

THE SQUIREL CAGE

By Douglass Welch

A good day to you all, and if you open your front door tonight along about 9 o'clock tonight, I wouldn't be surprised if you would hear a cannon firing in our kooky neighborhood. Mr. Jack, the fellow who already had a real shooting cannon for Christmas a few years back—why, he is going to fire it at least three times and maybe four, if it doesn't get too hot, in honor of George Washington.

The police (goaded by Mr. Jack's immediate neighbors) have been a little nifty about his firing his cannon in the past, so we are making this an official occasion. Mr. Jack has invited two foreign consuls to dinner and they have been instructed to wear red sashes with medals, and Mr. Jack has rented himself a George Washington suit and a Mr. Perkins three-cornered hat, and I am going as a cherry tree, and I have tried on my costume and I look very pretty indeed because I am in full bloom.

Mr. Jack has his cannon mounted on his patio and it is mostly aimed at the upstairs bathroom window of the Fuller house across the alley, and the Fullers are always screaming that some day Mr. Jack will put a cannonball through their bathroom. They say that the bathroom has been practically useless to them since Mr. Jack got his cannon because every one hurries in and out of there, and will check every minute or so to make sure that Mr. Jack is nowhere near the cannon.

You see, when this cannon normally fires, Mr. Jack loads it with a lady's picture from a black and white newspaper, and a flaming wad from the cannon's mouth and goes a good 200 yards. Also a vast cloud of smoke settles down all over the neighborhood. Two or three times this flaming wad has landed in the Fuller's back yard, and once it went clean over their house, and the Fullers are not the least impressed with the very careful precautions Mr. Jack takes on these occasions. Mr. Jack has men stationed along the path of flight with wet towels to put out any fires pretty soon. The Fullers always say nuts to that, they call both the police and the fire department.

Well, on New Year's Eve Mr. Jack did fire a real cannonball, but it wasn't his fault, and that's what I want to tell you about.

It seemed to me that a cannon without a cannonball was less than nothing, so two years ago I gave Mr. Jack a cannonball for his birthday, and his wife promptly took it away from him. Sometimes she did get it out of hiding and let him play with it on Sunday, pretending—only pretending—that he was going to fire through the Fullers' upstairs bathroom window. But when she gave him the cannonball she hid the black powder.

But when Mrs. Fuller got a very cold toward Mr. Jack and said that her husband was fixing to kill them all, Mrs. Jack gave Mr. Fuller the cannonball to keep, and Mrs. Fuller put it in alongside Mr. Fuller's socks in Mr. Fuller's bureau. And I guess nothing would have happened New Year's Eve except that one of the Fuller boys found it.

It was the Fuller boy and not Mr. Jack who put the cannonball into Mr. Jack's cannon on New Year's Eve, and the police finally got the story along the kid by holding lighter matches to his bare feet.

Record Repetition Holds Fascination For Youth

By ANN LANDERS

Dear Ann Landers: My mother holds you up as an authority on everything. Your word is what counts in our house, so please settle this argument.

I am almost 18 years old and I love to listen to records. If I like a certain record very much I play it over and over—four or five times in a row. My mother says it is abnormal to play the same record over and over and anyone who does it is over the edge of the roof. Do you believe that my mother is right about this? I need an answer—L.P. BUFF

Dear L.P.: No, I do not believe that a person who plays the same record over and over is a wacko.

I have played certain records (of which I am especially fond), four or five times in a row, and I'm all right. I'm all right I'm all right I'm all right.

Dear Ann Landers: Whoever wrote those immortal words "Heaven will protect the working girl," might have known what he was talking about, but the working girls this side of heaven are the ones who need the help today and you, Ann Landers, are our Patron Saint. Your column has dealt with the cat-fly effect manager, the ungrateful sex-pot who can't spell and calls herself a secretary, the lecherous boss, the cigarette moocher who goes from desk to desk, the coffee man who never plays, the number, the whistler, and the gunner. Now will you please say something about the knuckle cracker?

The world's champion knuckle cracker sits behind me and she is driving me crazy. I have told her (as my mother used to tell me) that knuckle cracking is bad for the fingers and that over a period of time it will cause arthritis. My aunt got arthritis from cracking her knuckles, so please stand behind my story. Thank you—CRACKING UP

Dear Cracking: Sorry, I can't stand behind a story that has no validity.

Frequent knuckle cracking over a long period of time can irritate the margins of knuckle bones and cause the knuckles to grow larger, but this doesn't bring on arthritis.

What happened was that the kid sneaked the cannonball over to Mr. Jack's yard while Mr. Jack and his guests were loading the cannon to greet the New Year in Meawville. Mr. Fuller was in his upstairs bathroom. Mr. Jack put in a charge of black powder, and then when he wasn't looking, the kid slipped the cannonball down the muzzle, and then Mr. Jack put in another sack of powder so there would be a good loud bang. And then he put in the wadded newspaper.

The whistles for New Year began to blow at that moment, and Mr. Fuller looked out the bathroom window, and Mr. Jack's cannon went off, the flaming wad shared over into Mr. Fuller's yard—and, honestly, so did a cannonball which described a lazy arc and landed in the Fuller's patio.

What my mother used to tell me—that if you don't stop cracking your knuckles they will get so big no young man will be able to slip a picture in the appropriate finger.

My wife is in the hospital now with our fourth child. Twice last week I asked my mother to play with the kids so I could go to the hospital to see my wife. She said she was too tired. Tonight she said, "All right, I'll come just for a little while."

As I was leaving the house the young boy climbed up in his grandmother's lap. She told him to get down because he was wrinking her dress.

Why then, like this? What can I do to get her to be more patient and loving toward our children?—DISAPPOINTED SON

Dear Son: Patience and love come from within. If your mother doesn't feel warmly toward your youngsters (and obviously she doesn't) you can do nothing about it. She dislikes them because she dislikes their mother—which is unfortunate.

My advice is to leave her alone. Don't ask her for favors and don't impose the children on her. When people are put in a spot where they feel forced to help they resent it and such pressure worsens the relationship.

When necking becomes petting, watch out! To learn how the smart girl keeps both her dignity and her boy friend, send for Ann Landers' booklet, "Necking and Petting"—And how far to go," enclosing with your request 20 cents in coin and a long, self-addressed, stamped envelope.

Ann Landers will be glad to help you with your problems. Send them to her in care of this newspaper, enclosing a stamped, self-addressed envelope.

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Parent, Teacher Meets Seen Battleground For Right-Left Conflicts

WASHINGTON (UPI)—In the lexicon of the average American parent, three of the dullest initials are PTA—Parent Teachers Association.

For parents and teachers alike, they usually mean an evening of weak punch, dead speeches, and the prospect of missing a favorite television show.

But according to an affiliate of the National Education Association, the traditionally lousy PTA meetings in city and suburbia will be the battlegrounds this spring of a determined right-wing effort to gain the upper hand in the nation's school systems.

A warning of turbulence ahead was made in "The Shape of Education for 1965," a publication issued this week by the National School Public Relations Association.

TEACHERS LOCKED UP

SHIZUOKA, Japan (UPI)—Twenty-one professors at Shizuoka University were released Sunday from a conference room where they had been locked in for 18 hours by students. The lockup was in protest against the school's refusal to hire an extra cook at the students' dormitory.

The publication cited a bulletin from the Birch society urging members to "join your local PTA at the beginning of the school year, get your conservative friends to do likewise, and go to work to take it over."

The purported advisor was further quoted as saying that "when you and your friends get the local PTA groups straightened out, move up the ladder as soon as you can to assert a wide influence. And don't let the dirty tactics of the opposition get you down."

The NEA-sponsored booklet reported that W.R. Fulen, an education professor at Oklahoma University, recently estimated that 35 state PTAs have been "confronted with rabble-rousing tactics of the extremists." In 20 states, Fulen said, extremists were successful in getting members elected to PTA offices.

The publication also reported that Edwin W. Davis, an official of an NEA commission on professional rights and responsibilities, had told the national convention that in 1964, one out of every 30 school districts in the United States had been confronted with "extremist attacks."

Davis also claimed that in five states "right wing extremists were threatening to wrest control of state PTA groups from the rank and file members."

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Chopped 'Bif Wilton's 12 oz. pkg. 49¢

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