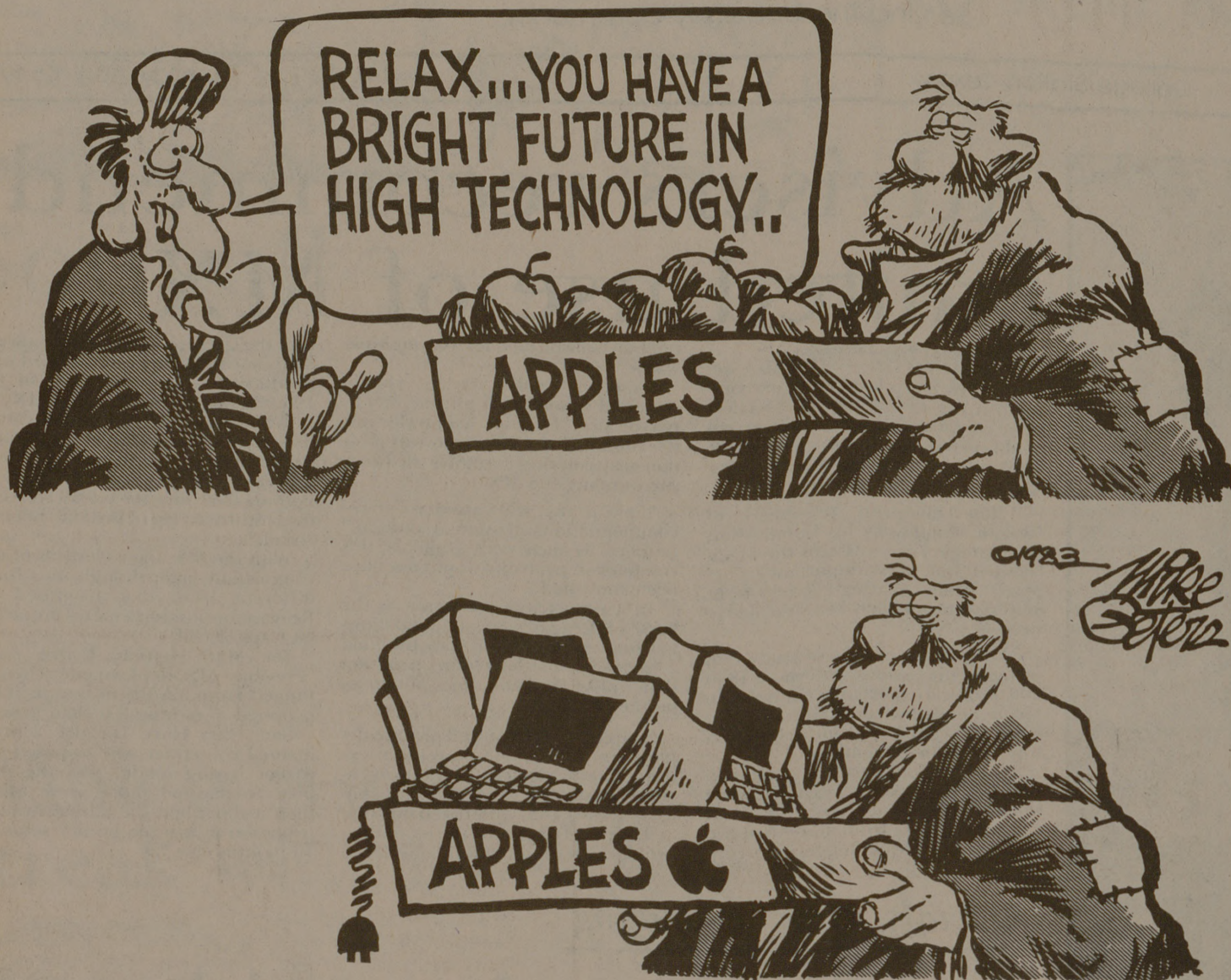


# opinion



## Similarity between Israel, America

Editor's note: This is the first of a four-part analysis written by members of the Israel Club in conjunction with Israel Awareness Week.  
by Connie Himelhoch-Bally

The year 1983 marks the United States' 207th anniversary of being an independent nation. During this time, America has evolved from a sparsely populated country with a main emphasis on establishing territorial domain, to a country whose contributions have had profound global effects.

This country was founded by people seeking political independence, and we have continued to hold the doors open to many people whose own countries embellish oppression.

The defined purpose for a country's existence cannot be given to its citizens by any leader, but a defined purpose must be established for goals to be attained and perpetuated. A country whose goals are deeply enmeshed with its purpose is Israel. This year marks Israel's 35th Anniversary as an independent nation. It is a country rich in history, constantly adjusting to internal and external con-

flicts. A country like our own, whose people are hoping to find opportunity, identity and life choices. The years of independence has resulted in many efforts to establish a framework within which peace negotiations can continue in the ahead.

On the Texas A&M University campus, beginning April 12 and continuing through April 15, students and faculty members will be holding "Israel Awareness Week." This will be an opportunity for the public to increase awareness of the advances and contributions by a country only 35 years

The contributions to the advancement of technologies in agriculture and national trade by a country so young, cannot be overlooked. It is an ample of people with various cultural and religious backgrounds living together in a small area to build a homeland. It is much the same in America, in that its citizens are asking us live together, let us live in peace.

Wednesday: U.S. foreign policy towards Israel.

## Wild wonderful world of political explanation

by Arnold Sawislak  
United Press International

WASHINGTON — Back in 1976, Fred Harris analyzed his loss in one of the presidential primaries with a charmingly creative explanation.

"I campaigned for the little people," the former Oklahoma senator said, "and I guess they just weren't tall enough to reach the voting levers."

Harris' Theory of Voter Altitudes, which is here capitalized in hopes of giving it a place in the pantheon of American political alibis, was not much less fanciful than some of the explanations we have been getting from the current crop of politicians about their own problems.

President Reagan, for example, has attributed opposition to cuts in welfare programs to poverty program bureaucrats whose jobs were in jeopardy. Criticism of his administration's environmental policies, he has said, came from people who won't "be happy until the White House looks like a bird's nest."

He is no exception. Presidents Johnson and Nixon regarded anti-war demonstrators as long-haired, pot-smoking hippies even when they could look out the White House window and see middle-aged, middle class Americans marching to protest the Vietnam War.

Interior Secretary James Watt also has come up with some interesting causes for some distressing effects.

Crime at the Washington Monument July 4 fireworks display, he decided, as caused by rock and roll music. To solve this problem, he has summoned Wayne Newton from the quiet, law-abiding community of Las Vegas, Nev., to sing at the monument this year.

Now Chairman Frank Fahrenkopf of the Republican National Committee has joined the remarkable explanation sweepstakes.

He has concluded that polls show a higher percentage of women do not like Reagan and-or the Republican Party are skewed by mothers and other ladies who are tired about losing government benefits.

He described the group causing the "gender gap" as 21 to 40 year old widowed or single heads of families recipients of assistance programs. These women out of the equation, he noted, the percentage of women who back the Republicans is much to even.

Fahrenkopf said he got this information from analyzing polls, but they have been different from those earlier this year by the American Enterprise Association's magazine, Public Opinion. Using network surveys and University of Michigan studies, the magazine's exit polls after the 1982 elections showed female support of Republicans 30 percentage points lower than male support for GOP candidates.

(With the exception of 1960, a percentage of women than men have supported GOP candidates in national elections since 1952, one Michigan studies showed.)

ABC polling figures showed the largest gender gap was among 25 year-old women with post-graduate degree educations and incomes of \$20,000 a year.

The smallest gap was among those with high school diplomas only, in the \$5,000-to-\$15,000 range, two age groups, 18-24 and 50-59.

From those figures, it would be hard to reach the same conclusion as the Republican chairman. But, like Fred Harris, probably needs an answer that doesn't make his problems look larger than they seemed before he asked the question.

## Business law vs. consumers

by Maxwell Glen and Cody Shearer

When the 98th Congress retires next year and pundits hold their annual "Worst Piece of Legislation Contest," we'll be ready with a nominee: the Uniform Product Liability Act. It would all but exempt makers of shoddy, unsafe or improperly labeled goods from expensive injury lawsuits.

Introduced by Sen. Robert Kasten (R-Wis.), who is not a lawyer, the legislation represents an all-out assault on judicial redress traditionally available to consumers. Unfortunately, the measure stands a strong chance of passing through Congress by the end of the year.

To hear business tell the story, of course, the Kasten bill is a long-overdue play for clarity. Since the mid-1970s, manufacturers claim, a burgeoning caseload of product-liability suits has left many companies in doubt as to just what is the law from state to state.

Product-liability reform guru Victor Schwartz, who heads an alliance of 150 businesses and trade associations backing the bill, says that industry wants a uniform federal law to define for state courts

the conditions under which a manufacturer is liable for injury stemming from product use — usually cars, trucks and pharmaceuticals. Simple enough, right? Wrong. By Kasten's reckoning, the "uniform" code would effectively rewrite

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liability standards that have long protected consumers and kept careless companies on their toes. It would relieve manufacturers of "strict" responsibility for design defects and failure to warn consumers while burdening plaintiffs with a long list of standards that must be proven before they recover damages. Every state would feel this flouting of case law.

For example, if a car owner in New Jersey wished to recover damages for a collapsed car roof, under present law he or she would only have to prove that the roof had failed to perform "as reasonably expected" or that the design's risks outweighed its benefits. Kasten's uniform code, however, would require the plaintiff to prove that the manufacturer knew or should have known about the danger — a much more difficult and expensive legal proposition and, ironically, by the current law standards, irrelevant.

Meanwhile, Mary Ann Smith, an American University tort law expert, said the code would simply impose chaos on state courts while offering little guidance on how to interpret it. "State courts will either have a monster on their hands or they'll interpret it in terms that they already know — the old law," Smith said.

Indeed, Smith contends that the body of product liability law is already predictable and, though it has grown quickly in recent years, reliable. That it differs from state to state is natural and not necessarily all that bad (unless you dislike keeping lawyers in business).

Ironically, possible federal godfathering of state court authority has led the Reagan administration to withhold outright support for Kasten's code. While the White House could throw in its weight when the bill gets another commerce committee hearing later this month, the chance is that it will stay on the sidelines.

Yet, as it looks now, Congress won't need a push from Reagan to make life easier for producers, jeopardizing in the process the health and safety of consumers. Given that, during the 1970s, disabling accidents out-distanced lawsuits 20-to-1, a bill such as Kasten's would only reduce manufacturers' incentive for making safe and useful products. More consumers would be injured; fewer of those injured could recover damages.

In the end, the pro-business bill may only drive customers away.

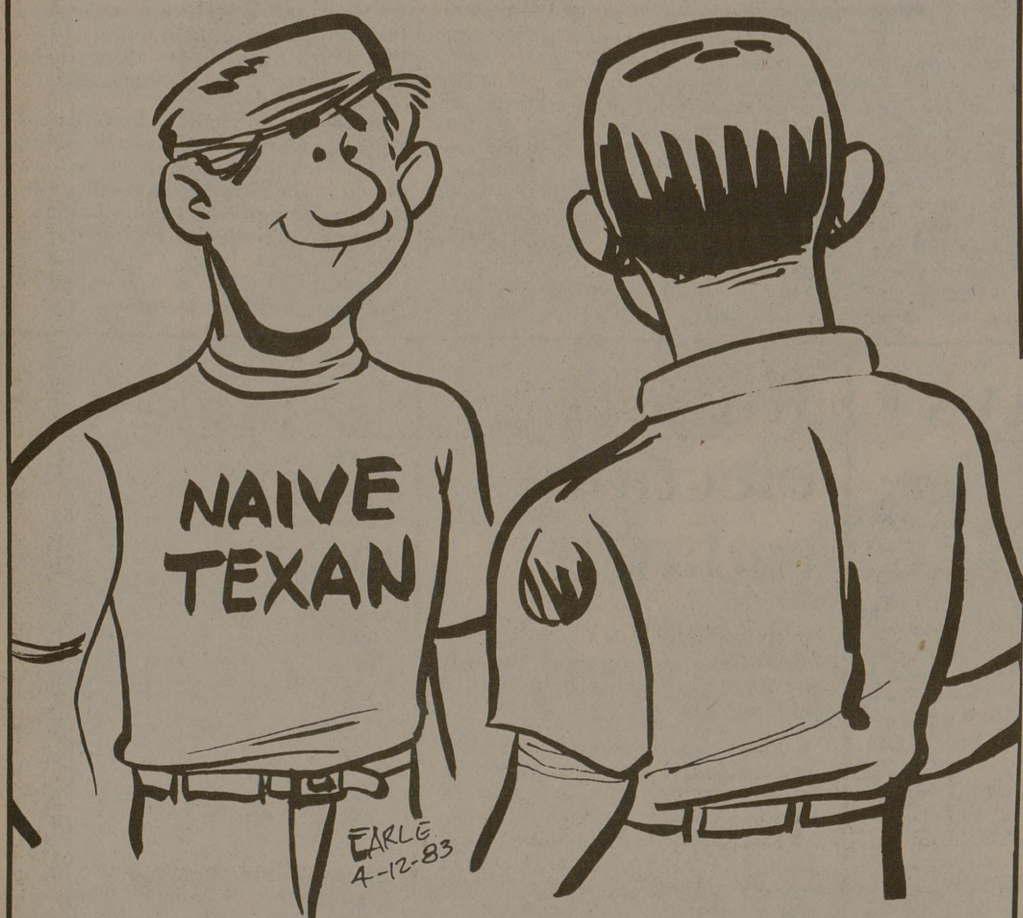
## Letter: Food fair outstanding

Editor:

The International Food Fair sponsored by the International Students' Association is a unique and special event. Where else can you sample foods and pagentry from more than 31 nations? The whole International Week is testimony to the outstanding effort that has made ISA one of the largest and finest international student organizations in the nation. For those who missed it, my condolences and encouragement to attend next year.

David Mucci  
MSC staff member

## Slouch By Jim Earle



"I can tell by your T-shirt that you were born in Texas and that you're not too hot on spelling."

## The Battalion

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The Battalion also serves as a laboratory for students in reporting, editing and photo-graphy within the Department of Communication. Questions or comments concerning any 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 exceed that length. The editorial staff reserves the right to edit for style and length, but will make every effort to preserve the author's intent. Each letter must also show the address and phone number of the author.

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

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