

Opinion

Tantrums for Liberty

The firing of Lee Iacocca as head of the government advisory commission on the Statue of Liberty was a good idea, despite the Chrysler Corp. chairman's ongoing temper tantrum. The decision was one of ethics, not conspiracy, for Interior Secretary Donald Hodel.

Iacocca claims his removal after four years was linked to a plan by the National Park Service to build a luxury hotel on Ellis Island. Iacocca is vehemently opposed to the project.

Hodel's decision made sense. Iacocca also is head of the Statue of Liberty-Ellis Island Foundation, Inc., a private group that has raised \$233 million for the Statue of Liberty restoration project.

It is unethical for the man who is in charge of awarding such huge contributions to the project to have control over where the money goes.

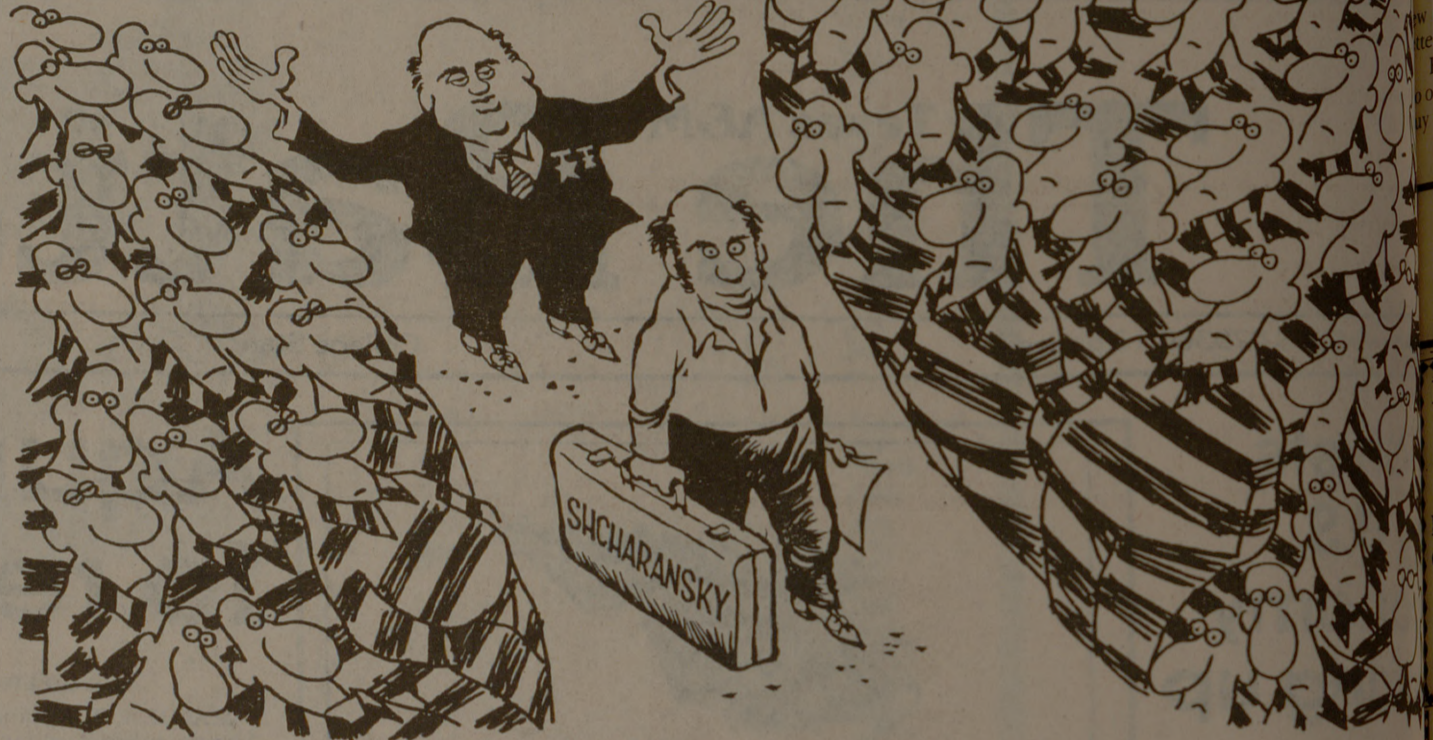
Iacocca has managed to win the sympathy of the press and the nation because Hodel's decision comes four years too late.

The Chrysler chairman should stop stamping his feet over his dismissal and concentrate his efforts toward thwarting the hotel construction — a detriment to the national park.

Iacocca's interests are sincere. Hodel's decision will keep those interests from conflicting.

The Battalion Editorial Board

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GORBACHEV PARTING THE RED SEA

Space flight

Man has a need to test personal and technological abilities . . .

For we cannot
tarry here.

We must march
my darlings, we must
bear the brunt of
danger.

We the youthful sinewy races, all the
rest on us depend,

Pioneers! O Pioneers!

Walt Whitman's words are just as appropriate to the space program as they were to the movement West. The human race depends on pioneers and in the 1980s — the astronauts who brave the journey into space. Where would we be if those first settlers had given up their dreams and turned back with the first death on the long and difficult trail westward?

But it is not a human trait to give up a dream. Man is an adventurer and an explorer. We have a constant need to test our personal and technological strength. And the explorer is a romantic figure: brave, intelligent and even stubborn.

Lora Best
Guest Columnist

The seven crew members of the Challenger possessed these qualities. It is what we expect of our astronauts.

NASA unselfishly allowed us to watch heroes through broadcasts of the shuttle launches, press conferences and the like. The agency always kept the public involved in its triumphs: the first launch, the first black and the first woman in space. We also were deeply involved in the first in-flight tragedy.

The tragedy of the explosion is that the people onboard were not just seven astronauts. The Challenger crew was a sampling of Everyman. There was a Jewish woman, an Oriental and a Black on board. They came from places as diverse as Concord, N.H. and Hawaii. The crew of every shuttle mission allows us to vicariously become the astronaut, the pioneer.

But the triumph of manned shuttle missions does not affect Americans alone. The Soviet cartographers who created the first maps of the surface of Venus have decided to name craters after Judith Resnick and Christa McAuliffe.

We must realize that our manned space program affects the peoples of other countries as well.

Technically, manned space missions have proven themselves. In the April 6-13, 1984 Challenger mission a Solar Maximum Mission satellite was retrieved, repaired and returned to orbit. Astronauts have completed space walks and tested the Manned Maneuvering Unit, which can be flown over 300 feet from the spacecraft to make minor repairs. Scientific experiments, such as the study of crystal growth, motion sickness and the effects of weightlessness on man would have been impossible without manned space flight.

Future shuttle-related experiments include the launching of two satellites — Galileo and Ulysses. Ulysses will fly past Jupiter and then go into a polar orbit around the sun. It will give us a first-time view of the North and South poles of the sun. These poles have never been seen by man because the earth is in orbit around the sun's equator. Galileo will orbit Jupiter and send a probe into the planet's atmosphere.

The Hubble Space Telescope, which would orbit above the earth's distorting atmosphere and show us the rest of the universe, and a proposed flight to Mars are dependent on the success of manned space shuttle missions.

Another shuttle-dependent program is the manned space colony. The station, which will be assembled in space by astronauts, is targeted for completion by 1994. The shuttle will be necessary to ferry men, women and supplies from the earth to the station.

Apart from the scientific purposes of the shuttle, it also has economic benefits. The shuttle has been able to deploy 45 percent of the satellites going into orbit. Arianespace, the commercial arm of the European Space Agency, deploys the other 55 percent.

A manned shuttle is commercially attractive because it is able to correct some of the problems that arise at launching. Three of Arianespace's 15 launches have failed and a total of \$150 million was lost because of them. Another benefit of the shuttle over rockets is that the space-

craft and its booster rockets are re-usable.

The shuttle disaster was not the time human life was lost while reaching for the stars. On Jan. 27, 1967 the manned Apollo spacecraft burst into flames on the platform, killing "Gus" Grissom, Edward White and Roger Chaffee. The space program was new and could easily have been abandoned. But it continued and two and a half years later Apollo 11 landed on the moon. Had NASA given up, man would have never been able to set foot on another world.

Today, seven more pioneers — Scobee, Michael Smith, Ellison S. Sizemore, Judith Resnick, Ronald McNair, Gregory Jarvis and Christa McAuliffe — are on their way. The nation will mourn their deaths but just like the early settlers, a manned space program must go ahead.

Who can imagine what we will be able to accomplish two and a half centuries from now?

Lora Best is a senior journalism major at Texas A&M University.

. . . but better to reach for the stars with our feet on the ground

We have ignored the challenge posed by the space shuttle Challenger on Jan. 28, 1986: To question manned space flight, its practicality, feasibility and purpose. We do not dare — allowing our emotions to cloud scientific reasoning in the wake of Challenger's fumes.



Cynthia Gay

While television blizzards Americans with five hours of shuttle disaster coverage, not one of our political leaders stepped forward to denounce the hoisting of *homo sapien* into space.

The media repeatedly gave us the facts, the personalities, the tears, the disbelief, and they pondered what went wrong. But neither our boobytub buddies, nor NASA officials cared to consider abandoning our man-in-space dreams.

Kennedy suffered the Soviet's sending the first man into space and resolved to one-up them with the first man on the moon. We did it in 1969, but at the loss of three lives in 1967 and a persisting loss of priorities. During our scramble to beat the Soviets, we failed to see that they were entrenched in a deadlier contest: Cold War.

The military's dependence on the shuttle insured the program's continuation in the 1970s, yet our defense interests are now in unnecessary jeopardy because of the NASA's commitment to provide commercial and scientific services.

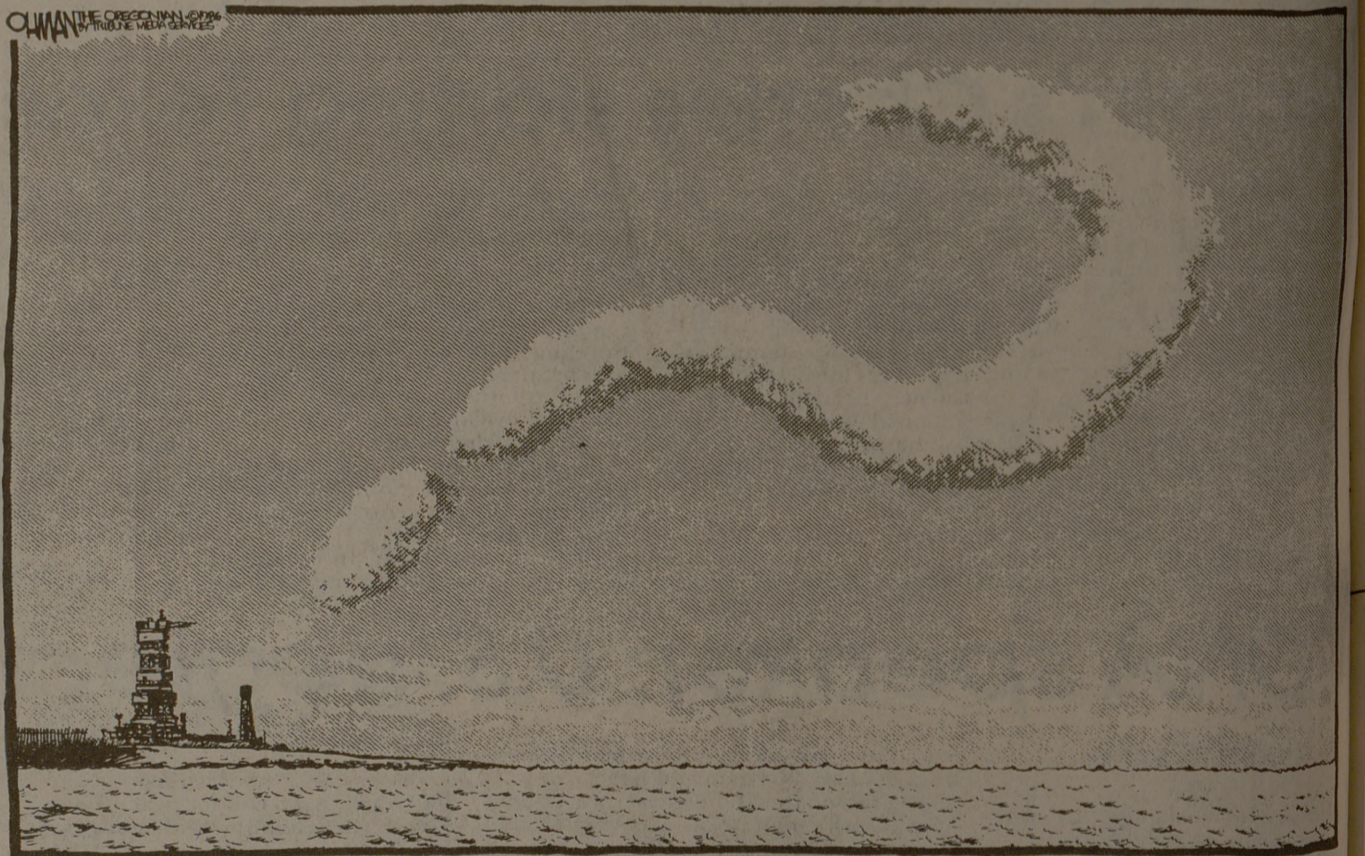
NASA decided in 1971 that the shuttle was the ultimate vehicle to meet all our galactic needs. Fifteen years and \$14 billion later, some decision makers in commercial and military fields say they feel hindered by our government's one-way faith in the shuttle.

When the first shuttle, Columbia, finally reached the launching pad in 1981, it was 20 percent over the budgeted cost and two and a half years behind schedule.

We refused to spend much time on the uncomfortable figure of \$1.2 billion — the price of Challenger — because we were focused on the crew's noble wish that America push full-speed ahead with the shuttle program. That's a costly catharsis.

Repurcussions from the shuttle disaster may mean a vital reconnaissance satellite, part of the Strategic Defense Initiative program, won't be aloft in time for the Reagan-Gorbachev arms talks in early 1987. Anxious to get on with SDI, the Pentagon is now spending \$2 billion to build new rockets to launch these satellites. In the meantime, old Titan ICBMs are being refurbished to send the satellites up. Reliance on an alternative carrier will aid the military's need for secrecy; for although only two of the 24 previous missions were defense-oriented, they were skeptically viewed by the news media.

In addition, satellite insurance proba-



bly will skyrocket because the Challenger did not. Before 1986 the government kept insurance running about \$38 million a satellite, but increasing costs forced NASA to up its charges to \$71 million this year. Some analysts on Wall Street predict further rate increases, worsened by the flat reluctance of the military and U.S. companies to trust the shuttle's safety.

Not only are manned spacecraft more expensive to design and build, many scientists claim most of their research could be accomplished without men. They also complain that continual funding for manned spacecraft has set back the cause of science.

For example, following the Apollo 1

fire in 1967, two "soft-lander" spacecraft designed to carry experimental equipment were scrapped to pursue this man-on-the-moon endeavor.

Right now we have robots that can do almost anything man can do in space. Robots won't sneeze or squirm — harmless human actions that could destroy an experiment in the low-gravity environment of space. What's more, engineers can radio commands to robots to make adjustments if necessary. And if extensive repair work is required, it may be cheaper to build a new satellite than to send an astronaut-repairman, since most spacecraft are useful for only about 10 years.

At the same time we were mourning

Challenger, scientists were toasting Voyager 2. NASA launched this unmanned satellite five years ago, and it is en route into Uranus Jan. 26 just one month late. This 1,800-pound "eye and hand" already had sent home revealing pictures of Jupiter and Saturn, before reaching Uranus to tell us about its magnetic fields and the planet that crosses into Uranus millions of years ago. In other words, Voyager 2 worked better than expected.

So could our space program. It kept man on the ground and sent machines to the stars.

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The Battalion

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