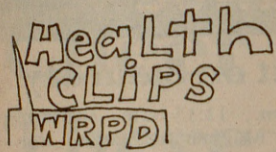
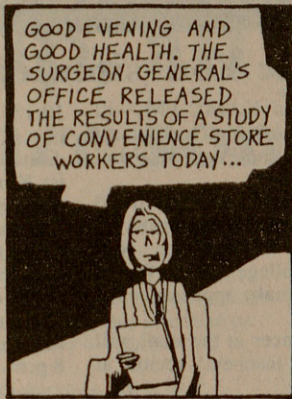


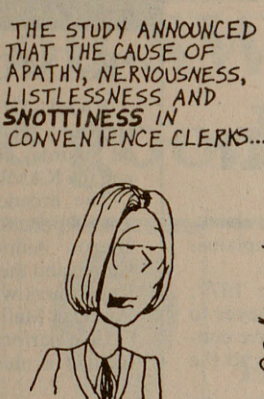
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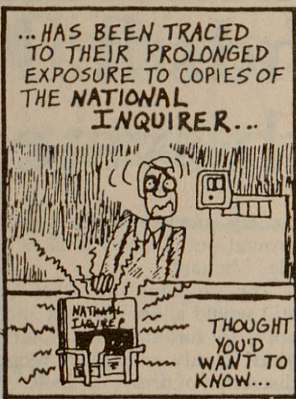
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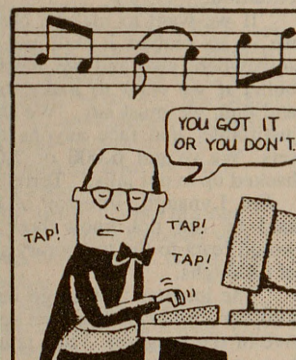
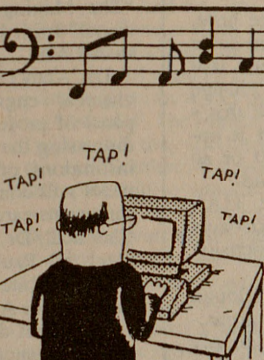
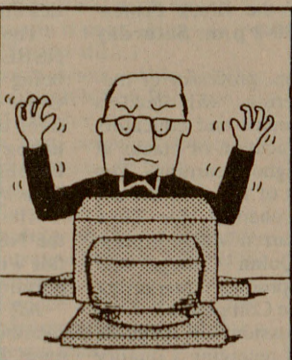
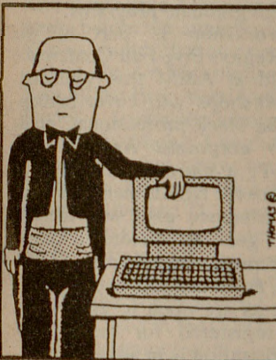
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War of the Worlds broadcast remembered by Americans

GROVERS MILL, N.J. (AP) — The Martians are coming again, 50 years after Orson Welles scared the bejabbers out of hundreds of thousands of Americans who believed a War of the Worlds had broken out on Halloween eve.

The hysteria over the radio broadcast clogged telephone lines and roads as the gullible thought huge cylinders carrying Martians were landing throughout the country, wiping out military forces with heat rays and poisonous gas.

Some who sheepishly recounted their terror said they headed for the hills after hearing the fictional newscast. Others said they grabbed their guns and headed

York Tribune columnist Dorothy Thompson said Welles and the Mercury Theatre deserved a medal.

"They have proved how easy it is to start a mass delusion," she wrote. "Mr. Welles and his theater have made a greater contribution to an understanding of Hitlerism, Mussolinism, Stalinism, anti-Semitism and all the other terrors of our times than all the words about them that have been written by reasonable men."

Despite the fame that the Martian scare achieved, similar panics occurred in Chile in 1944 and in Ecuador in 1949 when the script was translated into Span-

ish and broadcast, with the invasion site moved to those nations, she said.

"War of the Worlds" was the product of a talented group. Welles later gained his greatest fame as a film director with "Citizen Kane." His partner in the Mercury Theatre was the actor John Houseman. The script was adapted from H.G. Wells' novel by Howard Koch, who won an Oscar for the screenplay of "Casablanca."

Forrester, 35, said he was reluctant to get involved in the celebration until his wife, Andrea, persuaded him it would be a good way to raise money to preserve the pond and farmland where the "invasion" took place.

See related story/Page 1

for Grovers Mill to fight the invaders. Others just prayed.

Millions heard the broadcast; one survey gave the listenership at 6 million, another at 12 million. Of those who tuned in, according to the surveys, up to 1 million believed it was real, despite disclaimers before and after the program.

After 50 years, many people in Grovers Mill and surrounding West Windsor Township are tired of rehashing the tale every autumn.

Douglas Forrester, a state pension director and former West Windsor mayor heading up plans for the 50th anniversary celebration, said it's a good time to think about why "War of the Worlds" caused such consternation.

"It was a worldwide event, and it raises intriguing questions about human psychology, civil defense, the power of broadcasting, media responsibility and what kind of relationship we might have with other beings from another world," Forrester said. "There was a cascade of alarm that was just unstoppable."

Freda Remmers, a Kean College media professor, said many believed the broadcast because the popular show Edgar Bergen and Charlie McCarthy on a competing network ran long and those who tuned in late to the Mercury Theatre missed the disclaimer.

With radio's sophistication growing, listeners were becoming accustomed to hearing reports from Europe about the deepening threat of war, she noted.

A few days after the broadcast, New

Radio broadcast caused fear, panic for listeners

The following is a sample of the newspaper stories that followed the original broadcast of H.G. Wells' "The War of the Worlds," narrated by Orson Welles, on Oct. 30, 1938. The articles are reprinted from the Dallas Morning News from Monday, Oct. 31, 1938.

Radio drama backfires on big network

The hundreds of persons who mistook a radio thriller for a news broadcast Sunday night and excitedly telephoned the News that New York had been wiped out will be glad to know the city held up under bombardment rather well.

At 7 p.m., with routine announcement, the program was fiction, the Columbia Broadcasting System put "The War of the Worlds" on the air.

A few minutes later, Dallasites who were listening with half an ear jumped skyhigh out of chairs, books and papers, and rushed the telephones.

"Have you heard of the great tragedy," an excited man yelled over the telephone. "Bombing planes have destroyed New Jersey."

After that, plugs started popping all over the switchboard. A cylinder from Mars had landed in New Jersey, making a big hole in the ground. A planet had fallen in New Jersey and obliterated the entire Eastern sea-

board. The Germans were bombing Trenton and New York. And so on.

One man was indignant because he could get no information. "Do you mean to tell me Associated Press does not have anything on this?" he asked. "What kind of service is this anyway?"

Dallas listeners who were fooled, however, had plenty of company. Associated Press reported hundreds of inquiries from all over the country. Wires came to the Dallas office from Wichita Falls, Beaumont and Marshall wanting to know about the destruction of New York.

The Associated Press finally sent out a bulletin that the report of the destruction of New York was a result of a radio dramatization.

The panic it caused gripped impressionable Harlemites and one man running into the street declared it was the President's voice they heard, advising: "Pack up and go north, the machines are coming from Mars."

Police in the vicinity at first regarded the excitement as a joke but they were soon hard-pressed to control the swarms in the streets.

A man entered the Wadsworth Avenue station uptown and said he heard planes had bombed Jersey and were headed for Times Square.

A rumor spread over Washington Heights that a war was on.

Chairman predicts MCorp failure

DALLAS (AP) — The chairman of MCorp said the Dallas-based bank holding company, which has stopped paying dividends and interest on debt, could be in bankruptcy court seeking Chapter 11 protection by the end of November.

"I think everybody recognizes that there is a high probability that we will be in (Chapter 11) bankruptcy within 30 days," chairman Gene Bishop told the Dallas Times Herald on Wednesday.

"It's obvious that we can be forced and

that we may not have any choice.

"In the interest of protecting our assets and our creditors, it's really the only alternative."

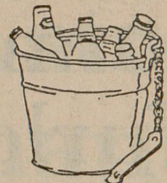
There had been recent industry speculation that the bank holding company, Texas' second-largest behind NCNB Texas National Bank, was forcing the reorganization issue to advance its own plan to recapitalize. Chapter 11 protection would free the corporation from the

threat of creditor's lawsuits until it can develop a plan to put its finances in order.

MCorp announced earlier this week it would stop paying dividends to preferred shareholders and would cease payments on about \$470 million in debt, effectively putting the bank's holding company's creditors on notice that they could push MCorp into bankruptcy court after Nov. 21.

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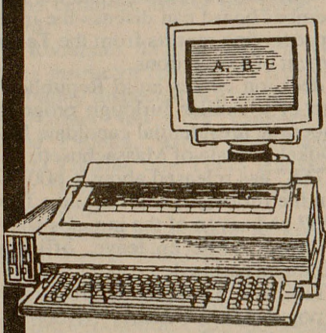
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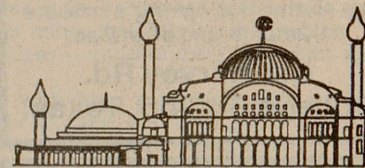
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