

Wait a million years, the crisis will be over

by Dick West
United Press International

WASHINGTON — Proximity is a key word in the Falklands dispute. Because they are currently located only 450 miles off the Argentine coast, the islands claimed by the British understandably have aroused proprietary instincts in Buenos Aires.

I use the adverb "currently" with some degree of confidence that it is exactly the word I was groping for.

"Here today, gone tomorrow" is the latest geographic dogma. That philosophy is manifested in a relatively new theory called "Continental Drift," which may be the next best thing to "Shuttle Diplomacy."

Earth's surface, science is now convinced, is composed of six major plates and about a dozen smaller ones that move above on a molten sphere. As the plates go, so go the land masses and oceans that rise above them.

It is believed the movement has been in progress for at least 250 million years. Before that date, the continents were all joined together and there was only one sea instead of seven to worry about.

In consequence, there were comparatively few border disputes and clashes over marine rights were similarly rare.

Then what is now South America's east coast began splitting off from what is now the west coast of Africa, and nothing has been the same since.

For instance, Florida was once attached to Africa, pieces of Alaska

started out near the Equator, the territory now called Antarctica was covered with trees and polar ice covered the Sahara.

And the outlook is for the restiveness to continue. Present trends will one day have Los Angeles approaching Alaska and Australia colliding with China.

In view of all this stirring around, it may be hypothesized that the Falklands are headed toward Europe and at some point in time will turn up north of Scotland in the approximate position now occupied by the Orkney Islands.

That could cause a marked relaxation of the annexation pressures in Argentina.

There is, alas, no guarantee that the future direction of "Continental Drift" will be along the geo-political lines deemed most promising for world peace.

We could, instead, see Egypt become part of Scandinavia while Israel drifts down near New Zealand, thus playing hob with the Camp David peace plan for the Middle East.

By and large, however, a game of "fruitbasket turn over" in most parts of the globe could only be salubrious.

It is true the traffic moves rather slowly — one to five inches a year — but as Secretary of State Alexander Haig has pointed out, time can be an ally of diplomacy.

If both sides in the Falklands crisis will just be patient, geographic conditions during the next few million years may change enough to render the dispute moot.



Ground Zero is new movement

by Arnold Sawisla
United Press International

WASHINGTON — Almost 20 years ago, Washington witnessed something it had not seen since the depths of the Depression — thousands of protesting Americans marching for a cause in the capital city of the United States.

That, of course, was the 1963 civil rights march climaxed by Martin Luther King Jr.'s "I have a dream" speech. It was the first of many demonstrations that would come to Washington in the next 10 years: first for racial equality and then against the Vietnam War.

When that decade of protest began, most people in Washington believed that mass marches, rallies and picketing would backfire on their sponsors; that lawmakers and policy makers would refuse even to consider the demands of the protesters while they were in the streets.

Among those who misread what was happening then were many in the media. The demonstrations were exciting spectacles, but most news people doubted

they would change much. In fact, until the civil rights and anti-war protests began involving thousands of people, some reporters and editors downrated their significance and news value.

There still are those who maintain the civil rights legislation of the 1960s and the withdrawal from Southeast Asia in the 1970s would have occurred with or without the protest movements. But those who marched and rallied believe they had an impact and the memoirs of many who made national policy in those days confirm that feeling.

Now, a new movement is afoot — for a nuclear weapons freeze now and a start toward nuclear disarmament soon. There have been big demonstrations in Europe; they haven't reached that point yet in the United States.

The demand seems to many in Washington to be naive and/or dangerous in view of the Soviet Union's aggressive military and foreign policy. The "smart money" in the capital says the president, especially this president, will ignore the

"Ground Zero" movement and the policy of trying to match the Russians in weaponry.

The smart money may be wrong. President Reagan made a major move in one of his radio talks and, in the usual practice of avoiding deficit in meetings until there is something to agree on, expressed the hope to talk to Soviet leader Leonid Brezhnev at the United Nations in June.

Even more dramatic was the move by Sen. Barry Goldwater, who had been elected President in 1964, and that he would like to meet with the Russians and point out there were far more construction for their economic resources than

ing more weapons. None of this means nuclear war is coming. But it may mean that politicians this time can't dismiss a potentially massive demand for change out of hand.

Slouch By Jim Earle



"There's the answer in black and white; but I'll swear I don't remember what the question was!"

Letters: Literacy in letters helps

Editor:

Bert McJimsey's recent response to the handgun control article was very enlightening. I do not refer to the content, it was full of the same old arguments, but rather to the style. Perhaps Mr. McJimsey is too emotionally involved with handguns to take the time to write a literate letter. It was quite difficult to read some of the misconstrued sentences. Arguments are much more persuasive if sentences such as "An excellent point used by many pro-gun control advocates" are left out. I hope that drawing attention to this poorly written material will encourage people to take the time to write letters which are grammatically and syntactically correct. I am better able to decipher the minds of the Aggies if their thoughts are put on paper in a literate form.

Bruce Babcock
Department of Agricultural Economics

Gun control reaction

Editor:

In inference to the article by Gary Barker in the April 22 issue of The Battalion. The second amendment to the Constitution states: "A well regulated Militia, being necessary to the security of a free State, the right of the people to keep and bear Arms shall not be infringed."

I totally disagree with his bleeding heart liberal utopian ideas. I myself am a gun owner. The guns I own are used strictly for sport and nothing else. The freedoms we have today were not won by using slingshots. True, I believe in the registration of firearms for private use, but a moratorium on hand gun production? Get real, son, this would be a major constitutional question and be in the courts for years.

People are killed every year by drunk drivers. Does that mean that we should ban liquor or automobiles? No, the problem is in the judicial system. Many criminals are given light sentences by the courts. If the maximum sentence possible was mandatory for conviction of a crime where a gun was used, maybe then such crimes would decrease. Guns don't kill people, it's the person behind it that

does. As the old saying goes, when guns are outlawed only outlaws will have guns.

Personally, the thought of not being able to defend myself against burglars or other criminals scares the hell out of me. So why don't you and your dog "Spot" (what a joke) go and find some other crusade to cry about.

Scott Ashmore '82

'Good' frats vs. 'bad' frats

Editor:

I am not in a fraternity nor desire to be. I believe there are two types of fraternities. The "good" kind of frat, a brotherhood, provides friendship, support, and love for its members. "Bad" fraternities proliferate in number and status breeding conceit through rejection and scorn for outsiders. A "bad" frat pervasion can fracture a university's cohesion, traditions, and friendly atmosphere. Texas A&M must not isolate, reject, or suppress its fraternities and sororities; doing so aids the "bad" frat proliferation and is self-disesteeming and hypocritical.

Aggies detesting seeing A&M labeled "Frat town of the 'bad' order" attempting to isolate frats from the University's main life and activities will only gratify those wishing to reject A&M's traditions through self-isolation. Thus, suppression provides an additional incentive for some to join Greek societies increasing their proliferation.

Those opposing frats reasoning that they ruin the University's cohesion imply: "I don't believe the bond between Aggies is strong enough; I fear for tradi-

tions disintegrating and the flourishing." This attitude holds opinion towards A&M's prized Still others believing frats are appropriate only at large, impersonal universities vehemently reject the idea that A&M is a highly esteemed institution but instead see a vast, anonymous college where the lost meander amongst masses. Rejecting frats is an inadequacy within the University's defeating.

Claim some spirited Aggies: "There are no frats here because our major Aggie traditionalists already have a large, unified fraternity." Is this frat a "good" one if it rejects and suppresses minority factions (frats)?

Some Ags spurn frats and "contending that proliferating frats at A&M eradicate its unique, frat and open atmosphere. Are frat and tolerance between Aggies truly conditional? Why do some, pro-Aggies to be the nation's friendliness, also insist that any fraternal composed of fellow Ags, is a "bad" frat?

The University's harmonious sphere disintegrating will probably through the "moral" majority's rejection of frats, not conversely. Holding solely responsible for the state of the university's harmony is unfair.

If A&M's traditions are strong, nothing will affect them. The bond between Aggies being true, frats cannot harm them. Those lacking faith in A&M fear frats. A&M must not reject fraternities and sororities because doing so is hypocritical and self-defeating.

Richard

the small society



by Brickm

The Battalion

USPS 045 360

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

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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.

The Battalion is published daily during Texas A&M's fall and spring semesters, except for holiday and examination periods. Mail subscriptions are \$16.75 per semester, \$33.25 per school year and \$35 per full year. Advertising rates furnished on request.

Our address: The Battalion, 216 Reed McDonald Building, Texas A&M University, College Station, TX 77843.

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