

Rodeo fan

An article appeared in the March 20th issue of the Gateway entitled "Cowboys have balls for Brains." An interesting and cute caption one must admit, but it must also be noted that the writer was one of strong convictions, especially since he remained anonymous.

Working through this article one comes upon the allegation that the Bar-None Dispatch talked in half-truths in their article dispelling the rumor of cruelty in Rodeo. Although it may be admitted that the livestock and the cowboys do not treat each other as if they are at the local neighborhood tea, our friendly critics comments are far from the true mark. It was obvious that he comes from an urban background and has had little experience with livestock at all, let alone with rodeo. He talks of cowboys with foam rubber pants, a blasphemous statement indeed, for if he has ever ridden a horse he would soon realize that one would quickly lose the affinity required between your seat and the saddle that is necessary to remain aloft. Foam would lead to inadequate balance and control, resulting in an ignoble dismount.

An interesting point our friendly critic dwelled upon was the so-called abuse of stock prods and flank straps. Throughout a castration complex is highly visible. Few stallions, if any, are used as rodeo stock so therefore it would be very difficult indeed to apply "high voltage electrical shock" to the testes of the animal.

As to pushing it up its rectum, few cowboys have the time or the patience to quiet the animal to the point that its tail can be deftly lifted and the vile instrument carefully inserted. As far as the flank strap being a stricture to the genital area any basic animal anatomy course will show that the testes are kept between the hind legs and not under the belly. In regards to our friendly critics concern for barb wire in the flank strap, I'm sure that if he had done his homework and a little empirical research, he would soon realize such a statement is erroneous.

The friendly writer discussed the fact of a "horses pride" being destroyed in the name of utility. This is another blatant example of our urban dwellers ignorance of the topic. If he has ever had the pleasure of turning two stallions into the same pen, yet alone many as is implied, he will have realized it is the nature of the beast to fight each other, resulting in disability and perhaps even death. As it is not practical due to our economic growth to let horses run free where they wish, thereby stamping out their own domains, prohibitions on the gelding of horses would require a horse raiser to kill most of his male colts. A questionable alternative indeed, especially for a horse lover.

For the coup d'etat our anonymous writer told of the sad tale where roping horses and those used in steer wrestling contests were being trained "by a beating process" to insure performance. May it be told that as a woman can never be beaten into loving you, nor can a horse be trained by cruelty. True he must be disciplined, somewhat like a child, but if you treat him unfairly you do yourself a disservice. It is impossible for a horse and rider to work as a team, as they must, when the horse is afraid of his master.

In the light of some of the sarcastic and perhaps even caustic words that have gone before, I wish our critical friend to do a little more research, spend a little more time and give a little more thought to the topic. Upon that I'm sure he will come to the conclusion some of the world's greatest animal lovers are cowboys.

Randell Thiessen
Law II

Life Boat

My extensive intelligence service reports that certain classes in this university have been treated to the "Life-boat Theory" of world survival as a solution to the ethical dilemmas posed to us affluent westerners, by the various world crises, notably the food crisis. Since I hate the Life-boat Theory, I would like to use your pages to attack it.

As I understand it, the Life-boat Theory pictures the world as a life-boat or raft, with a limited food-supply sufficient to keep those on the raft alive long

who eats most. Who eats most? Us. Tough ethical decision: get off the raft yourself. Or at least eat less. Who should get off the raft? How about the guy who is selling life-belts to those treading water, in exchange for their chocolate bars? (i.e., industrial countries who sell tractors and fertilizer in exchange for agricultural produce, at escalating prices). If someone gets pushed off the raft, he seems like an appropriate candidate: Us.

"Triage" is sometimes referred to, the French custom during W.W.I of saving the salvagable, and letting the really bad cases die. This again is motivated by a shortage (of medical supplies) in the analogy. We are pictured as the valiant medic, carefully husbanding his scarce, life-giving drugs. Tough decisions must be made. In fact, of course, the medic is an addict and using half the drugs to feed his habit. It's as ridiculous as westerners picturing themselves as Good Samaritans, going out to save the world. Everyone in the Third World knows who we are really: we're the thieves who beat the

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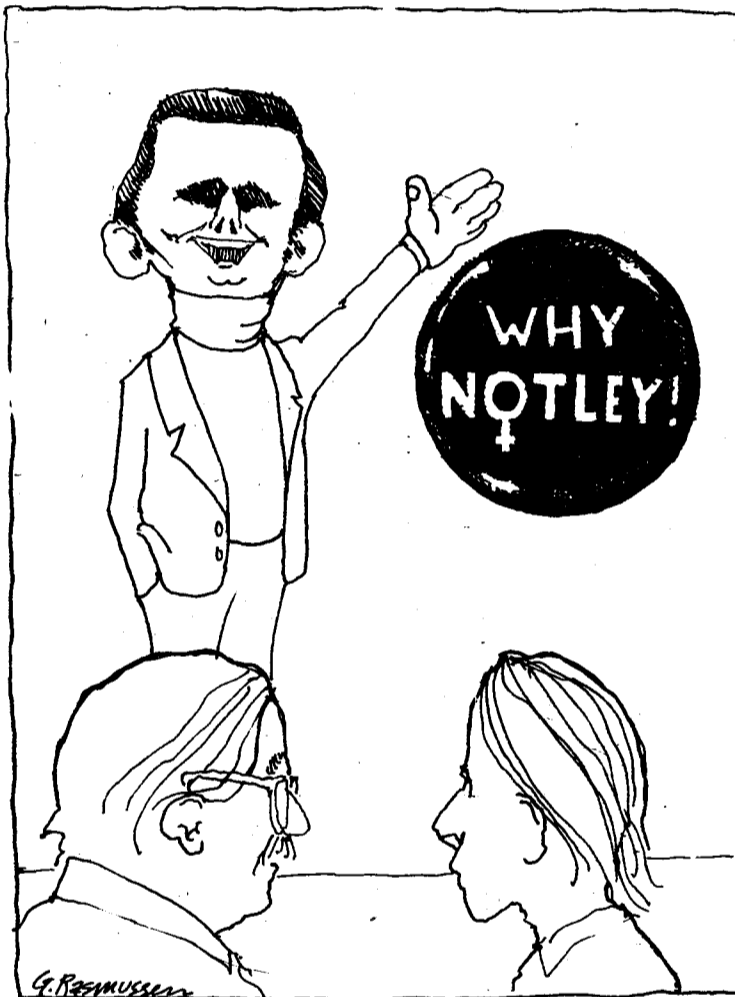
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AT LEAST IT'LL GET THE WOMEN'S VOTES.

enough to reach land, but not sufficient to feed their friends and relatives, who are not on the raft but in the water. Or it can be stated that the raft will only hold so many people, and it will sink if the others get on it.

It is then suggested that the only reasonable thing to do is to allow those unfortunates who are not on the raft to die, in order to save what lives can be saved. It is merely the luck of the draw that we happen to be on the raft and they are in the water. Such is life. A tough decision. Ethical, but value-free.

Attempts to be value-free in ethical decision-making always fail. Every decision reflects some value. "Life-boat" stories are used regularly in "values-clarification" games to uncover just what values people do operate on. In this values game, the obvious value at work is "I (who am lucky enough to be safe) am more important than They (who are in danger)". A very prevalent human value: Me First. In this case, Us First (Us being affluent westerners).

Who should stay on the raft and who should get kicked off, if food is as limited as is suggested? I should say, the guy

guy up in the first place.

All analogies have limitations, and encourage bizarre comparisons. The fault of the above analogies is that they are used as rationalizations of the glaring inequalities in the modern world. If we were not implicated to help others who do not profit as we do from the world economy, we might use those rationalizations with some justification. Until such time, these analogies obscure the real ethical choices before us, and encourage a do-nothing fatalism which results (I think) not from the inability to act, but the fear of acting.

We are the fat guy using up half the raft and tipping it on a dangerous angle; let's go on a diet!

Fletcher Stewart

The Solution

I want to propound a method of alleviating the looming energy shortage by making use of the byproduct from a method of birth control which is becoming more and more popular and which is commonly

known as abortion. The said byproduct is currently destroyed by incineration, which requires fuel.

If one examines the North American abortion trend, one comes to the conclusion that the day will soon be when the complete throughput of the proposed Arctic gas pipeline will be required to fire the incinerators of hospitals. This will be unnecessary because it is possible to use the said byproduct itself as a fuel.

A very special furnace for cremating large quantities of dead was invented during the Second World War. These furnaces needed kerosene to get them going but once going used the combustibles from the bodies as fuel. The manufacturer of the furnaces was able, through a wealth of operating experience, to perfect them and was granted patents for its creativity. The furnaces are still made today but only as a sideline. Some were sold to the United States and are installed in the American conurbations. Their task is to efficiently dispose of the victims of a Russian nuclear attack.

If these Gothic crematoria are suitably equipped then they can be used to generate electricity. They would be continuously fed with the carcasses of the plague which has been diagnosed as unwanted pregnancy. In this manner abortion would become useful instead of being a wastrel.

But there's a slight snag. These particular furnaces were designed for and refined on human dead only. According to the law a human foetus has no rights and so is not a human being. Perhaps we should let the furnace decide for itself. If it raises a good head of steam, do we turn a blind eye?

A.P. Kolinsky,
G.S.

Soapbox

I read the report on Grant Notley's rally speech in last Thursday's Gateway. I don't know where Mr. Notley got his information about Syncrude, but I believe he has been misinformed. Perhaps he is in possession of some secret source of information he is not telling the public about. But since he has come out against the "secrecy" of the Lougheed administration, I presume that the information he is utilizing comes from the same sources that I have to resort to: press, radio, and T.V. news.

Mr. Notley claims (or at least is reported to claim) that the \$200 million investment by the province (and I quote from Gateway), "involves an 82% risk for the people of Canada and Alberta" with the company putting 18% of the capital and reaping 70% of the revenues. However, according to the published facts of the agreement between Syncrude and the government of Alberta, Alberta gets 50% of the company's net revenues in royalty payments. Now, since Alberta is a 10% partner in the venture, this means that the province will collect an additional 10% of the revenue, as well as having continual supervision over the bookkeeping end of the enterprise.

The financial participation in the project is reported to look like this:

| | % of investment capital supplied |
|---------|----------------------------------|
| Alberta | 10 |
| Ontario | 5 |

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