

Robert N. Putnam II

Boycott accomplishing nothing

Exactly what good is the meat boycott likely to do? I fear that if there are to be any tangible benefits, they will come from the indirect, rather than the direct effects of the boycott. If all this adventure amounts to is a substantial number of housewives and other consumers abstaining from their use of meat for the period of one week, then it would be rather foolish to expect any real changes to occur at the meat market.

The nature of the problem of rising meat prices, governed by the laws of supply and demand, is simply not amenable to attack in the form of a boycott: boycotts, with their attendant publicity, may be excellent for remedying some types of social ills, where their effect in accelerating implementation of some new and progressive policy may alleviate the problem. But all the publicity and furor which the consumers of this country can precipitate during this week are not likely to instantly bring new and vast herds of beef cattle into existence where there were none before. And only indirectly, if at all, will a boycott bring about permanent decreased demand for meat (consumers might find they don't really need meat everyday).

Only an increased supply or a decreased demand will bring about a substantial and permanent decrease in the price of meat. I will resist the temptation to offer an exposition on the economic theory of supply and demand, since I have already done so once in this space this year (apparently to the great joy of the insomniacs among my readers who found that writing to be marvelously curative of their ill).

Boycotts, unless very rigidly organized and almost universally observed, may tend to impose sacrifices on only those participating, may result in losses to grocery store owners, and be of real benefit to anti- or non-boycotting consumers only. Any tactic that gives its benefits to a different group than that undergoing the sacrifice is not likely to enjoy much success.

The course of events this week is quite predictable. Meat sales will be down in the grocery stores at first. A lot of meat will just sit in the coolers. Meat department managers will fear that the meat will go bad if sales are not increased, so they will mark down the prices to get rid of the excessive stock. Non-boycotting consumers, (and even

those who intend to boycott, but are weaker-willed) will spy cuts of beef formerly selling for \$1.39 marked down to \$.99. They will load up their grocery carts with such bargains, and spend many happy hours rearranging the contents of their freezers to accommodate their hoard. In short, the boycotters will have done without meat; the grocery stores will have sustained losses from the desperation selling of meat at below cost; and those consumers who have ignored the boycott will have saved a lot of money, and will be enjoying steak. If a sufficiently strong discipline were universal among consumers, the results would penetrate much more heavily down the chain of meat suppliers, but the temptation of bargain prices puts too great a strain on human nature to expect such cohesion.

If, after the boycott, everyone goes

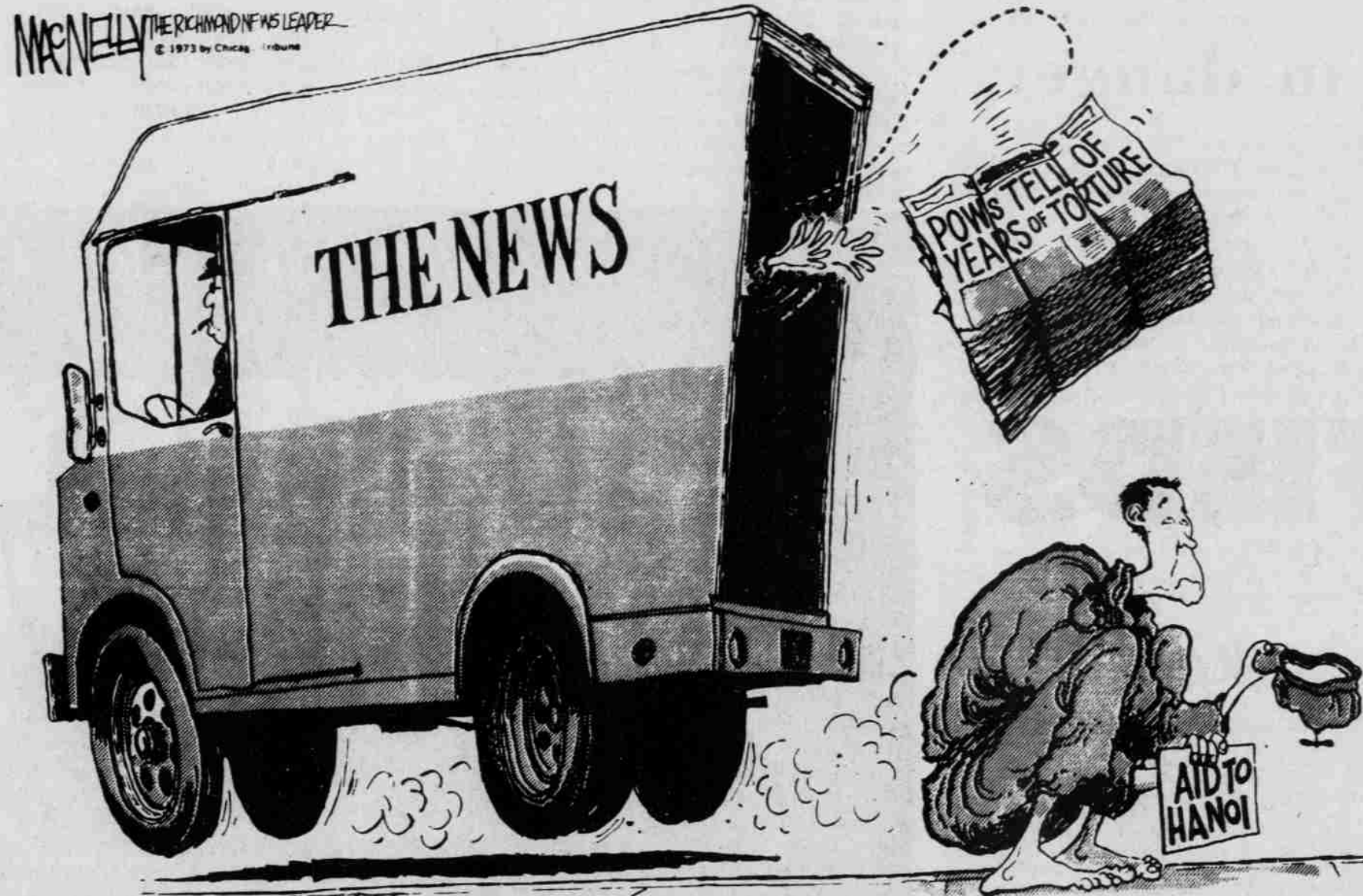
back to their old buying habits, the supply and demand situation will not have changed one bit from the pre-boycott state: meat prices will simply return to their old, high level, and remain there.

There is a much better remedy for the consumer than a total boycott of one week's duration, namely, a less spectacular but firm resolution to cut down on the weekly purchase of meat for the foreseeable future. If a significant percentage of consumers act in this manner, there will be a general and permanent decrease in the demand for meat. This will inevitably be felt along the entire marketing chain, and result in a decrease in price at all levels, without subjecting any one link (such as the supermarket) to the entire sudden loss.

The primary advantage of such an

action is, of course, obvious. As opposed to the boycott, here the consumers who are making the sacrifice by cutting down on meat will also be able to reap the fruits of their action: when they do buy meat the price will be lower. If large numbers of consumers participate in a mutual reduction in the quantity of their meat purchases, there is a very reasonable certainty that each will receive a benefit.

The same cannot be said of a total boycott of one week's duration. While such a demonstration may serve as a catharsis for frustrated consumers who somehow feel that they are doing something constructive about a very real problem, the boycott is unlikely to accomplish much unless it somehow is modified to a more permanent, but less drastic, method of decreasing consumer demand for meat.



Rick Sebak

Theatre group never lets you down

Laboratory Theatre hardly ever lets you down. When costumes, sets, and all the rich theatrical trappings are subjugated, only performances can create and save a production. In the basement theatre, this semester's most outstanding and distinctive student acting has been unfolding each week, and a grand reputation has been firmly established for Lab Theatre.

The changeable stage in O6 Graham Memorial has housed more than its share of near classical portrayals this year. There was not a weak moment or unconvincing character in Duane Sidden's production of "The Rimers of Eldritch," which revealed a storehouse of previously hidden talent while drawing superb performances from Playmaker regulars. Barbara Richardson in "I'm Really Here" gave one of the most memorable and

delightfully bizarre performances of the Lab season.

Playwrights have ranged from John Lennon ("In His Own Write") to W.B. Yeats ("On Baile's Strand") and from Harold Pinter ("Old Times") to Carolina student Carol Banks ("The Divine Misunderstanding"). The Lab Theatre is an artistic playground which remains unknown to many people on campus, but it becomes more important and exciting with each production.

This week, an original conception of the Frankenstein story was mounted by Russell Graves with help from the acting and directing majors in the L.D.A. program. An ensemble piece, this Laboratory Showcase production was exciting and interesting in each of its fragments even though they failed to fuse into "some everlasting whole."

"Frankenstein" is based on the Mary Shelley novel, features written material by Rebecca Ranson and Russell Graves, and tries to coalesce around the scenario developed by Ms. Ranson, Nancy Boykin, Dallas Greer, Michael Kerley, Richard Mason, and Duane Sidden. The acting ensemble was uniformly well-disciplined and quite effective in this non-traditional theatrical approach to the monster story.

The entire conception obviously owes much to Jean-Claude Van Itallie's "The Serpent" and the Open Theatre's style of acting. Unfortunately, the discipline and consistency of the ensemble are unable to complete the work which, unlike VanItallie's play, suffers from a weak base structure.

Duane Sidden as the Doctor valiantly tries to pull the pieces together through his fragment-mouse speech, one of the

few continuous threads which might gather and hold all the bit of business. There is an odd ring to his final claim of success in creation because of the fragmentary feel of the play itself.

Michael S. Rogers and Valerie Stancik are standouts as the monster and his bride in their two guises. They first emerge as a tap-dancing vaudevillean Jack and Jill who are "just flesh and bone with a couple bolts in our necks." Their hammy moments as this pair are marvelously off set by the intense monster-like presence of Gene Sher in the center of the playing area.

The monster is later shown as a traditional Christ-clown, silent and yet powerful. The stylized monster-attack used throughout the piece is another unifying factor which never loses its theatrical beauty and effectiveness but nonetheless is not powerful enough to cement the pieces together.

"Frankenstein" is being done upstairs in the Lounge Theatre, and utilizes the room itself in a most intriguing fashion. The hallway outside has an eerie and appropriately threatening whiteness which ends the play.

Special praise is due to the lighting designer and crew. Each segment achieves a special beauty and significance through the simple yet intense lighting.

Despite the fact that "Frankenstein" never fuses into a monster of a show, each part is totally absorbing and well executed. The show runs through Saturday night with a nightly curtain at 8:00. As always, Lab admission is free.

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Crossways

Why efforts as Key '73?

Editor's Note: Key '73 is a nationwide Christian evangelical movement sanctioned by the National Council of Churches and various denominations throughout the nation. Participation here is sponsored through local churches.

"Why can't Christians just leave me alone? Why do they need to convince me that Christ is the only way? Can't they be satisfied with it being a way for them?"

Christians are constantly being bombarded with these questions, questions that really say "Why evangelize?" or "Why such efforts as Key '73?"

These questions reflect the prevailing idea that there is no one correct way to live, no one set of principles we must recognize as universally true and compelling. Right has become "right for me." What we ought to do or be is seen merely as a matter of opinion.

Because he holds this subjective attitude about values and morals, modern man sees specific religions and religious ideas only as alternatives, not imperatives, for his life. The Christian cannot accept this subjective view of moral truth.

The Christian holds that his life has an objective moral foundation, based on his belief in the historical reality of Christ's resurrection. "If Christ has not been raised," Paul said, "[our] faith is futile... and we are of all men most to be pitied."

This belief in Christ's resurrection as historical truth motivates Key '73 and all Christian evangelical efforts. What Key '73 basically tries to do, then, is to confront everyone clearly with the person of Jesus Christ as he is revealed in the

Bible so that each individual can make his own moral decision—based on intelligent investigation—to accept or reject Jesus and his claim to objective moral truth. Personal honesty requires just such an investigation and decision.

Beyond the belief that Christianity is objective moral truth which must be proclaimed in this age of relativism, there are several other related reasons why Key '73 is taking place. For one thing, Christians are specifically commanded by Jesus to "Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations..."

Key '73's particular focus is calling the North American continent to Christ. This is not merely stimulated by the Christian's obligation to truth—it is also motivated by the deep, sincere desire of many Christians to share what is the most important and exciting thing in their lives.

Key '73 is also motivated by the Christian's belief it is God's will that all men know the truth which Christ reveals. "God our Savior," the Bible says, "desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth." In keeping with this, Key '73 is making an effort to reach all men, regardless of their beliefs or attitudes—no to coerce or belittle another's beliefs or religion, but to simply and rightfully present our own to be considered.

Many people turn off Christianity because they see too often justifiably-Christians who evangelize with pitying or condescending motives. These people are unfortunate warnings to Christians that God loves all men equally, and counts even the least of all

men—their moral and intellectual integrity as well as their "souls"—as valuable as any other.

Christians must realize they are no less sinners than anyone else, that salvation is by God's grace and not our own accomplishments. But non-Christians must remember, too, that real truth may be more compelling than its advocates.

Christians launch such efforts as Key '73 not to gain Christ, an brownie points but because we wish to be friends and disciples of Christ. "You are my friends if you do what I command you," Jesus says, and what he commands us is "to love one another even as I have loved you." So Christians share Christ, also, because we love our fellow man and want him to know and share the truth, love, strength, and lasting meaning and purpose that Christians have found shapes and sustains our lives in all events.

To be friends and disciples of Christ is not always easy. But most Christians would probably never make such extreme and extensive efforts like Key '73 to evangelize the world, knowing how many friends they may lose and people they may upset, if they believed Christ was merely one more way among many. Christians have found that those who accept Christ on his own terms must accept him as "the way" for their lives, and not merely as a possible alternative.

What Key '73 is trying to reveal is something that none can afford to not hear—something which we as Christians also feel no one can afford to live without.

Aid office

Nothing yet to give students next year

If you're on financial aid, you'd better write your congressman.

William Geer, UNC Director of Student Aid, is now sending out lists and addresses of all North Carolina congressmen with financial aid forms to incoming and returning students. Day before yesterday, he went to Washington and spoke to the N.C. joint congressional delegation.

Geer is serious about this, and there's a reason for it...

All he now has to offer students on aid for this fall and this summer is proposals, and proposals won't pay for an enzyme steak, much less tuition.

The proposals are from the Nixon administration, and they involve completely restructuring federal aid to students. Meanwhile, here it is April, when undergraduate grants are normally made. No one knows when the new programs might be put into action—maybe next week, maybe next fall.

And Geer can take no action on filling the estimated needs of his applicants.

When Geer went to Washington, he requested that any changes be held off for a year to prevent disruptions in the flow of aid. The same request has been made by other aid officials across the country.

The timing problem is complicated by statutory conflicts to the proposals which threaten to lengthen the controversy even further—more headaches for Geer and the students.

Nixon intends to end immediately the National Direct Student Loans and Educational Opportunity Grants and replace them with Basic Opportunity Grants and Federally Insured College Loans. But the NDSL's and

EOG's are required by law to be fully funded before there is any spending for the BOG's or the FICL's.

So in this case, Nixon is attempting not simply to withhold funds as in the impoundment controversies, but to bypass a Congressional decision on spending priorities.

But there are other good reasons besides timing why aid officials and students should object to these proposed changes. The high-interest bank loans of the FICL program will be relatively useless to students, compared to the three percent NDSL's. But the interest subsidy that the feds will pay to the banks involved, while making the FICL attractive to banks, will make it cost the taxpayer more than NDSL.

Nixon recommends funding BOG (perhaps the most apt acronym to come out of Washington in years) at only half the estimated level of national need for the program—he asks 620 million instead of the 1.2 billion experts say the program should cost. So the individual student will be given only half the amount he is eligible for.

As President Nixon has often announced, he considers it his duty as a new federalist to hold in check the concern of Congress about such things as the country's educational needs.

It appears that, in this case, the president's "duty" may wreck the capabilities of financial aid offices to help students.

So like we said, if you're on financial aid, you'd better write your congressman. After all, it is getting to be the middle of April, and you probably can't eat controversies and proposals.

The Bayit

Nureet, Shimshon will welcome you

When you enter the house, a dog named Nureet will jump up and down in front of you. That is her way of saying "Shalom! Welcome to the Bayit!" Also in this greeting party will be Shimshon, the cat, who slinks over to your feet, preparing to attack your shoelaces.

Mark and Lee will probably be sitting on the couch in the living room discussing when the kosher meat order will be coming in. Shana and Stan will be in the kitchen making deep-dish vegetable pie (oh no, not that meal again!), Bonnie will be under a pile of rabbinical school application forms next to Debbie who will be under a pile of sketches and diagrams of the upper left arm pit, for one of her nursing courses. Steve will be oops!... in the bathroom.

Steve comes out of the bathroom and into the kitchen howling for supper. Stan hands him a dog biscuit. Shana begins to set the table, sending Debbie and Bonnie upstairs to the study, leaving a trail of diagrams and application forms behind them. It is about 6 p.m.

I guess the Bayit is a place where you can be free, if you can be free with the responsibility of yourself plus six other people on your shoulders. If you live there, you are a part of the whole and you do things for the whole, and not for yourself. This kind of existence is a sense of freedom to many people. Some find joy in helping others besides themselves.

What gives me the right to talk about the Bayit? I do not live there but I was going to. There were eight of us who had been planning to live together since 1971-1972. At the last minute I could not move in and so now I'm considered the "almost-eighth person." From my

perspective off the sixth floor of Ehringhaus Dorm I see the Bayit from within and without, usually considering myself part of the whole, but often feeling very cut off from the seven of them.

The phone rings and Mark answers it, still talking to Lee as he puts the receiver to his mouth. It is a Hillel member calling to tell the Bayit that he is coming to the Friday night communal dinner and religious services with a friend who is not Jewish and who wanted to see the unique Hillel Sabbath service.

The amazing thing about Sabbath services is that they are spontaneous to a great extent. Lead by one or two students as opposed to a Rabbi, the service follows the traditional pattern with variations on the melodies used for prayers, and timely passages are read instead of outdated ones. If you know a good song, you are welcome to teach it during the break in the service that most Rabbis take for a sermon.

Since the Bayit has been in existence (back in the days before we actually had a house of our own), Hillel's active membership has greatly increased. People enjoy coming to the communal dinners because they are made to feel welcome. Many people wear jeans, others dress up if they feel like it. Visitors are quite welcome whether they are Jewish or not.

Good. Dinner is ready. Shana passes a slice of bread around the table and each person takes a piece. A prayer is said in Hebrew thanking God for the bread, and dinner begins.