

Surgeons leaving Korea with end of classic show

By Pat Clark

After a run of longer than a decade, *M*A*S*H* is going off the air this year. Well, not exactly off the air, as every station that can get a hold of some *M*A*S*H* reruns will put them on the air.

The first reaction you hear from devoted *M*A*S*H* viewers is the long "oooooh" of disappointment, followed by a brief statement about what a great show it was. The key word in this sentence is "was."

so many character entanglements before the ideas start to wear thin. If nothing else, peace had to break out some time. The *M*A*S*H* show has already lasted much longer than the Korean War of which it pretends to be a part did, and to me it's about time the producers brought our crew back home.

Movie-length ending

The current plan is for the show to end just that way. The unit will get the news that the war is over, and the show will go out with a movie-length extravaganza as the 4077th crew gets out of Korea. Not only is it nice that they have decided to end the show in such a tidy package, but it promises to be the biggest news in weekly television viewing since they exposed the real murderer in *The Fugitive* way back when.

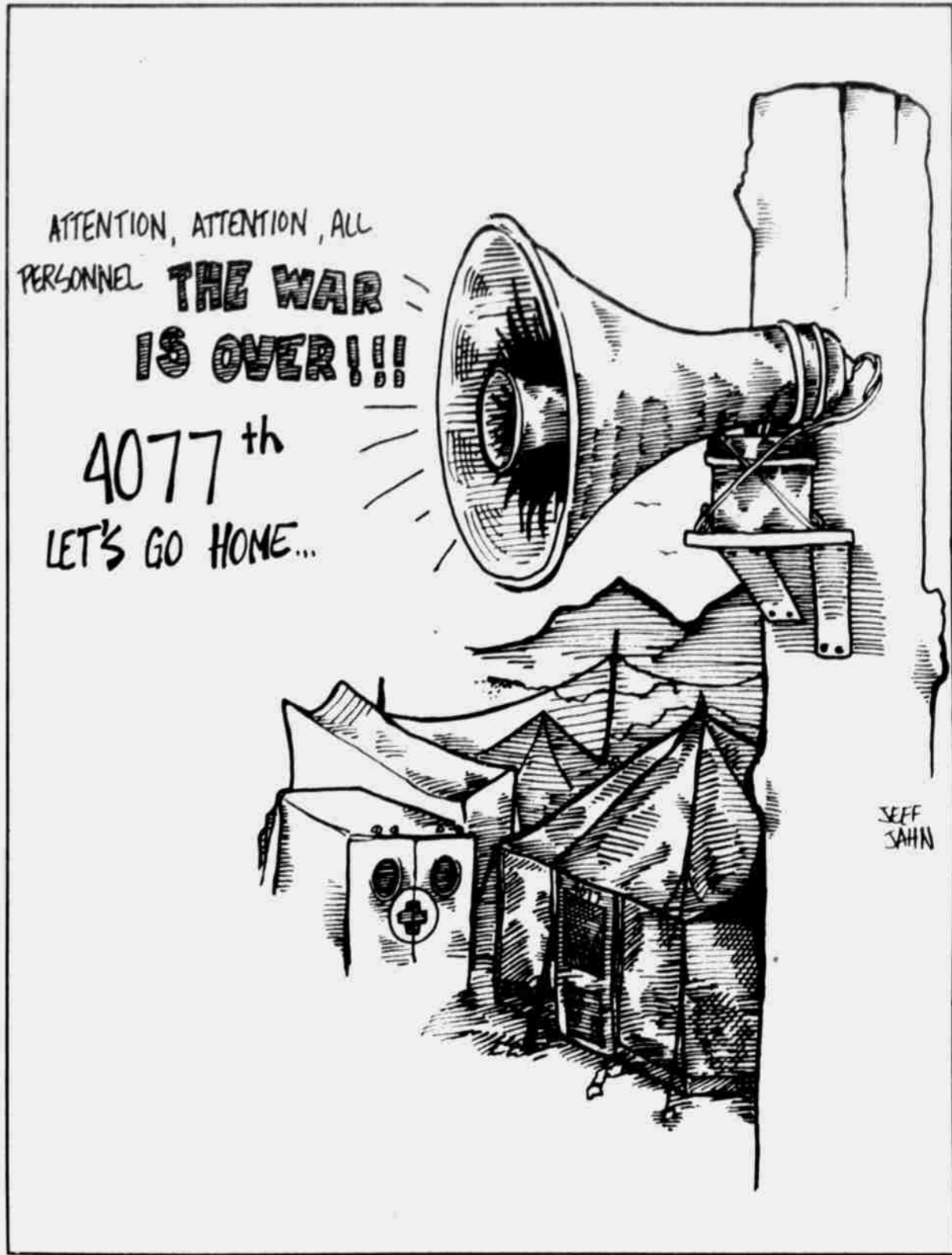
So let the *M*A*S*H* crew go out with style, but let them go out for good. No petition drives, no mournful letters to Alan Alda. You'll be able to watch reruns three times a day, anyway, and even the reruns match anything else television has to offer. This is especially true of the programming in the afternoon slots to which the reruns will be relegated. The only guy who really needs to feel bad is the one who has to invent a show to fit in the *M*A*S*H* time slot. My advice to him comes directly from the title of the *M*A*S*H* theme song: suicide is painless.

Television Review

It is a measure of both the American obsession with television and of the death of worthwhile television programming that so many people are taking the retirement of the *M*A*S*H* crew like the death of the family pet. Is it that this show is so good, or that so many of the other shows are so bad?

Running dry

Fact of the matter is that *M*A*S*H*, like hundreds of shows before it, has run dry. A team of army hospital surgeons, even a fictitious one, can only save so many wounded soldiers, get away with so many hysterical shenanigans, and develop



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