

The Style Invitational

THIS WEEK'S CONTEST

Week 700: Stump Us



BY BOB STAAKE FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

In May 1991, a Washington Post story quoted Democratic experts as saying the only guys who could raise enough money to have a chance in the 1992 election were Mario Cuomo and Lloyd Bentsen (or maybe Dick Gephardt or Al Gore or Jay Rockefeller). Our point is that, in February 2007, there are still plenty of candidates — and potential candidates, even far-fetched ones — for whom you can write funny slogans. **This week: Come up with someone's slogan for the 2008 presidential campaign.** While we'd especially like great ones for the actual likely candidates, those for other hominids will also be considered.

Winner receives the Inker, the official Style Invitational trophy. First runner-up gets a homemade ceramic grogger (noisemaker) in the shape of a piece of hamantaschen, the pastries served on the Jewish holiday of Purim, which begins the day this contest's results are printed. Despite its appearance, we are pretty sure that the pinkish clay emerging from the top of the pastry is not supposed to be a pork filling.

Other runners-up win a coveted Style Invitational Loser T-shirt. Honorable Mentions (or whatever they're called that week) get one of the listed-after Style Invitational Magnets. One prize per entrant per week. Send your entries by e-mail to losers@washpost.com or by fax to 202-334-4312. Deadline is Monday, Feb. 12. Put "Week 700" in the subject line of your e-mail, or it risks being ignored as spam. Include your name, postal address and phone number with your entry. Contests are 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 March 4. No purchase required for entry. Employees of The Washington Post, and their immediate relatives, are not eligible for prizes. Pseudonymous entries will be disqualified. This week's Honorable Mentions name is by Dave Prevar. The revised title for next week's contest is by Stephen Dudzik. This week's contest, first run back in Week 22 at the suggestion of still-losing Elden Carnahan, was recommended to the Empress by Russell Beland. This week's prize was donated by Marleen and Rachel May.

REPORT FROM WEEK 696

Our biennial contest to combine the names of new members of Congress to produce legislation: As usual, Losers were way more productive than Congress, churning out several thousand bills. Most common were along the lines of the Fallin-Johnson Act to promote ED research, and the Castor-Corker Law to help prevent laxative overdoses. As always when we run the results of this contest, you have to be pretty flexible in reading them. For instance, you have to accept Mahoney as "ma honey" and Yarmuth as "yar mouth." "Walz" is used for both "walls" and "waltz." We did not, however, accept Hodes as "hotties," and we would never even share with our readers such ridiculousities as Castor-Murphy-Murphy to mean — are you ready? Because we had to ask for the translation from Jeff Brechlin of Eagan, Minn. — "customer femur fee."

- 4** Walz-Yarmuth-Hirono resolution to suggest that Sean Lennon and Yoko try out for "Dancing With the Stars." (Dave Zarrow, Herndon) [That would be "Waltz your mother, Ono." For the rest, you're on your own.]
- 3** The Sanders-Walz Act to replace "The Star-Spangled Banner" with the Chicken Dance. (Tom Galgano, Bowie)
- 2** The winner of the Heinz Microwaveable Spotted Dick: The Fallin-Whitehouse-Hall Act to institute a national day of remembrance for President Ford. (Ernie Staples, Silver Spring)

AND THE WINNER OF THE INKER

The Whitehouse-Brown-Walz Act: An emergency appropriation to redecorate the Oval Office after you-know-what hit the fan in November. (Pam Sweeney, Germantown)

SECOND BILLING

The Corker-Yarmuth-Whitehouse-Perlmutter Resolution reminding Barbara Bush to never, ever say anything else about Katrina victims. (Kevin Dopart, Washington)

The Space-Walz Act, which appropriates funding for a fence to keep out illegal aliens. (Dan Landau, Potomac)

The Whitehouse-Bilirakis bill to both balance the budget and finance the war. (Pam Sweeney, Germantown)

The Buchanan-Johnson Act, which requires equal recognition of all presidents who served between 1857 and 1869. (Lenny Levy, Gaithersburg)

The Murphy-Murphy Law to declare that whatever can go wrong will justify another wrong. (Ben Aronin, Washington)

The Heller-Mahoney Tin Pan Alley Commemoration Act (Dudley Thompson, Cary, N.C.; Russ Taylor, Vienna)

The Lampson-Mahoney bill to extend congressional health coverage to certain elective surgical procedures. (Chris Doyle, Ponder, Tex.)

The Brown-Boyd Paradise Act to declare an official bird of Brooklyn. (Beverly Sharp, Washington)

The Whitehouse-Lampson Act: Would markedly increase the brightness of the Presidential Residence, though not the Presidential Residents. (Beverly Sharp, Washington)

The Johnson-Hare Act to designate Coca-Cola as the official soft drink of the U.S. Supreme Court. (Chris Rollins, Cumberland, Md.; Jonathan Paul, Garrett Park; Kevin Dopart, Washington)

The Donnelly-Elison-Ellsworth-Fallin-Gillibrand-Hall-Heller-McCaskill-Mitchell resolution telling the administration to go two-L. (Steve Llianger, Chevy Chase)

The Casey-Mahoney-McCarthy-Murphy-Murphy-Cohen Resolution ordering congressional dining rooms to serve green bagels every March 17. (Ira Allen, Bethesda)

The Whitehouse-Corker Bill to require presidential press releases to include a disclaimer that some statements may not comply with normally expected standards of accuracy. (Jim Newman, Luray, Va.)

The Heller-Bachman Act honoring Audie Murphy for his heroism in a war people actually understood. (Ira Allen)

The Wilson-Sires-Mitchell Comic Strip Edginess Act (Dudley Thompson, Cary, N.C.)

Yarmuth Hirono Act limiting in-law visits. (Pam Sweeney)

The Boyda-Sires-Johnson-Hare Act, funding medical research aimed at accelerating the onset of puberty. (Tom Gordon, Falls Church)

The Lampson-Tester Act to create the Bureau of Really Easy Jobs. (Tom Galgano, Bowie)

The Loeb sack-Hare-Webb Act requires special gear to be worn by men serving food in nudist colonies. (Jeff Brechlin)

The Shuler-Whitehouse Act reinforcing separation of synagogue and state. (Marleen May, Rockville)

The Lampson-Whitehouse-Walz-Fallin Act: Authorizes expenditures to refurbish the executive mansion. (John Folse, Bryans Road)

The Welch-Hare-Sires-Lamborn-Brown Act to prevent the importation of inter-species genetic mutants. (Russell Beland, Springfield, Erika Wilson, Gaithersburg)

The Davis-Sali resolution apologizing for lousy late-night TV jokes about the Japanese. (Kevin Dopart)

The Lampson-Hare resolution discouraging excessive merriment at Hill office parties. (Mark Eckenwiler, Washington)

The Smith-Tester Act to authorize the Department of Homeland Security to conduct background checks of motel guests. (Bob Kopac, Poughkeepsie, N.Y.)

The Cohen-Sires-Murphy Interfaith Marriage Facilitation Act (Jim Lubell, Mechanicsville, Md.)

The Boyda-Whitehouse-Fallin Act regarding the lost dignity of the Executive Branch. (Benjamin Cooper, Springfield)

The Mahoney-Boyd-Klein bill, to encourage congressional pages to "just say no." (John Clewett, Falls Church)

The Johnson-Elison-Wilson-Lampson Bill honoring the sons of John, Eli, Wil and Lamp. (Marty McCullen, Gettysburg, Pa.)

The Castor-Tester Steroid Policy for All Sports Even Fishing Bill (Paul Kondis, Alexandria)

The Yarmuth-Wilson-Whitehouse Resolution — calls for all roll call votes, payroll distributions, etc., to be carried out in reverse alphabetical order. This is the most significant legislation to be passed this year. (Larry Yungk, Arlington)

Next Week: We Beg You to Differ, or Match Pointless



Really a vacuum.



Really a grogger.

This just in! We've just learned why the pink plastic pig we offered as a prize for Week 698 seems to be the world's least effective cooling fan. That it because it is actually a little crumb-vacuum for the dinner table, according to reader Karen Sloane of Louisville, who got one as a Christmas present. Well, it's not as if we felt any suction from the thing either. But its pigness at least makes sense.

PHOTOS BY JULIA EWAN — THE WASHINGTON POST

For Early Critics of War, Vindication Is by No Means Sweet

CRITICS, From D1

ran into an acquaintance on the street, and that acquaintance warned: "What is your boss doing? Nobody at Carnegie is ever going to get through another Senate confirmation." And Matthews was herself admonished by a colleague at another think tank, who told her: "You're going to make Carnegie irrelevant. The war's going to happen and you ought to have Carnegie working on the after-war rather than on 'we shouldn't go to war.'"

Amid what she calls the "seemingly inexorable roll" toward war, the clear message was "you better get on the bandwagon or you'll never be taken seriously in this town again."

Instead, she looks like an accurate prognosticator. But, "you can't take any pleasure in having been right," says Matthews, "because this is a catastrophe for the United States and people are dying and didn't have to die, and it's going to take us years and years and years to dig out of this, and it's been a catastrophe for the Iraqi people."

Also repudiated were people who supported the war but diverged from the official administration line. Gen. Eric K. Shinseki, then the Army's chief of staff, was sharply rebuffed in early 2003 for publicly saying that several hundred thousand U.S. troops would be needed to keep the peace in Baghdad.

Now, as President Bush seeks additional troops for Iraq, it is widely agreed that the war was indeed prosecuted with too few troops — a seeming vindication for Shinseki, though he did not respond to an e-mail seeking comment.

Vindication is a difficult and complex concept and one that has to be considered with many caveats, such as those presented by Zbigniew Brzezinski when asked if he felt vindicated.

"If vindication was accompanied by a sense that America is likely to undo the damage they have done and can dis-embarrass itself of the tragic involvement, then my answer would be yes."

But Brzezinski, former national security adviser under President Jimmy Carter, scarcely believes such course corrections will happen.

He opposed Bush's doctrine of preemption and assessed the war policy as one that "was propelled forward by mendacity." He spoke out before and during the war, and he believes his criticisms began to sting as the war began to falter. As a result, he says, he was ultimately shut out of high-level Defense and State Department briefings he had often attended and was publicly upbraided by a foreign policy peer.

Despite the broad sea change in opinion among the political and policy class, Brzezinski's sense of vindication has its limits, he says, because "I have the feeling that the president's team is hellbent on digging itself in more deeply and if it does not succeed in Iraq some of its wilder policymakers seem to be eager to enlarge the scope of the war to Iran."



BY ALEX WONG — GETTY IMAGES

"I'm saddened," he said, "because I think it's doing terrible harm to America. But more than being sad, which is an emotion, I'm worried."

From Afghanistan to Iraq to Iran? Could this scenario actually play out? It is, among the vindicated, not at all absurd, for official Washington's sights have turned to Iran with "the same signs, a very similar drumbeat" as that which preceded the war in Iraq, says Rep. Barbara Lee (D-Calif.).

Lee saw it coming — not Iran, but Iraq. Back in September 2001, days after the terror attacks, she saw the broadly worded congressional resolution authorizing President Bush to use force to fight terrorism as giving him a dangerous degree of carte blanche.

That early resolution allowed the presi-

dent to "use all necessary and appropriate force against those nations, organizations, or persons he determines planned, authorized, committed or aided the terrorist attacks that occurred on Sept. 11, 2001, or harbored such organizations or persons, in order to prevent any future acts of international terrorism against the United States by such nations, organizations or persons."

It is language that haunts her still. "I said then it was giving the administration a blank check to use in perpetuity," Lee says. "If you read that resolution, it's very clear that it was the beginning of a march to war."

She voted against that resolution — the only member of Congress to do so — and then took the barbs.



BY KATHY WILLENS — ASSOCIATED PRESS



BY JIM YOUNG — REUTERS



CARNEGIE ENDOWMENT FOR INTERNATIONAL PEACE

Critics' circle, clockwise from left: U.S. Rep. Barbara Lee (shown with Susan Sarandon, far left) was called unpatriotic after casting the sole congressional vote against an early resolution; retired Marine Gen. Anthony Zinni, former national security adviser Zbigniew Brzezinski and Jessica Tuchman Matthews, president of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace.

"It was a very tough period," she says. "To call me unpatriotic was the lowest of the low," especially considering that her father, an Army lieutenant colonel, served for 25 years and saw duty in World War II and Korea.

Now, she says, people are eager to tell her she was right. But "it's not about feeling vindicated," she says.

"I want people to understand that this is a very dangerous foreign policy, the administration's foreign and military policy is very dangerous, that the notion of preemptive war is very dangerous and that we need to support more rational approaches to our foreign and military policy."

Lee, like Odom and many others, is calling for the war to end. They are strange bed-

fellows — she, a progressive liberal; he, a usually hawkish conservative.

For months, Odom, a senior fellow at the Hudson Institute, has been pushing a "cut and run" policy. He even wrote a piece in the Los Angeles Times in October headlined "How to Cut and Run," in which he wrote, "We must cut and run tactically in order to succeed strategically."

He advocates troop withdrawal coupled with a diplomatic engagement with Iraq's neighbors, especially Iran, with whom the United States actually has common interests, nukes notwithstanding.

Retired Marine Gen. Anthony Zinni, formerly the top U.S. military man in the Middle East, started where Odom started — in opposition to the war. Zinni argued that going into Iraq would destabilize the region and distract from the fight against al-Qaeda.

For his opposition, he says he was accused by some fellow officers of having political motivations and was disinvited from attending meetings at the Joint Forces Command, where he'd been a regular as a senior mentor for more junior officers.

But he diverges from most early critics of the war, because he now is arguing that withdrawing from Iraq would destabilize the region. Instead, he says, a new strategic framework for the war is needed — something far broader than the increase Bush has proposed, which Zinni calls a "half-step."

"It's breaking my heart, watching it," he says of the war. "I was praying somehow I'd be wrong, but in my heart of hearts I knew it would happen this way — the bad decision-making, the insufficient troops."

Congress now is mulling varying resolutions on the war, but Zinni complains that "the debate is wrong. I think Congress is debating the arrangement of the deck chairs on the Titanic."

But the ship, he argues, doesn't have to go down.

As the debate now centers on what can be salvaged from the U.S. engagement in Iraq, a cynical Washington exercise is underway, some of the vindicated say. It's a snake-like shedding of skin, a policy metamorphosis in which people who once were prominent cheerleaders for the war now are cozying up with the war's early opponents and distancing themselves from their earlier roles.

Matthews has seen it and fears it may warp the crucial debates about the way forward in Iraq and toward Iran.

"So many of the people who were wrong have gone on to being very visible pundits without ever admitting how wrong they were," Matthews says.

Brzezinski says there are some people — and he's talking "outside of the administration, of course" — who have embraced his positions in the oddest and most disingenuous way.

They say "that they are happy to have associated themselves with these views . . ." Brzezinski says. "That is the funny part, because you meet people who say, 'Oh, I was with you all along.'"