

Half-baked

One of the better things ushered in with the new year for college students, and for everyone for that matter, is the new minimum wage of \$2.90.

This year's increment of 25 cents is part of the four-step legislation, signed by the president during his first year in office, to systematically increase the standard wage to \$3.35 by 1981. The lobbying efforts of those favoring and opposing the law was intense in Capitol Hill.

And it still is. Here and across the nation. The State College Area Chamber of Commerce, taking its lead from the Pennsylvania and national leadership, says that an increase coming now is ill-timed and inflationary. They suggest a delay in the scheduled minimum wage increases of one or even two years would lower expected increases in consumer prices by 0.8 percent.

A delay also would save some jobs in Pennsylvania which have to be eliminated because employers supposedly could not afford to retain the positions. If not for everyone, then a partial deferral for teenagers (tentatively defined as persons under the age of 16, but this, too, is up for debate) is suggested.

If not a whole loaf, then how about half a loaf, they seem to be saying. But just who is kidding whom?

The arguments these businessmen present are far from sound. First, the increased minimum wage, far from destroying jobs, may very well increase jobs. The theory behind this says that more money will be placed in the worker's hands. They will spend this money, thereby causing a greater demand for consumer goods, which means more jobs for those who produce goods.

Second, inflation is caused by more money chasing too few goods. Some contend that the extra 25 cents an hour the lowest-paid workers in interstate commerce would be receiving is less money that entrepreneurs would have to invest. So much may be said to the contrary, however, and there is no way to prove this line of reasoning. There are too many ifs, ands and buts.

Obviously, employers will oppose any rise in wages, be they minimum or not. But in this case the pros outweigh the cons. It appears that Congress is trying to achieve that Great American Dream of reducing the disparity between the rich and poor, the haves and have-nots, by increasing the minimum wage to an acceptable level.

By doing so, economically disadvantaged groups of this country, the young, the minorities and the unskilled, have received some protection against potential exploitation.



IT'S FROM JUNIOR... HE'S RUN OFF TO JOIN THE CLEVELAND CITY COUNCIL...

Sure-fire reliable predictions for the coming year

Here they are: the sure-fire, can-do, will-win, can't-lose, 100 percent reliable and totally trustworthy predictions for 1979. May they help you recoup some of your losses from the Sugar Bowl game and restore your faith in destiny.

I PREDICT the House Assassinations Committee will conclude that John F. Kennedy was actually murdered by more than 300 people, who positively did not know each other, but who all used the same gun.

I PREDICT the Shah of Iran will not reach his 20th birthday.

I PREDICT economic indicators will show a slight rise early in this fiscal quarter, then will drop off sharply, leading investors to place less confidence in liquid assets and continuing returns, among other things.

I PREDICT somebody famous will die this year.

I PREDICT many people will spend millions of dollars buying something everybody thought no one in his right mind would buy.

Bob Carville

I PREDICT an unheralded political hopeful will make a serious bid for the presidency, but will be squashed when the sordid details of his private life are made public. Furthermore, I PREDICT this same political hopeful will then publish a book about his private life and make a small fortune for himself.

I PREDICT scientists will make a major breakthrough in the field of genetics, but no one will ever hear about it because the government fears it will cause international panic.

I PREDICT we will see the first Red Chinese

credit card this year, and the subsequent institution of the first Red Chinese collection agency.

I PREDICT several representatives from several different states will all claim their respective states are the most corrupt state in the country.

I PREDICT many people will be murdered in the course of this next year in a major metropolitan center of the United States, possibly New York.

I PREDICT many people will be murdered in a political uprising in a heretofore unnoticed third-world country somewhere in Africa.

I PREDICT prices will rise.

I PREDICT we will hear Richard Thornburgh announce that his plans to revitalize the state "must be given more time; and, in the mean time, we will put up with more of the same as

before." — or something to this effect.

I PREDICT we have not heard the last of Elvis.

I PREDICT a multi-million dollar media hype will fall flat on its face.

I PREDICT the Senate will split over a controversial issue, then table it for future consideration.

I PREDICT the Health Department will announce something previously considered safe for consumption is actually a deadly poison.

I PREDICT a new punk rock group will not live up to expectations in record sales.

I PREDICT that a low-ranked basketball team will win an upset over a top-ranked team, then lose 60 percent of its remaining games, finishing last in its division.

I PREDICT that a low-paid college newspaper columnist will get into an argument with his

editor, and then will be conveniently forgotten in his next pay period.

I PREDICT a small group of cultists will stage a wild demonstration, make top newspaper headlines and then will be forgotten forever.

I PREDICT a highly publicized Hollywood couple will break up shortly before one of them will appear in a motion picture.

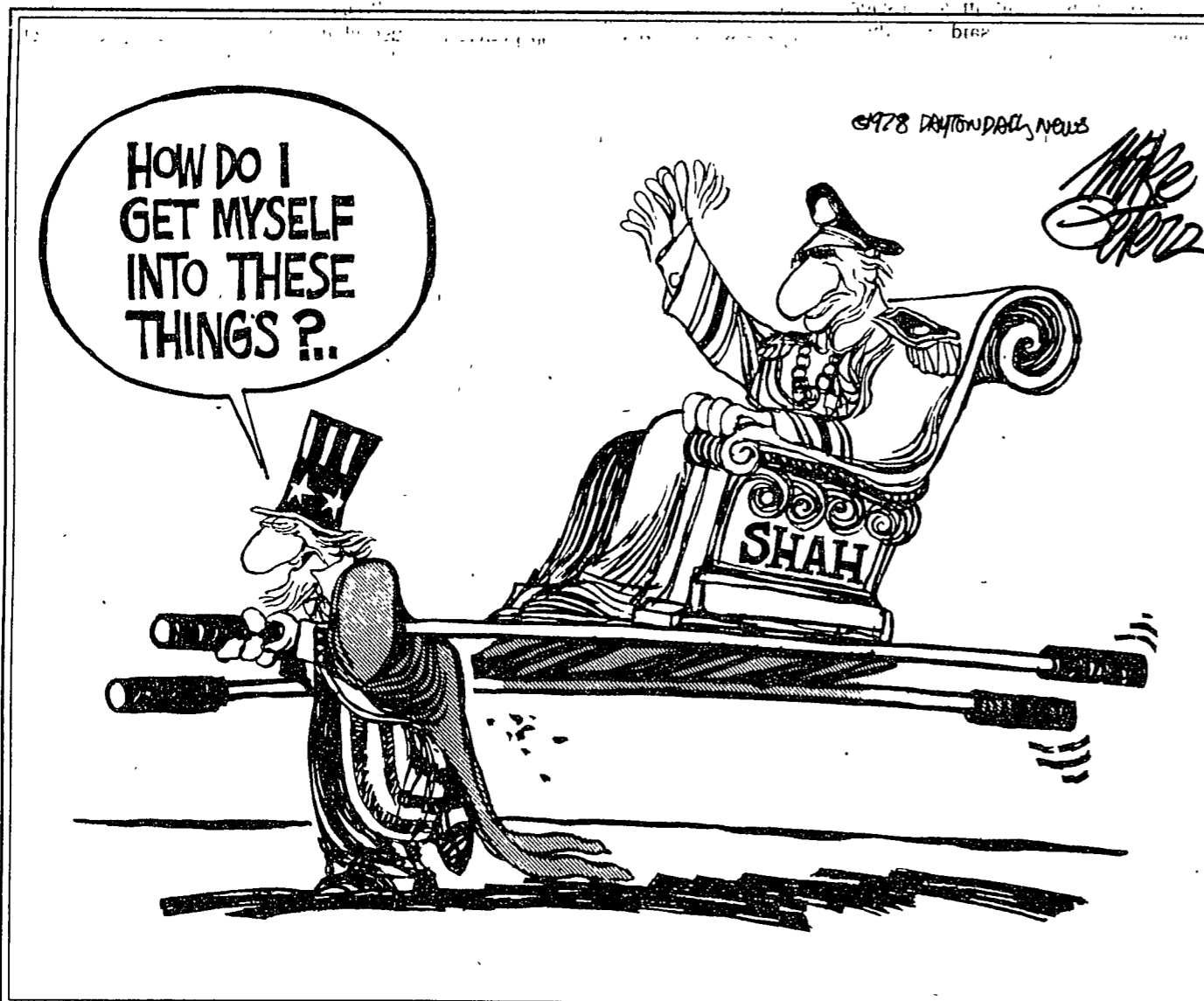
I PREDICT a series of terrorist attacks somewhere in the Middle East.

I PREDICT a previously unknown University student will buy hundreds of buttons, balloons and flyers and will be elected USG president, though still quite unknown.

I PREDICT someone will predict a new way for the world to end.

I PREDICT it will be cold at least one more day in State College.

Bob Carville is an 11th-term journalism major.



Collegian forum

It's dollars over deaths in Iran

Editor's note: The following was written by an Iranian student for Iranian students at the University.

In Iran mass demonstrations take place daily. At the Ministry of Science and Higher Education, 80 professors and university employees have been calling for the withdrawal of troops and reopening of universities, according to The New York Times. On Dec. 26, a 28-year-old professor was shot to death as he stood on the ministry balcony. The next day troops fired into his funeral procession, killing and wounding many mourners. In Mashad, on Dec. 30, 2,000 were killed by the U.S. trained army.

Other reports indicate that by the end of December the number of deaths in Iran is somewhere between 25,000 and 30,000.

In order to conceal the extent of the massacre, army trucks were brought in to wash blood off the walls and streets. Some of the dead were small children. These savage massacres are with full U.S. government backing. The American government has publicly stated its support for the shah.

Why does Carter keep reaffirming his support for the shah? The uprising

in Iran has sent shock waves in the corporate boardrooms of Grumman, Lockheed, General Motors and hundreds of other U.S. corporations. The collapse of the shah threatens to terminate billions of dollars in investments in factories, banks and military hardware. These include \$700 million in direct investments by U.S. corporations in Iran, about \$3 billion in yearly military sales, \$3.8 billion in exports each year and \$2.2 billion in bank loans.

The past weeks have seen extensive strikes and demonstrations by teachers, students, airline employees, government employees, shopkeepers, doctors and nurses, factory workers, postal workers, bank employees, and the religious community. Weeks ago, in an amazing show of solidarity with these struggles, some 37,000 oil industry workers stopped production and went on strike, dealing yet another decisive blow to the hated regime. The oil workers have raised political demands, among them an end to martial law, and freedom for all political prisoners.

The Iranian people are determined to overthrow the corrupt monarchy and to bring about a democratic

republic. They are opposed to the shah on many grounds — religious, social, economic and political. So what grounds are left on which to support him? In Iran, none.

But in the United States, we are witnessing a fierce campaign on the part of the government to rally support for the shah — to change the American people's natural sympathy for the oppressed people of Iran and to persuade them the shah deserves support, not the millions opposed to his rule and who want an end to all foreign domination, and to shape their own destiny.

This campaign, conducted through much of the U.S. news media, is distorting the situation in Iran in such a way as to discredit the opposition (calling them "fanatical" and "ungrateful"), and project the shah as a "modernizer".

We urge all concerned Americans not to be swayed by the fallacious statements emanating from the State Department and the press with regard to Iran. We are appealing to your humanitarian and democratic spirit to prevent the creation of another Vietnam-type conflict in Iran which would bring untold suffering to millions of Iranians and Americans.

Financial backing affects broadcast news priorities

News, like beauty, is in the eye of the beholder. To decide what is news is to exercise substantial power. Of course, a number of factors influence news priorities including: abilities and disabilities germane to the medium; the constraints of resources, geography, and time; the influences of other media; cultural setting; pressure from external sources, and reporters' instincts.

However, after examining both public service and commercial broadcasting, I have concluded that the method of financing a news operation has a subtle but pervasive influence on news priorities. I came to this conclusion after sampling news bulletins on British radio this past spring and on Pittsburgh local television news this past summer.

Public service broadcasting in Great Britain is financed through television license fees and administered by a non-profit, government sanctioned British Broadcasting Corporation. As an alternative, commercial broadcasting has been licensed under the Independent Broadcasting Authority.

I surveyed several random newscasts from BBC Network Radio 1, 2, 3, and 4, local BBC Radio Manchester, and local commercial Radio Piccadilly. Each of the lead six stories was classified based on content (economic, violent crime, non-violent crime, sport), coverage (international, national, local) and tendency shown (order, disorder, or no effect). Additionally, a separate set of figures was kept which adjusted percentages for story prominence.

What emerged was a clear pattern of what Stuart Hood, former BBC News Editor, has called "an expression of middle class consensus politics" which continues a "tradition of

impartiality on the side of the establishment." A bulletin is a result of a number of choices by "gate-keepers" who accept or reject material based on a number of factors including class background, upbringing, education, political and social attitudes. This ethos filters down as "traditional wisdom."



Mark Harmon

Of course, no one in any British radio newsroom sits down to plan government propaganda. As R.S. Frank writes, "The informal daily education of the population is conducted by the mass media which tends to select some topics and ignore others, give precedence to some and not to others and frame contexts and select contexts, all according to standards which perhaps owe more to custom than malevolent design, and more to unconscious synchronization of decisions than to conspiracy."

Indeed, while I was at BBC Radio Manchester a story was run describing a bank robber as "coloured." It was not important to the story and probably would not have been included

if the thief had been white. It was not a matter of racism, simply a matter of traditional practice on crime stories.

While I was at BBC radio network a story came in concerning large scale abuses by the Gray's Building Society. The story easily could be confirmed, had national significance and was very current. Yet, an unconfirmed three-hour-old account on the Aldo Moro kidnapping in Italy grabbed the lead item. The Gray's story was not even broadcast. When I asked why, the duty editor said, "It wasn't really significant."

Perhaps because of this set of values in the newsroom, not a single white collar crime story was broadcast on the BBC network during my attachment or the monitoring study (and only one such story ran on Radio Manchester).

These upper-class news values are reflected in the near one to one disorder-order ratio and in economics coverage. Forty percent of the stories on Radio's 2,3,4 are financial in nature, 52 percent when adjusted for prominence. Radio Manchester's figures are 61 percent and 46.5 percent respectively. Contrast these with the popular commercial station Radio Piccadilly (26 percent coverage, 28.5 percent prominence) and its pop music competitor Radio 1 (28 percent coverage, 35 percent prominence).

Using roughly the same procedure, I surveyed news priorities in Pittsburgh local television news. Here again the funding source greatly influenced news priorities. Ratings wars, news consultants and other commercial pressure has led to a proliferation of "blood and guts" reporting.

Violent crime, non-violent crime and disasters including auto wrecks comprised over 55 percent of the average station's

output in the survey. The disorder-order ratio was roughly 1:3, but would have been much higher save that almost all political stories favored the status quo. Much economic coverage was film of local strikes. Indeed, most lead items were local murders, robberies, fires and accidents — all tightly formatted.

National stories, usually just tapes from network newscasts, or feeds, show up later. There follows extensive sports and weather possibly with an eccentric reader, happy talk or a "kicker" feature at the end.

My purpose is not to criticize either system or to reveal undisclosed influences on news. I seek only to add statistical confirmation that the source of broadcast news dollars, be it government allotment or commercial revenues, does influence news output. Responsible journalists should recognize and deal with its influence and, if need be, temper it.

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the Collegian

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