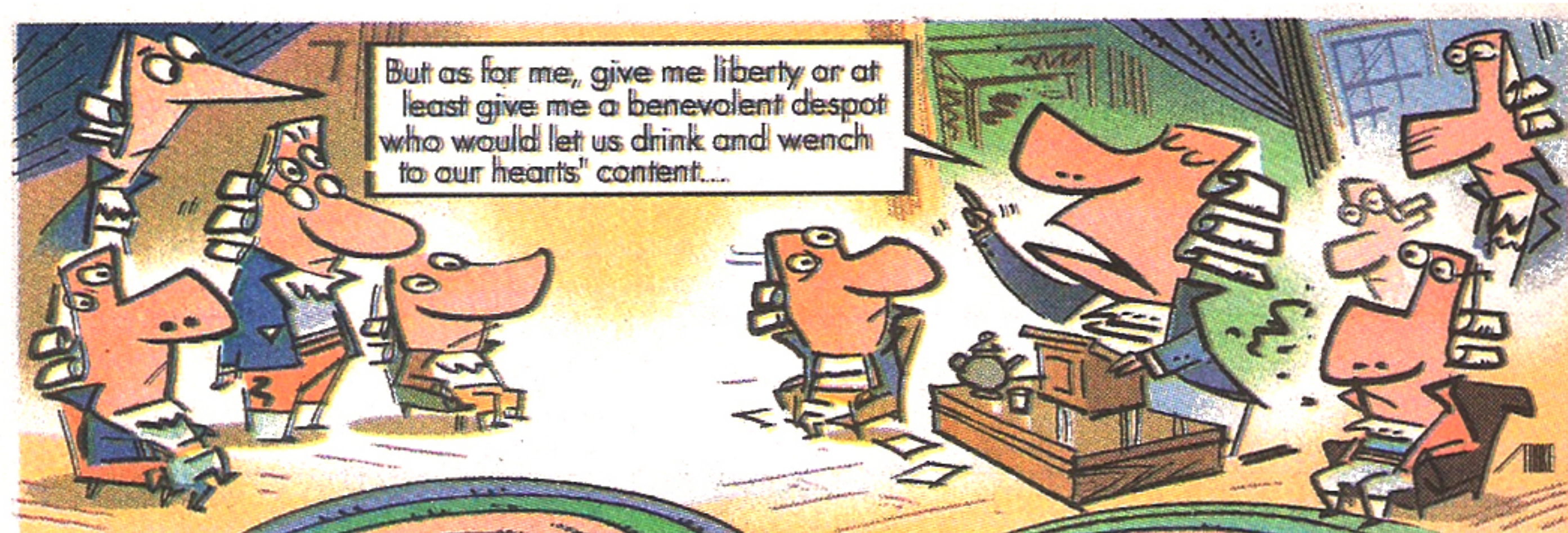


The Style Invitational

Week LXXIX: Painful Climaxes



BY BOB STAAKE FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

"I swear, as long as I am able to draw a breath . . . I shall never suffocate."

"Ich bin ein . . . President of the United States."

This Week's Contest was proposed by Russell Beland of Springfield, who recently found himself reflecting on the thudding anticlimax that is Yale's college chant: "For God! For Country! For . . . Yale." Russell suggests that we come up with statements that start really dramatically, but leave you sorta flat at the end. You can tinker with a historical statement, or craft one completely anew. First-prize winner gets an antique box of 1,000 of those toothpicks with colorful plastic frills, a \$20 value.

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, by e-mail to losers@washpost.com, or by U.S. mail to The Style Invitational, Week LXXIX, c/o The Washington Post, 1150 15th St. NW, Washington, D.C. 20071. Deadline is Monday, August 6. 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 Phyllis Kepner of Columbia.

REPORT FROM WEEK LXXV,

in which we asked you to find messages by mining the letters of a politician's name. Our prize selection might provoke some grumbles. In anticipation of complaints about favoritism and arrogance, we remind you: The Style Invitational is the world's last pure meritocracy. Humor is our only criterion; we leave it to others to celebrate diversity. In short, we are neither arrogant nor elitist, and it is time you rabble understood that. For what it's worth, more than 40 people converted GARY CONDIT into "I did it."

◆ Fourth Runner-Up:

BORIS YELTSIN—Obese boss. Bottle is bliss. Elitist? Nyet. Beets, not brie. Blotto, not sober. Rosy nostrils. (Stephen Dudzik, Olney)

◆ Third Runner-Up:

FIDEL CASTRO—Red isle toddler cast off raft, drifted. Disaster at sea, fatalities. Tot is freed. Soldier's tactics terrified toddler. Tears telecast. It creates a tiff. Oratories said. Tot is doled to Dad. Crisis closed. Dictator is elated. (Stephen Dudzik, Olney)

◆ Second Runner-Up:

ERNEST HOLLINGS—Loser T-shirts, eh? Let's see. The eeriest thing here is to sort the letters in "Ernest Hollings" so he's sent reeling to the right; i.e., re-engineer the genteel Ernest into the hellish SEN. TRENT LOTT! (Chris Doyle, Burke)

◆ First Runner-Up:

RASPUTIN—A Russian spin artist, I assist Tsars in straits. I taunt Tatar upstarts, usurp Asian satraps, stun Prussian pissants. Upstairs, I unsnap pants as a rapt Tsarina stirs, purrs, strips. Pit-a-pat! An assassin sprints in. Rat-a-tat! In pain, I pass. RIP Rasputin. (P.S., Anastasia's in Paris.) (Chris Doyle, Burke)

◆ And the winner of the Elvis doll:

JOHN FITZGERALD KENNEDY—

**Fiddledy diddledy Johnny F. Kennedy
Hero at thirty-three, hat in the ring.**

**Idol, Lothario, egalitarian
Rake or a leader? Joker or king?**

(Chris Doyle, Burke)

◆ Honorable Mentions:

GARY CONDIT: Dirty cad trying to act tidy. (Bruce W. Alter, Fairfax Station)

GARY CONDIT: Trying to go incognito. (Daniel Horner, Washington)

GARY CONDIT: Actor in tragic irony. (Bev Barth, Prince Frederick)

RUDY GIULIANI: A darling, dandy, grand guy running NY a la La Guardia? Nay, a niggling, galling, arguing, railing lug ruining NY. (Chris Doyle, Burke)

MICHAEL BLOOMBERG: Marc Rich? Hell, I'm richer. (Sue Lin Chong, Washington)

RALPH NADER: He rear-ended Al. (Jennifer Hart, Arlington)

PATRICK BUCHANAN: Ich bin butt-brain. (Adam Elfenbein, Arlington)

OSAMA BIN LADEN: Dabbles in abominable misdeeds. (Jonathan Paul, Garrett Park)

KIM IL SUNG: Milk? Guns. (Dan Dunn, Bethel, Conn.)

RUDY GIULIANI: An ailing gland. (Chris Doyle, Burke)

PIERRE TRUDEAU: Adieu, dapper dude. (Steve Fahey, Kensington)

RICHARD M. NIXON: I had no charm. (Russell Beland, Springfield)

GERALD FORD: Good golfer? Egad! FORE! Dodge! Dog felled. Deer offed. Real fear. (Stephen Dudzik, Olney)

HARRY TRUMAN: Mantra: Truth. (Judith Cottrill, New York)

MOSHE DAYAN: Some say he's a Mossad demon and madman. Nonsense. He's a Dead Sea dynamo, a one-eyed handsome man. (Chris Doyle, Burke)

HAROLD STASSEN: Ran, lost. Ran, lost. Ran, lost. Also-ran; lost. Also-ran; lost. Also-ran; lost. (Roy Ashley, Washington)

MADONNA: A man, a mood, a moan. A mom? Damn! (Les Finster, Washington)

BORIS YELTSIN: Notoriety, not sobriety. (Stephen Dudzik, Olney)

DOCTOR KEVORKIAN: Kook took no advice. (William E. Bradford, Washington)

FIDEL CASTRO: Fearless leader of little isle, lots of classic cars. (J.J. McCullough, Coquitlam, B.C.)

ED KOCH: Heck, he'd do OK. (John O'Byrne, Dublin)

Next Week: Unrefined Sugar