintage 1950s-era, wood-handled "silent butler"—a hinged dustpan bearing a painted likeness of the Maryland statehouse in Annapolis. This fine item is worth \$50.

First runner-up wins the tacky but estimable Style Invitational Loser Pen. Other runners-up win the coveted Style Invitational Loser T-Shirt. The Uncle's Pick wins the yet-to-be designed but soon-to-be-coveted "The Uncle Loves Me" T-shirt. Send your entries via fax to 202-334-4312, or by e-mail to losers@washpost.com, or by U.S. mail to The Style Invitational, Week VI, c/o The Washington Post, 1150 15th St. NW, Washington, D.C. 20071. Deadline is Monday, March 13. All entries must include the week number of the contest and your name, postal address and a daytime or evening telephone number. E-mail entries must include the week number in the message field. Contests will be judged on the basis of humor and originality. All entries become the property of The Washington Post. Editors reserve the right to edit entries for taste or content. Results will be published in four weeks. No purchase required for entry. Employees of The Washington Post, and their immediate relatives, are not eligible for prizes.

REPORT FROM WEEK III, In which we asked you to take any ordinary word, place a portion of it in "air quotes," and then redefine the word. This was a popular contest: You'll see it again. We received more than 5,000 entries and they were of such high caliber that we split the results in two. There will be two first prizes, as well as two sets of runners-up and honorable mentions. The first set runs this week, the second next week. This will have the effect of increasing from three weeks to one month the period between the date the contest is announced and the date the winning entries are published. In short, from now on *we* get an extra week to deal with the contest, but *you* don't. Your deadline remains unchanged: eight days from the date of publication. Also, we are pleased to announce that this paragraph sets the Style Invitational all-time record for the most consecutive words containing not even a single juvenile attempt at humor. So bite us. Back to "air quotes":

◆ Fifth Runner-Up: **"Wed"gie—What Fox TV gave itself.** (Jennifer Hart, Arlington)

◆ Fourth Runner-Up: **Co"pious"—Describing the amount of phony religiosity in the presidential campaign.** (Mike Genz, La Plata)

◆ Third Runner-Up: **"Id"iot—A powerful person who stupidly permits himself to be ruled by his libido.** (Tom Witte, Gaithersburg; Jonathan Paul, Garrett Park)

◆ Second Runner-Up: **T"hick"en—Just mix in a passel of pig-fat drippings.** (Jean Sorensen, Herndon)

◆ First Runner-Up: **Le"win"sky—One who gains a lucrative endorsement deal after shaming the nation's chief executive.** (Patrick Jones, Alexandria)

◆ **And the Winner of the Hirsute Hair Shirt:**

G"angst"er—Someone torn by inner conflict, and bullets. (Tom Witte, Gaithersburg)

◆ Honorable Mentions:

Gyn"ecological"—Of or describing a natural woman. (Susan Thompson, Derwood)

"Candid"ate—An unknown species. (Elden Carnahan, Laurel)

"Bra"ggadocio—Excessive pride in one's cleavage. (Malcolm Visser, Clifton; John Beshoar, Potomac)

Pr"elude"—A Honda getaway car. (Merrill Bates, Jr., Severna Park)

Wai"tress"—Often the source of hair in one's soup. (Meg Sullivan, Potomac)

"Gam"ble—To risk one's job by caressing the leg of a co-worker. (David Genser, Arlington)

Gl"ass"es—X-Ray Specs. (Niels Hoven, Houston)

Com"mute"rs—Silent, sullen companions in car pools. (Paul Kocak, Syracuse, N.Y.)

"Fun"eral—A ceremony in which you dance on someone's grave. (Mary Lou French, Lorton)

Exe"cute"—To euthanize one of those syrupy-sweet characters that are mass-marketed ad nauseam to children, such as Barney. (Joe Kobylski, Gaithersburg)

"Boo"ty—Waking up the next morning and realizing you made a scary mistake. (Aaron Frank, Arlington)

"Taxi"dermist—Someone who stiffes cab drivers. (Art Grinath, Takoma Park)

Dober"man"—A real hound dog. (Mary Lou French, Lorton)

"Con"version—"Glory hallelujah, I have found God, now let me out of jail." (Gary Mason, Herndon)

H"air"cut—The futile, pathetic trip to the barber taken by balding men. (Will Cramer, Herndon)

Vi"bran"t—When you're regular, you've got much more energy. (Jean Sorensen, Herndon)

"Mon"ument—A statue of Bob Marley. (Meg Sullivan, Potomac)

"Imho"tep—Self-effacing Egyptian e-mail author and god of medicine. (Sue Lin Chong, Washington)

Teletub"bi"e—Children's TV characters of uncertain sexual orientation.

(Dudley Thompson, Derwood)

"Buff"oon—Fabio. (Jennifer Hart, Arlington)

Debau"cher"y—Not aging gracefully; carrying on with much younger men. (Bill Strider, Gaithersburg)

Terra"pin"—The person holding up the line at the ATM because he cannot recall his number. (Jennifer Hart, Arlington)

"Flag"ellate—To whip your opponent with allegations that he lacks patriotism.

(Elden Carnahan, Laurel)

Chic"ago"—A city whose glory days are over.

(Tom Witte, Gaithersburg)

A"butt"ing—Dancing cheek to cheek.

(Bill Strider, Gaithersburg)

"Ex"posé—The Internet posting of nude photos of your former spouse, after the evil stuck-up trollop runs off with her ski instructor. Not that I'm bitter. (Kevin Mellema, Falls Church)

W"itty"—Given to emphasizing one's humor when dating, to overcome certain other shortcomings. (Tom Witte, Gaithersburg)

Psy"chop"ath—Lizzie Borden. (Noah Kady, Myersville, Md.; Merrill Bates Jr., Severna Park)

Man"age"ment—In a bureaucracy, those who should have retired years ago but didn't.

(David Genser, Arlington)

Nin"com"poop—CEO of a failed Internet company. (Chuck Smith, Woodbridge)

"Prolife"ration—Unrestricted propagation.

(Tom Witte, Gaithersburg)

Sh"ow"er—The scalding sensation caused by an ill-timed toilet flush. (Ben F. Noviello, Fairfax)

Im"peach"ment—Almost losing the presidency after tasting forbidden fruit. (Patrick Jones, Alexandria)

"Scrap"ple—Scrapple. (John Held, Fairfax)

"Game"togenesis—"Let's play around a little first." (Richard Teske, Winchester, Va.)

Mi"stress"—The pressure of being the Other Woman. (Beth Benson, Lanham)

Th"esau"rus—A dictionary's less popular kin.

(Tom Witte, Gaithersburg)

Automo"bile"—A vehicle associated with the "road rage" phenomenon.

(Merrill Bates Jr., Severna Park)

"Fun"gicide—A killjoy. (Dave Ferry, Leesburg)

"Ass"embly—Any state legislature.

(Chuck Beardall, Fairfax)

"Cad"averous—Describing a necrophiliac.

(Meg Sullivan, Potomac)

A"limo"ny—How ex-wives get big new cars.

(Tom Witte, Gaithersburg)

"Cluelessness"—A tendency to miss the point entirely. (Jacob Weinstein, Los Angeles)

◆ **The Uncle's Pick:**

Princi"pal"—The person who is, really and truly, your best friend at school. (Allen R. Breon, Clarksville)

(The Uncle explains: What we have here is a joyful mixture of wit and wisdom. All youngsters should both chuckle and take heed.)