Coffe or tea? This common question asked by air hostesses in long flights would have been a real soothing luxury for Captain Charles A. Lindbergh, the great boyish-looking American aviation hero, during his epoch-making 33 and a half hour non-stop flight across the Atlantic between New York and Paris in the years which saw him shoved away a doctor who wished to administer pills and a hypodermic injection.

Flying through snow and sleet, sometimes upside down, at an average of 107 miles per hour in his single engine one-seat plane, Spirit of Saint Louis, he occasionally fell sleep and could only manage a stretch of the imagination and no wonder, as the New York Times explained, that the aviator looked pale and strained when he arrived at Le Bourget at 2:10 pm that Saturday 21st of May 1927. But Lindbergh, the report goes on, had already stacked up on the goodies I will feed to my precious tió, each day stuffing him with the orange rings and candy bar wrappers while I dispense with the leftover fruit and sweets. (We wouldn’t want anything to go to waste now, would we?). Ah, yes. I feel the big day approaching when I soon will pat his barky cheek and feed him his last meal of the year while whispering, “It won’t be long now my dear, shortly you can let it all go.”

Then the day itself will arrive when out comes the stick and the public beating begins. With only a little towel to let the poor tió retain a modicum of dignity, we all join in the medieval flogging space to expand my argument but let me just state that this situation cannot be solved only with money. We should not follow the example of those parents or relatives who try to solve problems with money at the problems than anything else.

I will go so far as to say that the education system is in a very bad way and has been corrupted – it’s as simple as that! All sectors in the education community are partially to blame, perhaps some more than others.

- Teachers who are more concerned with their own interests than anything else.

- Parents who are more interested in the babysitting function of schools than anything else.

- The administration, which is more interested in appearances and throwing money at the problems than anything else.

What is true is that the spirit of public service has been lost. I would need more space to expand my argument but let me just state that this situation cannot be solved only with money. We should not follow the example of those parents or relatives who try to solve problems with gifts.

And yet I want to believe that there is hope! There are still good teachers in schools, good parents, bright pupils and responsible administrators.

XAVIER GASSOT
GIRONA

THE STING BY JAP

NOT EXACTLY

'Stis the Season

Although it may seem to be a tad bit soon to be talking about Christmas holiday preparations, I for one think that it is never too early to unearth the old yule tide trunk from the back of the closet, dust it off, repaint its cute smiling face and get it ready for the gift-giving to begin.

I must admit that every year I get that special shiver running like jingling bells up my spine with anticipation as I set out our cagatió on the mantel.

I have already stocked up on the goodies I will feed to my precious tió, each day slowing stuffing him with the orange rings and candy bar wrappers while I dispense with the leftover fruit and sweets. (We wouldn’t want anything to go to waste now, would we?).

Ah, yes. I feel the big day approaching when I soon will pat his barky cheek and feed him his last meal of the year while whispering, “It won’t be long now my dear, shortly you can let it all go.”

Then the day itself will arrive when out comes the stick and the public beating begins. With only a little towel to let the poor tió retain a modicum of dignity, we all join in the medieval flogging which forces the reluctant, naughty, rebellious, little tió to loosen his bowels and let flow the gifts and sweets for all the family to enjoy.

Yes, the time is drawing near when I will no longer have to retain my enthusiasm built up during the entire year, holding it in even when the pressure grows quite uncomfortable, even unbearable. I dare say, waiting for the anal, I mean, annual release of my built-up holiday glee.

SCHOOLS UNDERACHIEVING

As a secondary school teacher with 36 years of service, I believe I have earned the right to give my opinion on the latest public reports on school performance (PISA, Fundació Bofill): the real situation is even worse.

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