

## As I was saying



Jack Hilsher

This business I am involved with is, of course, the newspaper industry. My newspaper is, I firmly believe, an excellent one, and deserves far wider readership. This is especially true since I started writing this column. No, just kidding. It was true before, but unfortunately one group of potential POST readers is probably not the least bit interested. That's the so-called "Generation X."

NEWSWEEK says many of those in this age group of 18 to 29 never leave their TVs or their magazines or their computers, even to merely glance (ugh!) at a newspaper. That would be, like, uncool, man.

In the 70s two-thirds of all young people read newspapers regularly but today that statistic is down to only one-half! "To be relevant to young readers, newspapers have to change," says Al Gollin, research director for the Newspaper Association of America.

## J.W.J.



John W. Johnson

In the late 80's a man received a speeding ticket in the state of Maine. What followed this traffic violation turned out to be not so simple.

It seems that a Philadelphia man was clocked by radar; the radar said the man was traveling 45 miles per hour in a 25 mile per hour zone. A district court judge directed the man to pay a \$50 fine.

The man protested, saying the radar unit was malfunctioning, and that he was going down a steep grade while lost. The judge disallowed the man's protests and directed him to pay the fine.

Dissatisfied with the court's decision, the man went to the trouble of rolling \$50 in pennies; he then mailed them to the court in a 38-pound box.

The judge was not pleased and ruled that the pennies were unacceptable; in effect, saying that they were not legal tender.

It's not hard to understand the man's frustration at what he considers to be an injustice. And there is some measure of understanding of the judge's dismay at the man's method of displaying his frustration.

However, the man had a right to do what he did. The judge did not have the constitutional right to declare pennies (or any other currency) illegal tender. Such a declaration is reserved unto Congress and Congress alone.

The fact that the judge believed he could make such a declaration illustrates how far the mentality of the Judiciary has gone from its constitutional mandate of interpreting law to creating new law and/or manipulating existing law to suit special interests.

The Judge's decision was not upheld on appeal. But should the man who was fined have to pay an additional \$500 for a \$50 question which has already been answered, the question being Judicial attitude, not the veracity of radar?

This case clearly illustrates a runaway Judiciary, something that, i.e., rejected Supreme Court nominee Judge Robert Bork was clearly opposed to, and which opposition was the chief reason he was defeated by Congressional liberals who see the Judiciary as kind of an erector set for the masses.

How did we get to this point? Compromise ultimately evolved out of the debate over what our constitution should and should not be. And a republican democracy—the people ruling themselves through elected representation—came out of that debate. Also out of that debate came the three branches of government and the theoretical checks and balance system whereby no one branch of government is supposed to be stronger than the other.

Of course, some of those checks and balances are dependent upon attitude and ideas and the attitude and ideas in this nation, concerning Congressional versus Judicial responsibility, have been at odds with the constitution since

## A pointed column of thoroughly modern news

ica. So the good grey NY TIMES believed old Al and changed. They added a new section called "Styles" which appeared on Sundays. It has had four editors in two years and appears on shaky ground. However as an example of how hard they tried to be hip and appeal to the young, they once covered one of Generation X's pet crazes called "body piercing."

Well, what's good enough for the Big T is good enough for me. Today we examine that popular practice. You need to know about these things anyway.

Body piercing moves the traditional earlobe location to other parts of the body, really almost anywhere. This includes the tongue, chest, lips, nose and some other "I'd rather not mention" parts. It is not like tattooing which is illegal in some states; body piercing can be done by anyone who owns a needle. And, it has yet to become illegal anywhere. It involves dangling jewelry from the pierced part...rings, hoops or chains.

In a popular eastern shore resort six stores on their ocean boulevard offer piercing services, all supposedly staffed by "experts." Piercing by a needle costs up to \$80; if by a gun only \$17. Sterilization, sometimes offered at no charge, is questionable at best. In

one stretch of a relatively few blocks over 75 piercings were done on 18 to 30-year olds in one day.

A South Carolina paper, the Myrtle Beach SUN, polled young people with this result: three out of every four said they would consider body piercing because it gets people noticed. One 17-year old said, "It's different, so you get attention with it." Only one called it "gross."

Interestingly, body piercing has a long history. It was first mentioned in the Bible as a way to mark slaves who ask to remain in servitude after six years. And in many African tribes it has served to indicate everything from fertility to adulthood.

In the Western world it first gained attention by repeated showings on MTV. There are, however, some horror stories which don't get any air time. There have been deformities from sloppy work, nerve damage and even virus infections. The Department of Health has managed to stay out of it so far, nor has any legislature acted.

But there you have the change necessary in this column's material so as to make the paper become more relevant to younger readers. (VOICEOVER: The opinions, expressed are his own.) Truly, a cool subject. Subscriptions, anyone?

## Dangers of judicial excess

the middle of the last century when Congress deferred making a decision in the Dred Scott slavery case. Congress instead deferred the decision making process to the Judiciary where upon the Supreme Court decided that a slave was not a citizen. The courts of this land have been making effectively monumental social policy decisions every since.

It's not the court's decision in the Dred Scott case that's at issue here. The issue is what branch of government made that decision. Since the Dred Scott case, this nation has been accustomed to the notion that the Judiciary will make policy decisions that a cowardly Congress will not make.

There is no convincing evidence that the Judiciary sought both the role of initiator and interpreter; it's clear that the Judiciary has often acted out of an honest desire to deal with problems which were begging for solutions.

And it is in fact that the self-indulgent and impatient citizen who is largely behind this abdication of Congressional responsibility. It is because of a citizen obsession with immediate gratification that the process of policy being made after considered debate has been by-passed, instead going directly to court.

The danger here is that this process means it's not the people through elected representation who face the nation's problems, deal with them, and come up with policy making decisions. Rather it is the Judiciary which is largely unaccountable to the people. And accountability is the cornerstone of the republican democracy process.

The man who was fined for speeding was notified by the court that his pennies were not legal tender, and that if he didn't send a money order to the court by a certain date, his driving privileges would be suspended.

The issue here goes well beyond the frustration and attendant actions of a man judged to be guilty of violating a traffic law. The issue is how much longer a nation can afford to let the Judiciary

usurp powers which constitutionally belong to the legislative branch of government.

The ball is now in your court. And the answer is to elect men and women of conviction to Congress, representatives who will not shirk their constitutional responsibilities, while seeking curbs on the Judiciary for a referral of social issues back to Congress.

Otherwise, we can expect to be ruled in the future by ever more provincial little kings in various courts from whom we must beg the least of indulgences.

## Fire damages bar under renovation

By GRACE R. DOVE Post Staff

An early morning fire October 17 damaged the back wall of the Countryside Inn at Demunds Corners, Dallas Township, but quick work by firefighters prevented major damage.

According to Kunkle fire chief Jack Dodson, firefighters could see the flames from Lake Catalpa when they answered the call shortly after 3 a.m.

"The dispatcher had told us that the whole building was involved," Dodson said. "We were very concerned. In case of a fire

there, Dallas is automatically dispatched with us because the building is very old and made of wood. It has roofs on top of roofs and no partitions. If it had spread, the whole place would have gone up."

Trooper Kelly from the Pennsylvania State Police fire marshal's office at Shickshinny is investigating the cause, which is still undetermined, Dodson said.

The fire burned through the back wall of the dining room and sent smoke throughout the entire building, Dodson said.

A tenant in an upstairs apartment wasn't home at the time of

the fire, Dodson said.

Firefighters believe the blaze started outside the building behind the dining room, near where an air conditioner is mounted in an outside wall, he said.

The Dallas Township police and tankers and firefighters from Franklin Township, Franklin-Northmoreland and Trucksville assisted Kunkle and Dallas at the scene.

Dodson estimated the damage at \$10,000.

The Countryside Inn was recently purchased by Bob Fox, who had been remodeling it, Dodson said.

## More local news and ads The Dallas Post

THE SEASON IS *fall*

THE COAT IS

VERICCI

Bee Witching

119 JEFFERSON AVE. DOWNTOWN SCRANTON

MON. - TUE. SAT. 10:15-5:30 P.M. - TUE. 10:15-7PM

### This Seminar Is For People With One Thing On Their Mind.

So you like the idea of being a homeowner. But you're having a tough time getting your head around stuff like points, escrow, principal and such. A good reason to come to our next seminar. Where you'll learn all about buying a house; from budgeting to negotiating to closing. So come. And see what you think.

**Mellon Bank**  
*You're why we do our very best.®*

#### HOME BUYING SEMINARS

<p>Wilkes-Barre October 25, 1994 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. St. Stephen's Episcopal Church Community Room 35 South Franklin Street Parking is available in Mellon Bank Parkade R.S.V.P. to 826-5300</p>	<p>Stroudsburg October 27, 1994 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. St. Luke's Roman Catholic Church Lower Level 818 Main Street Parking is available R.S.V.P. to 424-7173</p>	<p>Milford November 1, 1994 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. Delaware Valley High School Lecture Hall #1 Route 209 Parking is available R.S.V.P. to 296-8576</p>
---	---	--

© 1994 Mellon Bank Corporation

Mellon Bank, N.A. Member FDIC. Northeastern Region

### NEW SPECIALS

at  
**FOUR SEASONS GOLF CLUB**  
7 days a week, after 4 P.M.

**ALL THE HOLES YOU CAN PLAY**  
with Motor Cart

**ONLY \$10<sup>00</sup>**

**TUESDAY SPECIAL**  
All Day 18 Holes w/Cart \$13<sup>50</sup>  
or \$16<sup>00</sup> w/Lunch & Beverage  
**655-8869**  
(Twilight is now 4 P.M.)

**NITE GOLF TOURNAMENT**  
Fri., Oct. 21st.

"Capt. & Crew Format" registration at 6 P.M. Shotgun start at 7 P.M. \$22/person inc. 9 holes of golf, glow balls, tees, pins, necklaces, markers, etc. and prizes for winners in several flights. Sign up AT PRO SHOP OR CALL 655-8869 to reserve foursome.