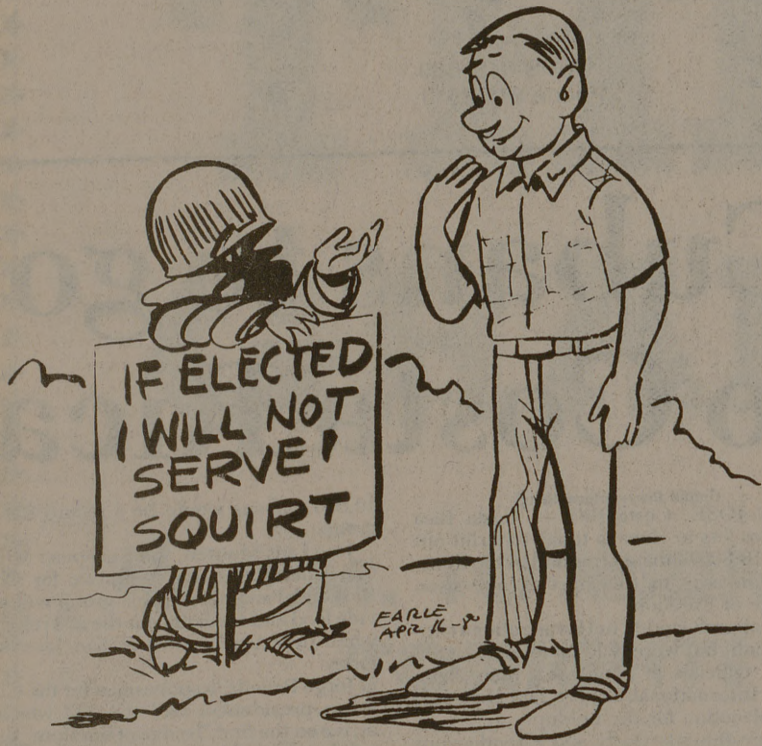


SLOUCH By Jim Earle



"I consider it a positive campaign promise. Have you ever thought of how much better off we'd be if our elected politicians didn't serve?"

OPINION

Soviets can't be trusted

Is the Soviet Union manufacturing germ warfare weapons in violation of an international treaty? The answer appears to be yes.

A few weeks ago U.S. intelligence officials became convinced a fatal outbreak of anthrax in the city of Sverdlovsk last year resulted from an accident at a germ weapons facility.

Under the convention signed in 1972 by Russia, the United States and 85 other nations, development, production or stockpiling of biological warfare weapons was outlawed and all such material was to be destroyed by late 1975.

American officials raised the Sverdlovsk matter with the Soviets and they were given a strange tale.

Yes, the Russians admitted, there had been an outbreak of anthrax in Sverdlovsk last April, but the disease had been caused by improper handling of meat products, not by a treaty violation.

Intelligence officials gathered more evidence and now conclude that the Soviets are not telling the truth.

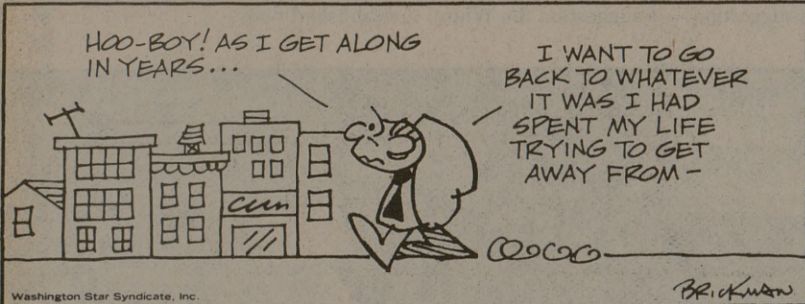
The incident means that the rulers of the Soviet Union are capable of deliberately violating a treaty undertaking and then coldbloodedly lying about it.

And if they will cheat on germ warfare, is it possible to trust them in a far more strategic matter, a treaty to limit the number and types of nuclear missiles?

Scripps-Howard Newspaper

the small society

by Brickman



THE BATTALION

USPS 045 360

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Letters to the editor should not exceed 300 words and are subject to being cut to that length or less if longer. The editorial staff reserves the right to edit such letters and does not guarantee to publish any letter. Each letter must be signed, show the address of the writer and list a telephone number for verification.

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VIEWPOINT

THE BATTALION
TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY

WEDNESDAY
APRIL 16, 1980

Wisconsin fund laws try to give public money to candidates

By DAVID S. BRODER
MADISON, Wis. — When the debris of Jerry Brown's space-odyssey television show and the other bric-a-brac of the presidential primary was cleared away last week, the Wisconsin legislature completed a piece of work which just conceivably may do more for the betterment of politics than all the words which were uttered here by the recently departed candidates.

Wisconsin long has enjoyed a reputation as one of those "laboratories of democracy" where problems which resist solution at the national level can be attacked, on an experimental basis, in a somewhat more manageable dimension.

One such problem in our politics is the growing linkage between interest-groups and campaign financing, and the ability of those groups to use their financial leverage to extract special concessions — or block

needed actions.

In keeping with its progressive tradition, Wisconsin in 1977 became one of the early states trying a limited form of public financing for legislative and state races, with the subsidies to candidates financed by a voluntary \$1 checkoff on the state income tax.

In its first trial, in the 1978 election, the new system had very limited use, because the available funds were paltry and statewide candidates found the spending limits that went with the acceptance of public funds unrealistically low for the needs of a competitive campaign.

But the winner of the 1978 gubernatorial race, maverick Republican Lee S. Dreyfus, was unwilling to accept the troublesome status quo.

In his own race, he set a limit of \$2,500 on individual or PAC (political action committee) contributions to his treasury (one-tenth) seriously im-

paired" his freedom of judgement.

In a speech last January, Dreyfus proposed a radical change in state law — a flat prohibition on PAC contributions from interest groups to individual candidates and a provision that such gifts could go only to the political parties.

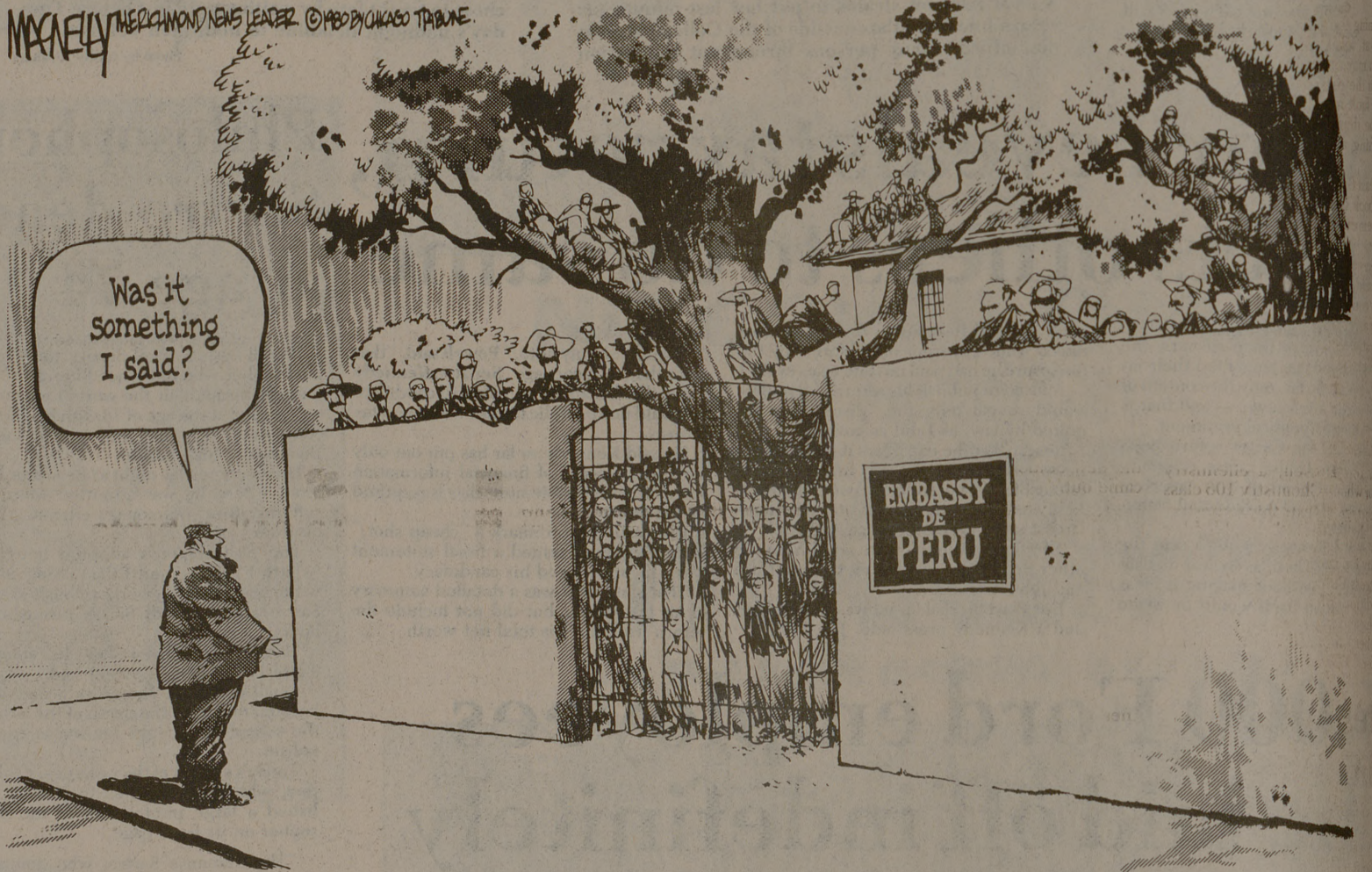
His purpose, he said, was twofold: First, end the purchase of legislative winners in 1976 received more than half their campaign funding from interest groups, 19 of them received more interest-group dollars than they spent in their entire campaigns, and 16 received such contributions in substantial amounts, even though they had no opponents.

Second, Dreyfus said, he wanted to try to restore "the parties to a healthy state," as broad diverse coalitions with differing philosophies, while confining the interest-groups to their proper function "of persuading and informing those who govern..."

Dreyfus' proposal was too meek for the other Wisconsin politicians to swallow. Leaders in both parties argued, with some justification, that his plan could lead to subterfuge: encourage the interest groups to conduct ostensibly "independent" and unauthorized campaigns of their own for favored candidates; make the party leaders the "new bosses" of Wisconsin politics, or, alternatively, reduce the parties even further into "laundering devices" to targeted interest group contributions to favored candidates.

But at a time when Congress seems incapable of breaking its own deadlock on the campaign-finance issue — with House-passed bills halted by filibuster threats in the Senate — the Wisconsin example is rare and encouraging bit of good news.

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Here it is — the thank-the-Lord, get-me-out-of-here-alive editoria

By ROY BRAGG
Battalion Editor

My college career is nearly over. Soon, I will be leaving Texas A&M University to accept a job as managing editor of the New York Times.

And so, I must bid a quasi-fond farewell to The Battalion.

The editorial written by departing editors is usually a cliché-ridden piece of fluff about missing the hard work, the camaraderie of the staff and other aesthetic nonsense.

Well, friends, this isn't going to be one of those editorials.

My reign as editor will come to close on April 25. At that time, the new editor will take over.

Last night, the Student Publications Board nominated Dillard Stone as Summer-Fall editor.

I wish Dillard all the luck in the world.

He's going to need it.

It's not that it hasn't been fun, but I will definitely have to think about it for a while.

First, I view my reign as "The Chief" with mixed emotions.

The Battalion has been my mother, father, sister, brother, girlfriend and best friend for the last four months. Ask my wife.

Working at and running The Battalion has been both fun and frustrating.

When I took over as editor in December, I didn't know what the hell I was doing. I still don't, but I think I've faked it rather deftly. I wish I knew what I know now when I applied for editor. I may not have tried for the job.

Just kidding. I have no regrets. Even if it hasn't been a barrel of monkeys, I think I've learned a lot running a Big-time College Newspaper.

A Big-time editor is a baby sitter. Most of

what I have learned, therefore, has been from my children — my staff.

From dealing with them on a personal level, I have learned to expect nothing and accept anything. I learned that the hard way — things that couldn't possibly go wrong did and things that could never occur did.

In addition, I have learned from my staff's personal problems — of which there were many — to avoid everything and everybody as much as possible.

I learned this because I have seen more go on in my four months as editor than I probably will in several reincarnations.

During my editorship, the newsroom was full of more personal turmoil than twenty bad Harlequin romance novels. Peyton Place was Romper Room compared to The Battalion this year.

The one good thing I picked up from these newsroom spats is the secret of life — most people are motivated by honesty and

stupidity.

No matter what the instance, people driven by an honest desire to do what they think is right. I don't believe there are really bad people in the world. That's double for my staff. They're good people — my staff and myself included — are usually too stupid to know that they're doing it usually wrong.

This is what human beings are all about — me included.

Like I said, I wish I knew this before I took the job. That's why I am writing this column.

Dillard will learn this in a few weeks. He doesn't already know it. He has served as deputy commander of the Corps of Cadets this year, so he already has had more experience dealing with people than I have.

It's a good thing he has been in the Corps. If he had any hair, he'd probably pull it out after a couple of weeks.

THOTZ

