

A new kind of penny arcade?

Wednesday, an Associated Press story came over the wire reporting that a club in New York City honors people who shoot other people by awarding them with a plaque and \$200 cash. The club, called the Federation of Greater New York-Pistol and Rifle Clubs, has a membership of 6,000 people.

The federation recently gave its "Courageous Citizen Award" to a Brooklyn delicatessen owner. The owner, WHEN FACED WITH THREE ROBBERS, WRESTLED A GUN AWAY FROM ONE OF THEM AND PROCEEDED TO SHOOT ALL THREE. The robbers are now reported in critical condition.

Said the deli owner: I'm not sorry I did it, and I'd gladly do it again. I'm tired of punks who go around robbing people.

Another award was given to a former Texan police officer who shot and killed a mugger near his Hilton Hotel suite. The Texan, who was visiting New York at the time, accepted the plaque, but was not offered the money. The reason: his gun may have been illegal in New York because it was registered in Texas.

Several other citizens who were offered the prize declined to accept it.

The federation, which has been offering these commendations for about nine months, explains that the award system is intended to encourage citizens to use guns to repel intruders.

Lord, it's great living in Oregon.

Letters

Letter wasn't cute

After reading J.I. Glover's letter (January 18, 1978) referring to the article on Marilyn Osgood-Knight, I was inspired by Glover's thoughtlessness to write this letter. If I could view her letter objectively, I might consider it a clever piece of satire, but not when it is at the expense of an individual. Perhaps Glover thought that the analogy presented was a cute idea, but I have yet to consider anything "cute" that shows ignorance and a basic lack of sensitivity.

Glover refers to the "courage" of Osgood-Knight and by this I presume she means the courage of a person to engage in a very deep questioning of herself and

her feelings. If Glover is disturbed by Osgood-Knight's thoughts about gayness and by her conclu-

sions, then Glover should have the courage to speak openly, instead of disguising her opinions in racist language.

Whatever the specific intent of her letter, Glover has certainly indicated that she does not understand the tastelessness both of playing with hurtful stereotypes and of seeking to degrade the sincere efforts of an unusual woman who has faced a difficult conflict and has begun to work out a personal solution.

While Osgood-Knight's "coming out" was an unconventional one, her example makes an important point: that gay people are individuals and that their lives may not be expressed in terms of stereotypes or according to other peoples' models.

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Defense practice meaningless

Submitted by
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Lane County Mobilization for Survival

This opinion statement is in response to the simulated nuclear attack "drills" held last week by civilian defense officials of Oregon, Washington, Alaska, and Idaho.

Each year the federal government wastes \$120 million of the taxpayers' money on its civil defense program against nuclear war. Here in Lane County our Civil Defense officials will play their part in the charade. They will try to act out their roles, what they would do in case of a nuclear attack.

What they will not do is play act what would really happen were there a nuclear war—die. Death is what happens when nuclear weapons are used and death would be the result of a nuclear attack on this country. A recent study, quoted by the Carter administration, concluded that no one can win a nuclear war. The study's conclusion on an all-out nuclear war with Russia — that the United States would suffer a minimum of 140 million fatalities and the Soviets 113 million — was similar to those of past reports.

Do these officials honestly believe that fallout shelters and canned food reserves will protect us? What

water would we drink? What plants would be left to produce the oxygen we need to live? When a nuclear weapon explodes, radioactive fallout falls through the atmosphere to soil and water and is absorbed by plants and eventually in to human foodstuffs. The hazardous quality of fallout does not decrease during

the journey; it multiplies so that by the time it reaches the food supply it is capable of even more damaging effects. Is this the food we would eat when the canned goods in these toy fallout shelters are gone?

Fallout shelters and civil defense officials playing "nuclear wars" are no security against nuclear annihilation. The only action which would provide any security at all is nuclear disarmament. The Mobilization for Survival is working around the world for human security which we know will only be ours when the nuclear bombs are dismantled, when we put an end to the arms race, stop producing in this country and exporting to other countries materials for nuclear weapons under the guise of nuclear power, and begin using our wealth and resources for human needs.

We call upon the U.S. government to support the U.N. Special Session on Disarmament in May 1978. That support needs to be more than rhetoric. It needs to include actions such as those listed above and a priorities change from the present billion dollar commitment to the War Department to financial backing for arms control and disarmament.

It is time that we say no to this nuclear insanity—that we say no to the federal governments' spending \$130 billion on new weapons and preparation for war and that we call a halt to wasting \$120 million dollars on mock nuclear wars when civil defense could be fulfilling its important function of preparing the community for natural disasters.



Mulligan's Stew

Tick-tack-toe on Capitol Hill may be a good idea

By HUGH A. MULLIGAN
AP Special Correspondent

WASHINGTON — Sen. Alan Cranston, the liberal Democrat, has worried out loud on several occasions about California voters thinking they've been shortchanged in the U.S. Senate because he and conservative California Republican S.I. Hayakawa disagree so often.

"I keep hearing we cancel each other out," Cranston recently complained to an interviewer. He said he found the phrase "cancel out" particularly irksome because it implied that Californians wound up without a say on many issues.

Instead of fretting about California's one-on-one situation in the U.S. Senate, it seems to us here in the Think Tank at Column Control (the nerve center for ideas whose time has not yet come and may never) that the good senator could be onto something really big.

Some serious thought should

be given to the prospect of more senators cancelling each other out more often.

Cranston came up with some statistics on roll calls showing that he and Hayakawa really only disagreed about half the time, or on 55 percent of the votes, but his legislative aides, probably out of fear of being canceled out themselves, failed to come up with any solid research on what the nation and its taxpayers would gain if senators were permitted to cancel each other out like old postage stamps.

Surely there must be other combinations of senators, even within the same party, who disagree often enough to cancel each other out and thereby spare the nation their oratory and their franked handouts on the great issues of our times. If half the senators canceled each other out even half the time, Washington wouldn't be a half-bad place.

In almost any session of Con-

gress, even with a new man in the White House, only about a half dozen really major issues stir up the populace enough to get a conversation going in the lull between Sunday afternoon pro football and the "Six Million Dollar Man."

So far this session the real lapelgrabbers seem to be the Panama Canal, abortion and welfare reform, President Carter's energy package, his urban policy and his assault on the three-martini lunch among other tax havens.

Think of the newsprint, the banquets, the paid political broadcasts and the travel expenses that could be saved, plus the wear and tear on speech writers, reporters and anchor men, if all those senators whose minds were made up in advance on any issue just canceled out with a distinguished colleague on the opposite side and both stayed home mending their fences, tending their rose gardens or denying all in their

memoirs.

Senatorial tick-tack-toe could even cross state lines to find another zero worthy of cancelling out and if applied to the House of Representatives with its membership of more than 400 the cancelling-out process could save enough money for everybody on the White House staff to get his limousine back.

Cancelling out is nothing but a refinement of "pairing," the custom borrowed from the British House of Commons whereby U.S. congressmen overdue at the dentist or their lovenest or the divorce court during a key roll-call vote pair off with an absentee on the opposite side of the aisle.

Cancelling out on issues, rather than just pairing off for voting, would bring the added fallout of canceled speaking engagements, canceled hearings, canceled TV talk shows and canceled junkets, since all those in favor of and opposed to the Shah of Iran, the de-

volution of Scotland, the new or the old regime in Namibia could cancel their reservations and stay home.

"Meet the Press" might have to scrounge around for uncanceled uncommitted congressmen, but the nation would be spared the splendid redundancy of senators debating the natural gas bill in their living rooms.

An emotive issue with a wipe-out factor might leave either chamber without a quorum on roll-call days when party discipline cancels out all but the mavericks and the uncanceled majority, but those left would face the challenge of debating with members whose minds hadn't been made up in advance. There might even be days when senators would be on the edge of their chairs in rapt attention while someone had the microphone instead of waving at hometown delegations passing through the gallery or studying the chandeliers in deep meditation.

Friday, January 20, 1978