

Guest Columnist

Memo from mac



Try these poems, Ronnie

By LLOYD BALLHAGEN
President, Harris Newspapers

Ronald Reagan, as predicted, brought the arts and culture back to the White House.

Columnist High Sidey foresaw, early in the game, the revival of class in Washington, D.C. The return of hard liquor, fur coats, and jewels was apparent immediately after the inauguration.

A ballet dancing son added to the glitter.

Now comes poetry. President Reagan, speaking to a group of Republicans the other day, whipped out a poem for the gathering, indicating, perhaps, that he plans to conduct foreign policy in verse.

He said Secretary of State Al Haig was taking an even tougher message to the Soviet Union. The message was:

"Roses are red, violets are blue,

"Stay out of El Salvador and Poland, too."

If the President plans to pursue a poetic foreign policy, the public, in a patriotic gesture, should offer him assistance with the verse. He needs a neat stack of poems to pull out of a hat ready for immediate transmittal to foreign leaders - including Congress. Like:

"Roses are red, violets are blue.

"Watch out, Russia, we'll

bomb you."

Or he may wish to discard the "roses are" approach.

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"Mexico, Mexico, we love your oil

"But keep your people on your soil."

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"Television, motorcycles, and little cars,

Japan, route your next shipment to Mars."

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"O' Israel, O' Israel,

Your bombs hit their mark, But if you want more planes,

You're whistling in the dark."

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Or maybe he would rather wax poetically in the classical tradition of the Bard:

"Time is out of joint,

O' cursed spite, If only Congress would give us

More armed might."

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He may go for a memo to his Secretary of State:

"O' Al, I love you,

I'd send you a rose, But if you want more power,

Stick it up your nose."

There's no question that peanut farmer and his no-class Georgia mafia are gone. Oh, what a relief it is!



By John Mc Cormally
Roving Editor
Harris News Service

We went exploring the mountain West, which is a journey of rocks and rivers.

It is a dazzling discovery - of the earth's age, and its continuing infancy.

We took a swift vacation swing in a little car, too far, too fast in too short a time. Our 3,500-mile route was a lasso-loop on the map, thrown from the Mississippi out to the headwaters of the Missouri, down the Divide to the beginning of the Colorado, then down the Platte to the prairies again.

We pitched our little tent and cooked our meals in the national forest and national park campgrounds - my grandson, John, his dad Terence, and I - and we took in all the sights along the way - the Badlands, and Black Hills, Mt. Rushmore and Cave of the Winds; Devil's Tower, Old Faithful, Mammoth Hot Springs, Jackson's Hole, Flaming Gorge, Dinosaur, Grand Teton, Grand Lake, Grand Island - and had a grand time. It's the kind of trip I wish everyone could make, and then make again whenever the years have dulled the memories, just so they could feel the meaning of America the Beautiful.

I really meant it to be a vacation, so I didn't take the writing machine along, or even make any notes. So these are just some impressions that stuck. The rocks and rivers make the lasting impression. As you go west and go up, you can't avoid the feeling you're on a geology field trip. If you couldn't see enough for yourself, all the pamphlets and sign boards and ranger lectures

Exploring the mountains

would tell you - about all that terrible commotion in the bowels of the earth; the tilting and grinding and quaking and upheavals; the faults and thrusts, the ancient seas and molten lava, the erosion of endless winds, the creeping of relentless glaciers. And so, you keep being reminded, by the bubbling mud, the smoking crevices, the squirting geysers, this old earth is really old, and it is not through yet.

We went up to where the Yellowstone begins, a trickle as clear and pure as the mountain air - where its starts an incredible journey to the Missouri and the Mississippi and the Gulf and the Atlantic; and then, not far away, to where the Snake begins, in glacial purity, and goes the other way - to the Columbia and the Pacific. Later on, we watched the Colorado start in its remote mountain innocence, on its long journey to Mexico, to be robbed and

dirtied, salinated and sucked nearly dry on the way.

We came over the last crest on the way home, up to 12,000 feet on the spectacular trail ridge road through Rocky Mountain National Park, chuting down Big Thompson canyon, like a run-away bobsledder, out onto the high hot plains at Greeley where the wind whips feedlot smell, the snow-capped mountains disappear in the rear-view mirror, and the irrigation pumps suck the ancient, irreplaceable water from the Ogallala aquifer, and spit it at the sun.

Rocks and rivers. That's all we are. From the rocks in all their wild and wonderful shapes and colors, from dusty specks to mountainsides, glistening, steaming, cutting, crumbling, has come the soil that feeds us, and on our journey we could still see it being made by wind and water, sun and

snow. What a scary thing it is to see a river born, in a tentative trickle on a mountaintop, and realize there are four billion thirsts to be slaked.

Atop all this we gloried in the green of the grasses, the endless miles of forests, the high mountain meadows awash in wildflowers, and marveled at the beauty. They say 100 million vacationers will visit the parks this summer. What a magnificent thing it is that they are there to be seen. I found myself staring in disbelief at mottled hillsides of conifer and quaking aspen, sucking surprising lungfuls of brittle air, gazing in wonderment at the nearness of the stars, and sighing prayers of thanks that someone had thought to preserve all this for my grandson - and to hope we will for his. (It wasn't all this serious. More in another column.)

DOONESBURY



James Kilpatrick



Israeli raid: on balance, yes

WASHINGTON—Now that the fallout from Israel's June 7 raid on the Iraqi reactor has subsided, it may be possible to take a little more reflective view of the event than seemed possible at the time. The questions raised by the raid are close ones. On balance, I believe the Israelis acted not only boldly but also prudently and legally.

That conclusion rests upon certain assumptions. Let us assume, for purposes of discussion, that the 70-megawatt plant southeast of Baghdad was not truly designed for either research or electric power; that the plant was in fact intended for the production of atomic bombs; that the \$350 million reactor was nearing the point in early June at which 26 pounds of highly enriched uranium would have been moved on site, to prepare for start-up in early August.

Let us acknowledge, rather than assume, the recent history of Iraq's relations with what Iraq persists in calling "the Zionist entity." Alone among the Arab nations, Iraq has refused ever to sign an armistice with Israel. In terms of international law, a

state of war has existed between the two countries since 1948. The Iraqis repeatedly have voiced their determination to obliterate Israel altogether.

Let us consider other premises—that Iraq could not have been deterred by diplomatic efforts, that such other Arab nations as Saudi Arabia are privately delighted by Israel's successful raid, and that the raid was not timed to promote Prime Minister Begin's prospects in Israel's June 30 elections.

Some of these assumptions and premises are challenged. The nuclear attaché in the French embassy in Washington, interviewed by the Washington Post, insists the reactor had no facilities for producing atomic bombs. Professor Joseph H. Nye Jr. of Harvard, an authority on nuclear proliferation, believes the Iraqis were five to 10 years away from producing even a crude atomic bomb. George W. Ball, undersecretary of state in the Kennedy-Johnson years, is outraged by Israel's action. The New York Times terms the "sneak attack" an act of "inexcusable and short-sighted aggression."

Sorting all this out, I would submit that the preponderance of the evidence supports the Israel decision. Given the state of war that exists, it is puerile to speak of "sneak attacks" and "short-sighted aggression." Belligerents are entitled at law to be belligerent. The question is not a question of legality, but of wisdom.

The question, more narrowly still, boils down to a question of Israel's survival. Three atomic bombs would wipe out her very existence—and three atomic bombs, in the experts' view, were about what the destroyed reactor could have produced in the next few years. I accept as a reasonable premise that the volatile Iraqi government could not have been deterred by treaties, U. N. resolutions, or even by the prospect of atomic retaliation. The threat was real; and the reactor's activation was imminent.

Under the circumstances, so assumed, what was Israel to do? Rely upon the French government to stop the construction? As the French attaché made clear, France saw no atomic

threat at all. Should Israel have appealed to other Western nations to apply diplomatic leverage? The time for such leverage had passed to no avail.

Thus came the attack, superbly executed, with minimal loss of life. The consequences, thus far at least, seem bearable. Israel has offended much opinion in the United States, has drawn pro forma denunciations around the world, has embarrassed the Reagan administration, and has provided an ominous precedent for pre-emptive strikes. In theory, the raid may unite the Arab world, but what is vaguely identified as the Arab world never has been united by anything. The act probably has worsened Israeli-Egyptian relations and has complicated negotiations over the Syrian missiles in Lebanon.

We ought not to minimize these consequences, nor exaggerate them either. Faced with an immediate decision on a choice of risks, Israel chose to go with the raid. The choice was sound.

Distaff Side



Little Blue Schoolhouse (5)

by dolores hope

"TO THE casual observer, American education is a confusing and not altogether edifying spectacle. It is productive of endless fads and panaceas; it is pretentiously scientific and at the same time pathetically conventional; it is scornful of the past, yet painfully inarticulate when it speaks of the future."

THAT OBSERVATION was made 50 years ago, not this year, by an educational philosopher by the name of Boyd Bode in *The New Republic*. The crises, confusion and aimlessness continues intact, charges Diane Ravitch, professor of history and education at Columbia University, in the same magazine, last spring.

BECAUSE AMERICAN education is so important and because American education, particularly public education, is in such a bad state, the magazine's editors explained eight articles on the state of public education were prepared for the April 18, 1981 issue.

IT DOESN'T take a magician to make a good school, the *New Republic* editors insisted. What it does take, in their opinion, is:

- A good principal
- A disciplined atmosphere
- High expectations
- Homework
- Individual attention to students
- Emphasis on basic skills and intellectual rigor
- Systematic evaluation of pupil and teacher performance

RAVITCH CONTENTS that the basic problem is a lack of consensus about whether there should be a common curriculum and whether there are knowledge and skills that everyone should have.

"IF," SHE wrote in *The New Republic*, "we believed it was important:

- ...to have a highly literate public
- ...to have a public capable of understanding history, politics and economics
- ...to have citizens who are knowledgeable about science and technology
- ...to have a society in which the powers of verbal communication are developed systematically and intentionally then we would know what we wanted of our schools."

UNTIL WE make up our minds about what we want; until we replace confusion with direction, she concludes that "we get the schools we deserve" and these schools "accurately reflect our own conclusion about the value of education."

Jack Anderson



Fake U.S. passports easy to get

WASHINGTON — Thousands of aliens are entering the United States every year with bogus documents — and many of them are not humble farm workers or restaurant busboys who want to make an honest living in this country. They're drug smugglers and other criminals who take advantage of the ease with which passports or entry visas can be obtained.

It is astonishingly simple for foreigners to get legal entry into the United States. A phony birth certificate can be purchased in Los Angeles for as little as \$3, and a complete phony identity can be packaged for around \$300. A false passport, using the identity of a dead person or a friend, is equally easy to acquire.

While honest applicants for immigration sweat out months, sometimes years, waiting for their entry visa, crooks who have no compunctions about faking their way into the country are swarming over the border by the thousands. Some big-time narcotics pushers have 20 or 30 phony passports. Federal authorities have told my

associate Jack Mitchell that the number of bogus passport applications received each year probably surpasses 30,000, perhaps even twice that number. And it's a pretty safe guess that few, if any, of these phony applicants are planning to pursue legal occupations in the United States. What's really depressing is that fully one out of every four passport frauds goes undetected. And what makes this percentage scary is that, according to Justice Department estimates, "80 percent of the hard drugs entering the United States is smuggled in by organized rings that make extensive use of false ... U.S. passports and other documents."

Worse yet, State Department brass for some reason won't let their investigators do anything about it. Frustrated security officers inside the department are afraid that the very integrity of the U.S. passport system is in jeopardy. They feel that their work is being undermined by the pathetic ease with which hordes of foreign drug smugglers and other criminals can walk the streets of this country with virtually no chance of being caught.

In fact, the flood of counterfeit entry permits has touched off a bitter controversy at the State Department. On one side are upper-echelon bureaucrats who don't want to rock the diplomatic boat by lodging accusations against countries that are main sources of illegal immigrants. On the other side are security officials who feel they are being handcuffed in their attempts to put a stop to the outrageous sale of visas and false passports.

The security people estimate that as many as 20,000 U.S. visas are sold each year. What worries Foggy Bottom officials is that this illicit trade in visas obviously involves some members of the Foreign Service. Whether the visas are being issued by naive American embassy officials or corrupt ones is, of course, what the investigators would like to find out.

WHISTLEBLOWER FIRED — Stephanie Garland was an employee in the Labor Department's office of workmen's compensation programs until she was let go last April. She has brought suit against Labor, charging that she was fired because she per-

sisted in complaining about fraud and mismanagement by her superiors.

Garland was an audiologist; she administered tests to workers who filed claims for hearing loss. Officials say she and another audiologist were terminated when a departmental "reorganization" left them with no work to do. Yet the task force they worked with was created in 1976 to handle a backlog of 16,000 hearing-loss claims.

The General Accounting Office recommended such a task force after finding lengthy delays in processing claims, and an average overpayment of \$10,000 per claim. Garland says she found fraud and incompetence in her office, and when she complained to the inspector general, she was terminated. Prior to that, she was given no assignments for six months.

During that same period — and currently — outside consultants were hired to handle claims. Garland's attorney told my reporter Ben Lay that one consultant earned more than \$48,000 around the period of Garland's enforced idleness.