# opinion

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## Strange rituals rule in Senate chambers

### by Steve Gerstel

United Press International WASHINGTON — The strange, archaic rituals of the U.S. Senate, emulated by no known tribe, came to full flower in the ushered exit of the de-parted Sen. Harrison A. "Pete" Williams

No man has ever been executed while bathed in so much friendship and lavished with so many words of admiration

A stranger walking into the Senate could not have been faulted for believing that Williams was being honored for some noble deed, rather than drummed out in disgrace

Yet, such are the tribal ways of the Senate, no other outcome was even faintly conceivable.

Even if Williams, through some short circuit in his mental process, had chosen expulsion to resignation, the Senate would have booted him out with affection

Williams, no matter his admirable record in the field of social legislation over almost a quarter of a century, was a convicted felon, albeit appealing, who faces three years in the Big House.

The question of entrapment, which the Senate intends to ponder at a later date, aside, Williams had been convicted by a federal district court jury, a verdict upheld on appeal by the presiding judge. Yet, the workings of the court seemed

barely to intrude on the Senate as it ponderously moved about the odious task of sitting in judgment on a fellow.

To be sure, Williams was hauled before the Senate Ethics committee which, after listening to testimony and watching tapes, recommended unanimously that the New Jersey Democrat take his place in history as the first senator expelled since the Civil War.

Still, as is the way in the Senate, Williams was accorded all the honors and perks of office, even though he spent much of his time last year as a defendant in federal court.

Three times Senate leaders bowed to his wishes and postponed the Senate trial. The third and last delay was granted to let Williams' recover from surgery. No one questions that Williams underwent an operation although it was one that he had resisted for over a year.

Once the proceedings began, the Senate extended every courtesy to Williams - even to the extent of listening to the case for six days.

On one of those days — as if all were normal — Williams was allowed to offer a resolution recessing the Senate in mem-ory of former Sen. Clifford Case, R-N.J., who had just died.

Just as promptly, he was named, along with Sen. Bill Bradley, D-N.J., as a mem-ber of the official delegation to the Case funeral, an assignment he carried out the following day.

But it was on the final day, after Williams finally resigned during a long and rambling speech, that the Senate's tribal insticts were fully on display

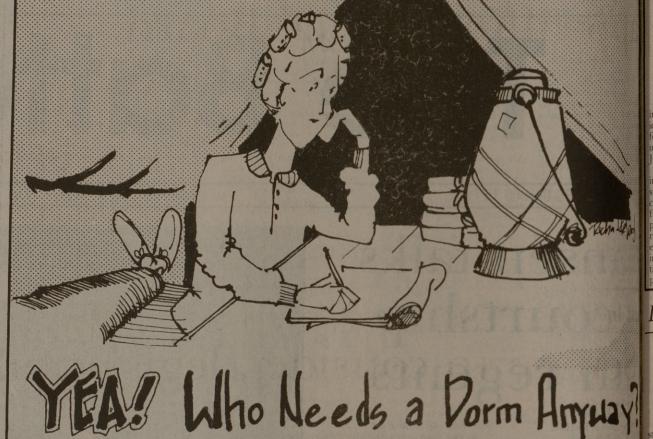
Senate leaders Howard Baker and Robert Byrd, their voices somber, expressed their grief at his downfall. Senate after senator marched up to him, shook his hand.

Vice President George Bush and Sen. Daniel Inouye, DHawaii, rushed to the family gallery to embrace Williams' wife. And not much later, a defrocked Wil-

liams, was greeted by hundreds of his admirers in the marbled, four-story rotunda of a Senate office building.

Williams was driven out of the Senate with cause but the visible evidence was hard to find on that final day.

And should the final court appeal fail, some fellow convicts might wonder why one of their own gets a pension in the neighborhood of \$45,000, has all the Senate floor privileges and is welcome, any time after he gets sprung, in the Senate gym.



# Senator speaks out against b

#### By David S. Broder

WASHINGTON - If you ask most people, they will tell you that the changes of the past generation have erased many of the regional differences in the United States and have blunted the sharp moral edges of controversy over public issues. The conventional wisdom is that we are a homogenized society, governed by men and women of adaptable conscience.

Both those beliefs were sharply challenged this month in the Senate debate over legislation to restrict the federal courts and the Justice Department from using busing as a remedy for proven cases of school segregation.

The final Senate vote on the bill containing the restrictive language was 57-37. Among senators from outside the Old Confederacy, the vote was 34-36 against the measure. Among the senators from the Confederate states, the vote was 23-1 in favor.

The one southern senator who voted against the bill was Dale Bumpers of Arkansas. Outside his own state, not much was made of the fact. But his action is more than a rebuke to the majority in the Senate, which pushed through this radical and dangerous abridgement of the independence of the judiciary and the Justice Department. It was equally a reprimand to those who tend to see politics as a "go-along-get-along" scramble for the safest perch from which to pre-

The point of this piece is not to elevate Bumpers to political sainthood. He is as fallible in his judgment as anyone else. But he comes from a state which in 1980 voted out of office two other Democrats, President Jimmy Carter and Gov. Bill Clinton, who were moderates on race issues and opposed to the court-stripping efforts. He knew what the risks were in the stand he took in isolating himself from every other southern senator of both parties, including his own colleague, David H. Pryor.

This is what he said in explaining his stand: "My words here this morning will not change a single vote. I rise to speak on this issue because I do not want either my children or my constituents to think I acquiesced in or only mildly objected to what we are about to do here. I want them and any person within earshot or whoever may read my words to know that the beginning of the end of constitutional guarantees in this nation occurred over my strenuous and vehement protest."

The essence of his argument was the same one made by the American Bar Assn., the chief justices of the state supreme courts, Sen. Barry M. Goldwater (R-Ariz.) and other conservative individuals and institutions, who were prepared to risk offending popular preudices in order to protect the Constitution.

The argument was that in barring the

orders or the courts from issuing (beyond five miles or 15 minutes time), no matter what the findings the segregation in the school system Senate was short-circuiting the Con tion and undercutting the indepen of collateral branches of governme

The argument did not prevail Senate and it may not prevail it House, where pressures are build the Democratic leadership to per vote on a similar measure.

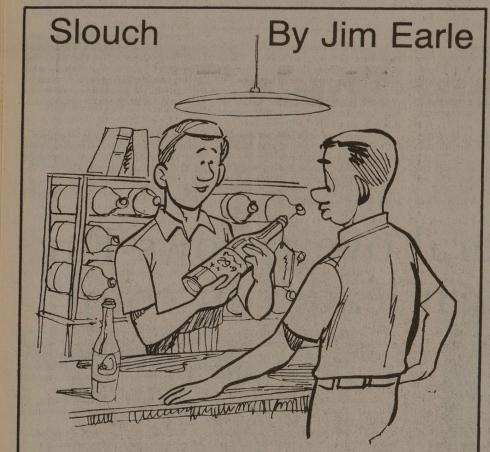
Dr. Geo Even writing about Bumpers'st ished Pr two weeks after the fact, might beaand Anthr dered irrelevant, were it not for other point the senator made. lecture ary Field'

'Completely aside from my owners rin, dismay and repugnance over Committee tion today," Bumpers said, "I amer sentation appalled by the virtual silence do dent Cem press, which either does not under sponsors sponsors the implications of this action ...... emester he variou has not been paying attention."

The precedent of this law, he persenting ex-out, can easily be used to restrict the speaker we eral courts from reviewing libeldee search or arginst the standard of the First Appendix search or against the standard of the First Am sponsored ment or examining police searchen newspaper premises for possible tion of the Fourth Amendment.

Tra In time, I think the South will be that one of its senators said what B

pers said about this assault on the of n tution. And the press will be aster of n



"And rarest of all is my quart of original, unopened gasoline, 29.9 cents per gallon vintage!"

pare for the next campaign

Iustice Department from seeking busing that more of us did not

## Letters: Bikes belong on the street such sense

**Editor:** 

I would like to make a comment on Roy Gunn's letter and all those graced with his opinion. I ride a bike on the street, have never hit a pedestrian or been hit by a car. The sidewalks are there for the 30-odd-thousand students, faculty and staff to walk on, not for you to take short-cuts on the way to class.

You may be one of those more intelligent bikers who pedals slowly, has both hands on the handle bars and watches

#### out for that student who will pop out from a doorway or abruptly change directions. But you must be an exception. Most of the people riding on the sidewalks have no common sense. Riding a bike without using your hands is asinine. not cool as you might think. For those of you that do, may a stone deflect your front tire while you are riding near a lampost. You will learn. Others think riding on a crowded sidewalk is a game where a near-miss at high speed is extra

bonus points. If you were going to ride

on the sidewalk, you should set speed at a fast walk when it is crow Would you try to speed your through rush-hour traffic?

Remember, you will be the onem ing injury, not the pedestrian. U.T. forbid, has the right idea - No Bike Sidewalk!! Until we get a similar ru heaven help you if you run into me Enough of your lazy crap!

> New Scho 1973: Rick Berkow

Loftus such topic Texas A&M University administrators or faculty bers, or of the Board of Regents. The Battalion also serves as a laboratory newsp She als Exper

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### Stop the real world, I want to get on

**by Dick West** WASHINGTON — I am indebted to the National Geographic Society for sending me maps showing the locations of South American Indian tribes, the sites of Aztec ruins in Mexico and other interesting points.

What I would like to see next is a map of the "real world" that President Reagan claims to have discovered out there beyond the blue horizon.

The capital of the "real world" apparently is a placed named South Succotash. But I can't find it on any of the maps in my collection.

Reagan has been quoted as saying the "real world" begins 50 miles in any direction from Washington. By my calculation, that means the nearest boundary lines pass a few miles north of Baltimore, east of the Chesapeake Bay, south of Fredericksburg, Va., and west of the Appalachian Trail. What is not clear to me is how far the

"real world" stretches beyond those peri-

meters and what lies on the other side. For what Reagan has said, for instance, it would appear that all of Califor-nia is in the "real world." Yet I keep hearing reports of "other worldly" behavior in certain segments of that state.

Could it be the "real world" is not actually as homogeneous as some of us who reside inside the 0-mile quarantine zone might have imagined?

A good map would settle such questions as surely as those of us on the Geographic's mailing list are now aware that the Botocudo Indians occupied part of the Amazon Basin.

For years, I heard rumors that a "real world" awaited pilgrims who ventured far enough across the wide Potomac. But, frankly, I never put much credence in such tales.

They seemed to me either to fall into the category of folklore, or to smack of over-the-rainbow figmentary regions like Oz and Shangri La.

I was convinced that if I went out seeking the "real world," I would end up at a jumping-off place near Culpepper, Va., without a parachute.

Then Reagan came along and made a true believer of me. The versimilitude of his accounts have stripped away all doubts that the "real world" really does exist.

Thus far, my attempts to make contact with the "real world" have been pretty much limited to perfunctory gestures like releasing homing pigeons on the chance they might bring back some sign of it in their beaks or talons.

I am told that if I am serious about getting in touch with reality I should send up a balloon with my name attached. They say someone in the "real world" will find it and mail it back to me.

I'm not sure I want to form any permanent attachments, however. The "real world" might be a nice place to visit, but I wouldn't want to live there.

### The Battalion

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