

VIEWPOINT

THE BATTALION
TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY

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Slouch

By Jim Earle



"I had been giving thought to willing my brain to an organ bank, but I can see now that's out of the question."

Frustration mistaken for indifference

By JOHN H. McELROY

The college student of today is often compared to the "involved," "active" generation of the '60s and found wanting. But things were simpler in the '60s. There was one big issue then: Vietnam. Now the problem is too many big issues, each of them urgent, most of them unglamorous, all of them overlapping, and some of them needing a technical knowledge to understand. The inventory of big issues today is so extensive that sometimes the world seems constituted of nothing but intransigent problems of drug addiction, human rights, inflation, crime, shortages, discrimination, poverty, environmental integrity, the breakdown of international diplomacy, and a swarm of other major crises.

The good chance exists that what appears to be indifference among today's generation of students may be simply the overload on their sympathies, at being asked to care about too many things all at once. The pattern appears to be frustration, followed by avoidance of the causes of the frustration, followed in many instances by a degree of guilt. Indifference is cultivated by many persons to deal with their feeling of guilt, or at least in appearance of indifference is cultivated.

Game playing and self-destructive behavior of various kinds offer escape for others who do not want to face up to their sense of failing to address issues. A few become cynics. Fewer still become righteous activists completely devoted to one cause. But the moral majority of college students, who today feel the same call to duty that idealistic young men and women in other generations have felt, know that the condition of their world is not likely to be bettered by any one special interest group, however zealously served or right it may be.

Unless one wants to argue that today's college generation is morally and politically insensitive in comparison to those that preceded them, this generation's refrain "There's nothing one person can do that would help" probably should be read, "I wish I knew what I could do to help."

But is there any validity to the proposition that it is up to each generation to solve the problems of the world that previous generations left unsolved?

Probably older generations invented the idea that their younger successors were supposed to solve the problems which the older generation left unsolved, as a way of avoiding the fact that each generation while solving some problems creates new ones, and thus does not progress in any absolute sense.

For the past 300 years western nations have been increasingly obsessed with the idea that they were making progress in an absolute sense. Yet one sees at a glance today how erroneous that idea is and how often advances in science and technology contribute to the history of human misery and disorder. Nor can we, in today's world of volcanic social stresses that are being added to steadily by burgeoning world population, any longer consider the continuation of death-control, through better medical practices, in the best interest of mankind, unless accompanied by radical world-wide birth-control. Yet no one foresees how to institute such control of human birth without abrogating historically deep rooted human rights.

The responsibility of new generations to solve old problems is a fallacy: the true responsibility in each generation is to avoid creating new disorders and maladies. A great increase in cold, courageous, calculating, unsentimental reasoning and self-interest is needed today if human culture is to survive. And just as essential as this increase of enlightened self-interest must be an accompanying decrease in respect for analysis that has no better purpose than assignment of blame for today's problems. (History as an exercise in fault-finding is no longer useful.)

But what is enlightened self-interest? It is surely not selfishness or indifference. Rather it is knowing that to do what is right for the sake of the right is loving thy neighbor. It is also knowing that we can only have peace by abandoning the mentality of war, which conceives of other human beings as enemies and exploiters. Finally, the enlightened self-interest that is needed is a certain largeness of spirit, the largeness of knowing one's place in a universal moral order.

What is required of today's college student is a harder program than the demonstrations for peace of the '60s, which were sometimes little more than mass exercises in hate.

For a whole generation to avoid creating new problems would be truly "radical" behavior. It would be revolutionary if a whole generation upheld right for the sake of right, abandoned the mentality of "them" versus "us," and urged governments to think of universally valid moral laws as the primary motive for economic, social, and political decisions.

John H. McElroy is a professor of English at the University of Arizona. He has performed research and published in the fields of American literature and American cultural history.

Pigs and politics and hit lists

By ARNOLD SAWISLAK

WASHINGTON — It was George Orwell who explained one of the home truths of politics in the not-so-innocent fable "Animal Farm."

"All animals are equal," one of the ruling pigs tells the other barnyard residents when they question some new porcine privilege. "But some animals are more equal than others."

It took John T. "Terry" Dolan of the National Conservative Political Action Committee to provide the most recent application of that axiom to contemporary politics.

Dolan announced that NCPAC was launching a \$1 million television, radio and print attack on four Democratic members of Congress because they were against President Reagan's economic proposals. He was then asked why NCPAC did not also go after three Republican senators who recently provided the votes to defeat the president's program in the Senate Budget Committee.

Dolan shrugged off the votes of GOP Sens. Charles Grassley of Iowa, William Armstrong of Colorado and Steve Symms of Idaho against the committee's budget re-

solution — a virtual carbon copy of the Reagan request.

The three senators, Dolan said, were upset about the projected deficits in the Reagan plan. They voted against the resolution because they wanted more cuts, not to restore the wasteful programs of the liberal Democratic past.

Dolan, in fact, attacked the Reagan budget himself during his news conference, saying it left the country with huge deficits. But, he said, it was "best hope" for restoring the U.S. economy and NCPAC's main goal was to support it.

At the same time, Dolan downgraded the budget and tax cutting proposals of Democratic Rep. James Jones of Oklahoma, chairman of the House Budget Committee. The Jones plan would yield more savings and smaller deficits than Reagan's plan, but Dolan said it was not to be taken seriously.

"Real conservatives are laughing at Jones," he said. Dolan said Jones' real purpose was to salvage Great Society social programs that the conservatives in the administration are out to cut back or eliminate.

Jones is one of NCPAC's targets, along with House Democratic Leader Jim Wright

of Texas, Ways and Means Committee Chairman Dan Rostenkowski of Illinois, Sen. Paul Sarbanes of Maryland. The people, Dolan told a news conference, who typify the kind of profligate spender who have gotten the country into its economic mess.

(In point of fact, it is hard to find ideological common denominator for four Democrats. Sarbanes got a liberal rating of 83 from Americans for Democratic Action, but Rostenkowski was only in the 1980 liberal voting scale and Jones Wright scored only 39.)

Some reporters thought there was to be the new NCPAC campaign than me eye. Dolan was asked if the campaign started against four of the strongest Democrats in Congress as much to scare the cure rank and file members of the House and Senate as to defeat the stated target.

Dolan would not concede that was prime consideration, but agreed it could be a spin off benefit of the program. He noted that Sen. Everett Dirksen of Illinois once said, "When I feel the heat, I see light." And Dolan very pointedly left shoe undropped, saying NCPAC intended to expand the list as soon as it could.



It's your turn

Drug paraphernalia bill is needed

Editor:

This week the Texas Senate will put under its consideration a bill which was passed by the House last week. This particular bill is part of H. Ross Perot's anti-crime package. Perot is a Dallas computer magnate and chairman of the Texas War on Drugs. The bill under consideration would make it illegal to sell, possess or deliver drug paraphernalia. As a result of the anti-paraphernalia bill, there has been an outcry of protest from a variety of groups including head shop owners and the American Civil Liberties Union. The objections given to the proposal that would outlaw drug paraphernalia have been based on the claim that if drug paraphernalia were made illegal, the objects could still be bought in any supermarket or department store. In addition, the opponents of the bill claim that the constitutional rights of the head

shop owner and paraphernalia merchant would be violated.

However, there is no question as to what constitutes drug paraphernalia. The bill is quite long, but it spells out in detail the various types of drug paraphernalia including water pipes, power hitters, bongs, blenders, scales, testing kits, hypodermic syringes and cocaine spoons. A violation of the law would occur when the buyer or seller of drug paraphernalia uses or intends to use the paraphernalia for illegal purposes.

I pose a question to the bill's opponents.

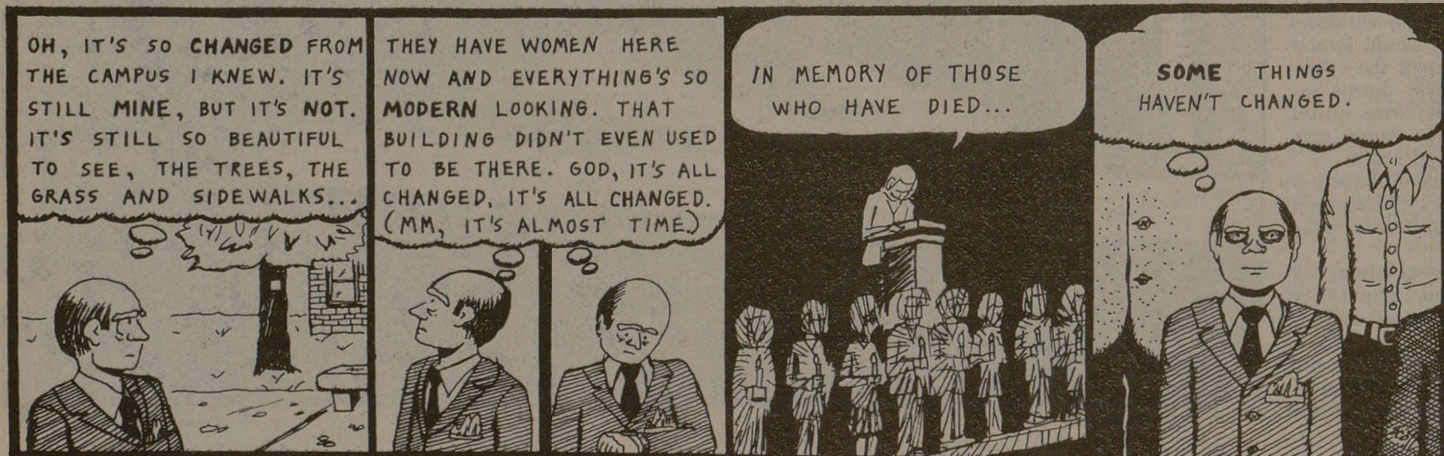
If illegal and dangerous drugs are out on the streets, then why should the tools and objects designed to use illicit drugs be legal and possessed?

If the Texas Senate approves this measure so crucial to the well being of the State of Texas, we can be assured that the useful business of head shops across the state will be crushed and destroyed. The passage of this bill outlawing drug paraphernalia is a necessary step towards the final goal of elimination of illegal drug trafficking not only in the state of Texas but throughout America as well.

Murray E. Moore

Warped

By Scott McCullar



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