

Did you hug your draft card today?

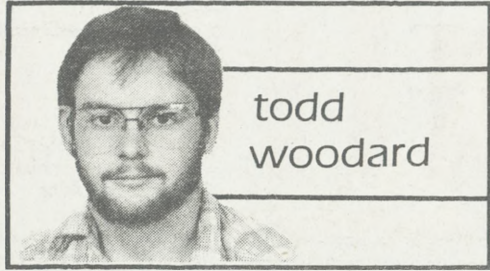
Monday was the last day of grace for about 1 million 18-, 19- and 20-year-old men who had not registered for the draft. If they choose not to register, they face two possible penalties: five years in jail and/or a \$10,000 fine.

Fortunately, because I'm at the doddering age of 23, I don't face the unenviable prospect of registering along with other youngbloods, even though registration is not the draft is not war. Knowing my name and address were occupying a byte of computer space in Selective

Service System hardware would give me the willies. More importantly, being compelled, by force of law, to tell anyone anything anytime concerns me. Especially when the products of my information concern my well being.

Registering for the draft strikes me right at the core of my libertarian heart. Of course, the mechanics of registration, reading and writing, are not problems — only the possibility of conscription.

As citizens, we (both sexes) owe our society some service, but I'm not sure we owe military service.



todd woodard

Which brings us back to the end products of registration: the draft and war-making.

It's curious that, traditionally, the men who waged war were not the ones who fought wars. To clarify, older, more learned men, who supposedly had paid their dues to society, were not often in the bang-bang-shoot-'em-up.

The same problem exists today. The youngest, least organized, least experienced and least educated voting members of our society, some of whom are not granted full participation in adulthood (drinking alcohol in Texas, for example)

don't have much of a voice about registration or what happens to them as a result of registration. Pow. Register or pay up.

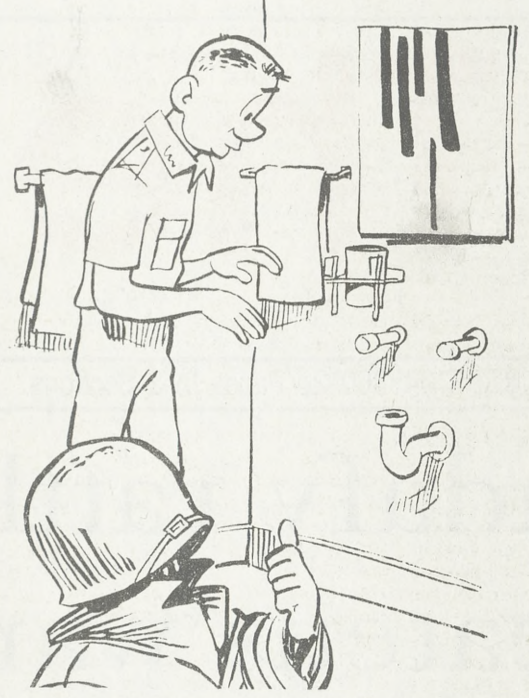
Besides the age discrimination, another confusing area of registration is its halfway stance. We should either have nothing or go to a full draft, so that we're better able to prevent the Russkies from enslaving all the free peoples of the world. Why this namby-pamby?

Pussyfooting has a number of pluses. First, forced service with no identifiable threat would likely cause draft card campfires in one or two cities. Second, it's cheaper. Third, you can exempt about 50 percent of your population base, women, legally. Fourth, registration is a big part of the battle. Once you're in the big book, you get to stay there. Where you can be found quickly in time of need.

But age and sex injustice aside, the idea of Ronald Reagan, Caspar Weinberger or Gen. Al Haig rumbling about countering imbalances, playing brinkmanship and shining our tarnished image with warm bodies causes me heartburn.

Especially when one of those warm bodies might be yours. Or mine.

Slouch By Jim Earle



"It got to be such a problem cleaning it all the time that I said, 'What the heck! Why not get rid of it.'"

Governors meetings lack flair of past years

By David S. Broder

WASHINGTON — Watching the nation's governors at their meeting in Washington last week, I kept thinking how much that group has changed in the 20 years I have been covering their sessions. This generation is probably more talented and capable — and certainly more earnest — than the rather light-hearted fellows who gathered in Hershey, Pa. in the summer of 1962 for what was then a casual mixture of partisan politics and play.

But whatever the 1982 version could claim in superior seriousness and diligence, it lacked the glamour, the energy and the sheer audacity that was supplied at the Hershey conference — and at many others, earlier and later — by Gov. Nelson A. Rockefeller of New York.

When he walked into the room, things started popping. "His arrival was invariably heralded by the voice, that unmistakable, insistent honking," his former speechwriter, Joseph E. Persico, writes in his newly published memoir, "The Imperial Rockefeller." "He never arrived alone, but in a flying wedge, Nelson striding ahead with easy purposefulness at the point of the angle, while aides trotted at each flank."

He made exactly that kind of entrance into the sun-filled dining room at the Hershey hotel housing that year's conference. It was Rockefeller's sport in those days to throw a strong civil rights resolution on the table and sit back in enjoyment while northern and southern Democratic scrapped with each other about the issue.

It was part playfulness and part partisanship, but in Hershey, lame-duck Gov. (now Sen.) Fritz Hollings of South Carolina, who had seen Rockefeller's trick before, got a bit aggravated.

If you want to talk about civil rights, he said, let's have a real talk. And he launched into a mini-filibuster. Then as now, the governors had a tight schedule to keep, so there was consternation for several hours until Pennsylvania's David Lawrence was able to persuade both men to back off and let the game proceed.

I thought about those days, reading

Persico's lively book last week, when that of federalism filled the Washington Nelson Rockefeller was out front on the issue — as he was on so many others. He organized the bipartisan political machine that bulldozed the first federalist initiative, general revenue sharing, through Congress. And in the casual days, when the governors' conference had no substantial staff resources, its own, his staff put together almost all that remains, even today, the organization's federalist platform.

Yet Rockefeller was never chairman of the group. He was blocked by the Democratic national chairman, John M. Bailey, working through Abe Ribicoff of Connecticut and other Democratic governors to deny Rockefeller a national platform that might have served his presidential ambitions.

In Persico's telling, it is not a sad story — and certainly not a tragic one. It is, Rockefeller's entourage always was, a lively affair, full of graceful touches for those within his circle, and scorn for those on the outside.

He had not much use for Richard Nixon, so he could — as Persico tells it — make a nasty crack even about the Nixon's Christmas card. He had so little esteem for Ronald Reagan that he campaigned enthusiastically against Reagan in 1976 even after Jerry Ford had dumped him from the ticket as Vice President.

Rockefeller and Reagan were always odds at the governors' conference where they shared center stage — and particularly at one held aboard the U.S.S. Independence ("The Ship of Fools") in 1967, the year that Time magazine incautiously pictured them on its cover as the Republicans' 1968 "dream ticket."

Rockefeller always bested Reagan in side the governors' meetings, and — as he liked to point out — ran ahead of Reagan in the challenge to Nixon's nomination in 1968.

Recalling him, through Persico's book, I had to think it was probably just as well that Rockefeller did not live to see Reagan President. Nixon was enough. But, Lord, he would have made the governors' meeting more lively last week.



Letter: People too smart to start war

Editor:

I fully agree with what Elizabeth Crenshaw had to say in The Battalion (a puppet of Pravda) on March 1st about the imminent attack on the U.S. by the Soviet Union. Not only are the Soviets preparing to attack us this moment, but they are infiltrating into every part of our society.

The Russians have special agents placed very high in our government and big business corporations. How else can one explain high inflation, unemployment and the sale of sophisticated machinery and computers? They plan on destroying our economy and draining every last drop of useful technology from us before they come in for the kill. It doesn't stop there either. Someone you know (professor, dorm janitor) could secretly be going to meetings where they discuss ways of breaking American morale. No Nukes and other pacifist demonstrations are some of the best ways those sneaky commies bring their ideas into the open. I've even seen them broadcasting their propaganda here on campus. Don't be fooled by so called fundamental evangelists. They're trying to recruit our youth into their Red army of followers. They don't want you to be a born again Christian but a born again commie.

I bet you didn't know the Russians are controlling our weather. By weakening our farming industry we can't use food as a weapon anymore. Could our own Corp of Cadets (is nothing sacred?) be blindly following a crazed pinko awaiting the signal to invade? That's just a theory, but the list is endless. You can't trust anybody!

Before Ronald Reagan and his conservative Republican followers (as opposed to those Satan-worshipping liberal Democrats) ascend into heaven, I think he should make even more spending cuts and use the extra money for buying even more tanks, planes and guns for defense (offense).

I have been in the hospital four times now for nervous ulcers and have spent many a night worrying about such things. Not anymore though. I figure the end will come sometime around Easter. I'm skipping school and blowing off studying. What's the use of such petty worries and distractions as these? Enjoy your spring break Ags because it will be your last.

By the way, I've taken Highway 6 both ways and found it to be nothing special, but it is a good escape route.

Greg Budinger '83
Jan Word '83

Writer can't really exist

Editor:

I've just read Elizabeth Crenshaw's letter on how Russia is going to blow up America. Surely you can't expect us to believe that this person actually exists. Next you're going to tell us that she sees little green men at night. C'mon guys, if you have to make up letters, at least make them believable. Otherwise send them to the National Enquirer.

Gary Johnson
603 Southwest Parkway

Blame Russia for everything

Editor:

Reading Elizabeth Crenshaw's letter about preparing for a nuclear attack from Russia was quite humorous. She mentioned the world conquering determination of Russian leaders and their superior war machine they have to back it. This war machine should peak in 1982 when our military effort should be at its weakest, and the attack could come as soon as this year.

Well I'm sorry Mrs. Crenshaw, but you obviously have been reading too many articles from the authors who aren't too realistic about the present world or the mental state of Russian leaders. The fact is that the U.S. has enough nuclear weapons to kill the Russian population 35 times over, and the Russians probably have the same type of capability. Neither our leaders nor the Russian leaders are eccentric enough to try an attack that could mean world destruction.

Although the Russians have more actual missiles than the U.S. (appr. 1400 to 1050 (1980)), the American technology is far superior to the Russians. Each U.S. missile has a MIRV warhead which is actually 10 separate heads that separate over the target. Our cruise missile is far superior to anything the Russians have and so too are our Trident submarines. If the Russians launched offensive missiles toward the U.S., our satellites would detect their launch within 30 seconds. Within 15 minutes, the president would know if the missiles were aimed at the U.S. and he would have 15 more minutes to retaliate or surrender. Since the missiles would hit us 30 minutes from launch, a nationwide panic, trying to get to shelters, would do more harm than good.

If you are worried about the Russians and their ideas on dominating the world, concern yourself with their conventional army, which is twice our own, and their actions around the world. If you feel something should be done about that problem, join the army. Your help is much more needed there than in The Battalion. The Russians may take over the world but they will never start with U.S.

A destroyed and contaminated Earth is of no use to anyone, even Russians.

Tom Reilly
McInnis Hall

The Battalion

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The Battalion also serves as a laboratory newspaper for students in reporting, editing and photography classes within the Department of Communications.

Questions or comments concerning any editorial matter should be directed to the editor.

Letters Policy

Letters to the Editor should not exceed 300 words in length, and are subject to being cut if they are longer. The editorial staff reserves the right to edit letters for style and length, but will make every effort to maintain the author's intent. Each letter must also be signed, show the address and phone number of the writer.

Columns and guest editorials are also welcome, and are not subject to the same length constraints as letters. Address all inquiries and correspondence to: Editor, The Battalion, 216 Reed McDonald, Texas A&M University, College Station, TX 77843, or phone (713) 845-2611.

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