

# Monday's Commentary

## Isolationism craze needs reexamination

Isolationism's popularity in this country is at a dangerous level.

From the very top echelons of the White House to the smallest subdivision in suburbia, the parochialism creeps through the American psyche.

Last week's speech by U.S. Rep. William Brodhead, D-Detroit, typifies the attitude. The 17th District congressman has built a nearly impenetrable district fortress, immune from political challenge. He has done this by catering to the isolationist mentality.

Isolationism crosses the barrier from liberalism to conservatism, so Brodhead has an easy go of it as he travels from the Detroit portion of his district to the suburban area.

Overwhelmingly elected (sans opposition) in his last outing, the congressman has, himself, become isolated from the realities of history's lessons.

Now before I go any farther, let's get a few things clear lest anyone draws the wrong conclusion from this little essay.

First of all, this isn't an attack on Bill Brodhead the man, but rather a comment on his public stands. That's an important distinction. All you Brodhead fans keep it in mind.

Secondly, this editor is totally dedicated to the proposition of peace. Warmongering isn't my thing.

But, the lessons of history demonstrate to us that

isolationism, even in the name of peace, always has led to war. Let us not forget the admonitions of British Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain who crumbled under the pressure of Germany's Nazi Reich all in the name of "peace in our time."

Also remember the Oxford students who vowed never to die for "King or country" and who, a few years later, were forced to die in droves because of the political tunnel vision exhibited by themselves and their leaders.

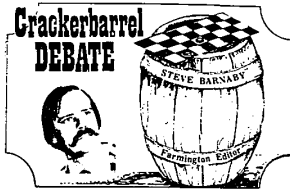
But back to the congressman's speech before the Farmington Chamber of Commerce last week.

From the man who voted in support of the Vietnam Republic's downfall, we now hear that we should be proud of the fact that we no longer have the ability to dominate militarily or in controlling this country's energy sources.

We should be proud of our successes, he tells us. He goes on to support the energy policy of a president whose administration is literally in a state of leaderless confusion, whose energy policy is a reflection of his unstable leadership.

Carter, Brodhead and the rest, who mouth Hooverism, lined up with a bit of the Calvin Coolidge, are spreading an antiquated political philosophy which will haunt and stalk us until it wreaks its terrible havoc.

Already we suffer, already this country has lost



the respect of other nations. After all, a treaty signed by this country isn't worth a whole lot. Just ask those who live in the Republic of China.

The idea of energy independence is a joke, as is the idea that this country can exist as an island isolated from the world's problems.

We must show responsible leadership on a world-wide scale.

And there is an alternative in global leadership which doesn't call for the rattling of atomic swords. We needn't be reactionaries prone to war.

Let me refer you to one Norman Angell, winner of the 1933 Nobel Peace Prize, author of the Great

Illusion and once editor of Foreign Affairs.

Angell wrote: "The root of the problem is very simply stated: if there were no sovereign independent states, if the states of the civilized world were organized in some sort of federalism, as the states of the American Union, for instance, are organized, there would be no international war as we know it. . . . The main obstacle is nationalism."

In his writings, Angell shows us the fallacy surrounding the balance of power theory. Wisely, he tells us that nations are incorrect when assuming they can go it on their own. Nations need one another to survive, for food and raw materials and technology.

This necessarily means that this nation must be concerned with what is happening in other nations. Instead of learning how to avoid working together with other nations, we must learn to cooperate one with another.

True, domination isn't any solution. Angell shows us that countries which have conquered other nations and attempted to dominate have discovered a futile end.

So Congressman Brodhead, and all those of like mind, find a copy of the Great Illusion. Read it and you may find yourself rethinking the course for this nation.

## Some people just can't wait for spring to come

All in all, spring is overrated. I can't understand how people get excited about a time of year when it rains 10 days out of 15. But one of the nice things about the season is the return of fishing.

People fish through the ice in the winter, true. But ice fishing resembles real fishing the way the Winter War resembles chess — the broadest concepts are similar, but one is a lot more comfortable than the other. Only sick people really enjoy ice fishing.

Smelt and perch, the proletariat of the piscatorial world, are the first legal catches of the spring. They're first, but they're dull; how much of a thrill can there be in dipping a net into 41-degree water several hundred times a night? Or dropping 50 perch — the state limit — onto the bank before noon?

Both fish move in schools about the size of a subaqueous Manhattan, so catching them is actually much easier than not catching them. Still, it's red-baits-and-ice fishing — satisfying, but not exactly memorable. But they're two of the few kinds of fish that are legal to catch in the spring, when most gamefish are spawning.

So, if legal niceties bother you, smelt and perch are just about the only things you can fish for.

NOT EVERYONE is bothered by such niceties.

I grew up two blocks from the Detroit River. If you grow up across the street from a baseball stadium, I guess your heroes are center fielders. Mine was a guy I thought was the world's best marine engine mechanic, and Chester the fisherman.

Chester was a professional fisherman. There aren't many of those people around, and fewer still in Detroit. And even fewer of them who weigh in at about 280 pounds and still manage to habitually dig up Sears workpans five or six sizes too large.

Chester wore his belt so low ladies could be expected to blush at the sight of it — provided they got close enough to see it. Making a living catching fish has its advantages, but enhancing your personal hygiene is not one of them.

But Chester — whose last name I never learned — was unusual in more ways than one.

The fish he caught professionally were minnows. He sold them to bait stores at 15 cents or a quarter a dozen so that you could buy them for 50 or 60 cents a dozen. In the minnow business, "a dozen" is a euphemism for what looks like a healthy number of the little suckers. Nobody counts them.

And he had a 15½ foot solid steel boat that weighed in at a good 200 pounds. In the bow he kept a 55-gallon oil drum filled with probably another 200 pounds of water. Add a few dozen pounds of minnows to the drum, on good days.

All of this, and Chester, too — who weighed more than the boat — were pushed around the river by a 20-horsepower Johnson outboard engine that would never have even seen V-J Day if it hadn't been for my other boyhood hero, the marine mechanic.

He also had a hand in keeping Chester's car alive. It was a black, 1954 Chevrolet that made a series of the greatest comebacks since Lazarus.

YOU COULD see Chester coming back from minnow netting forays into Lake St. Clair when he was still maybe a mile from the lighthouse that marks the point where the Lake flows into the River. His boat wasn't hard to spot — that 55-gallon drum in the bow made it look like a miniature iron ore freighter.

When you saw him you knew you had time to do just about anything you wanted to before he made it back to the docks. After you spotted him, all that

weight in front of that puny outboard gave him an estimated time of arrival of about 90 minutes.

Chester was on the water five or six hours a day, so his face was the color of expensive Cordovan English walking shoes. He also had terrible sinuses. Somewhere in the depths of those pants he kept one of the cloths mechanics use to sop up grease. Every few minutes he'd rummage around until he found it, then noisily blow his nose.

Still, none of this had anything to do with his professional life. He was a truly great fisherman.

Although illegal.

Chester didn't chase minnows. He parked in some likely looking place and waited for them to come to him, checking on their progress with the net every now and then. In the meantime, he fished with rod and reel.

Chester pulled an Atlantic salmon out of the Detroit River in 1956, when there weren't supposed to be any Atlantic salmon east of Boston.

WHEN CHESTER caught that salmon, he didn't have the faintest idea what it was. At Tommy's Boat Livery they kept a very large book full of color photos of fish, but nobody used it in years — when you've seen one perch, you've seen them all.

The book was on a shelf above the mounted head of the third largest muskie caught in the history of mankind.

Chester pulled that big book down and started leafing through it. When he saw a picture that looked like the fish — which he had spread out on his lap below the book for easy reference — he stopped and compared. And when he found a picture that said Atlantic Salmon, he'd found the brother of the fish on his workpans.



Mike Scanlon

Big excitement was the result. Newspapers were called, and surprisingly enough they came and took pictures. And brought with them some guys from the Department of Natural Resources.

This presented a problem to Chester, who had 40 or 50 pounds of illegal walleye in his boat. The season on them was still closed, but when you can fillet them and get \$1.25 a pound for the result, you don't let legal niceties bother you. At least, not if you're Chester.

The boys from the DNR, however, were much more bothered by such minor scruples.

As far as I know, Chester was the first person to ever catch an Atlantic salmon in the Detroit River. In exchange, he also got to be the only guy I know who said "fishing" when his cellmate asked what he was in for.

The illegal walleye drew him a three-day sentence.

So, perch and smelt may not be the most exciting things to catch, but they beat the hell out of lighting matches and writing your initials with soot on the ceiling of a county cell.

## Tinkering Around

by LOUISE OKRUTSKY

### Fund begins for Mrs. Slovik

In 1945, men and women were looking forward to settling down into post-war serenity. Husbands were returning home from the Second War.

In 1945, Antoinette Slovik received word from the Army that her husband, Eddie had died.

So Eddie Slovik's widow applied for Army benefits. The Army never explained to her how her husband died. But after receiving her application for benefits they informed her that she was ineligible for them.

She was told she must send his last paycheck back to the Army. She did. It wasn't until 1953 that she learned the reason she was denied her husband's benefits by the Army.

Her husband was the first soldier since the Civil War to be executed for desertion. She discovered the whole truth not from the Army but from a writer who wanted to interview her for a book he intended to write about her husband's case.

Eddie Slovik's death and his widow's financial predicament went unnoticed for a good many years until about four years ago when a television movie was based on the incident.

That's how Roman Ullman became involved in her cause.

Ullman, 36, is the head of the Polish Central Citizens Committee, which is trying to raise \$5,000 to pay Mrs. Slovik's medical bills. The 64-year-old woman is in a Detroit nursing home suffering from cancer, emphysema and several other complaints.

"I guess she's in pretty bad shape," said Ullman of Mrs. Slovik.

"She's not old, but her condition is bad. I guess when you lose the will to live and self-dignity there is a tendency to age," he said.

After Ullman saw the movie he became interested in a movement to have a bill passed in Washington allowing Mrs. Slovik to collect the Army benefits that she would have normally received plus interest.

In 1945, she would have received \$10,000 from the Army. After 34 years at 6 1/2 percent interest she has the chance to receive \$76,000.

Part of the bill introduced in February, 1979 which would allow her to receive that money stipulates that a percentage of the sum is non-taxable. The bill is pending before the House Judiciary Committee. If it wins their approval, the bill will make it to the floor of the Senate and then move on to the House of Representatives.

MEMBERS OF Sen. Donald Riegle's staff speculate the bill might make it out of the Senate by July 1, 1979.

The bill has won the support of President Jimmy Carter and is cosponsored by Sen. Ted Kennedy.

Comments from the Army and the Veterans' Administration are necessary for the consideration of the bill. Despite a grass roots feeling in the Detroit area that those two organizations don't want Mrs. Slovik to receive any money, Reagle staffer John Graykowski said he expects their comments to be favorable.

But for Ullman, the legal efforts in Washington have taken "too damn long."

Bogged down by poverty and ill health, Mrs. Slovik needs help in paying for her medical bills. She sold her home and for a while lived in a motel in Redford.

"I want her to have something in life," said Ullman. The Polish Central Citizens Committee recently began helping tide over Mrs. Slovik until the legal maneuvering ends.

Money they collect will go directly to her debtors. The committee doesn't want to collect a lot of money. They just want enough to pay her bills so she has one less worry.

Somewhat it seems fitting the committee is the group trying to help her immediate needs.

THE COMMITTEE was founded in 1917 to recruit Polish Americans to fight in World War I. At that time, Poland didn't exist on the map, a situation not wholly unusual in the history of that country.

After the war, the committee began to lobby President Woodrow Wilson to help create a new Poland through the Treaty of Versailles.

In recent times, the group, an umbrella organization for about 100 other Polish organizations, has expanded its efforts from the political to the cultural arena, according to Ullman.

The group is soliciting funds from Polish American businessmen and just about anyone else who wants to contribute to help Mrs. Slovik.

"We want to keep her off welfare," Ullman said. Those sentiments are echoed by Hamtramck businessman Henry Kozak, who owns a distributing firm.

"I'm pro-Mrs. Slovik," he said. "Two people don't get convicted for a crime if one didn't have any part in it. She's living in the shadow of her husband."

"She's up to her ears in bills. She's virtually destitute," adds Kozak, a former state senator.

THE GROUP HAS already raised \$1,000 toward their goal. Contributions can be sent to the Antoinette Slovik Fund, 3000 Town Center, Suite 2700, Southfield, 48075.



## "Around the edge

by Jackie Klein

### Give kids benefit of doubt

Raising kids may be demanding and frustrating, but it doesn't have to be complicated. Few parents choose to be grouchy, yelling caretakers.

That's the contention of James Eddy, a staff social worker at Mott Children's Health Center in Flint. Eddy, who advocates the common sense approach to bringing up kids, will speak on child management from 7:30 to 10 p.m. Tuesday, May 1 in a forum sponsored by Southfield-Parent Youth Guidance Commission in Southfield-Lathrup High School.

Eddy outlines a few do's and don'ts in his booklet. He has dealt with 5,000 families in Genesee County and claims he's raised at least 40,000 kids. He maintains he can turn families around in as few as four sessions.

I don't want to steal Eddy's thunder because, if you're a parent, you'll want to hear him speak May 1. He's got a good sense of humor which takes the mystery and complication out of parenting. But here's a sneak preview of some of the points he'll make.

If you want your kids to pick up their toys, don't be sloppy yourself. Don't call them dumb or they might refer to you and your friends as "dumbbells."

Be consistent. If you can't stand to hear your offspring cry when you say no, don't change your mind. If you do, your child will think he can get what he wants just by being a brat. Don't expect your kid to agree with you all the time. Consider yourself lucky if he or she thinks you're right one out of 10 times.

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Steve Barnaby

Editor

2332 Farmington Rd.  
Farmington, MI 48024  
(313) 477-5450

John Reddy, General Mgr.

Thomas A. Flordan, Executive Editor

George J. Hagan, Advertising Director, Fred J. Wright, Circulation Director