

Viewpoint

The Battalion
Texas A&M University

Wednesday
August 17, 1977

Trial by press

David Berkowitz pleaded not guilty yesterday to charges he is the "Son of Sam" killer who gunned down 20-year-old Stacy Moskowitz last week in New York.

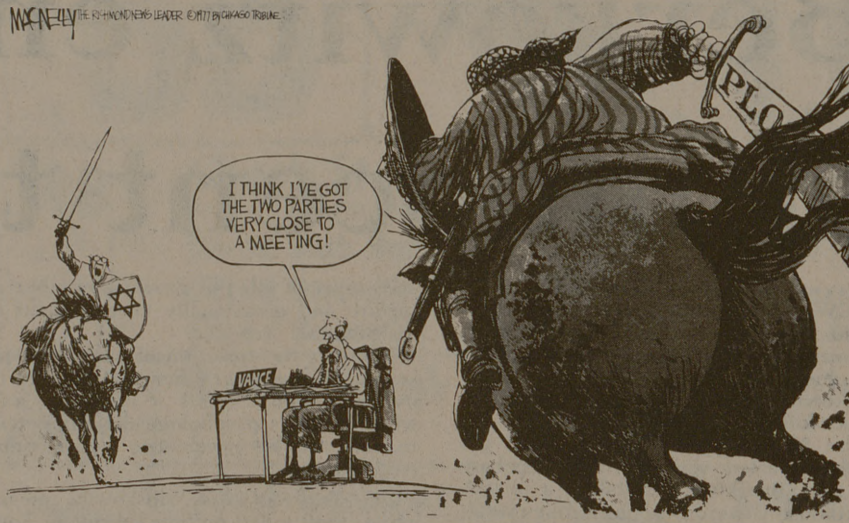
But probably half the people in America have already convicted and condemned him, assured of his guilt by the shoddy journalism national newspapers and television are practicing in covering the case.

Mass murders are always sensational cases, especially when stretched over a year, as this one has been. But when supposedly objective press becomes caught up in the fervor of the policeman that's "got his man", our system of justice greatly suffers.

When NBC Nightly News devotes 22 of the 30 minutes in one evening's newscast to the case, including profiles and examinations of Berkowitz's personality, only the most skeptical of viewers would not believe he's guilty. When newspapers throughout the country stop calling Berkowitz "the suspect" and start calling him the "Son of Sam", that old rule of "innocent until proven guilty" goes right out the window.

If Berkowitz is the "Son of Sam" killer, he deserves the worst punishment our system of justice can deliver. But he also deserves the same fair trial our Constitution guarantees every American. The members of the press, as defenders of freedom, need to remember that.

L.R.L.



Meteor lighting way in Madisonville

Crime in small towns is becoming more and more a problem in Texas. But one nearby community is taking steps to fight its own crime wave, thanks in great part to the prodding of the town's weekly newspaper.

Madisonville, 38 miles northeast of Bryan, has suffered from increasing vandalism and burglaries in recent months. City officials have said inefficient city police and population growth too rapid for the town's own good contributed to the crime wave.

The Madisonville city council decided last week to appoint a new city police chief in an attempt to bolster the city police force's effectiveness. The Madison County sheriff's department

has also increased efforts to control vandalism, and the young people that they say cause most of it, within Madisonville.

Small town newspapers often take neutral positions on community problems such as Madisonville's crime wave. But the Madisonville Meteor has been in the forefront pushing for solutions to the problem.

Meteor Publisher Sam Logan has editorialized repeatedly for constructive solutions to at least the youth vandalism problem, suggesting that the town's young people don't have enough to keep them out of trouble. But this last week, with the city council's decision to appoint a new police chief, Logan decided it was time for the paper to

take stronger action as well.

Logan changed a long-standing policy that the paper would report the names of only individuals charged with felonies. In the future the paper will report the names of individuals charged with misdemeanors as well as felonies, on the theory that people about to get into mischief may have second thoughts if they know getting caught means letting the whole town know. In a small town that can be very strong persuasion.

That change in policy may not solve Madisonville's problems. But it's a step in the right direction, both for the Meteor and small town newspapers in general. We applaud Mr. Logan for his courage and determination to improve the town he serves.

L.R.L.

Canal treaty true test for Carter, GOP

By DAVID S. BRODER

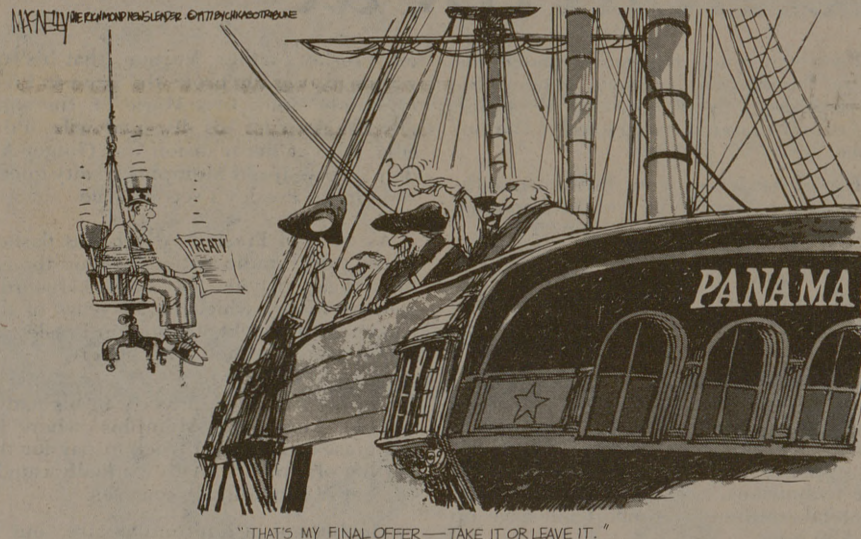
WASHINGTON — Alexander Hamilton, writing in the Federalist Papers, called the treaty provision of the Constitution "one of the best digested and most unexceptionable parts" of the entire document.

And yet, a century later, Secretary of State John Hay wrote bitterly against the requirement that treaties be ratified by two-thirds of the Senate before taking effect.

"A treaty of peace," he wrote, "in any normal state of things, ought to be ratified with unanimity in 24 hours. They wasted six weeks in wrangling over this one (with Spain), and ratified it with one vote to spare. We have five of six matters now demanding settlement. I can settle them all honorably and advantageously to our own side; and I am assured by leading men in the Senate that not one of these treaties, if negotiated, will pass the Senate. I should have a majority in every case, but a malcontent third would certainly dish every one of them. To such monstrous shape has the original mistake of the Constitution grown in the evolution of our politics."

Those opposing views, both cited in Kenneth N. Waltz's book, "Foreign Policy and Democratic Politics," have fresh currency as the nation prepares for the Senate struggle over the newly negotiated treaty settling the future of the Panama Canal.

It is a struggle which will not only revive one of the great and continuing questions about our form of government — the capacity of a representative Republic to frame sensible, long-term foreign policies — but will also test the leadership of President Carter and the opposition Republican party.



"THAT'S MY FINAL OFFER — TAKE IT OR LEAVE IT."

In the long history of the United States, fewer than a dozen treaties have been voted down by the Senate. Yet there is no assurance that this treaty, which arranges for the gradual transfer of control of the canal to Panama by the end of the century while safeguarding American security interests there, will get the required two-thirds majority in the Senate.

Administration officials say there are now fewer than 60 assured votes (of the 67 needed for ratification). And conservative groups claim that at least 39 senators (five more than the minimum number needed to upset ratification) have at one time or another opposed substantial concessions

by the United States. At this early stage of the proceedings — with the legal language not yet drafted — three aspects of the coming struggle are particularly interesting.

For the President, ratification is an acid test of his ability to function in the international arena. Should he fail to win Senate approval for the Panama treaty, his ability to negotiate successfully with the Soviets on arms control, and with other countries on economic and trade issues, would be severely endangered. It is almost literally a fight that Carter cannot afford to lose.

But it is also a significant test for the Republican party leadership. Sen. How-

ard H. Baker, Jr. (R-Tenn.) and his GOP colleagues have done well on the domestic issues, in collaboration with the conservative Democrats. They scared Carter off the tax rebate and beat him on campaign reforms and labor law changes. But they take on a much heavier responsibility if they choose to pit the conservative coalition against the President for ultimate control of foreign policy — particularly on the Panamanian question.

It was the view of past Republican administrations — no less than this Democratic administration — that future good relations in this hemisphere require the United States to acknowledge the end of the imperialist era which our unilateral control of the Panama Canal symbolizes. Such a treaty might well have been concluded by Gerald Ford, were it not for the political threat he faced from Ronald Reagan last year.

Ford and Reagan are likely to split on the new treaty, with the former President backing his successor's action and Reagan continuing to play the nationalistic pride that opposes any concessions. It will be up to Baker and the other Senate Republican leaders to avert an open schism — if they can — within their party on this issue.

Finally, the Panama treaty ratification will test the thesis — grown so fashionable among American liberals in the period of Vietnam and CIA revelations — that the Congress is a better, wiser, more farsighted custodian of the nation's foreign policy than the Chief Executive. Most of our history, from the "warhawks" of the 1820s to the isolationists of the 1930s, says that thesis is a dubious proposition at best. But the Panama treaty will let us judge anew whether Hamilton or Hay was right.

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Letters to the editor

Congressman defends palm oil citrus bill

Editor:

A recent David Broder column (Battalion July 27, 1977) was critical of an amendment I offered to a recent foreign aid bill authorizing funds for international lending institutions.

The amendment prohibited the use of American foreign aid dollars going to the Asian Development Bank, the World Bank, the Inter-American Development Bank, and other international lending institutions to underwrite loans for the production of palm oil, citrus, or sugar.

Apparently drawing from criticism offered by Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan of New York, Mr. Broder was concerned that the amendment was included in the same section of the bill as the human-rights language.

Quite simply, my amendment and the human-rights language were both restrictions on how the money could be spent. So, for the sake of organizational logic, both provisions were included in the same section of the bill as were all other restrictions and limitations on the use of those funds.

Also, of concern to me were the insinuations that my amendment was "protectionist" or, as was charged, that it "slammed shut the door to competition". Quite to the contrary, the amendment was designed to give fair competition a chance.

The reason this action was necessary is because foreign countries are taking these loans, underwriting mostly with American money, and using them to gain an unfair competitive advantage over American production.

While I welcome these countries to the free market of international competition, I oppose the unfair advantage many of these nations enjoy over American producers because of the incredibly low interest rates charged by these international lending institutions.

For instance, the World Bank charges three-quarters of a percent on 50-year loans, the Inter-American Development Bank asks only 1-3 percent for loans of 16-40 years, and the Asian Development Bank has 2.5-3 percent interest on 24-30 year loans.

Loans of such generosity are unheard of for American producers.

The importance of this unfair foreign advantage is underscored by the fact that the United States has been setting record trade deficits almost every month this year.

The villain behind our deteriorating balance of trade is our continued dependence on foreign oil; the major weapon we have to offset this trade imbalance are our agricultural exports.

For the sake of example, soybeans and soy-products account for 20 percent of all American agricultural exports, but now many of our former markets are being closed to us because of the advantage these low interest loans are giving palm oil, a competitor to soy-oil.

In the next ten years over 500,000 acres of American soybeans are expected to be displaced by foreign palm oil. Based on current production figures and prices, that would be equivalent in price to 4.8 million barrels of foreign oil.

Another problem, potentially more serious, involves the unhealthy aspects of palm oil. Most consumers do not know that the term "vegetable oil" widely used for cooking and other purposes contains palm oil. They also don't know that palm oil has an extremely high saturated fat content — 45 percent. That compares to 15 percent for soybean oil, 18 percent for peanut oil and 38 percent for animal fat. Considering that medical experts have repeatedly warned us to avoid excessive amounts of saturated fats in our diets, I trust Mr. Broder will not object to legislation I have co-sponsored which will require products which contain palm oil to be so labeled.

When Congress began contributing to these international lending institutions it was with the intention of helping underdeveloped nations build the agricultural production necessary to meet the nutri-

tional needs of their own populations.

Now many of these nations have progressed to the point that they are now entering into world agricultural trade. I congratulate them on that progress, but I also say that is the point at which the American taxpayer should no longer be asked to underwrite the cost of their production.

So, Senator Moynihan not withstanding, I intend to continue the fight to end this wasteful and counterproductive expenditure of American money. If the World Bank wants to help a country become self-sufficient agriculturally, I am all in favor of it. I do not even object to these lending institutions helping developing nations build export markets for their products. But I do not think we should be expected to subsidize our own demise.

W. Henson Moore
Member of Congress

Mrs. Rudder says thanks

Editor:

My sincere thanks to everyone — Chancellor Jack K. Williams Faculty, staff, students Office of Continuing Education Information Center University Center staff Student Corps of Cadets guides University News Service Campus Security Food Services Assoc. of Former Students College Station Cemetery

Military personnel from Fort Hood and Ellington Air Force Base

News media — who helped to make the visit of the Ranger Battalions Association of World War II to Texas A&M so memorable. Because of you, they say that the day spent at Texas A&M was the highlight of their stay in Texas for their bi-annual reunion. I appreciate the cooperation of so many people. I have always been proud of Texas A&M, but never more so than now.

— Mrs. Earl Rudder

Top of the News

Local

Animal control center established

The nation's first Animal Control Information Center will begin operation at Texas A&M University in January. The center will be funded by a \$15,000 grant from the Coordinating Board of the Texas College and University System with additional funding from the Texas Engineering Experiment Station. For a small user's fee, the center will provide information about various aspects of animal control. It is being established in cooperation with the Texas A&M College of Veterinary Medicine, the Engineering Extension Service and the Sterling C. Evans Library.

Seminar on aging set

The last of four workshops for elderly Texans and those who serve them convenes at Texas A&M University Aug. 20 to discuss the retirement years. The seminar, conducted by Texas A&M psychologists, is concerned with teaching older persons to improve the quality of life after retirement.

State

Briscoe wants deregulation

Gov. Dolph Briscoe, chairman of the Southern Governors Conference, plans to push for adoption of a resolution to deregulate natural gas prices at the organization's meeting Aug. 27-31. Briscoe said recent declines in the price of natural gas in Texas prove the system of supply and demand will work if government regulations do not interfere.

Welfare commissioner retires

Texas Welfare Commissioner Raymond W. Vowell, 62, has announced his decision to retire the post he has held since July 1976. "The department is moving into a new era, one which can be expected to bring about radical changes in programs serving people. I believe the Board of Public Welfare should have the opportunity to select a commissioner with more potential tenure than I can offer, to guide the department through the many changes ahead," Vowell said.

Coors boycotted over ERA

The Texas Women's Political Caucus has voted unanimously to boycott Coors beer because Coors was supporting the anti-ERA lobby group, Heritage Foundation, and had contributed \$300,000 to a 5 p.m. Coors spokesman Bob Russo, said the women were in error regarding Coors' stand on the Equal Rights Amendment, but refused to elaborate.

Nation

Canal treaty criticized

Louisiana Gov. Edwin Edwards has urged state legislatures to pass resolutions opposing the Carter Administration's plans to give up control of the Panama Canal. He said Panama is unstable and leaning toward communism, and that any turnover would threaten international commerce and security. There is nothing to stop a future Panamanian regime from demanding yet another treaty 10 years from now that would cost the United States millions of dollars more, Edwards said.

Governor gets pie in the eye

Ohio Gov. James A. Rhodes was struck in the face with a cream pie and seven demonstrators were arrested yesterday at the Ohio State Fair. The protestors were objecting to the construction of a gymnasium complex at Kent State University. Rhodes was not injured in the incident.

Commando weapons seized

Agents from three federal agencies raided a Miami home and river marina Monday, seizing three boats, a cannon and other weapons and apparently thwarting a commando raid on Cuba. Assistant U.S. Attorney R.J. Sanford said the confiscated items were to be used in an "imminent hit-and-run harassment raid somewhere on the Cuban coast." A member of the Bay of Pigs Veterans Association was arrested and charged with violating federal firearms export control laws.

World

Jews protest Nazi's escape

Hundreds of Jews converged on Rome yesterday to protest the escape of Italy's most notorious Nazi war criminal, SS Col. Herbert Kappler, 70, serving a life prison term for the World War II massacre of 335 Italians, vanished Monday from the Rome military hospital where he was being treated for terminal stomach cancer. Kappler, weighing 106 pounds, was apparently stuffed into a large suitcase by his wife and lugged out of the hospital.

Palestinian bomb injures Israelis

A bomb exploded on a bus near the Israeli farm town of Afikim yesterday, injuring eight passengers, police said. Palestinian guerrilla forces claimed responsibility for the blast. The Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine had vowed earlier to step up its attacks on civilian targets inside Israel in reaction to a government decision seen as a step toward annexing occupied Arab land.

The Battalion

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