# THE SQUIRREL CAGE

**By Douglass Welch**

A good day to you all, and particularly to ladies who are not coordinated. I mean like Mrs. Fumbles.

I planned today to tell you a few things about the romantic life of the male army ant, but after I looked into it briefly I found it dull beyond belief. The male army ant does everything by the numbers. He is one of 3000 or so male ants produced by the queen, and his destiny is to fly away to another colony as soon as he is old enough to date. This is nature's way apparently of preventing too much inbreeding. If he refuses to fly away to another colony, and hides, and is discovered, why, they bit off his head.

And when he does fly to another colony he generally arrives just as some other male army ant is marrying the queen —his chances of marrying her are only about 3000 to one — and again they bite off his head. And even if he is the lucky one out of 3,000, after the honeymoon he loses his head. It is very terrible to be a male army ant.

**Mrs. Fumbles**

So I want to tell you about Mrs. Fumbles today instead of the unhappy male army ant. Like I say, she is an intellectual, and she knows the Flemish painters and the Elizabethan poets, and Bartok and modern ballet, but the floor under her kitchen stove is always a little bit greasy because she just doesn't see these little things around her house. She is a great, imaginative cook, and when she tosses a salad it is like Swan Lake, and the one time she had the Garden Club ladies at her house she served them a boar's head with the apple bit, and like that.

But her muscles are not connected to her brain like the rest of us, and she dropped Mrs. McMurty's Dresden platter with the Yorkshire pudding (only Mrs. Fumbles would think of serving Yorkshire pudding with a boar's head), and she twisted the spigot off Mrs. Blair's antique coffee urn, and Mrs. Blair said later that Mrs. Fumbles was hateful. And she completely forgot the salad, Her husband found it in the icebox after the ladies had gone, about a quarter ton, he said.

Mrs. Fumbles' husband and children adore her and protect her against a world she is really not capable of coping with. The kids will stop playing and say: "I've got to go with mother to the store. She has to have someone with her to call out the red stop lights and cars in the way and to help her with her purse at the grocery." The kids check over her shopping list, too. Unless she is watched, Mrs. Fumbles will come back with a case of anchovies and nine cans of caviar and no soap powder.

**The Boss**

So Mr. Fumbles' boss came to town with his wife, and Mr. Fumbles gave Mrs. Fumbles the old Pep Talk, and he said "Honey, you are just as good as she is, and a lot prettier and a lot smarter, so don't be overwhelmed by the fact that she is the boss's wife. And I want you to know that no matter how you louse up this dinner, I love you and I am on your side all the way."

So it was the boss' birthday and Mr. Fumbles had ordered a cake with about 9,000 candles on it to surprise and please the boss at the fancy restaurant he was taking the boss and his wife to, and I guess they worked on it most of the day because this cake had moving parts, and a motor inside. Real class. And I mean, if the boss liked this dinner, Mr. Fumbles got the dealership for the whole state.

So the first thing that happens, Mrs. Fumbles tips over her glass of sparkling burgundy right across the table like a gaping wound on Mrs. Boss' raw silk dress, and Mrs. Boss says to her husband: "It's like a dream; it has all happened to me somewhere before." And then Mrs. Fumbles goes to the Powder Room and drags her purse across two goblets of water and turns them over, and bursts into tears, and when she comes back she runs smack into the headwaiter who is carrying the cake.

Mrs. Fumbles is well known in this place (and loved) and the headwaiter has thoughtfully provided himself with two waiters as interference, but Mrs. Fumbles penetrates the defense and tips the cake, and that's it, brother. Our side lost.

Mr. Fumbles has a great boss. He lifted his champagne glass and said to Mr. Fumbles: "As one fellow who has a clumsy, lovable wife to another fellow who has a clumsy, lovable wife, I extend you my deepest sympathy, and I also extend you the state dealership."

So sometimes things work out all right.

# Demo Sees Red Threat

WASHINGTON (UPI) — Sen. Thomas J. Dodd, D-Conn., said Tuesday that an American defeat in South Viet Nam would mean a Communist "massacre of innocents" throughout Southeast Asia.

Dodd, a close friend of President Johnson, sharply criticized proposals for U.S. withdrawal from Viet Nam in a 50 - page speech prepared for Senate delivery. It seemed certain to fire up the Senate's Viet Nam policy debate.

Sens. Frank Church, D-Idaho, and George S. McGovern, D-S.D., triggered the first round of the policy discussion last week when they urged consideration of a negotiated settlement in Viet Nam.

Dodd labeled such proposals part of a "new isolationism" stemming from a "national weariness with cold war burdens." He called, instead, for steps to win the anti-Communist war in Viet Nam without major escalation and said suggestions of a pull-back amounted to appeasement.

For the Vietnamese people, Dodd said, the first consequence of an American defeat would be "a bloodletting on a genocidal scale." He said the 1 million refugees from Red North Viet Nam and the peasants who have resisted the Viet Cong guerrillas would be at the mercy of the Communists.

"And the massacre of innocents in Viet Nam will be repeated in every Southeast Asian country that falls to communism in its wake, in a gigantic bloodletting that will dwarf the agony and suffering of the war in Viet Nam," he said.


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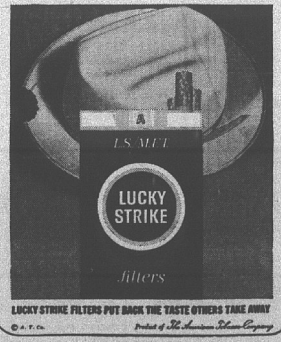


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# Steel Unions, Industry Plan To Resume Contract Negotiations Soon

PITTSBURGH (UPI) — The United Steelworkers Union (USW) and the basic steel industry will resume contract negotiations soon, it was learned Tuesday.

Union and industry sources told UPI that both sides now were attempting to set a "mutually satisfactory" date for the resumption of the talks.

It was learned the talks may begin as early as next week.

Collective bargaining on a new contract to replace the current three - year agreement which expires April 30 was recessed Jan. 8 pending outcome of the union's presidential election which was held Feb. 9.

**Count Begins**

The Honest Ballot Association, working under the supervision of the union's three international tellers, began the formal count of the election returns Monday. The count may take weeks.

An unofficial tabulation of the election returns showed USW Secretary-Treasurer I. W. Abel holding a 4,400-vote lead over USW President David J. McDonald in the election for the presidency. McDonald's third four-year term as president expires June 1.

**Overtures Made**

Sources told UPI "the groundwork has been made. . .union overtures have been made to the basic steel companies, and they are receptive to a resumption of negotiations as soon as a mutually satisfactory date can be set."

Still unsettled was the question of whether the union would agree to extension of the April 30 contract expiration date to make up for the time lost in bargaining due to the union elections.

**Extension Demanded**

Industry sources emphasized anew today they would continue to insist on such extension as of the "utmost importance to us."

Both McDonald and Abel appeared irked at the suggestion made Monday by AFL-CIO chief George Meany that the union agree to such a contract extension.

McDonald said Meany's statement was "premature and prejudicial." Abel said, "I don't know why Mr. Meany would say anything like that."

**Loser Still Leads**

Should McDonald be declared the loser of the Feb. 9 election, he still would be the nominal head of the union bargaining team until his term of office expires. But in that case it would be Abel calling the shots.

The steel industry has made two formal moves to win extension of its contract with the union. It was turned down both times.

The official count of the union's election returns at the international headquarters here resumed at 9 a.m., EST.

Wayne Antrim, of Hammond, Ind., chairman of the three-member International Teller Committee which is supervising the tabulation at the downtown headquarters of the union, said the counting was progressing slowly and may take a "number of weeks."


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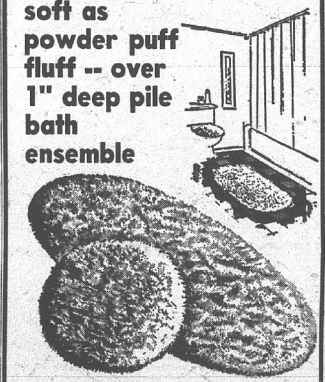

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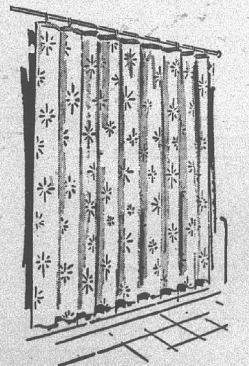

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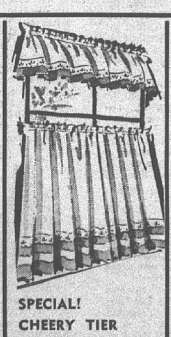

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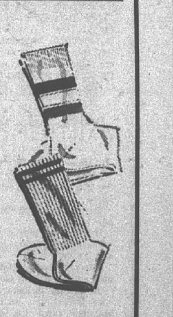

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