

The Style Invitational

Week CX: Sick Humor

CROUPSPEAK:

...THE IRRITATING ABILITY OF ALL CABINET MEMBERS TO ARTICULATE THE BOSS'S PARTY LINE!

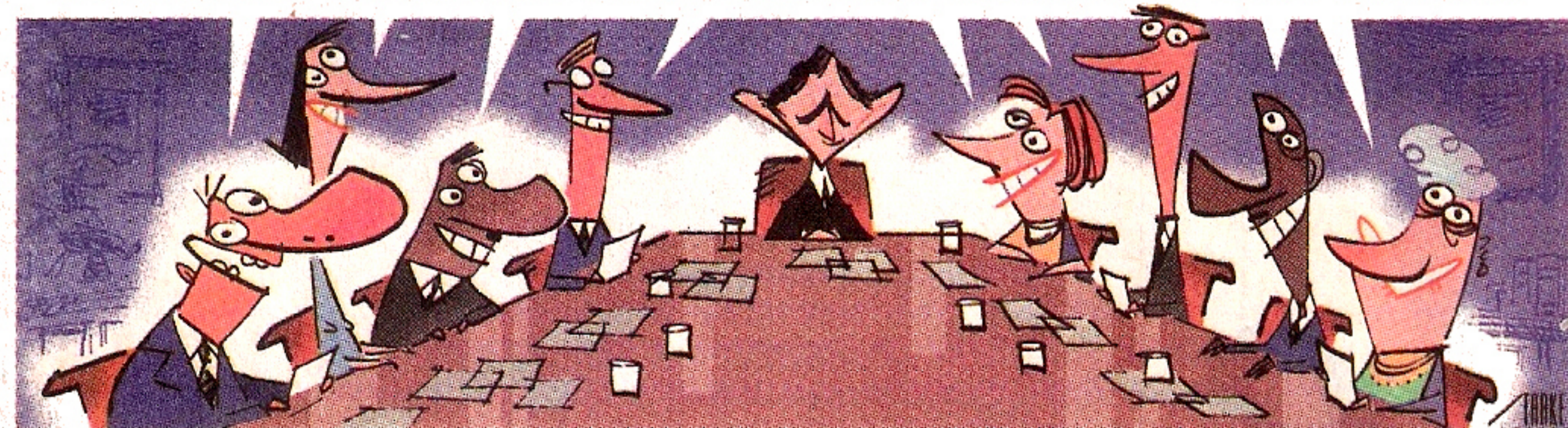


ILLUSTRATION BY BOB STAAKE FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

The En-runs: When imprudent investments send your life savings down the toilet.

Divertalkulitis: Painfully earnest and boring fare on Sunday morning TV.

HMorrhoids: A bloody nuisance caused by federal laws that permit stingy insurance coverage.

This week's contest was proposed by Dan Helming of Maplewood, N.J. Your challenge is to come up with modern diseases of Washington life. First-prize winner gets a genuine program from the 1957 U.S. presidential inauguration, which describes Dwight Eisenhower as a president as great as Lincoln and Washington, and contains what may be the dowdiest picture ever taken of Mamie. It is worth \$30.

First runner-up wins the tacky but estimable Style Invitational Loser Pen. Other runners-up win the coveted Style Invitational Loser T-shirt. Honorable mentions get the mildly sought-after Style Invitational bumper sticker. Send your entries via fax to 202-334-4312, or by e-mail to losers@washpost.com. U.S. mail entries are no longer accepted due to rabid, spit-flying fanaticism. Deadline is Monday, March 11. All entries must include the week number of the contest and your name, postal address and telephone number. E-mail

entries must include the week number in the subject field. Contests will be judged on the basis of humor and originality. All entries become the property of The Washington Post.

Entries may be edited 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. Pseudonymous entries will be disqualified. The revised title for next week's contest is by Bob Sorensen of Herndon.

Report from Week CVI, in which we asked for signs of incompetence. Special T-shirt award goes to Jeff Wallenfelt of Waldorf, who sent us eight separate e-mails reading, "Did this get through?" His entry was "sign of an incompetent e-mailer."

◆ Fourth Runner-Up: **Sign of an incompetent al Qaeda terrorist: hijacks a flight simulator.** (Brian Broadus, Charlottesville)

◆ Third Runner-Up: **Sign of an incompetent phone-sex operator: "I'm 39 and sort of dumpy, wearing a pink housecoat . . ."** (Marc Liebert, New York)

◆ Second Runner-Up: **Sign your lawyer is incompetent: As he is questioning you on the witness stand, he keeps asking you whether you realize you are under oath.** (Daniel L. Gray, Washington)

◆ First Runner-Up: **Sign of an incompetent Tourette's syndrome sufferer: "You gosh-darned danged noodlehead! What the h-e-double hockey sticks are you . . ."** (Meg Sullivan, Potomac)

◆ And the winner of the Redskins Super Bowl XXII mug: **Sign of an incompetent sommelier: "Do you want a glass with that?"** (Kyle Bonney, Fairfax)

◆ Honorable Mentions:

Boxing promoter: His press conferences are marked by regrettable incidents of civility and outbreaks of jovial, good-natured banter. (John C. Feltz, Fairfax)

Undertaker: Emphasizes cleavage. (Mark Updike, Crownsville)

Alchemist: Tries to turn gold into lead. (Vic Krysko, Yorkshire, England; Barry Blyveis, Columbia)

Dominatrix: Fuzzy pink bunny slippers. (Julie Thomas and Will Cramer, Herndon)

U.S. attorney general: Sees the world as a place where relative truths contend, instead of the setting for a Manichaean struggle between the purely good and the purely evil. (John Ashcroft, Washington; Brian Broadus, Charlottesville)

Metro operator: Uses the PA system to accuse passengers of stealing the steering wheel. (Brian Broadus, Charlottesville)

Seeing Eye dog: Chases cars. (Lauren Joseff, Reston)

Miss America contestant: Asked which person she admires most, she says, "My plastic surgeon." (Sue Lin Chong, Washington)

Middle Eastern terrorist: Travels under the name Joe-Bob El Aziz. (Howard Walderman, Columbia)

Enron exec: He's still waiting for the right time to exercise his stock options. (Walter Webert, Bethesda)

Plagiarist: Copies his professor's doctoral thesis. (Bob Grossman, Columbia)

Fast-food employee: You order fries and he asks if you want fries with

Southern Italian: "Bubba-ding bubba-doom." (Paul Kondis, Alexandria)

Mortician: Muffled screams at funerals. (Brian Broadus, Charlottesville)

Folk-singing family: Flees the Nazis by escaping to the Sudetenland. (Russell Beland, Springfield)

Optometrist: "Can you read the FELOPZ line?" (Sue Lin Chong, Washington)

Marathon runner: Tries "Olestra loading" before the big race. (Robin Grove, Pasadena, Md.)

Voyeur: Wears cameras on his shoes to look up women's nostrils. (Bob Dalton, Arlington)

Liberal: Has a bleeding pancreas. (Tom Witte, Gaithersburg)

Terrorist: "Pull my finger" bomb proves ineffective outside five feet. (Chuck Smith, Woodbridge)

Chiropractor: Asks if your children have stepped on a crack recently. (Jean Sorensen, Herndon)

Gynecologist: Refers to the parts by their street names. (Barry Blyveis, Columbia)

Hip-hop artist: Chooses a moniker like Soc R Mom or Biggie Fries. (Chuck Smith, Woodbridge)

Abstract expressionist painter: Inspires comments from gallery patrons that "My 4-year-old nephew couldn't do that." (Elden Carnahan, Laurel)

Accountant: Uses only Roman numerals. (Barry Blyveis, Columbia)

Lawyer: Won't confer with you without his lawyer present. (M. Lilly Welsh, Oakton)

Panhandler: Spends the money on