

opinion/editorial

Rumors of politickin' cloud success of Carter's trip

An atmosphere of euphoria surrounds the White House following President Jimmy Carter's apparently successful trip to the Mideast. Only 24 hours earlier the atmosphere had been a lot heavier. The scant reports of progress in Carter's talks with President Sadat of Egypt and Prime Minister Begin of Israel were guarded and negative.

The same kind of euphoria which followed the signing of the Camp David accords has administration

spokesmen, as well as some Israelis and Egyptians, making predictions of peace within the month. We remember well the similar predictions made after Camp David.

Perhaps the most interesting thing that has come out of Carter's recent peace-making mission is the charge that the negative progress reports were staged by the administration to make the resultant success a bit more dramatic. Carter's image as decisive leader has been fading lately and a

well-designed bit of political theatre with a grand climactic ending would enhance that image.

If the charges are true and the administration is attempting to manipulate public sentiment, that action in itself is an interesting statement. For, in fact, it says that, in the administration's collective mind, actions do not always speak louder than words. One would think that success would sufficiently enhance the president's image. In this case, however, it

would seem that the president and his counselors don't agree.

Peace is a noble and honorable motive. Hopefully the president had peace as his prime motive for traveling to the Middle East. If, on the other hand, his main purpose in going was to enhance his image, his success in securing agreement between Israel and Egypt seems somehow cheapened. It is a rather sad commentary when priorities are juggled such that politickin' comes before peace.

Take the house, wife, kids, Spot, for tank of gas

It was a cool spring evening in the year 1984. "I know what let's do," said Father. "Let's go to the drive-in movie."

"But, dear," protested Mother, "we can't afford to go to the movies."

"Oh, I know that," said Father. "I just thought it would be a nice drive out there. You know, get behind the old wheel, step on the gas and zip through the countryside."

innocent bystander

"Well, if you think so, dear," said Mother dubiously. "Speaking of gas, though, you'd better get some first."

"You're right, Mother," said Father, checking the gauge. "Darn, I just filled it yesterday."

"I hear Sherman's Super Save is having a gigantic sale," said Mother. "Regular is only two cents more a gallon than it was yesterday."

"I can't believe it," said Father. "That's the lowest increase in months."

Special sale

But, sure enough, there was a big sign on the curb in front of Sherman's. "TODAY ONLY," it said, "Regular, \$76.98 a gallon!"

"I suppose it is a bargain," said Mother with a sigh. "But it still seems an awful lot to pay for a gallon of gas."

"Now, Mother," said Father sternly. "You know very well the government's policy is to increase the price of gasoline in order to reduce consumption. And it certainly does make sense. You push the cost up high enough and Americans are simply going to stop driving their cars."

"Well, I guess you're right, dear," said Mother. "But I do miss the girls sometimes."

"Now, Mother, we've been through all that," said Father. "I'm sure they're very happy lolling about in the Saudi harem. Besides, it was getting awfully cramped with four of us living in the car."

Miss house and kids

"Yes," said Mother. "I miss the house, too. And Spot. He was such a wonderful dog."

"A little on the tough side, if you ask me," said Father. "Look, I miss the house and the children as much as you. But what could we do? I couldn't very well walk to work."

"I know, dear," said Mother. "It's too bad you couldn't take a bus."

"I thought about it," said Father. "But with all that expensive gas they have in their tanks, the drivers are just too heavily armed these days. It would be easier to hijack a tanker truck."

"What'll it be, folks?" said Sherman, leaning in the window. "A gill, a pint, or a magnum?"

Private talks

"I'm a little short of cash today, Sherman," said Father, getting out of the car. "I wonder if we could talk privately."

Father was back in ten minutes with a five-gallon can of gas in each hand. "Get out, Mother," he said.

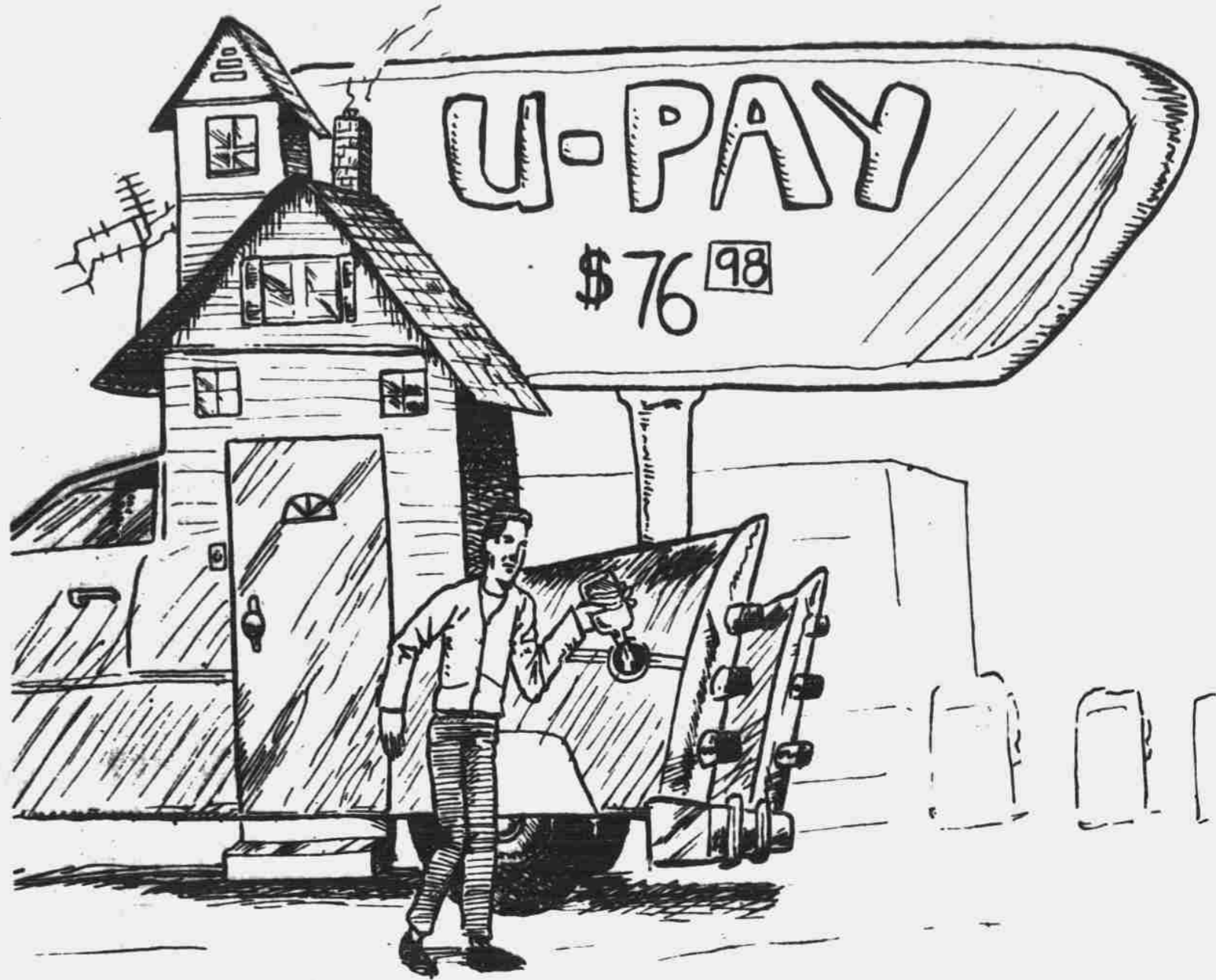
Mother blanched. "Oh, Father," she cried, "tell me you didn't sell Sherman my—forgive the expression—favors?"

"I certainly did not!" said Father indignantly. "Not after he offered me only half a pint and refused to clean your glasses. But I'm not sure I swapped him the right thing."

"Of course you did, dear," said Mother, beaming. "What on this earth could be more precious than ten gallons of gas?"

Father looked unhappy. "The car," he said.

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Depression blues foiled by silliness

We're improvising blues in the basement, and the kid steps out from under a blistering solo to wring the last bit of life out of his last three notes. The first slides sensuously into the second. The third cuts through the air like a stiletto and just hangs there daring anyone to step on it. He flashes a self-conscious "where did that come from?" smile and ad-libs the last verse. It ends:

"Seems like this must be the path
But don't mind me
It's just terminal vagrancy
Ain't nothing you can catch."

michael zangari

It's no use. We've been playing the blues all night, and the only mood that seems to be getting through is abject silliness. Already we've written three tunes. "I was looking in (which I should have been looking out)," seems to win the big prize tonight, if for no other than I managed a very soulful yell when I grabbed an ungrounded microphone in the middle of it.

Catharsis

"If I don't have a catharsis right now, I'm taking my guitar and going home!" the kid screams.

I check my guitar case. Several broken picks, half a baloney sandwich, two copies of a proposed documentary on coffee as a contraceptive and sundry charts—but no catharsis.

"You're out of luck," I say. He begins to pack up. "I feel too good to play the blues tonight," he says, "but I feel too bad to feel good..."

He plugs the guitar back in and plays around with another loose riff.

"Maybe we can work something out..."

We piddle around for a half an hour playing "American Bandstand,"—remember this hit from the sixties...? After three different disco versions of "Hang on Sloop," I begin to pack up.

"Come on! I know if I could just get a grip on these

bad feelings I could play some killer blues... tell me something sad."

"You're out of tune."

Attempted depression

In the spirit of getting depressed we decide to go for coffee. We jam the guitars into the booth and sit in the aisle. Everybody else has a date.

The waitress makes a long approach. She circles the table several times, and finally decides to land.

"What will your guitars have?" she asks.

I grimace and ask for separate checks.

Now it starts.

"You know, I really respect my mother."

We're here five minutes and he's already at his mother.

"Do you know in her entire life she never had to go for a cup of coffee?"

"She would have played lousy guitar."

Several more attempts at getting depressed fail totally. It's beginning to look a lot like Christmas around here.

"I really would like to play some blues tonight," he says.

But it's just no good. We're obviously just feeling too good to do much of anything.

letters to the editor

This letter is in reply to several disparaging letters I have read in the editorial column as of late. I shall not elaborate with statistical information, but rather give a personal view.

Evidently, those who have so freely condemned the Arabian and Iranian students have had no direct contact with these people nor are they educated as to the struggles of these people. Not only am I defending my foreign friends; I am also defending myself (an American), for I was one of those "animalistic" American demonstrators last Thursday evening.

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