

EDITORIAL

not a luxury

When the question of municipal support for the Back Mountain Memorial Library was so roundly defeated Nov. 3, most area residents who had voted against it grunted their approval and assumed that nothing more would be heard from — or of — the library again.

Actually, the lop-sided vote was as like a pebble cast into a quiet pool; the ever-widening rings it created have already focused attention—unfavorable attention—on our community. Who will believe that ours is the progressive community we say it is when we refused to keep alive our library?

A WBRE-TV editorial telecast Nov. 4 states our sentiments quite succinctly:

"A widely held view can be summed up as: 'You don't help those who refuse to help themselves.' We've heard it advanced most strongly in matters of welfare and, we suspect, some of the staunchest advocates of helping only those who help themselves are among those who refused in Tuesday's Election to support the Back Mountain Memorial Library.

We grant there were many things unfortunate in the way the issue was handled. Indeed, we think it had no business being on the ballot; no one yet has asked the voters whether they choose to support public schools or the maintenance of public roads. The fact remains however, that it was on the ballot and that an overwhelming majority of those who voted on the issued voted against supporting their own public library.

It is easy—too easy—to say that if the residents of the Back Mountain area refuse to support their own public library, no one should support it. Traditionally, the Library has depended on "outsiders" to help support it through an auction. In the referendum, Library officials only tried to put financing on a business-like basis and the responsibility with the community it serves. While 18-hundred voters refused, 800 others voted to support their library. Knowledge always is in short supply and those who thirst for and seek out knowledge always are a minority, but without them and the resources to serve them, ours would be a vastly worse world. Our concern then is for the 800; that the candle's flame they represent is not snuffed out by the 1800.

A library is not a luxury. It is for any community the repository of knowledge upon which the community depends for survival and hopes for growth to a degree greater than most of us realize. If free men forget, their enemies always have recognized the value of the word by making it the first they try to destroy, distort and erase."

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gasoline prices

Consumer gasoline prices are about to go up at least a cent per gallon, what with the announcement by Gulf that the sprawling giant of the international oil cartel is upping its wholesale price. And the blame for the increase, obviously to be passed on to the consumer as other giants follow suit, is going to be blamed on none other than the President.

The way this all came about is that the big boys of the oil cartel would have us first believe that there is a shortage of crude stocks, partly because of the dependence on foreign oil.

Secondly, there is a move on in the House Ways and Means Committee in Washington, D.C., to slap a tax on lead used in most gasolines in an effort to entice the big boys of oil to leave the lead out, thus helping in the fight against air pollution.

While few members of the House committee have expressed their personal views on the new proposed tax, it is a good bet that the proposal will come out of committee within a matter of weeks, and be presented on the floor of the House, where even less opposition is expected. Therefore, the oil boys are figuring they might as well concede this one, and go after the consumer for the difference.

thissa 'n thatta

blue day

by The Gaffer

Very possibly it is just another case of Blue Monday, but the news this morning depresses me. I might say that my spirits are at a very low ebb and I cannot immediately pinpoint the reason. Some of the headlines should have been cheering; for instance, the General Motors strike appears to be nearing a settlement; Isarel appears to be about to return to the Middle East peace talks; Montreal is quiet and the yuppies in London who mobbed the David Frost show did themselves more harm than good, although I cannot see why English law doesn't take some steps to punish them.

I guess it boils down to three headlines—"McGovern Favors Ban of FBI Agents in Campus Protests;" "Nixon to Divide Country, Muskie Asserts;" and last, but not least "Nader Group Critical of Medical Profession."

A careful reading of the McGovern story bore out my opinion that McGovern really favors campus violence, although he uses as his reason an opinion poll of police chiefs and qualifies his threat of seeking legislation to forbid the FBI from investigating campus violence by stating that he would favor it if the FBI were called for by college presidents. Naturally college presidents of the permissive type would choose to conceal their own weaknesses and there would be no calls from them.

McGovern hasn't convinced me one iota that he really favors law and order on campuses or anywhere else and, as I see it, is taking such steps as he can to weaken it.

As far as Muskie is concerned, his statement is an absurdity. Nixon certainly has no idea whatsoever of dividing the country. Nixon has been trying to unite the country and preserve it as the citadel of law and order it has generally been since the Civil War. Muskie's notion is to divide the country so that the big half will want him for president in 1972, and he has no business faulting Nixon for the very thing which he is trying to do himself.

But on reflection, Muskie has every right to aspire to the presidency, and maybe he will get it some day. I wouldn't even mind if I could convince myself that he has the same concern for the U.S.A., its laws and its international safety as Nixon has.

McGovern is a born fool, so it must be that my depression is based on the Nader headline.

Nader, I believe the country could do without. He has damaged industry after industry, profession after profession and even our system of government from the presidency to the village dog catcher.

He has not accomplished much, except for getting a large sum from General Motors Corp. (and taken it away from GM stockholders) in settlement of a libel suit which he brought against them and I wonder if he isn't trying for another one—really running a sort of blackmail game.

I hasten to add that I am not a GM stockholder, although I would like to be a great big one. I don't recall just what Nader's lawsuit was about, but he had goaded the big corporation into reprisal and it hired some detective agency to make a bum out of him, something that should have been easy to do. The detective agency bungled it up, so a court of law punished General Motors stockholders by levying a big fine on the company, thereby protecting Nader's flanks from future harassment. The other corporations are now scared to death of him.

As I have written before, why doesn't he start a company of his own in order to show how easy it is to run one according to his expensive and impractical ideas? He could use his libel balm money for capital.

He has bludgeoned the bankers, according to the headline which lowered my spirits (damned if they aren't improving right now); is about to go after Du Pont and is now menacing the doctors.

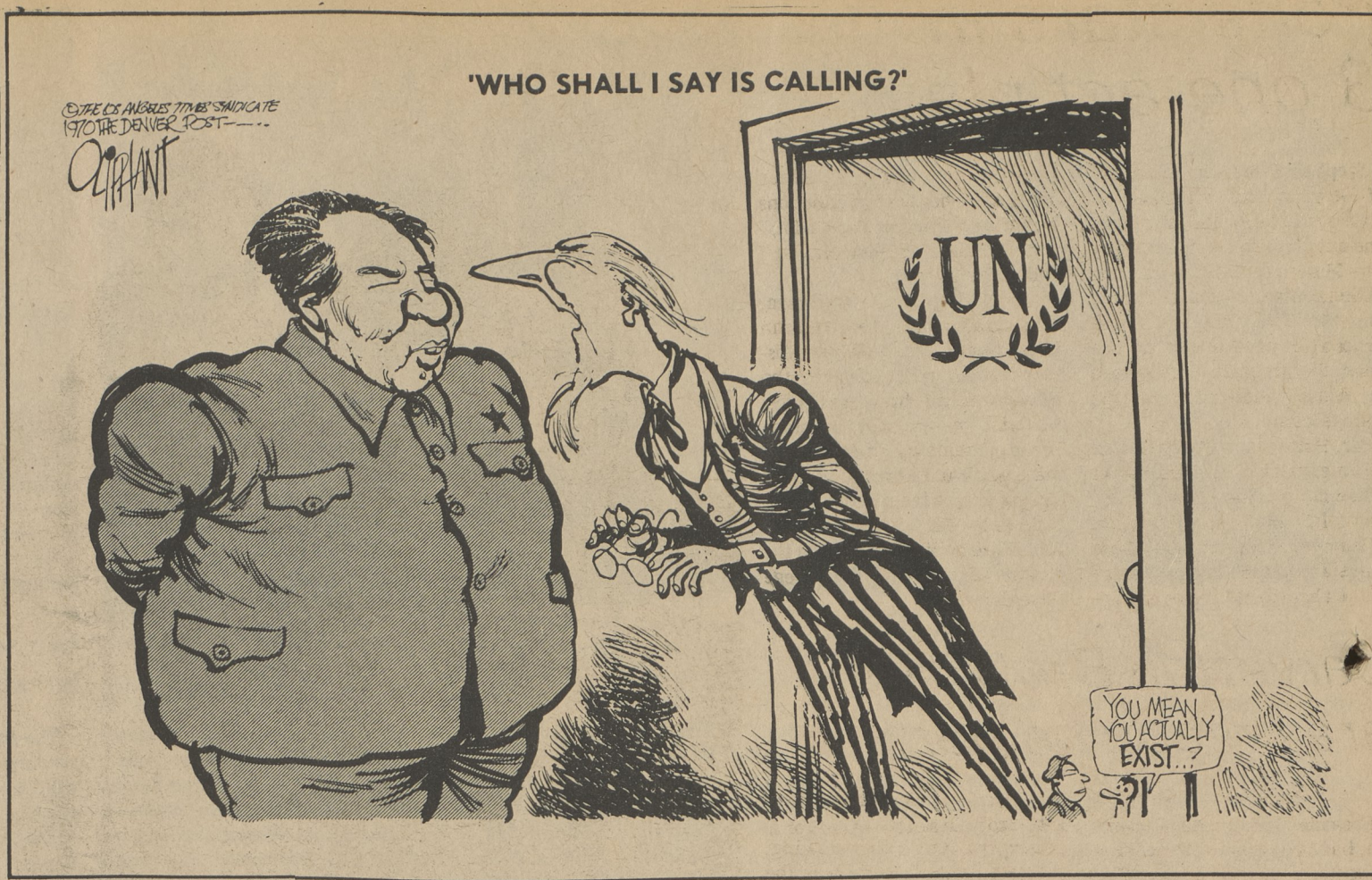
Well, there may be plenty of things wrong with the doctors, but mostly the public objects to their high prices and if Nader can do anything about that, I will eat my words. Doctors aren't perfect because they are people, but I've known a great many doctors and have every confidence that their professional skill and ethics are fully equal to Nader's. By the way, what profession does Nader claim other than that of a professional troublemaker?)

What bugs me is where Nader gets the money for this attack on our economic and governmental system. Certainly the obvious result can be nothing other than a general increase in prices and taxes and a lowering of corporate dividends.

What are this man's real political principles?

Why doesn't he investigate and snipe at the labor unions? Labor unions have great power over the economy and have been operated none too creditably from the standpoint of internal democracy and external adherence to the country's laws.

It may be that a key to his financing may be found thereby.



"mother, what building is that?"

by Eric Mayer

"Listen—a sound . . ." Like the dry rattle of leaf skeletons against boarded windows, like the cold tapping of autumn rain on dusty glass. A sound.

"They're coming back." A whisper passes down the dark, booklined passages, swept along on the parched breath of yellowing pages.

"They're coming again." From binding to binding, where titles fade and peel, the word is passed. Up and down the shelf cliffs it clambers, alerting the cloth and paper denizens of the caves. Racing along dank corridors, the rumor wends its way through a dim maze, reaching out into each alcove, touching each and every book. "They're coming back, at last."

Cover to cover, rustling pages, fragile fall leaf pages, sound the alarm.

"Wake up Aesop, clear your throat. Soon they'll arrive, and wake Homer too." A murmuring silence, a bustling darkness, calls the entombed books back to life. Downstairs and up, the night is suddenly thick with life.

"—and you, Alice, fetch the Mad Hatter (He probably hasn't missed them all this time) and the cheshire cat, and the rabbit—if you can. Bring them all, even the Queen of Hearts, and hurry, any minute now they'll be here."

Time, settled like dust on desks and books and shelves alike, is stirred, rising into the night in luminous small clouds.

"Hurry—Pass the word. They'll want Christopher Robin and Pooh—and Peter Rabbit. Even Mr. Toad. He can finally rev up his motor car again, and yes—the Grinch—tell him to get ready too. But don't tarry. I

can't understand what's kept them this long."

So the alert goes out and the citizens of the library, watching expectantly in their paper and ink houses, are ready.

Thick and thin books, large and small, age-bleached books and bright new ones, all wait. Novice volumes, still on their first card of sign-outs, heed the advice of scarred veterans. "Oh, they can get rough. I've been dropped in a few mud puddles on the way home (you can see how my right corner's crushed) and there are always those sticky fingers. I've tasted more than one chocolate bar in my time. But then again, they won't set coffee cups on you. It's worth it really. But where are they?"

"Where are they?" The question flutters through the stillness, unanswered. The dust begins to settle again, a protective blanket atop the card cabinets and check-out desks. The library sighs, a collective subliminal sign—ashen and brittle with time.

"Maybe it was only a mouse." "But I heard it—." "Maybe the mice are feasting on our bindings again. Maybe what we heard was just the mice, clattering through the gloom in search of paste. Maybe."

"Yes, maybe—." The dusty snow floats downward. The book denizens, disappointed, crawl back into their paper homes, unread, and the library lapses back into a long winter.

"Maybe next time Alice. Tell your friends to save their stories till tomorrow. Maybe they'll be back then."

Outside, a cold mist of rain makes a brief descent from heavy, low traveling storm clouds. Bending beneath a single umbrella, two figures hurry through the steely twilight.

jottings...

where but in America?

by Jane Wildoner

Well, it's all over now but the shouting. Pennsylvania has a new governor-elect who will probably be blamed for slapping an income tax (or some other kind of tax on us. I think, in Pennsylvania's immediately past political situation, it wasn't a case of "Ya pays yer money and ya takes yer choice," but rather, "Ya makes yer choice and ya pays yer money"!

Has anyone, ever, at any time in history, tried blaming himself for the raising o' the tax? And held his tongue, instead of letting it loose at both ends with a swivel in the middle, in his demand for new and more and better? And been satisfied to throttle back and enjoy the sights of what he has, instead of racing full speed ahead in his endeavor to get there first to get his hands on the most?

Back to the election—if I never rejoiced in the fact that I am a citizen of a democracy (however imperfect it may be), I did so during this last election campaign. You've probably heard it said, "More often than not a man's offspring will follow in his footsteps when it comes to religion and politics."

Well, in these days of demonstrations for equal rights, the offspring may find himself on the far side of the fence from both his Ma and Pa. Having for a long time found myself in the same political corral with my folks and, except for minor issues, seen eye-to-eye with them, this time I felt like some kind of

maverick calf looking over the fence at the whole clan only to find them looking back, wondering what they did wrong in my upbringing!

Fortunately, ours was not one of those irresistible-force-meeting-immovable-object confrontations, and the election is water over the dam now; we call all go back to pulling each others' political legs over whose man beat whose man. But, where else can a situation like that happen without the threat of dire consequences?

And how about that magnificent mustachioed man, Dan Flood? Did you receive a reminder of the list of publications available for distribution by members of Congress to homemakers and residents of cities and towns, a short while ago, from our honorable Congressman? Or, aren't you on his postal patron mailing list? If any of us had any doubts that we're having the wool pulled over our eyes, we surely didn't show that we don't like it at the polls Nov. 3!

Next election, I'm going to propose a nomination changing Dan Flood's name to "Flash" Flood because he is just like a great wall of water bearing down on both Republicans and Democrats alike. For my money, I hope it keeps raining in his watershed area for many elections yet to come!

One man's (or woman's) opinion, of course. But where else can it happen except right here in our good old imperfect democracy, the United States of America!

One, a child, gazes up at the ghostly white building that sits abandoned on the hilltop across the road. A faint draft of warm, musty air seems to brush him, like phantom breath. So he looks up toward the half-boarded windows, blank, glassy eyes reflecting the neutral grayness of the sky.

"What building is that?" "The library," his mother answers, hurrying him along.

"Is that where they keep books?" The mother nods, a pale figure under a pale sky.

"We had to close it," she explains defensively. "It cost too much. Taxes—" The child seems puzzled.

"Well—you'll understand someday." As they pass the abandoned building the child throws one last quizzical glance over his shoulder.

Inside, the books settle back to sleep. Water drips noisily through some neglected hole in the ceiling. Mildew is as bad as fire.

the empty pew

by the Rev. W. Jene Miller

One of the major causes of trouble in the churches of today is the widening rift between the "pulpit" and the "pew."

The reason is NOT because the preachers have changed, either. That has been the whipping boy of the reactionary forces. But, the real reason is simply that there are requirements for being a pastor, but none for being a member!

Churches have allowed people to think they could have their names added to a church school roll and attend less than one time a month, and still call themselves "members of the class." That's blasphemy.

You could not even call yourself a First Grader and do that. You certainly cannot call yourself a Church School student on the basis of such shoddy and undisciplined disloyalty.

Churches have allowed people to think they could have their names on a church membership list and attend less than one time a year, and still call themselves "Christian." Except for shut-ins, who can't go anywhere else, either, that's blasphemy.

You could not call yourself a member of a civic club and do that. Jesus was not put to death because he made it easy for men to take up their cross daily and follow Him. Oh, you did not intend to reject God or deny His Claim, it was just that the Church allowed you to get by with such dishonest commitment and vow.

Churches have allowed people, to think they could give little or no time and money to build human values and still think they could build their own strong personalities and souls. And suicide, alcoholism, drug addiction, ulceration and family dissolution are rampant in our culture.

You could not even call yourself a ball player and do that.

The Right To Write

To THE POST:

We wish to thank all of Bill's friends who contributed to the Back Mountain Memorial Library or the Trucksville Volunteer Fire Co. as a memorial to him.

Sincerely,

Gertrude Moss and Family

THE DALLAS POST

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only yesterday

FORTY YEARS AGO

Uncle Peter Brong, blind storekeeper at Evans Falls, is celebrating his 82nd birthday. Uncle Peter can find a pound of coffee on the shelves as well as anybody, and make change without trouble. Only once has he been in difficulties. Late one stormy night, a motorist called to get gasoline. Uncle Peter dressed, went downstairs, and started to pump the gas. The driver slugged him and robbed the store. Probably never knew Uncle Peter was blind.

Jacob Huntsinger 79, pioneer North Mountain lumberman, is buried in Orcutt Cemetery.

Chet Culver, Dallas baseball pitcher, is at Pittston hospital with a fractured leg, result of a mine accident.

THIRTY YEARS AGO

You can get a set of teeth for only a dollar down, and pay the balance while you're wearing them.

Charlie Smith, Beaumont, paid an

election bet promptly, depositing a four-day old Guernsey bull calf on Doc Jeter's desk at the Dallas Bank. Ferdinand was securely bound in a feed bag, only his head protruding.

The new theater of war centers about Greece. The British fleet is assembled at Salonika to help repel the Italian invasion. As 2 million turkeys die in a western freeze, prices advance locally, and Back Mountain turkey raisers expect to do a roaring business.

TWENTY YEARS AGO

Kiler Updyke is reported as getting along nicely in a base hospital in Korea, able now to walk, after being seriously injured by a mortar shell.

Back Mountain Kennel Club elected Austin K. Howard president, Robert Bachman vice president.

A. J. Sordoni Jr., was elected president of Commonwealth Telephone Co., succeeding his father, Senator Sordoni.

Christmas lighting will brighten Dallas streets Dec. 1.