



College heartburn quotient

A new sodium-free antacid tablet is being advertised. In the advertisements the company has included a chart listing the Heartburn Quotient for a variety of situations.

Here are some of the circumstances listed:

500 points — "The police car you just hit has two nuns and a White House official in the back seat."

135 points — "Your accountant moves to Brazil."

In the first place, some people aren't susceptible to those heartburn problems. They're called "carriers." Such chance encounters as minor disagreements or other problems with carriers can cause unbearable burning pains in the stomach.

This doesn't include cases of continual contact with a carrier. Continual contact can cause worse problems, including shaking, dizziness and an urge to scream.

Sure, some of the situations mentioned in the commercial would start the



old acid pump going. But college students usually don't face those types of emotional upsets. The types of situations we face are much worse. Here are a few examples:

600 points — After at least a 15-minute wait, you finally are next in line to register for classes. At that moment, the person sitting at the table has to make a trip

to the restroom, and there is no one to replace her. And the folks open registration announce from the line that they are splitting the line into two parts — and you're in the wrong part.

492 points — One-tenth of an hour after a traffic light changes from green, the car behind you, which is currently equipped with electronic sensors, honks.

300 points — At any hour of the night, you arrive at the bus stop five seconds after the vehicle is intended to board leaves.

98 points — Automatic clothes cause one or more socks to change thereby guaranteeing at least one mismatched pair will emerge from the dryer (or monthly wash). Or said socks will not be heated when you put clothes in them.

3,000 points — you lose your notes the week before finals. The book has been entirely highlighted, and all of your class notes.

Cannibalism and high-tech industry

by Art Buchwald

Hi-tech industry, particularly computers, is recommended for people who are looking for a profession. For the moment the computer industry is supposed to be recession-proof. Well, up to a point.

I heard this story about one of the largest computer companies in America.

"Dr. Frankenstein, I want to congratulate you on your new software program which makes it possible for a robot to do the work of 100 human beings in one half the time."

"It was nothing. The key was to get a computer to interface with the robot so they talk the same language. Once the robot was programmed to only respond to SAMPSON it learned to discriminate not only colors, but sizes, shapes and verbal orders. One executive sitting in his home in Greenwich, Connecticut, with our 'Artichoke 536,' can now give orders to every SAMPSON-programmed robot in the Western world."

"We're aware of that and we're very proud of your work. It has turned out to be better than anything we dreamed of."

"Have you sold the system already?"

"No, we've been using it in our own company first, to make sure there aren't any bugs in it."

"And?"

"You're fired, Frankenstein."

"Yes, the system you perfected made it possible for us to lay off 3,000 employees and still increase productivity by 40 percent."

"But it was my idea. How can you fire the person who thought up the idea?"

"The SAMPSON Robot has made it possible to eliminate your entire research and development department, which was a big financial drain on the company. We can now instruct the Robot to do the same work you were doing at a hundredth of the cost."

"It has perfected a new merchandising program, which will eliminate 90 percent of our sales force, and it's already figured out how to cut our taxes and phone bills

by 70 percent. Dr. Frankenstein, you created a work of art, and we plan to give you full credit in our next stockholders report."

"That's great, but I still need a job."

"You should have thought of that when you started developing the SAMPSON Robot. Surely you knew that this labor-saving system would eliminate the need for people."

"I was thinking of other companies we could sell it to; not our own."

"We would be crazy not to use it ourselves. Our first responsibility is to cut labor costs as low as we can. When you put a human being on the payroll, you not only have to add in his salary but also his Social Security, medical benefits, pension, vacation and coffee breaks. A robot can be depreciated over three years, and then it works for us for nothing."

"Well, if you feel that way about it, I'll go to another company and make a better SAMPSON than you have."

"I wouldn't do that if I were you. According to SAMPSON, which is now doing our law work, if you go to another firm and work on the same research you will be guilty of giving away trade secrets and our robot advises us to sue you."

"But you're taking my livelihood away from me."

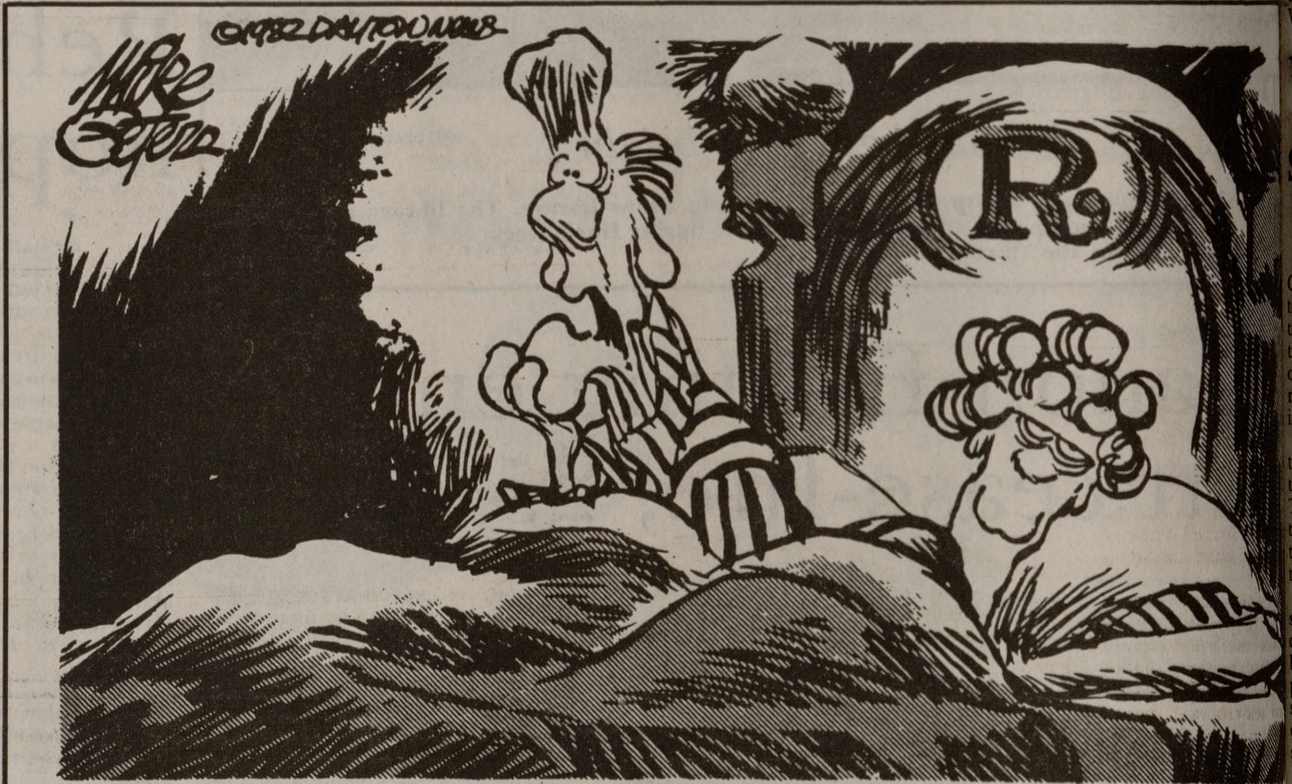
"We're not taking it away from you. The robot you invented is. If you were as smart as you think you are you wouldn't have programmed it to do research and development. Once you scientists take on a problem, you never think of the consequences of your successes."

"Well, if I can't work in R&D give me a job doing something else. I have only two more years before I get my pension. I'll work in the mailroom."

"All right. I'll ask SAMPSON, on my computer."

"What did it respond?"

"He said he doesn't need some dopey person to get in the way. He can sort the mail alone."



I CAN'T STICK THE MX ON A RAILROAD, I CAN'T STICK IT ON A PLANE, I CAN'T STICK IT IN A SILO... SO YOU TELL ME, NANCY, WHERE CAN I STICK IT?

White House influence tested

by Donald A. Davis

WASHINGTON — The MX missile furor is providing a glimpse into the tactics the White House will use to guide controversial issues during the coming session of the 98th Congress.

It was only by chance that Dec. 1 was the date set for President Reagan to come up with a proposal on how the expensive and controversial nuclear missile should be based. His choice — "dense pack" clustering — was submitted to Congress rapidly and with minimum fanfare.

Although its membership was the same as before, the Congress that received the suggestion was not the same one through which Reagan shoved measure after measure as he laid out his economic programs in the first two years of office.

Because of the November elections, many congressmen lost their jobs, making them all but immune to any sort of presidential arm-twisting.

Others who weathered the ballot battle were more reluctant to listen to the persuasive president's calls for support. Democrats had no reason to toe the line for Reagan and Republicans were wary. Reagan did some telephoning to congressmen, but did not mount the kind of campaign which conjured up the unexpected victories earlier in his tenure.

The result was an overwhelming 245-176 House of Representatives vote to deny funds for the missile Reagan calls the "Peacekeeper." The outcome did not necessarily surprise the White House, although the margin of the vote did.

"It was a difficult vote. We started from behind and that was how we ended up," said deputy press secretary Larry Speakes.

Speakes estimated a "core of 40 to 50" House members made the difference and that once the vote began to turn one way, other congressmen began jumping on the bandwagon.

With the new House for the 98th Congress, which comes to office in January, containing more Democrats, the administration can expect more lopsided defeats there.

However, the MX loss is providing a test for the White House theory of success through the Senate, where Republicans dominate, and then in the valuable conference committees, where deals are struck.

"We're hopeful for passage in the Senate," Speakes said of the chances for the MX. He

added that the House loss "doesn't indicate to us" a similar margin in a Senate vote.

If the administration can squeeze the MX financing bill through the Senate, where Republicans retained their edge in the elections, the differing outcomes then go into conference committee. That is where the missile might come back to life.

"There's got to be a meeting of the minds somewhere," Speakes said.

In addition, the president is expected to speak out "forcefully and often" in behalf of the MX, hoping to stir grassroots pressure on the congressmen.

That signals a significant departure from past campaigns when Reagan formed his famed "Boll Weevil" coalition of conservative

Democrats and loyal Republicans.

Now with the House firmly in the Speaker Thomas O'Neill's Democratic ship, the administration can almost have any hope of support on crucial issues.

But with the president using the Office as the "bully pulpit" described by Theodore Roosevelt, the administration is to pound out its message to the congressmen thoroughly in the future.

critical votes come up. Then they will chip on getting at least one acceptance of their bills through the Senate.

isolating O'Neill's power and coming to a compromise when the two sides are reason out their differences.

Berry's World



"Sometimes I wonder if there isn't more to life than immediate gratification."

The Battalion

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