

Slouch By Jim Earle



"I'm at the crossroads trying to decide whether it's best to go into finals rested, with a clear mind or to study hard and risk damaging my rested clear mind!"

Thoughts behind naming weapons

by Art Buchwald

You may have noted that the new name for the MX missile is "The Peacekeeper." As much thought went into what to call the missile as to where to put it. You can say what you want about our military planners, but when it comes to naming mega-death weapons they know their business.

An entire military establishment is involved in thinking up new names for weapons. It is one of the most important divisions in the Pentagon, because when Defense is acquiring new hardware it doesn't want to tip off the taxpayer that it is buying a weapon that can obliterate millions of people.

Digby Trident, who is in charge of market research at Defense, told me: "We spend a lot of time and money thinking up names for our new weapons. The more innocent the name, the better chance we have of the public accepting it."

"How do you work?"
"Let's take the 'Cruise Missile.' The name was selected over others after a great deal of market research in on-the-street interviews. The pollsters asked people first how they felt about a new, improved 'Hiroshima Plus Missile' and received an overwhelmingly negative reaction. Then they were questioned how they'd like, one called 'Sudden Death.' The male respondents said the name appealed to them because it reminded them of professional football. But most females said the first thing that came to their minds was a lot of families being wasted."

"Women always tend to be more squeamish when it comes to war," I agreed.

"Finally we asked what came to mind when they saw the words 'Cruise Missile.' The majority of those questioned said it made them think of a nice boat on a smooth sea. Eighty percent said they would buy a ticket on a cruise missile, even if they didn't know where it was going."

"How did you come up with the name 'Trident' for the new nuclear submarine?"

"We had originally named it 'Killer Shark.' But it turned out that several dovish senators on the Armed Services Committee had seen the film 'Jaws' and decided to withhold appropriations for it. Since we didn't have another name ready for it and were fighting a deadline, the Admirals said: 'We don't care what you call it, Trident. We've got to have it.'"

"The Admiral who was scheduled to testify on the submarine in front of the committee is hard of hearing, and thought we had named it 'Trident.' So that's what he called it when he made his case before the senators, and they loved it. There are a lot of people around here who thought I fixed it so I could have a class of submarine named after me, but I'm completely innocent."

"Where did you find the name 'Peacekeeper' for an MX missile?"

"We first thought of calling the MX the 'Fratricide' missile, but when we test marketed that name we found people thought it meant killing your brother. Then the White House called back and said the President wanted to use the MX missiles as a chip in disarmament talks in Geneva, and he would like a name that would not only alleviate the fears of American Catholic Bishops, but also give a message to the Soviets that we were serious about wanting to cut down on the arms race. So we came up with 'Peacekeeper' which is probably the greatest brand name for a nuclear weapon that we ever thought of."

"It tells the whole story, as far as we're concerned. It's got the carrot AND the stick."

"What's the carrot?"
"The name 'Peacekeeper.'"
"And what's the stick?"
"The missile itself. With 10 nuclear warheads on each, we've got the greatest saber-rattler in the business."

Front runners and underdogs

by Arnold Sawislak

United Press International
WASHINGTON — A lot can be said about the advantages of a fast start in politics, but with Sen. Edward Kennedy out of the 1984 presidential picture, the remaining hopefuls should consider the perils of front-running.

When Kennedy declared himself out of the running, he left former Vice President Walter Mondale as the natural frontrunner for the Democratic nomination. As a number of politicians have learned in the recent past, that does not mean Mondale is home free.

Satchell Paige's dictum, "Don't look back. Something may be gaining on you," is good advice for athletes, but it is superfluous for presidential candidates. If they are running ahead, especially in the earliest stages of a campaign, they can be sure all kinds of somethings and someones are trying to gain on them.

Witness what happened to George Romney in 1968 and to Edmund Muskie in 1972.

Romney, then governor of Michigan and regarded as a hot prospect for the Republican

presidential nomination, got out front early in 1967 and, while Richard Nixon lay back and waited, had the full time and attention of the political press.

Thus, when Romney observed in an off-hand way that he was "brain washed" by U.S. generals during a visit to Vietnam, the media jumped on the comment and Romney's rivals jumped on him. His presidential candidacy never recovered.

Nixon, a firm believer in timing as the key to political success, was ready to step into the lead — after he was assured that there was very little competition behind him.

Muskie had the same kind of experience when he was the Democratic front-runner four years later. He did a marvelous job of signing up supporters among Democratic leaders even before he went to the rank and file voters.

But in his first primary campaign, with reporters following his every move, Muskie let himself get embroiled in a dispute with a disputatious newspaper editor, and — whether he really shed tears or not on that snowy day in Manchester, N.H. — came off as a man who

could not keep his cool when the situation got hot. Another candidacy ruined by a blunder that easily could have been totally avoided: Muskie not been the frontrunner.

The hazards of front-running were made plain to the mind of political strategist John Scahill when he counseled Ronald Reagan to avoid leading the entire Republican field in the years ago.

Leaving Iowa to George Bush as the temporary frontrunner and Reagan able to deal a near-fatal blow to Bush's campaign by appearing to be the champion GOP underdog at their famous "I'm a Democrat" microphone debate at Nathan's. The irony of it all was that Reagan won the election that same day.

Mondale is aware of all this recent history. He certainly isn't going to publicly announce about being regarded as the leader in the 1984 Democratic nomination, but he is going to make a big deal about it either before or after the election. He has the wisdom of old Satch to know that the herd of Democrats behind him is just a herd for him to trip.



Letters: Bicycle safety problems

Editor:

I would like to raise an issue that has needed to be brought to the public's attention for quite some time. This issue involves the safety concerning two-wheeled vehicles.

One day, a student proceeded through an intersection, having the legal right of way. Not yielding to the Moped, a car pulled out in front of him causing him to swerve and slide under the car. Luckily enough he did not slide in front of one of the tires and get crushed.

Exactly one week later, another student was faced with the same situation riding her Moped through campus. Again, she too was not seriously hurt.

These two accidents are not isolated incidents. Unfortunately, quite often the victims are not so lucky as to escape with only minor injuries.

Caught up in a daily rush, we simply don't realize how unprotected two-wheeled vehicles are. No matter who is at fault, though, the two-wheeled riders have the most to lose. How can we not be more careful with other's lives at stake?

The best solution to this problem is for motorists to be aware of the vulnerability of bikes and mopeds. So please, take a little more time, be a little more careful, and think twice before risking yours or another person's safety.

Lucinda Weiss '85

Editors Note: This letter was accompanied by 52 other signatures.

New Solidarity

Editor:

Concerning the newspaper *New Solidarity*, I was more than a little chagrined by the journalism and argumentation expressed by the newspaper.

As far as the journalism is concerned, the subject matter for their articles were out of date for the most part, and the articles were also extremely biased with no objectivity whatsoever.

Their use of rhetoric heavily outweighed their use of logic, and both were extreme and inadequate, respectively. The rhetoric was an extreme example of "shock action" propaganda. It was meant to cloud the issues with emotional cla-

mor, and to attempt to blindly guide the reader to whatever the writers attributed as correct reasoning.

Their poor use of logical argumentation was littered with name calling (Argumentum ad Hominem), complex questioning, appealing to authority (Argumentum ad Verecundiam), etc. The latter is the most interesting of the fallacies they expressed, even though the fallacy first mentioned was the most prevalent. Throughout the paper it seems as though Lyndon H. LaRouche Jr. is some sort of "man with all the answers." I have not the slightest idea who he is, or his

qualifications for his remarks, but it appears to be the repudiated author that is continuously looked to and quoted in this newspaper. The National Democratic Policy Committee (NDPC) appears to be his own little political "Moonie" cult.

The *New Solidarity* newspaper is an excellent example of political demagoguery, and appears to be more interested in a communist and fascist witch-hunt than it is interested in political awareness.

Berry's World



"I thought it was just the PLAYERS who were going to approach every game as if it were a playoff game!"

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 and 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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