

Television viewers consumed by abundance of diet plans

By DICK WEST

United Press International

WASHINGTON — Morning television fans recently were witness to an acrimonious wrangle between two rival diet book authors appearing on the same talk show.

The exchange was not perhaps as dyspeptic as might have been heard had two talk show hosts been pitted before the same cameras. But it was nonetheless highly unseemly.

No other country on Earth has ever enjoyed such a rich variety of diet plans as is available to the overweight of America. The spectacle of two leading gurus bickering on the public airwaves was indecorous to say the least.

Try visiting one of the so-called "Third World" countries sometime. The relatively meager choice of diet plans available to even the wealthier inhabitants of those benighted lands will make your heart heavy with pity.

I have heard stories of aborigines along the Amazon River who average less than

two diet plans per tribe. Contrast that with our own abundance.

In this country, diet books are published in such profusion that reviewers are hard pressed to keep abreast of the tide. The Sunday literary section of one newspaper I read not long ago lumped five new diet books into a single review.

Imagine what talk show duels do to America's image in undeveloped parts of the world where there aren't enough diet plans to fight over.

I remember when I was a child I used to balk at eating hot tamales for breakfast. My mother would try to shame me into downsizing the portion on my plate.

"Many poor kids in faraway places don't have diet plans that include hot tamales for breakfast," she would admonish.

I would hang my head remorsefully and gulp down a few bites. I never did learn to like tamales for breakfast but it was a lesson I never forgot.

Call me a do-gooder if you must, but I believe the United States would be wise to

share its diet plan plentitude with less fortunate people about the globe.

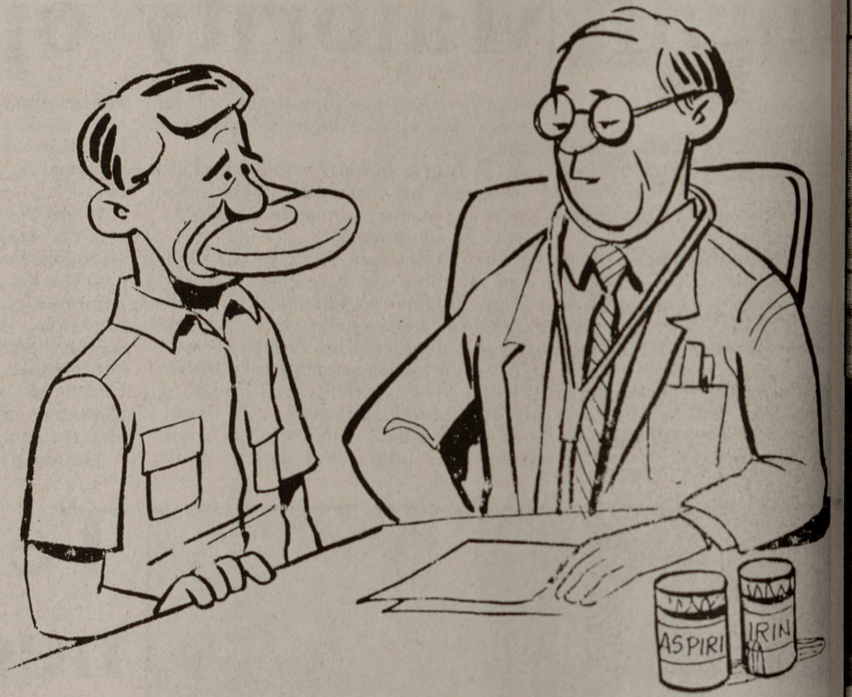
Just ask yourself this: Do you want your children to inherit a world in which half the people have more diet plans than they can possibly follow and the other half are barely able to choose between calories and carbohydrates?

For an illustration of this principle at work, consider the composite country of Lower Bagatelle. The only edible plant it can grow is colewort. Lacking funds to import food, Lower Bagatellians consume an awful lot of colewort.

The conventional wisdom would be to supply Lower Bagatelle with cookbooks showing different ways to prepare colewort. That type of foreign aid obviously generates resentment toward the benefactors, activating the Ugly American syndrome.

But send them a new diet plan in which colewort is the only authorized dish and we will have won their eternal gratitude, plus a loyal ally.

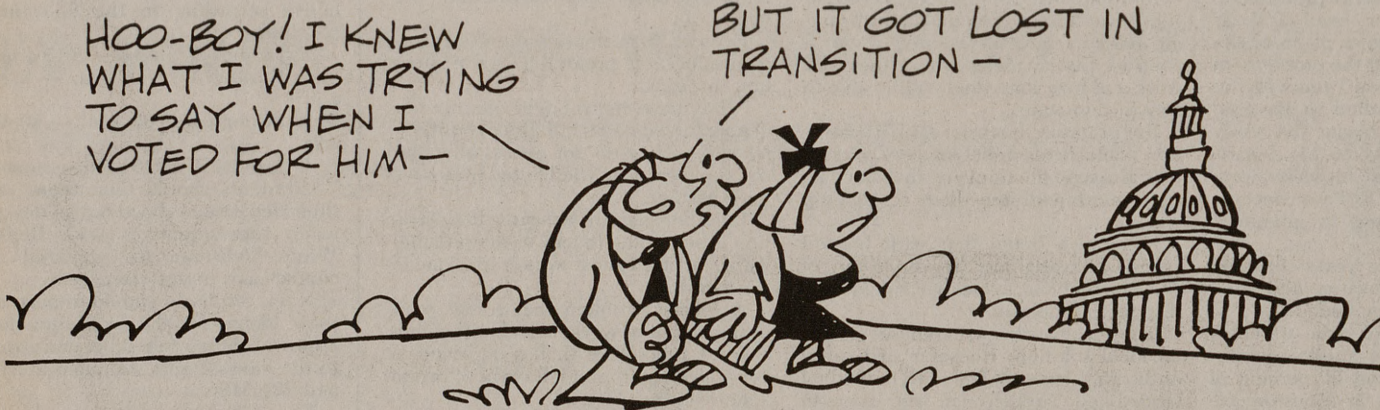
Slouch By Jim Earl



"Before we consider the problem at hand, could I suggest that you look for some other recreation to replace the Frisbee?"

the small society

by Brickman



Berlin: still a very special place

By DAVID S. BRODER

BERLIN — It was 36 years ago this Fourth of July that the first American troops entered Berlin to take up their occupation duties. It was 18 years ago this June 26 that President Kennedy made his "Ich bin ein Berliner" speech, reaffirming the American commitment to the freedom of the city that the Soviets had severed, two years earlier, with their infamous wall.

So it was appropriate that halfway between those two anniversary dates, on June 30, a man who has been at the center of American policy in postwar Germany came back to Berlin for a welcome from the city and the U.S. Berlin Command.

John J. McCloy, the first American civilian high commissioner for Germany, is 86 now, but spry of step, quick of wit and as focused in his analysis as in his reminiscence. He dominated an Aspen Institute of Berlin seminar on U.S.-European differences in foreign policy, not just by his presence but by the pointedness of his observations. And he amazed his hosts by going straight from the conference table to long evenings at the opera and ballet with no sign of fatigue.

McCloy was welcomed back to Berlin by the city's new governing mayor, Richard von Weizsacker, and one morning was honored by the army with a military review and the unveiling of his portrait at the headquarters of the Berlin Command.

The old man was touching and funny, as he told how he had persuaded Franklin D. Roosevelt that Gen. Lucius D. Clay would be a better choice than himself for the first U.S. high commissioner, and when asked by President Truman to succeed Clay, was able to say to the perplexed chief executive, "It's not the first time that job has been offered to me."

But as McCloy made clear in the semi-

nar, he is concerned at the strains in the U.S.-German alliance that he and his contemporaries forged from the ruins of World War II, strains that show in the rising German criticism of the Reagan administration's nuclear policy. And he is worried that the younger generation of Germans and Americans may not appreciate even what Berlin symbolizes as a showcase of freedom behind the Iron Curtain.

On the latter point, at least, there may be solid — and not just sentimental — reasons for reassuring McCloy. The West Berliners celebrated their freedom this year in the most practical way possible, at the polling place, voting in Von Weizsacker in a stunning rebuke to the Social Democrats who had run the city since liberation days and had grown sloppy and even corrupt in the process.

On the evening of his portrait ceremony, there was another celebration of freedom — a peaceful protest march through the downtown streets by some 5,000 youths protesting the shortage of housing. With the memories of the Berlin of Nazi days, it was something to see the police lined up, with clubs and shields ready, to protect the store windows from being shattered by making no move to interfere with the process.

And later in the day, when I visited some of the American troops who had participated in the McCloy ceremony, there was reassurance of another kind. Most of these men are too young, of course, to have any memories of the Berlin Blockade, the Berlin Wall's erection or Kennedey's speech — let alone Berlin the Nazi capital reduced to rubble in the war.

Berlin is now considered "good duty" for the 7,000 Americans in the military contingent. There is good housing for those with families who serve a three-year tour. The

tour for single or unaccompanied enlisted men has been reduced recently from two years to 18 months, helping their morale. Because the operating costs of the Berlin garrison are paid by the West German government (since the city is still formally "occupied territory"), the post has avoided some of the stringencies imposed by recent Pentagon budget squeezes.

The mission remains partly symbol, partly substance. The troops train constantly in MOUT — military operations in urban territory, practicing house-to-house fighting in mock-up buildings. But with 22 enemy divisions encircling them, the U.S., British and French contingents are primarily a trip-wire force.

The sense of isolation is a problem. "There are 112 miles of wall," one sergeant remarked, "and you can only go around so many times without feeling like a rat in a maze." Idleness is also a problem. Troops train intensively for six weeks, patrol and pull other details for six weeks then have six weeks of relative leisure.

The city of Berlin is, according to Col. David H. Harris and Lt. Col. Robert H. Wood, "awash" with drugs, and controlling drug abuse is a challenge for the officers and non-coms. But the attentiveness of company commanders like Capt. Warren Crecy and Dave Benjamin and Sgts. Gregory McGuire and Timothy Johnson — plus a "buddy system" that matches a new arrival with a Berlin veteran of his own age, rank and background — is, they say, reducing the problem.

Meantime, the army continues to show the flag in a fashion McCloy would approve, making daily "flag tours" in U.S. Army sedans through East Berlin and encouraging Americans in uniform to visit the old Communist sector, in order to demonstrate the Americans' right of access.

Reagan's choice long overdue

Writer's cramp

by Angelique Copeland

It's about time.

President Reagan's nomination of Arizona Judge Sandra O'Connor to succeed retiring Supreme Court Justice Potter Stewart will end two centuries of male exclusivity on the high court.

Already there have been cries that the only reason O'Connor received the nomination is because she is a woman, not because she is the best candidate for the job. But if Reagan had not moved now to break up the brotherhood on the court, similar cries would have arisen whenever an attempt was made to place a woman on the bench.

While O'Connor would be the first woman on the Supreme Court, she is by no means the first qualified woman candidate over the last 200 years. In the past, a combination of tradition, fear and ignorance has worked to obscure the talents of other female justices when there have been openings on the Supreme Court.

And just because a woman has finally been nominated, the battle is a long way from being over.

Things will not be easy for our aspiring first woman Supreme Court Justice. The president of the National Right to Life Committee (NRLC) has already announced "the entire pro-life movement will oppose her confirmation," because they say she has generally supported abortion legislation and the Equal Rights Amendment from her post on the Arizona Court of Appeals.

NRLC leaders feel like Reagan's nomination is a slap in the face, since it was their conservative, middle-class vote that played a big part in getting him elected.

Recalling the Republican platform and President Reagan's often-stated recognition of the right to life of unborn babies, NRLC feels betrayed. That platform called for appointment of judges who "respect traditional family values and the sanctity of human life" — conservative code-words for those who oppose the Equal Rights Amendment and abortion. Because in 1974, O'Connor sponsored a bill to put the ERA to an advisory referendum of voters and because she once opposed a bill to forbid abortions at University Hospital in Tucson unless the mother's life was en-

dangered, she doesn't fill the NRLC. Even if O'Connor overcomes the opposition and the Senate confirms her nomination, she will still have a long way to go. There are those who will consider every ruling from the angle "she voted that way because she is a woman." Not only she have to fight the stereotypes that kept other women before her off the court with every decision she writes she will those battles all over again.

But at least the first step has been taken. The feminists and the women's liberationists are rejoicing over Reagan's tradition by nominating one of "theirs" for a seat on the nation's high court. All America should rejoice at a milestone this country has passed on its way toward real equality and freedom.

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Warped

By Scott McCullar

