

Lee May

It's Odd Party Time

In one corner we have Jimmy Carter slugging it out with Teddy Kennedy. In the other corner, Big Jaw Connally and a ring full of challengers bounce off the GOP champ, Ronnie Reagan, erstwhile hero of B-Grade movies.

While these would-be-presidents are the main event, they certainly aren't the only event. The campaign ring, as always, is peopled also with offbeat, out-of-the-mainstream fighters who surface every four years, only to be tossed aside as voters rush to the two big parties.

As usual, the Libertarian Party holds its head high, especially in New York. A recent story in The New York Times details the bravado of the party that faces impossible odds. Although the party in 1978 drew only 171,627 votes for its presidential candidate, this year's runner feels the people are ripe for a Libertarian victory: "Many things have happened to make them ready," says Ed Clark. He goes on to cite the Vietnam War, Watergate and inflation as reasons for declining faith in government.

The party has something for everyone. To "conservatives" it offers a free market economy, heavy cuts in taxes and in welfare. To "liberals" it offers proposals to decrease military spending, and to repeal laws forbidding drug use and sex among consenting adults.

Clearly, a party like this cannot stand; it has no sizable, hardcore constituency. But if you think presidential candidate Clark is worried, think again. He says: "If we ever get discouraged, we can look at the quality of the Republicans and Democrats."

Then, there's the Citizens Party. It's new, and, like the Libertarian Party, it hopes to translate disenchantment with the Big Two into victory for itself. With roots in the environmentalist movement, the Citizens Party is a natural attraction for those in the antinu-

clear movements, labor movements and those in small business who are being moved out by big business.

Playing the industrial giants, Barry Commoner, ecologist and possible presidential nominee, says, "Our system today no more resembles free enterprise than a freeway resembles a dirt road. Small businesses of all kinds are being squeezed out. A multinational corporation can switch profits to a subsidiary in Panama when we tax it, switch jobs to a plant in Taiwan when American workers ask higher wages or make a dangerous pesticide in Brazil when its manufacture is banned in the United States."

The man is right, but unfortunately not many people care.

Commoner, (even the name is right for a man of the people) Clark, and the rest of the members of their parties have good points to make, but surely they don't expect the points to make a dent in the presidential picture. And it's going to be rough getting their points to make a dent in the way this country does business.

Nevertheless, they serve a useful purpose. Political parties outside the well-worn path trod by the Big Two remind us that alternatives do exist, that fresh ideas not usually postulated by conventional candidates are available for our perusal. Occasionally, one of these "offbeat" ideas finds its way into the platform of one of the major party because some stubborn delegate sees the light and refuses to be shouted down by his less venture-some peers.

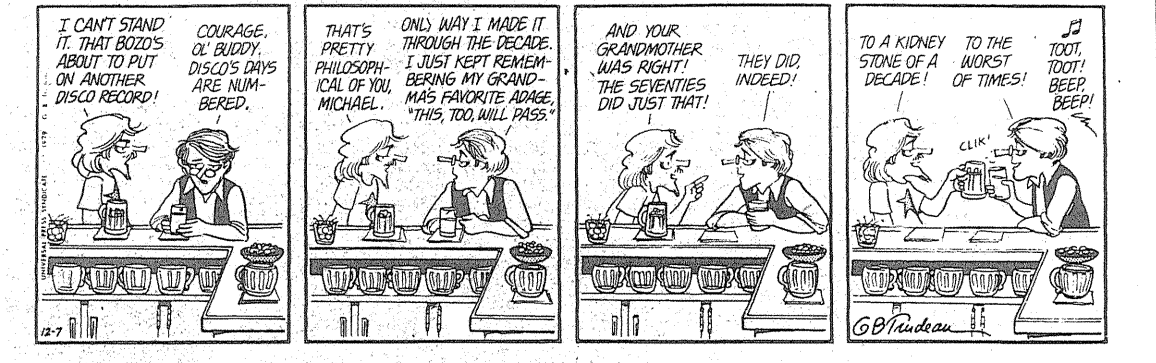
That may be the most the odd parties out can expect.

As for the rest of us, we can expect Campaign '80 to spawn everything from promises of monumental cuts in income taxes to assurances that inflation will come to a screeching halt to plans on forming a U.S.-Canadian-Mexican alliance to slogans guaranteed to make America strong and whole again.

And not all that will come from the odd parties out; our old standbys, the Democrats and the Republicans, will promise us anything, too. It'll all show that the odd parties aren't really so odd. Just small, that's all.



DOONESBURY



Pulse Of The Public

'Underpaid ...' Series: 'Excellent Work'

ATLANTA — My dear friends, I want to thank you for the very excellent work on "The Underpaid And Under-Protected" series. This is a service of value which cannot be overestimated.

The writing is superior and the facts are true. Please thank and praise Paul Lieberman, Chester Goolrick, Lee May, Charlene Smith-Williams and Steve Johnson.

I have read and enjoyed The Atlanta Constitution for 47 years.

JULIA N. CLIFTON

Conserving Gasoline

ATLANTA — There is every incentive for every American to conserve gasoline—to show resolve and unity of purpose by voluntary action. It seems a very simple way to start would be for everyone who usually drives to work every day to use public transportation—just one day a week for starters! That alone would more than make up for the three miles per day less driving recommended to neutralize the loss of Iranian oil.

The inconvenience is minimal—although if the idea caught on no doubt MARTA would have to put on more equipment and add personnel. But I suggest we try it for a couple of months—and then who knows we might add carpooling, try MARTA twice a week and so on.

It's a challenge—a small one—but one challenge met may give a big boost to national morale.

JOSEPH F. HAAS

Reineke's Courage

ATLANTA — Robert Lamb's reportage on Chuck Reineke's defense of the First Amendment was yet another reminder that some Americans are eager to dilute that part of our common inheritance which sets us apart from virtually the rest of the world.

I know Powder Springs to be a pleasant place; I hope those who enjoy its quiet virtues will commend the monumental virtue reflected in Chuck Reineke's courage. The fellow has guts.

Too few of us are willing to translate our consciences into action. Too many of us see no danger

in a high school administrator's denial of Mr. Jefferson's gift to us. I hope Chuck Reineke's classmates watch and listen.

This is a lesson in Americanism which is rarely taught in civics class. It's what we are all about, or ought to be.

GENE MOORE

Blacks And Iran

ATLANTA — Sure proof that the Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini is crazy is exemplified in his recent request, directed to black Americans, to turn against our country.

I send one message to Khomeini from this Georgia elected official:

Black Americans love our country. Proud, brave and courageous black Americans fought and died, in every war, to build and protect the United States. Now, on the issue of Iran, black Americans stand together — side by side and hand in hand — with all Americans in our resolve to take a tough stand against terrorism, hatred, mob violence and satanic blackmail in the Middle East.

The United States must hang tough on this one.

DAVID SCOTT
State Rep., District 37

Ban Autos?

POWDER SPRINGS — Here we go again. People are coming out of the woodwork proposing to solve our crime problem by infringing on honest citizens' constitutional right to bear arms: "A well regulated militia, being necessary to the security of a free state, the right of the people to keep and bear arms shall not be infringed."

I have followed the anti-gun rhetoric very closely in the press, and in every instance the anti-gun people pushed to have the gun indicted, tried and hanged to the nearest tree. Nowhere have they proposed that we mete out this punishment to the real culprit, the criminal.

Are the public officials who push for such laws really trying to save lives or do they love the media coverage which comes with such proposals?

If they are really sincere in their desire to save

lives, they should go after the most dangerous killer on our streets today — the automobile.

Why don't they amend their anti-gun proposal to include a 60-day waiting period before you can purchase an automobile? During this time the police could fingerprint you and check to see if you have a record. Of course, all persons that have a drinking, drug or mental problem would have to be denied a permit. (I wonder how many public officials would lose their driving privileges.)

Unconstitutional, they scream! Certainly not. Nowhere in our Constitution is there an amendment that states the keeping and using of an automobile shall not be infringed.

JOHN POOLE

Stop Hysteria

PHOENIX, Ariz. — We have an excellent chance as a nation to take an important step for our future in the Iranian controversy, and we do not need the help of the Iranian government to do it.

The anti-Iranian hysteria of recent weeks is along the line of the anti-German and anti-Japanese hysterias of the two world wars. Fortunately, legal action by the U.S. attorney general to protect the civil rights of fired Iranians is substantial reason to believe that the current hysteria has not become government policy as it did in the two wars.

This gives the American people a chance to grow out of the primitive methods and fears, and the ignorance and biases which they implement, but the help of the news media is vital to the result. Historically,

The most valuable Iranians among us are either citizens or long-time residents. They include some of the world's most respected people, and in the world of Islam none are regarded more highly. They were not, and are not, pro-shah, pro-fanatical Islamic religion, or any other fanaticism or tyranny. They did not come to the U.S. to get rich, but to obtain the liberty and freedom which has always been circumscribed in Iran. They have been, and could be again, of great help to the U.S., not excluding liberating the hostages unharmed. But hysteria is blind, and strikes these of the Iranians as readily as the newest arrival.

DANIEL E. MOORE

Other Voices

Jordan And The Ethics Act

NEW YORK — Far from tarnishing Hamilton Jordan's name, the appointment of a special prosecutor in his case goes far toward clearing it. More important, the move suggests that even though Mr. Jordan is President Carter's closest aide, the administration is working to resolve the case in a way likely to win public confidence.

Attorney General Civiletti reported that a three-month Justice Department investigation of charges concerning cocaine possession turned up nothing worth prosecuting, and very little worth further investigation. But then Mr. Civiletti demonstrated how scrupulous the administration means to be. He interprets the 1978 Ethics in Government Act to mean that even this remaining investigation requires an independent prosecutor. That is because the charges, though minor, involve so high an official. The purpose of the act, after all, was to avoid the appearance of an administration clearing itself.

The way the episode has been handled so far reflects credit on the law, as well as the way Mr. Civiletti construes it. It has not produced anything like the political catastrophe some predicted. Mr. Jordan is still rightly presumed innocent and rightly retains his White House post. Meanwhile, the charges diminish in seriousness and substantiality.

The attorney general also correctly construed the law to prevent his department's

regular prosecutors from empaneling grand juries and coercing testimony from witnesses in the initial three-month investigation. Arthur Christy, the new special prosecutor, has full powers to determine whether the remaining coke-sniffing accusation is supported by substantial evidence. We assume he has the wide discretion to drop even substantiated charges if Justice Department policy would not allow prosecution of a less celebrated citizen. He is well-equipped by experience and ability to carry the case to a just conclusion.

We trust Mr. Christy also will pursue the question of whether Mr. Jordan was falsely accused out of malice. Doing so could discourage abuse of the law during the election campaign.

The Ethics Act has many critics, most notably prosecutors. They say it unfairly presumes lack of integrity in the Justice Department and they note, correctly, that this Watergate-inspired statute covers offenses far less severe than the high crimes of that scandal. But the scope of the law — broad as to offenses covered and selective in the officials affected — is one of its chief virtues. The issue here is not whether an accusation involves a minor offense but whether the result is credible. The process may temporarily inflate a coke snort into a federal case, but to a public that has come routinely to suspect cover-up, it is a price well worth paying.

The New York Times

Charles B. Seib

Judging The News Business

(Charles B. Seib, as explained in this column, served five years as ombudsman for The Washington Post. In addition, he wrote a syndicated column, "The News Business.")

WASHINGTON — Way back in 1947, the Hutchins Commission on Freedom of the Press urged the news business to adopt "a resolute policy of criticism of the press by the press." In 1967, A.H. Raskin of The New York Times proposed that newspapers set up "departments of internal criticism" that would represent the interests of their readers.

Out of those suggestions came the newspaper ombudsman, a modest attempt by the press to deal with the paradox of the unwatched watchdog. The press, which monitors and, in effect, disciplines the other institutions of society, is not itself monitored or disciplined.

About 20 American newspapers now have ombudsmen on their staffs. Since there are about 1,750 daily newspapers, this is not a landslide movement. It is growing, but very slowly.

Five years ago I joined this tiny band (then even tinier) under a five-year contract with The Washington Post. The contract expired last month, and The Post and I parted company, as was agreed at the start.

There is no set job description for the newspaper ombudsman; each brings different qualifications to the job and each works under a different set of rules. What follows represents the findings of one ombudsman only — this one.

First, what did I learn about the customers — the readers whose interest I tried to represent? I learned early on that newspaper readers are more perceptive than most editors realize. I say that as a former editor.

Readers are quick to notice the flaws that crop up in every newspaper — the headline that goes beyond what follows, the distortions caused by what we in the business call the "hype" and "needle" or the biases of the reporter, the unjustified implications of over-display or under-display.

While quick to detect these flaws, readers tend to ascribe the wrong reasons. Too often they see errors of judgment and mistakes caused by deadline pressure and outright stupidities as evidences of a deliberate slanting of the news.

We of the press are to blame for this conspiracy theory of journalism. We have a tradition of aloofness from our customers and a totally unjustified posture of infallibility that encourages such suspicions.

I also learned that readers care about their newspaper. They admit it to their homes as they would a friend, and they want it to be

have honestly and honorably, as they would expect a friend to behave.

They may not think deeply about the implications of the First Amendment or rush to the defense of the press when the courts slap it down. But, I am convinced, they recognize that the free press is important to them as citizens in a democracy.

Although they may be disappointed in the press and even distrustful of it, there are few among them who would say that it should not be free. They want a better, more responsible press, but not a fettered one.

And what did I learn about the reporters and editors who put out our newspapers?

My reactions may be distorted by my own journalistic background, but here they are: I believe that news people are, as a group, deeply dedicated to their mission of informing the public. I have known good journalists and bad ones; I have never known a dishonest one. Having said that, I must also say that elitism is an occupational disease in newsrooms and editorial offices, and humility is in very short supply. Publish and be damned is the mood today, and compassion is synonymous with softness.

Finally, the bottom line. Were the last five years worth The Post's money and my time?

I think the answer is yes, followed by a quick acknowledgement that an ombudsman's triumphs are few and his frustrations are many.

The effectiveness of the ombudsman is limited by one essential fact. He is always dealing after the fact. Since he does not — and should not — take part in the operation of the newspaper, by the time he registers readers' complaints or his own, the paper has been printed, read and used to wrap the garbage.

While he can promote the publication of corrections, they have limited value. They can rectify errors of fact, but we haven't found a way to make amends for the story that should never have been printed, or for the story correct in its fact but wrong in its implications. Or the one that should have been printed but wasn't and now won't be because it is "old news."

To be at all effective, the ombudsman must have the right of publication — that is, his paper must be willing to print what he writes about it, however critical. Sometimes he can use that right to repair damages.

But all too often, the most he can offer the irate reader or the injured party is an explanation and an apology. That is when he tells himself that his efforts have a cumulative value that transcends the daily score.

THE ELVES AT WOLF MAKE CHRISTMAS GIVING EASY!

WOLF CAMERA SUPPLY

WE WILL "MEET OR BEAT" ANY LOCAL CURRENT LEGITIMATE ADVERTISED PRICE

<p>PENTAX KM OUTFIT INCLUDES: • KM BODY WITH 50mm f/2.0 • PENTAX AF-16 ELECTRONIC FLASH • PENTAX CASE \$249⁹⁵</p>	<p>PENTAX AUTO 110 OUTFIT INCLUDES: • AUTO 110 SLR • PENTAX-110 24mm f/2.8 LENS • PENTAX-110 50mm f/2.8 LENS • PENTAX-110 18mm f/2.8 LENS • 110 WINDER • AF-130P • SOFT CASE • STRAP \$299⁹⁵</p>
<p>MINOLTA POCKET 470 KIT \$79⁹⁵</p>	<p>MINOLTA XG-7 & MINOLTA XG-1 OUTFIT w/45 mm f/2.0 • WITH MINOLTA ELECTRO FLASH 14 w/45 mm f/2.0 \$239⁹⁵</p>

<p>POLAROID CLINIC! BRING YOUR POLAROID TO US FOR FREE CHECK-UP! SOUTH DEKALB MALL: FRI., DEC. 7, 5 pm-9 pm LENOX SQUARE: Sat., Dec. 8, 11 am-4 pm PERIMETER MALL: SAT., DEC. 8, 5 pm-9 pm</p>	<p>NIKON FM w/50 mm f/1.8E \$289⁹⁵</p> <p>CANON A-1 w/50 mm f/1.8 \$399⁹⁵</p>	<p>VIVITAR 35 ES OUTFIT \$99⁹⁵ • INCLUDES: QUANTARAY MINI ELECTRONIC FLASH w/40mm f/1.7</p>
---	---	--

<p>POLAROID ONE-STEP WOLF'S LOW PRICE VALUE OF \$28.88 FILM & FLASH -9.98 *18⁹⁰</p>	<p>POLAROID SONAR LAND CAMERAS 2 FREE FILM & FLASH A \$16.97 VALUE FREE! WOLF'S LOW PRICE VALUE OF 2 FILM & FLASH *52⁹⁸</p>
--	--

<p>POLAROID PRONTO WOLF'S LOW PRICE VALUE OF 2 FILM & FLASH *157⁹⁸</p>	<p>POLAROID SX-70 WOLF'S LOW PRICE VALUE OF 2 FILM & FLASH *157⁹⁸</p>
---	--

WOLF CAMERA SUPPLY

• MAIN STORE • 150 14th STREET • 892-1707
• 90-DAY NO INTEREST FINANCING AVAILABLE
• WE ACCEPT TRADE-INS!

• LENOX SQUARE 237-3388
• DOWNTOWN Next to Regency Hotel 577-8958
• OLD NATIONAL HWY. College Park 768-1606

• PERIMETER MALL 394-2858
• PIEDMONT & LINDBERGH Near Flea Market 261-5374
• STONE MOUNTAIN 5060 Memorial Dr. 296-6367

• SOUTH DEKALB MALL 241-5211

PERIMETER, LENOX & S. DEKALB OPEN SUNDAYS!