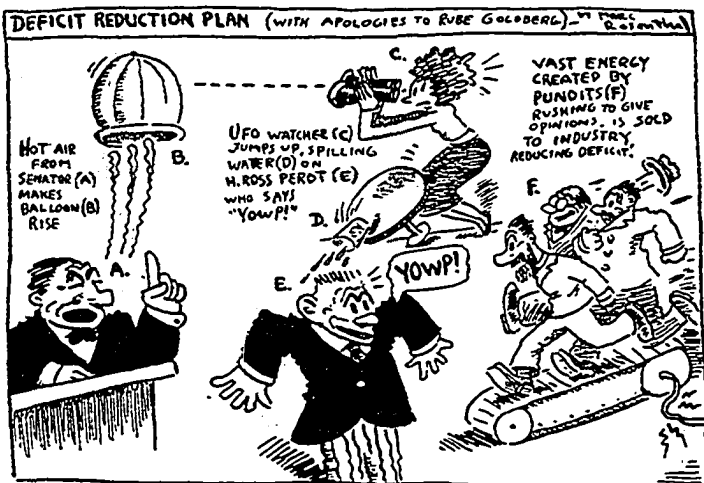


The Style Invitational

WEEK 17: Reductio Ad Absurdum



BY MARC ROSENTHAL FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

Four simple ways to reduce the federal deficit:

1. Impose a special handgun licensing fee for disgruntled postal workers.
2. Secretly print up four trillion dollars and have an accountant named Seymour "find" it one day in the U.S. Treasury.
3. Levy fines for pomposity in the District of Columbia.
4. Have the federal government challenge Michael Jordan to a game of golf.

This week's contest: Send us a photocopy of your behind. Just kidding. Obviously, this week's contest is to come up with an easy way to reduce the federal deficit, in 20 words or fewer. This idea was proposed by reader Ken Sandler of Alexandria, who wins three Hanes briefs in attractive designer colors. The first-prize winner will receive a rubber chicken *plus* a ceramic cat, a value of \$50.

Runners-up, as always, get the coveted Style Invitational losers' T-shirts. Winners will be selected on the basis of humor and originality. Mail your entries to the Style Invitational, Week 17, The Washington Post, 1150 15th St. NW, Washington, D.C. 20071, or fax them to 202-334-4312. Entries must be received on or before Monday, July 5. Please include your address and phone number. Winners will be announced in three weeks. No purchase necessary. Employees of The Washington Post and their immediate families are not eligible for prizes.

REPORT FROM WEEK 14, IN WHICH YOU WERE ASKED TO COME UP WITH NEW COLLECTIVE NOUNS.

Hmm. More than 3,000 entries, not one of which proposed a name for a group of Style Invitational entries. We suggest: a MESS of entries. Smart but too-popular offerings: a BRACE of orthodontists, a PILE of proctologists, a REAM of proctologists, a GAGGLE of comedy writers, a GIGGLE of teenage girls, a GOGGLE of skin divers.

Sixth Runner-Up: a TRAVESTY of justices (Meg Sullivan, Potomac)

Fifth Runner-Up: a CORPS of morticians (Barbara Mayo-Wells, Ellicott City)

Fourth Runner-Up: a BROOD of pessimists (P.P. Rao, Oxon Hill; also, Chuck Smith, Woodbridge)

Third Runner-Up: a MYRIAD of clichés (Dave Noon, Harrisonburg, Va.)

Second Runner-Up: a PROLIFERATION of abortion protesters (Charles Gilbert Owens, Indian Head)

First Runner-Up: a GREAT DEAL of used-car salesmen (Tim and Heather Allen, Chapel Hill, N.C.)

AND THE WINNER OF THE BIG, FLUFFY PILLOW:

a TRANSTIONPOSI of dyslexics (Stu Segal, Vienna)

HONORABLE MENTIONS:

a BATTERY of L.A. police officers (Douglas Olson, Beltsville; also, Geoff and Jacki Drucker, Arlington)

an INNUENDO of proctologists (Harry Richardson, Laurel)

a RUMP of couch potatoes (Mrs. S.T. Prevost, Falls Church)

a PRIDE of grandparents (Susan Wenger, Montgomery Village)

a SLEW of murderers (Lyle Rodieck, Washington; also, J. Chanmugam, Bethesda)

a KUVVEY of Quayles (Lance Cona, Washington)

Un MOI des existentialistes (Dick Holt, Arlington)

a CONGRESS of hot-air balloons (John Kelly, Washington)

a PROPOS of nothing (Chuck Smith, Woodbridge)

a LOT of Realtors (Byron Baker, Capitol Heights; also, Kathy Weisse, Sykesville)

a RASH of bookers (Mary Mazer, Antioch, Tenn.)

a HEAD of thyme (Harry Richardson, Laurel)

a BASSINET of White House staffers (Ronald Varuska Jr., Washington)

a RETINUE of optometrists (Chuck Smith, Woodbridge)

an AMALGAM of dentists (Marilyn Glaser, Laurel)

a JAR of potholes (Mary Frances Borrell-Gould, Kensington)

a [REDACTED] of secret agents (Meg Sullivan, Potomac)

a GARRISON of Kennedy assassination conspiracy theorists (Bob Zane, Woodbridge)

a MAGNUM o' pus (Harry Richardson, Laurel)

a CLIQUE of castanet players (Kathy Weisse, Sykesville)

a CONSENSUS of yes men (Ro Hafford, McLean)

a RING of phonies (Barbara Mayo-Wells, Ellicott City)

a CHAIN of lynx (Harry Richardson, Laurel)

a PROFUSION of nuclear scientists (Pat Wallace, LaPlata; also, Kathy Weisse, Sykesville)

an ARMY of homosexuals (Philip Delduke, Bethesda)

a SEMORDNILAP of palindromes (stolen from an undisclosed acquaintance by Paul Kondis, Alexandria)

AND LAST:

a SHIRTLOAD of Style Invitational losers (Paul Kondis, Alexandria)

NEXT WEEK: YOU PUNCH US.