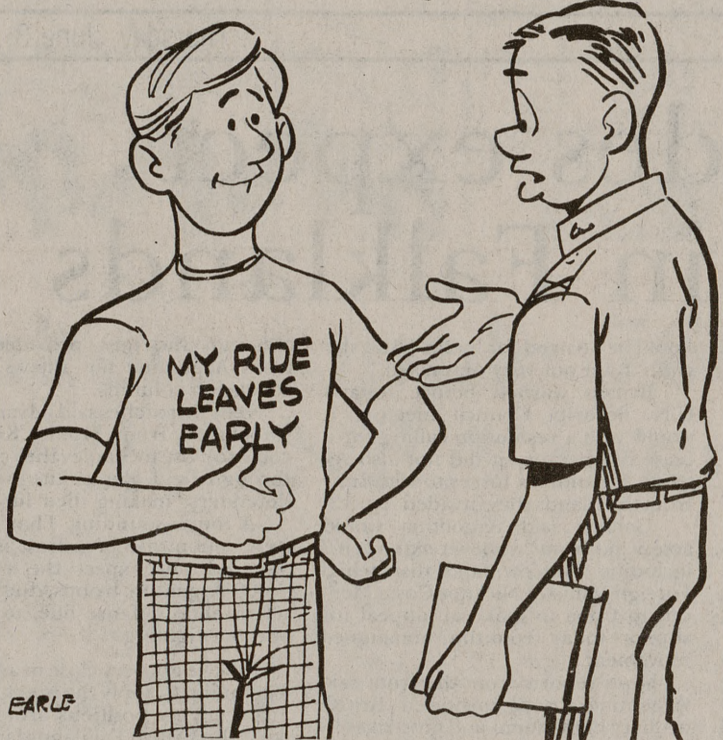


Slouch By Jim Earle



"Okay, I can see how it would work for this weekend, but do you really think you can wear it and get excused from class before every weekend trip."

Reporters hear Reagan show

by Donald A. Davis  
United Press International

WASHINGTON — Picture this, students of political fantasy:

Jim and June Citizen have put in a tough week at their offices. They sleep late Saturday morning, have scrambled eggs for brunch, toss a frisbee with Jim Jr. and pet the dog, probably a mixed-breed terrier named Dutch.

The hands on the clock point straight up to noon.

"It's time," says Jim, "to tune in President Reagan's weekly radio chat to the nation."

June, Jim Jr. and the dog look as if Dad suddenly has been taken ill in the head. But Jim is a Republican, a political junkie and concerned with what his president has to say, for there are major issues to be explained.

He learned over the airwaves last week, for instance, that Americans are out there demanding a federal budget be passed by irresponsible Democrats.

Then there was the stirring Armed Forces Day speech about American fighting men and their wives, and the talk about how to protect the peace by building more nuclear weapons. He has

learned about the Caribbean Basin Initiative, the trouble with Social Security and a lot about the budget.

At 12:06 p.m. EDT each Saturday, President Reagan talks to directly to millions of Jim Citizens, without having to filter his comments through reporters. Straight from the shoulder stuff. Oval Office to your living room.

Right? Wrong.

There is no known nose, or ear, count of how many people actually listen to the five-minute radio show each week. One or 100,000 — it makes no real difference.

For the audience the president wants to reach is never far away. The smooth delivery and baritone voice is aimed at the same reporters the administration claims to be bypassing.

Saturday is what is known in the journalism trade as a slow news day. By springing a surprise address — the subject is never announced in advance — Reagan is guaranteed time on the nightly network news shows, and importantly, big stories in the Sunday morning newspapers across the land.

It has provided him a springboard to regularly attack his Democratic opponents, and they have hardly laid a glove

on him in return. The Democrats had a few winners — such as Sen. Bumpers and Rep. Mo Udall — but their lucid responses could not overcome the momentum the president has built week by week by speaking out first and from the White House.

Reagan has only allowed reporters see him once after giving a speech. He entertained a cluster of them in an Oval Office session to allow photographs to be taken of him at the microphone. That means no questions are asked of his assertions.

It is finely-tuned show business, lored in the White House for getting the president's message with a minimum of fuss and response.

The series was supposed to include shows. But administration spokesmen are hinting it has been a success and be extended.

Jim Citizen and the handful of reporters who have Saturday White House duty may be the only ones who actually listen to the live broadcast, but millions will see and hear the president's words Sunday morning.

And it's doubtful that even Jim catch each and every show.

No itsy-bitsy seals, only great ones

by Dick West

United Press International

WASHINGTON — The Great Seal of the United States, which is 200 years old this month, was put together by a congressional committee.

This may explain why the Great Seal has two sides, one of which has never been used to seal anything.

If a congressional committee had designed our postage system, we probably would have to lick both sides of the stamps.

Let's just be thankful the Great Seal doesn't have six sides, like Rubik's Cube.

Incidentally, to save you the trouble of asking, the name given to the Great Seal is a bit redundant. There are no Petite Seals, Midget Seals, Peewee Seals, or any other kinds of lesser U.S. seals.

The seal whose bicentennial we are celebrating could simply have been called the Seal of the United States, leaving off the adjective, had the committee been so inclined. But you know how committees are.

I don't have the text of the committee's deliberations before me, but I would be willing to bet the Great Seal was the result of a compromise.

Most probably all committee members except one favored a seal showing a bald eagle, symbolizing self-reliance, supporting a shield whose stripes symbolized the original 13 states and whose blue top symbolized Congress.

In one talon, the eagle held an olive branch while the other talon clutched 13 arrows. (You can make up your own sym-

bolism for that.)

The lone dissenter, for his part, likely favored a seal showing a pyramid, symbolizing heaven knows what, topped by the Eye of Providence, which may have symbolized Ben Franklin's optician.

Although outnumbered, the dissenting committee member also happened to be chairman of a subcommittee that handled pork barrel projects. So a compromise was in order.

The result was the two-sided Great Seal now displayed in the State Department's Exhibit Hall.

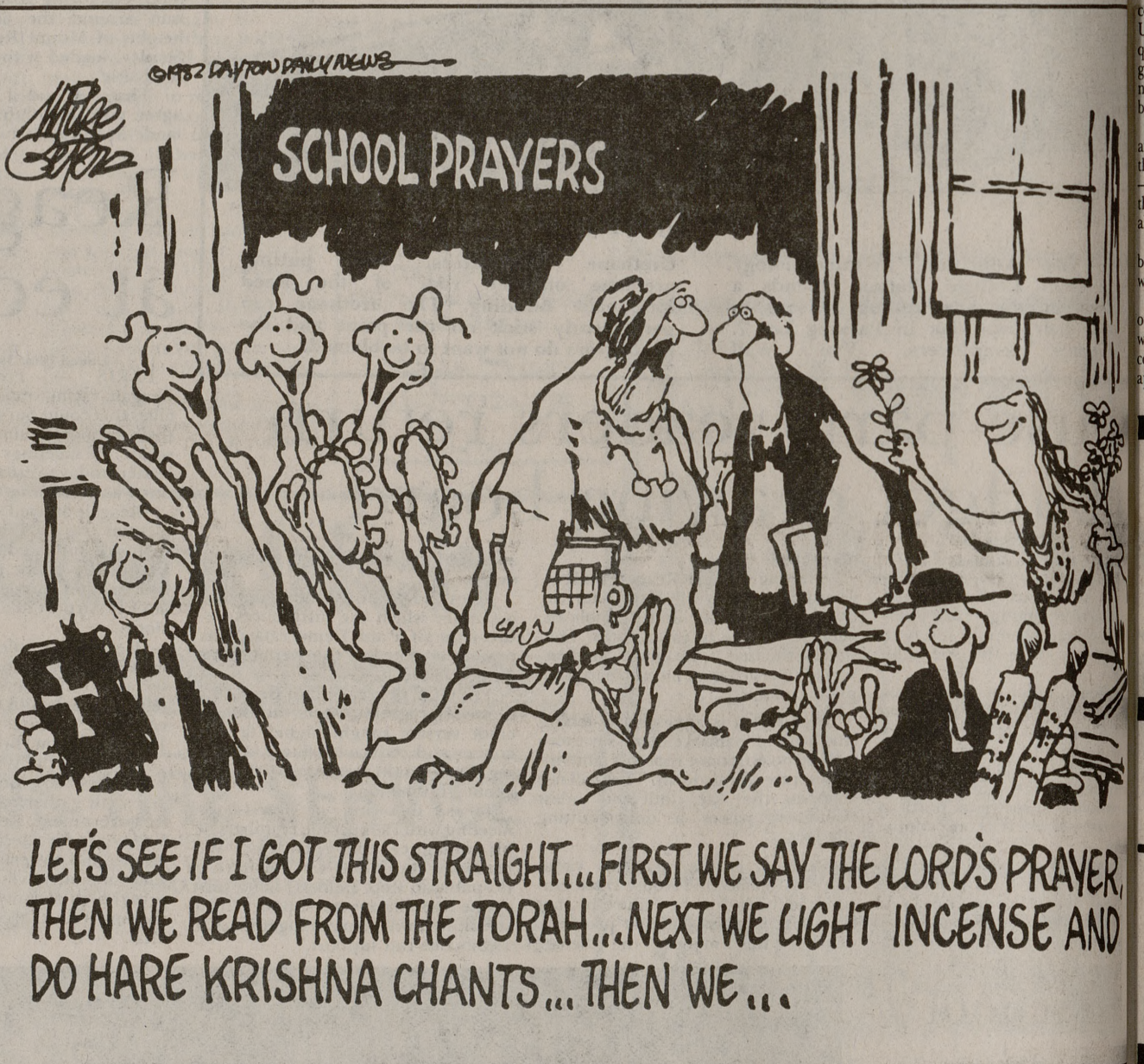
If you don't have time on June 20 to visit to the Exhibit Hall to pay your respects, you can see replicas of both sides on the back of any dollar bill.

Either way, the bicentennial of the Great Seal is an important milestone and it behooves us all to give some thought to how we can best celebrate it.

A formal celebration is being planned by the State Department, and the U.S. Postal Service is issuing a commemorative stamped envelope with glue on the inside of the flap only. But that doesn't mean we, as private citizens, can't crank up our own festivities.

My inclination would be to tie in the Great Seal observance with the demonstrations against the slaughter of baby Harp seals in Canada. There is plenty of symbolism in this linkage.

Naturalists warn that continued killing off of Harp seals could threaten the entire species with extinction. Which is exactly the plight of the bald eagle seen on the front of the Great Seal.



the small society by Brickman



Democratic party needs agreement on alternative to Reaganomics

by David S. Broder

When the House of Representatives rejected all the alternative budget proposals last week, the country was denied the show of fiscal discipline it needs from government in order to have any chance of crawling out of this crippling recession. But if there is any solace to be found in the House's budget fiasco, it is this: The voters saw a clear demonstration of where the problem lies.

Part of it lies in President Reagan's stubborn resistance to a "mid-course correction" in his own policies — a resistance which inhibits most of the congressmen of his own party from supporting any such change.

But a larger problem is the inability of the Democratic Party to forge an internal agreement on an alternative to Reaganomics.

The House was, as always, a near-perfect reflection of those external realities. By March of this year, Washington Post-ABC News polls showed a shift in public opinion from the earlier broad support of Reagan's policy. By a 2-to-1 margin, those polled said Congress should make "substantial" changes in Reagan's budget. A follow-up poll in April found most saying his tax cuts and domestic spending reductions were too deep.

The House votes last week reflected that judgement. First, a majority amended the Reagan-endorsed budget to shift \$4.8 billion from defense to

health care — a straight-out Medicare vs. military test. Then, the House rejected the overall Republican plan, which still sacrificed domestic spending to defense needs and the scheduled tax cuts.

There were cheers from the Democratic majority on that vote, for never once in all of 1981 had they been able to derail the President's legislative express train.

But the cheers were short-lived. Having cleared the agenda, at least temporarily, of Reaganomics, the Democrats failed, on three tries, to find a majority for any plan of their own. They could not muster a majority for a plan devised by five of their brightest young members, in conjunction with a handful of moderate Republicans. Nor could they unite behind either the original or a modified version of the Democratic budget reported by the House Budget Committee and presented by its chairman, Rep. James R. Jones, D-Okla.

In objectively failing to meet their legislative responsibilities, the House Democrats confirmed another finding of that March poll. The voters — who are rarely fooled — said that as far as they could see, the Democratic alternatives were not better or worse than Reaganomics; there were no alternatives at all.

The seriousness of the failure is heightened by the fact that, this time, the Democrats really did give it their best shot. Rep. Richard Bolling of Missouri, perhaps their most skilled parliamentarian, devised rules for debate designed to

give every faction in the party a clean run on its pet provision — in hopes it would support, and not disown, the product. The agenda guaranteed the Democrats would have the last chance to assemble a majority.

That they could not do so shows how politically divided and intellectually bankrupt they really are. They are worse off, in both respects, than they were a year ago, when Reagan was riding high. Last spring, the Democrats were able to get 176 of their members to support the Jones budget against Reagan's preferred plan. This year, Jones could muster only 171 votes for his product.

Last week, the defections came from both ends of the Democratic spectrum — not just the conservative wing. Barely half the 63 Democrats who voted against the Jones budget were southern "blue weevils." Most of the black Democrats were angered by what they regarded as inattention to their own budget proposals — also balked, as did a dozen or so liberal Democrats.

The conventional answer of Democrats is to say that if only they had more members in the House, they would do better.

But the voters will not be satisfied with that. They will want to know: Do what? That question ought to be at the top of the agenda for the Democratic Party's mid-term mini-convention in Philadelphia at the end of this month. Reaganomics is in trouble. But Democrats should have to learn that you can't beat something with nothing.

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