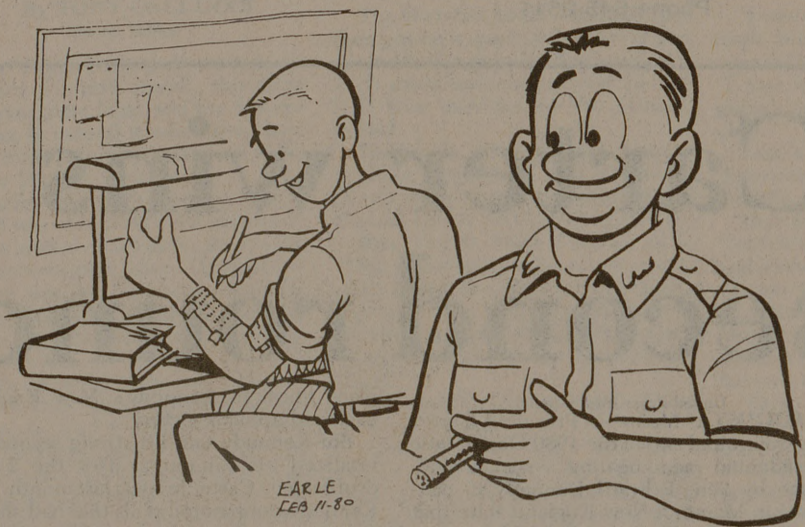


SLOUCH

by Jim Earle



"The strangest thing just happened to me! By the time I finished writing up my cheat notes, I realized that I had learned what I was supposed to know."

OPINION

'Nice guy' tactics hurt U.S.

Frankly, it just seems that the United States is going to "nice guy" itself to death.

President Carter, in justifiable response to the Soviet aggression in Afghanistan, offered \$400 million in military and economic aid to Pakistani ruler Muhammad Zia ul-Haq.

However, there are already woes and cries from the left that Zia is "another Shah" and that American support for the dictator's "despotic regime" will result in a similar backlash when he is ultimately and unavoidably overthrown.

Well folks, it's a real world out there, and there are no absolutes.

If he is ultimately to be overthrown, then let it be by Pakistanis and not under the tank treads of Russian aggression.

By the same token, what is this preoccupation with always having to support ONLY lilywhite, saintly governments?

If critics can find one, fine, but like we noted earlier, this is a real world and not one of left wing idealistic fantasy.

No, if we're going to keep looking for "nice guys" to support and trying so hard to be the same ourselves, we're going to lose everything we have.

This nice guy stuff has got to stop.

Newport (Vt.) Daily Express

the small society

by Brickman



THE BATTALION

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VIEWPOINT

THE BATTALION
TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY

MONDAY
FEBRUARY 11, 1980

Common Cause aided by good timing more than popular view

By DAVID BRODER

WASHINGTON — The 1970s — that paradox of a decade — gave us a set of stunning contrasts. There was Watergate, the classic political scandal, but there was also Common Cause, the classic good government "reform" group. There was John Mitchell, the jailed attorney general, but there was also Archibald Cox, the special prosecutor who was fired by Richard Nixon because he would not obey corrupt commands.

The trouble with symbols is that they do not always age gracefully — and that is particularly so with symbols of civic or personal virtue. Some of the heroes of Watergate, like some of the heroes of the civil rights movement, have celebrated their own righteousness so often and so well that they have become, quite frankly, bores.

Archibald Cox, at age 67, and Common Cause, nearing age 10, do not seem to be in danger of succumbing to that temptation.

When Cox was elected last Saturday as the third chairman of Common Cause (following founder John Gardner and Nan Waterman, who held the post for the past three years), the meeting of the organization's governing board was described by my colleague, Chris Colford, as being characterized by "vast hope, immense vitality,

and a remarkably well-informed discussion."

The Carter administration could not bend its age guidelines for judicial appointments to give Cox a circuit court judgeship (in part, one suspects, because he was proposed by Edward M. Kennedy). But Common Cause is wisely not bound by such foolish consistency. Its board recognized that two days a week of Cox's time (all he can spare from his Harvard Law School duties) is worth almost anyone else's full-time services.

Cox is fond of speaking in nautical images, and in an interview the day before his election, he described government as if it were a ship — the Enterprise — that is drifting in circles.

"We have to move the Enterprise along," Cox said. "When people don't see the Enterprise working, they lose confidence and they have to look out for themselves."

The modern bureaucratic-political state that Cox glorifies as the Enterprise (with all its space-age connotations) others see as Leviathan, crushing the citizenry in its path.

For all its avowed nonpartisanship, Common Cause is an embodiment of the liberal view that the public good is best

defined and achieved by the state — and private goals are comparatively "selfish." That view suffuses its rhetorical assaults on "special interest" group, and fuels its unending crusade to rid the political system of supposedly wicked private contributions and to flood it, instead, with the purity of public (ortax-supported) subsidies.

There is a great deal open to challenge in that view of the world, but there is also a great deal to be said for the political utility of having a vigorous organization acting on that faith.

It is quite true, as Common Cause President David Cohen said, that the organization has become a bulwark to many of the "institutional people" in Congress — Republicans like Barber Conable and Tom Railsback, Democrats like Tom Foley and David Obey — who really are interested in improving the effectiveness of the institution.

It is also true that this viewpoint — and its organizational embodiment in Common Cause — is a motivating force for many who would otherwise have abandoned politics as a hopeless morass. As Common Cause board member Kathleen Gilligan Sebelius of Kansas remarked, after a just-completed tour of Common Cause groups in 25 states, "We found that there are thousands of peo-

ple out there who are absolutely convinced that they can have an effect on making. That's pretty fantastic, and age."

Common Cause went through a lull in the late 1970s, like a lot of other organizations. Its membership dropped from its peak of 213,000 members at the end of 1979 it was back up to 200,000 members — with an extraordinary cent renewal rate.

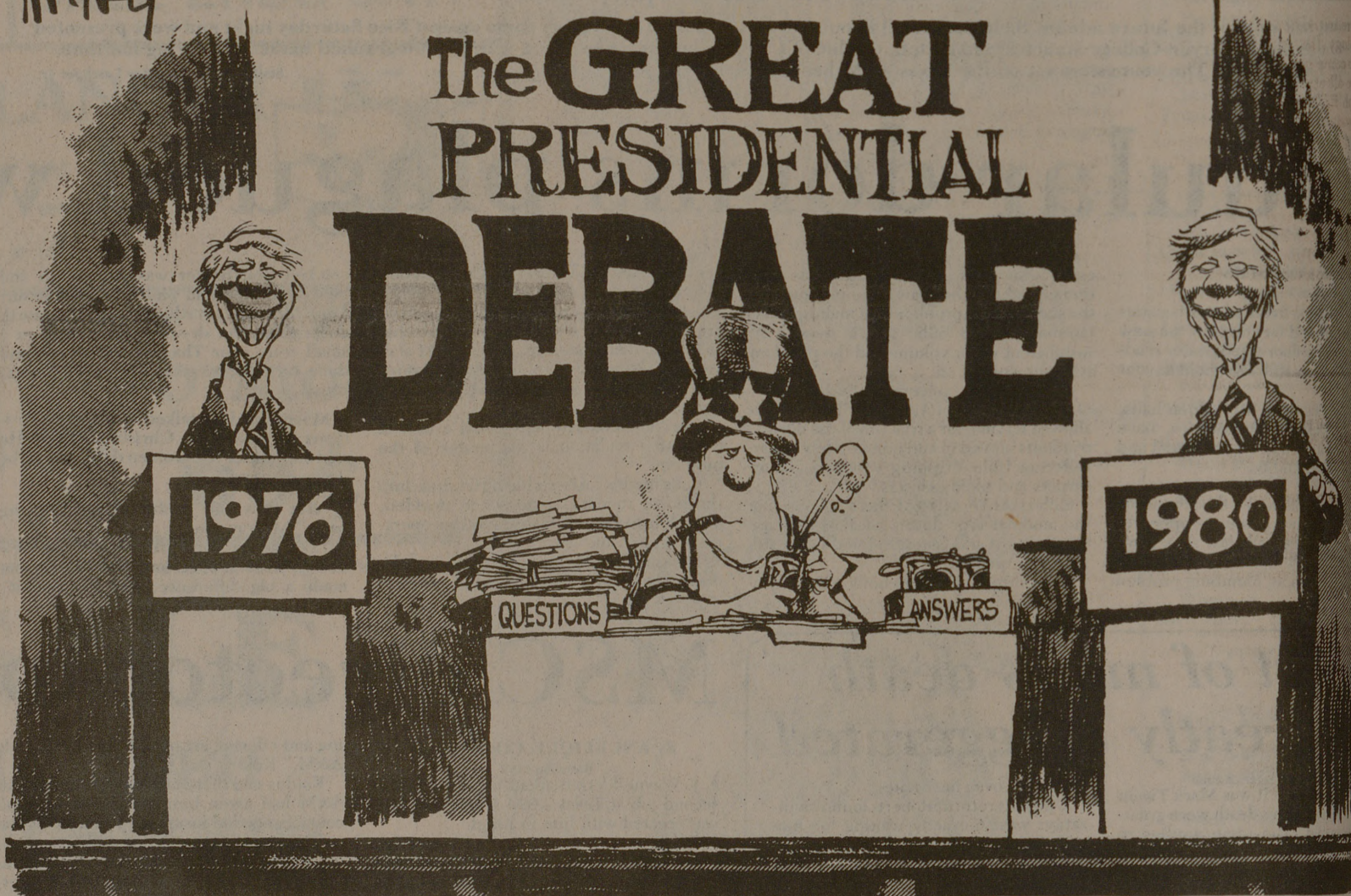
From its beginning, Common Cause has been lucky. Fifteen months after it launched the organization with the goal of cleaning up the system of campaign finance, the Watergate burglary, one of history's most dramatic events, the evils of secret political contributions to Congress.

Finding Archie Cox with is another bit of luck. On the day he was elected chairman of Common Cause, the FBI was investigating the "Watergate burglary," the FBI blew the whistle on the more alleged congressional campaign contributions.

The timing was incredible. It was politics — as in every other kind of politics — sometimes it's more important to be in the right place at the right time than to be right.

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LETTERS Commons residents tired of invasion

Editor: I am disturbed by the large number of Corps members who make use of the Commons area as though they own it. Specifically, the Corps people invade our TV room and switch channels, much to the disdain of the Commons area residents. The signs by the TV rooms state, "For Commons area residents only and invited guests." Well, the Corps have ignored these signs and feel that the building use fee covers these rooms. It does not. The Commons residents pay for the TV rooms, and they should have exclusive utilization of these

TV rooms. Finally, the Corps still use our pool tables and ping pong tables. Several times I have waited for these tables because the Corps had taken up many of the tables.

Richard Leonardon
(This letter was accompanied by 12 other signatures.)

Ashamed of others

Editor: After reading the letter written by Oscar Alvarez in Tuesday's Batt, I felt so

ashamed, not necessarily of myself, but of my fellow student and Americans.

I agree whole heartedly with Mr. Alvarez, and if a foreigner to our country can recognize what a privilege it is to live and study in this country, shouldn't we as Americans quit sitting back and taking America for granted? Maybe it's because most Americans have never been out of the country and seen that it is like overseas and don't realize how good we really have it.

I am a woman. I'm not trying to be a women's libber or sound like a martyr, but if there is a war and I am called, I will gladly

go and serve for my country.

No one, man or woman, wants to leave family, friends and home to go to war. We have a responsibility that has been placed on us since the day we were born as citizens of this country, and that is to love it, defend it, and everything that it stands for.

I never have been good with foreign languages and don't want to have to learn Russian, now!

By Doug Graham

THOTZ

