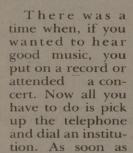
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Opinion

United Feature Syndicate

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Music masterpieces a phone call away



Art Buchwald

they put you on : HOLD you can enjoy the great masterpieces of all time.

A big fan of this type of music is Stuart Brotman. He maintains the only way you can really appreciate the classics is to be left hanging on the line waiting for a live person to talk to you.

"Once you listen to Mozart on the phone you never want to hear him live again," Stuart said.

"I didn't know you could get Mozart on the telephone," I said.

'You'd be surprised what you can get," he said. "The other day I called to make an airline reservation to Atlanta and was plugged into Handel's 'Messiah.

"Is 'Messiah' a favorite of yours?"

"It wasn't. But I had to wait so long that now I know the lyrics by heart.'

What has been the most memorable music ever played for you on the phone?" I asked Stuart.

"I once dialed Sears Roebuck about a lawn mower sale and they immediately switched me to 'Aida.' At the finish I lost my head and started shouting 'Encore! Encore!' and the clerk hung up on me.'

"I've called Sears many times and I've never heard Verdi.'

"They only play him during Columbus Day sales," Stuart said.

"How do you feel about Stravinsky?"

"I can take him or leave him. My problem with Stravinsky is that when you have the telephone up to your ear, he can blow you out of the booth. When I'm waiting to speak to someone on the phone I prefer a Chopin sonata.

"If I wanted to hear some good music what company would you suggest I dial?

"American Express has excellent taste. If you call their credit card complaint department they will pipe in the 'Blue Danube.'

"That's no big deal. My gas company plays the 'Blue Danube' every time they put me on hold."

'The difference is American Express pipes theirs in live from Vienna.'

He then explained to me what was going on. "In the beginning most firms didn't pay much attention to the music they played. But as they kept cutting personnel, there were fewer employees to answer the phone. So with a smaller staff the companies had to play longer pieces. The days of piping in 'Begin the Beguine' are over. The average wait for a car rental agency to take your call now is at least a Beethoven symphony.

"I didn't realize so much thinking went into institutional answering serv ices.

"I'll prove it to you," Stuart said. "I'm going to dial the IRS. They always put you on HOLD.

He handed the receiver to me. I listened and then said, "I don't believe it. The IRS is playing Wagner's 'Gotterdammerung.

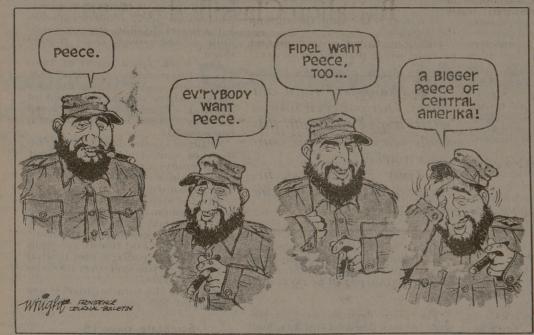
"Why are you surprised?"

"It's a funeral march."

"What did you expect — 'Happy Days

Are Here Again'?'

Art Buchwald is a columnist for the Los Angeles Times Syndicate.





Abortion Difference between life and existence

Wednesday was the 13th aniversary Glenn of the U.S. Supreme Murtha

Court's Roe v. Wade decision which legal-

ized abortion nationwide. Many people have the misconception that abortion was not legal anywhere in the United States before the decision, but this is not true. Abortion was legal primarily in more liberal northern and western states, illegal in more conservative southern states.

The case was initiated by a Texas woman named Roe. Names used in cases are sometimes pseudonyms to protect the participants. Wade was and is presently the Dallas County District Attorney.

Roe became pregnant and decided to terminate her pregnancy. She visited various doctors to discover if any would perform an abortion but was turned cause of anti-abortionists. I believe that down. Her only other option was to existence begins with conception, travel to a state where abortion was legal though not necessarily life. There is

could not have an abortion legally performed. The law needlessly discriminated against women who could not afford the cost of travel.

The case eventually reached the U.S. Supreme Court. After examining testimony from medical, women's and religious groups, the court reached a decision. The court stated, in effect, that because various groups could not completely agree as to when life began and to the morality of abortion, the decision to terminate a pregnancy should lie with the individual.

Thus, state laws which prevented abortion were declared unconstitutional for violating a woman's right to privacy, her ability to freely make a decision without interference from the government.

Women should possess the right to have an abortion. I sympathize with the or to Mexico where surgical procedures more to life than just physical existence, were often unsafe. During this time, a namely the quality of life. Simply claimdressed.

Suppose that a woman faced and pected pregnancy and could not aff to leave work to carry her pregnand term. Would you be willing to profinancial support so that she could a her pregnancy to term?

Ge

"It

And what if she did have here yet had no means to support it? Wa you be willing to provide support?

What about adoption? Easier than done. An emotional attacht quickly develops between mother: child. Many women recognize this and the potential problem of part with the child after its birth.

What about handicapped child Would it be fair to bring a severely tally or physically handicapped of into the world? Would it be fair tof anyone to live this type of existence?

What about rape and incest? Wou be fair to force a woman to have ad conceived in hate? Rape and incest degrading experiences. A pregna resulting from these acts may served as a reminder to the degradation.

flight left Love Field in Dallas every Sat- ing that abortion is wrong, period, is not urday morning primarily carrying preg- enough. Other issues must be adnant women to California to have abortions performed. Other women opted to travel to Mexico.

state of Texas violated her right to ter- I have never known a life of poverty and minate her pregnancy. She could not af- have never experienced the misery ford to travel to another state and thus, which accompanies it.

What about poverty? Judging from my circumstances, if I were a woman I Roe filed a lawsuit claiming that the could adequately provide for a new life.

make and a difficult issue to reso The fact that strong differences opinion exist indicates no absolute or wrong. I could not bring a child the world to face a life of misery. you call life may be no life at all.

Glenn Murtha is a senior politicals ence major and a columnist for Battalion.

Mail Call

Barton should reconsider EDITOR:

In the Jan. 18 edition of the Eagle, Congressman Joe Barton was quoted as saying he would support President Reagan if he chose to bomb terrorist training camps in Libya. Barton stated, "If they (the terrorist) have to pay a price, it may lessen the degree of terrorism. We should not only raise the price to terrorists, but also to those who support them." Barton would not view the strike against the camps in Libya as an act of war; "It is one thing to conduct a strategic military strike and another to occupy.

I find this attitude not only asinine, but an affront to those of us who voted for him. One of the primary reasons for terrorist attacks against our citizens is a deep seated hatred and mistrust of the American government created by positions and actions taken by the United States in the past.

Is it logical to assume that by killing more people we will reduce these feelings? Can we raise the price so high that these feelings will no longer be expressed in terrorist acts?

Military action will only serve the terrorist cause by creating additional martyrs, reinforcing the negative image of America and increasing hatred. These will be valuable tools for recruitment into the terrorist ranks, thus increasing terrorist activity.

I do not know how to stop terrorism. Perhaps it must run its course. Perhaps disproving the terrorist propaganda and reflecting a less-warlike image can help.

I have a realistic view of war. I believe it to be the most And nobody in Congress, much less the Executive inhuman act of humanity. Sadly, there are times when we must sacrifice our young men to protect our way of life, but we must be absolutely positive that such a great sacrifice is justified.

I believe that not only Libya, but most of the world, would view a military strike as an act of war. At a time when a rational dialog with the Soviets is delevoping and the dream of nuclear disarmament may become a reality we cannot afford to involve ourselves in a conflict the majority of the world will condemn. Terrorism is not an American problem, it is a global problem and must be dealt with on a worldwide basis.

Our elected officials, such as Barton, must now, more than ever before become voices of reason. The time for a "Bomb the Bastards" attitude is past, and espousing these attitudes will only result in adding fuel to the fire. I urge you to write Barton and ask him to reconsider his stand.

G. Ray White **Graduate Assistant**

Farmers should unite

EDITOR:

The American farmer is having a hard time holding on to the last bastion of freedom in the United States. Over the last few decades the federal government has gradually regulated his land, his job and his fiscal responsibilities. Now Uncle Sam has suddenly pulled the rug out from under the farmers by threatening to foreclose on all the massive loans the federal govern-As a participant and a victim of the Vietnam conflict ment has forced them to depend on over the years.

Branch, gives a hoot.

The farmers' plight has been ignored by the media and the people of America - they've not even the wherewithal to band together to save their land and their livelihood. Not that it would do much good, though.

About the only way they're going to keep their farms, bought with so much toil, is - as a group - declare bankruptcy, citing the federal government, much as would any debtor harassed by bill collectors. It is their right by law, their duty to themselves, their farms and the people who need their produce.

What, you say, but such a massive debt disclosure would likely bankrupt the federal government - at the time the Gramm-Rudman deficit reduction bill is gearing up to cut the fat from the federal bureaucracy. The two actions together, if accomplished, would put the government in big trouble. Better, I say, to have food on the table than to serve up the last supper to our so-called leaders in our Rome on the Potomic.

At least an attempt by farmers to formally declare bankruptcy would get them a little attention, which they seem to be able to achieve no other way.

William H. Clark II

Letters to the Editor should not exceed 300 words in length. 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 be signed and must include the address and telephone number of the writer.

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