



Home Page
Chicago: <i>Southwest Side</i>
Ray Hanania Online
Featured Writers
Other Voices
World Views
Restaurant Reviews
Southwest Side Events
Arts & Entertainment
Automotive
Education
Finance
Health & Beauty
Home & Family
Science
Sports & Recreation
Travel & Leisure

[Home](#) | [About Us](#) | [Advertising Info](#) | [Classifieds](#) | [Contact Us](#)



Posting Date: September 20, 2006

Fattened Political Egos Garnish Bloated Duck Liver

By **RAY HANANIA**

Mayor Daley claims that Chicago is the laughing stock of the United States because the Chicago City Council a few months back approved an ordinance that bans the sale of foie gras, a liver delicacy that comes from tortured ducks and geese.

I searched the Internet to find examples of the laughter but can only find references to Daley's decision to destroy Meigs Field claiming it was a potential target of Osama Bin Laden and al-Qaeda. The Government this week fined Chicago nearly \$40,000 for destroying the airport without FAA approval.

And I found a reference to people laughing at the offices of Wal-Mart and many of the nation's large retailers as they recorded record earnings just this week while their employees will continue to slave for minimum wages after Daley vetoed the so-called "Big Box" ordinance.

Wal-Mart, Target and other large merchandisers that make more than \$1 billion a year in revenue, announced plans to bring more stores into Chicago now that Daley has defended their right to squeeze profits out of the low-waged employees.

No, I did not hear many people laughing at Chicago over the foie gras ban, but I did hear some people who have a decent respect for animals.

As many of you now know, foie gras is a liver meal that is a delicacy because it is rare. It is not a natural liver at all but it only comes from ducks and geese that are force-fed to excessive weight using metal pipes shoved down their throats causing their livers to enlarge over a period of several months.

As the duck and geese suffer, the liver grows in size and allows restaurants to profit greatly by selling the dish.

Laughing hysterically are the lobbyists for the restaurant industry

Home Page
Chicago: <i>Southwest Side</i>
Ray Hanania Online
Featured Writers
Other Voices
World Views
Restaurant Reviews
Southwest Side Events
Arts & Entertainment
Automotive
Education
Finance
Health & Beauty
Home & Family
Science
Sports & Recreation
Travel & Leisure

that protested the City Council's vote on April 16 and who have been assured that Daley would bend as many political arms in the City Council to force them to repeal the law which was adopted by an overwhelming vote of aldermen, 48 to 1. They are planning a lawsuit against the city if the foie gras ban is not repealed.

While the Big Box vote was approved by a smaller margin, Daley was able to veto it last week when he convinced three aldermen to turn their backs on residents and stand by the artful lobbying of the merchandiser's and their threats to hold the people of Chicago hostage.

But the vote on foie gras was too large and a veto is impossible.

However, Daley has ridiculed the aldermen so much that when the ordinance is re-introduced for a recall vote maybe next week, aldermen who have been pummeled back into rubber-stamp-hood will simply do whatever Daley asks.

A curve ball comes in the form of divine intervention this week, only days before the Holy Jewish New Year holiday of Rosh Hashana.

Several Chicago rabbis openly called on the City Council to stand by the ordinance and they reached out to the only two Jewish aldermen for their support.

The rabbis said that the measures taken to make foie gras constitutes animal abuse.

According to several reports, rabbis warned the two Jewish aldermen that they would "invoke the wrath of God" if they backed down.

Now, I am not sure if God would be mad because the aldermen would have backed down twice under the bullying and intimidating influence of Mayor Daley and his big-buck backers, or because they would be turning a blind eye to the unnecessary pain and suffering of animals that are most often seen barking around small lakes and ponds in the Chicago area, or being run over as they try to cross major intersections by uncaring motorists.

"The cruelty inflicted on animals in the production of foie gras is unspeakable," wrote Rabbi Asher Lopatin of Anshe Sholom B'Nail Israel Congregation. "It is undeniably disgusting in the eyes of God and in the eyes of any civilized person."

The former director of the Simon Wiesenthal Center for Holocaust Studies, Jana Kohl, wrote she would do "everything in my power to defeat your misguided efforts" at a repeal. "It's the only food item that can only be raised by torturing an animal," Kohl said.

"Beyond the Kosher dietary laws, God has told us to do what is "good and proper in the eyes of God," Rabbi Lopatin reportedly wrote in the letter to the two Jewish aldermen, Bernard Stone and Burton S. Natarus.

Kohl added, "As the only two Jewish members of the Council, it's particularly shameful and disgraceful of you to turn your back on our cherished concept of 'tikun olam,' namely our obligation to make our world a better, more compassionate place."

Ironically, Kohl is the granddaughter of the man who founded Kohl's Department store, one of the non-Big Box retailers that not only does a good job paying its employees but also has a great

reputation for good quality clothing buys.

My wife Alsion shops there and her being Jewish, she also sympathizes with the issue coming up as it does just before her High Holy Days begin.

Now, because I care about my wife's opinion, I tend to agree that the law should stand. And rather than being a national joke, as Mayor Daley asserts, Chicago is in fact a city of conscience that stands for an important principle that we will not close our eyes to suffering, be it ducks, geese, aldermen or employees of greedy mass merchandizers who successfuly opposed the Big Box ordinance.

[Responses to this column](#)

[E-mail this column to a friend.](#)

(Ray Hanania writes about everything under the sun. You can reach him at rayhanania@aol.com.) Visit www.tvchicagoland.com to view Hanania's interviews with local Chicagoland politicians and community leaders.

Serving readers in Orland Park, Tinley Park, Frankfort, Mokena, Palos Park, Palos Hills, Palos Heights, Oak Lawn, Burbank, Bridgeview.

[Home](#) | [About Us](#) | [Advertising Info](#) | [Classifieds](#) | [Contact Us](#)

© Copyright 2006 Vondrak Publishing Company, Inc.

Home Page
Chicago: <i>Southwest Side</i>
Ray Hanania Online
Featured Writers
Other Voices
World Views
Restaurant Reviews
Southwest Side Events
Arts & Entertainment
Automotive
Education
Finance
Health & Beauty
Home & Family
Science
Sports & Recreation
Travel & Leisure