

# The Washington Post

AN INDEPENDENT NEWSPAPER

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### *The World's Most Boring Headlines*

I'm delighted to note that, whereas some newspapers merely editorialize about major issues in journalism, The Washington Post actually does something about them. I refer to The Post's recent initiative to combat boring headlines, with particular commendation for two superb instances of what Michael Kinsley ["In Search of the World's Most Boring Headline," op-ed, May 14] would probably label the gastronomic headline: "H. Robert Heller to Be Fed Nominee" [May 13] and "Ronald Reagan's Fed" [May 14].

JOHN F. ANDREWS  
Washington

I thoroughly enjoyed Michael Kinsley's very funny column, "In Search of the World's Most Boring Headline." He quite rightly gave special prominence to the "stating-the-obvious" category, saying, "it would be difficult to top 'Soviet Economy in Need of Changes.'"

But I think The Post did top it—and only two days later. May I nominate May 14's Metro headline, "Developer Urges Building of Outer Beltway"? For obviousness, this swamps Mr. Kinsley's other examples.

SUSAN SHAUGHNESSY  
Washington

On the very morning The Post ran Michael Kinsley's op-ed whimsy on boring headlines, and

even entered into the spirit of the thing with unaccustomed editorial banter ["Worthwhile Kinsley Initiative," May 14], a headline on the front page earned at least honorable mention in the "how's-that-again?" category: "U.S. Envoy Aggravates Paraguay."

It's hard to visualize how a U.S. ambassador could have worsened the already difficult situation in Paraguay, but if he did, he sure must have exasperated the Stroessner regime.

ALBERT CIZAUSKAS  
Falls Church

Realizing as I do that newspapers must jazz up their rhetoric in order to make their articles readable, I must nevertheless maintain that there are still some readers who would gladly sacrifice some of the journalistic fluff and hyperbole for crunchy, solid truth.

If an article is pointing in the right direction, one doesn't have to stand on one's head to convince people of that fact. A headline should, above all, tell the reader what the article is all about, rather than make him waste his time finding out.

To imply, as did Mr. Kinsley, that the unforgivable journalistic sin is to grind out a headline whose only virtue is its truth is to demean his profession and intelligent readers.

DAVID S. KING  
Kensington