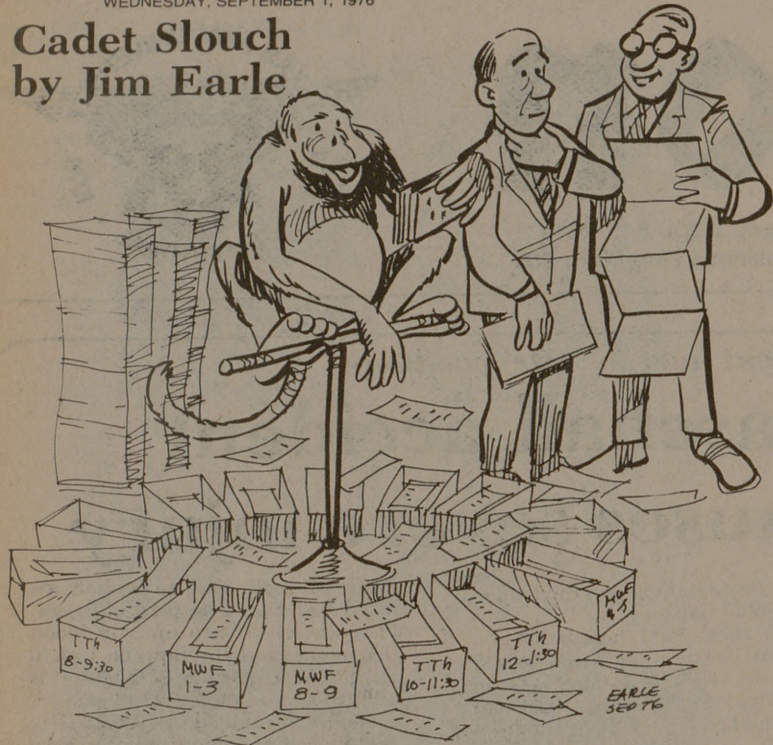


Cadet Slouch
by Jim Earle



"Of course he's not as fast as a computer, but his logic is better at developing schedules. If it's all the same to you, let's keep under wraps for the time being!"

No good news for Mr. Ford



David S. Broder

MADISON, Wis. — In the passage of time and space from the noise and excitement of Kemper Arena in Kansas City to the quiet and cool of this university town, two scenes from the extraordinary final hour of the Republican convention have grown more vivid in this reporter's mind.

One was the gesture with which President Ford beckoned his defeated rival, Ronald Reagan, to leave the stands and join him on the podium, from which Mr. Ford had just delivered his acceptance speech.

The physical emotion was so right — and so natural — that, craning my neck to see the President over the heads of others in the press stand, I was momentarily transfixed.

It was not a gesture of command, summoning Reagan from his seat. Neither was it an imploring gesture, begging him for assistance. It was a terribly familiar gesture, but not until a day later did I realize why. It was a gesture from a Midwestern boyhood — a memory this reporter shares with Jerry Ford and Ronald Reagan and Bob Dole.

If you grew up in Grand Rapids or Tampico, Ill., or Russell, Kan., or my hometown of Chicago Heights, you could remember other August evenings when, supper eaten, dishes done, you would be sitting on the front porch, or tossing a ball to your dog on the front lawn. A friend would come strolling down the sidewalk — headed for the movie, or the drug store, or the baseball diamond — and with a crook of his arm invite you to come along. You didn't know what was up, but you

knew he was headed toward the action.

That was the way the President beckoned Reagan. And the Governor, who in his moment of defeat the night before had finally let his passion for the presidency show through his actor's veneer, could no more resist answering the gesture than he could flub his big scene when he reached the microphone.

It was great theater — and great politics — because it symbolized what is best about Jerry Ford. His instincts in personal relations are so natural, so genuine, his gestures so unforced, that it is impossible to believe him phony. And that belief is what, if anything, will elect him.

But the other riveting memory of the last night carried quite a different message. One prominent Republican did not see the scene just described. John Connally was gone before any of this happened.

He had been sitting in the VIP section a few rows behind the Ford family. His wife, Nellie, was on one side, and Mary Scranton, wife of Ambassador William Scranton, was on the other.

I don't know what kind of company he provided for Mary Scranton, but I imagine it may have been a difficult evening. Every time I glanced over in that direction, Connally looked like a thundercloud. Maybe it was the thought of Dole — his neighbor on the 17th floor of the Meuhlebach hotel — getting the phone call from the President that Connally had wanted, or maybe it was something else. But the scowl was on Connally's face every time I looked.

Even when he was applauding with big, exaggerated gestures — his hands raised almost to the height of his eyes — the expression never changed. And that, too, stirred a memory. It was the last previous convention Connally had attended, the Democratic convention in Chicago in 1968.

During all the turmoil in the streets and the hall, Connally had played the role of the enforcer — keeping relentless pressure on Hubert H. Humphrey not to deviate an inch from support of Lyndon Johnson's policies in Vietnam.

At various points, when Humphrey appeared to be wavering and about to yield to advisers urging him to accept the "peace plank," Connally threatened to withhold the Texas votes or even to place Johnson's name in nomination against Humphrey. Finally, Humphrey caved in. He won the nomination, tied irrevocably to the Johnson record and doomed to defeat.

At that convention, too, there had been talk that Connally hoped for the vice-presidential nomination. Maybe yes, maybe no. But I remember him in the Chicago hall,

scowling just as fiercely as Humphrey's acceptance speech he did through Mr. Ford's night. In 1968, he had been in the front row with the Texas delegation. But the look was the same.

I cannot recall what Connally when Humphrey finished speaking, but I won't soon forget what happened when Mr. Ford won. The instant the speech ended, as the cheering began, Connally grabbed his wife by the elbow, headed for the exit. One scene was there, the next he was gone.

That hasty exit said as much about Connally's attitude toward the convention, the ticket and the president's chances as any news item could. And it was not good news for Mr. Ford.

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Grow deaf as we enjoy advances of the SST

By EDWARD P. MORGAN

I can't find the exact quotation, unfortunately, but H. L. Mencken once said, in effect, that nobody ever lost a fortune underestimating the intelligence of the body politic.

That thought, provocatively undemocratic as it is, came to mind when I read a front page headline a while back marking the inaugural of supersonic jetliner service between Europe and Washington.

"Thousands cheer arrival of Concorde," the headline said.

It is quite understandable that throngs of the curious would converge on Dulles airport to observe the landing of the most advanced airborne contrivance since the Wright brothers launched their heavier-than-air contraption from the North Carolina sand dunes at Kitty Hawk in 1903. Besides, two commercials SSTs, strangely resembling stratospheric sharks, landed within minutes of each other on that memorable day, one British, the other French. The two nations have plunged three billion dollars into a 13-year joint effort to produce the SST. And the Russians now have one, too, developed on their own and flying, though it is not clear whether it is flying passengers.

There were approving murmurs from the Dulles crowds about the lack of roaring racket at the landings. An official noise-monitoring station said the sound from each Concorde was less than that registered by a Boeing 707. With engines at full throttle, the noise on takeoff was another matter.

But the point which the crowd and apparently most of the officials forgot was that many environmentalists, including some in the government, consider most airport noise of virtually all jetliners already too high. Politics has prevented the adoption of reasonable noise levels not only for aircraft but for trucks on the highways. Blind, as it were, to the growing menaces of our materialistic age, we may grow deaf as we enjoy such "advances" as the SST.

Many cried calamity and a collapse of the U. S. world leadership in aviation, when the Senate a few

years ago banned the production of an American commercial supersonic jetliner. But does nobody remember the grounds for the Senate's decision: not only the noise problem, which the SST has not begun to solve, but the damage caused by sonic booms as the SST pierced the sound barrier over land? (That is partly why Transportation Secretary Coleman limited SST flight to 16 experimental months. New York officials have already closed Kennedy airport to the SSTs.) Then there is the ozone factor, a problem still not measured. One theory is that the vapor created by an unspecified number of SSTs, flying either over land or water, would attack the ozone shield which protects us from lethal overdoses of ultraviolet rays from the sun.

Finally only a wealthy few can afford to fly the SST. I'll blunt my complaints if just one of them uses the time saved to figure out ways to improve the transportation most of us have to grapple with, in the air and on the ground.

Morgan is a correspondent for In the Public Interest, a press service of the Fund for Peace.

The Battalion

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