Time will tell if lawmaker keeps faith

I WANT YOU to sit down and put your faith cap on. That's right, put it on and make sure it fits real tight. Got it adjusted. Great. Cause I want you to believe along with me today. I want you to believe along with me that what a congressional press alde told me, indeed, is the truth.

But I'm going to go with the people on this one. I'm going to believe. For a few years now, we've been hearing a public outcry that the media is unfair to those with whom it disagrees, that many in the media

Even though I have a tough time seeing much liberalism in today's newsrooms, most of the letters and phone calls I get from the public are chock tull of the feeling that the press unfairly expressed that bias. I heard a lot of that after writing the column about Dan Quayle's non-war record. Many of those writing or calling were sure I was somehow in collusion with the Kremlin.



Steve Barnaby

column were sure it wasn't.

RECENTLY, I received a letter accusing U.S. Rep. Bill Broomfield R-Birmingham, of opposing the construction of a memorial statue com-

who served in Vietnam.

Now, I'll admit right out front that

Bill Bromfield isn't one of my favorite congressmen. Frankly, I think

to should have relitred a long time
ago. If anything he proves the longheld contention that it's more difficult for a challenger to win a congressional seat than it is to get a seat
on the Soviet Politburo.

But the American public generally

holds of to incumbent congressmen like bables to mothers. We just won't let go.

At any rale, I thought it would be unfair of me to write a column about Broomfield's stand on this issue, minor to some of us, major to others, without first speaking to him or a properly appointed representative. I called and talked with press aide Paul Russinoff. Now I've never met Paul. But he turned out to be a nice guy. Istated my case.

Paul said he wasn't sure of all the facts, but that he would get back with me that morning. Sure, I thought.

But no sooner had I walked to the coffee machine and back than Paul was on the line.

No, the congressman isn't opposed to the statue, he said. A vote was taken in the Senate that passed, with only one vote in opposition. A vote in the House will be coming shortly.

"I don't see why he would oppose, "said Paul." I want to believe that. For the 10,000 female military personnel who served is Viennam, I want to believe that the pro-military congressman from Birmingham will keep the faith.

Laughter — best relief from worldly concerns

WE SIGH with relief when snow drifted over Yellowstone this week, squelching massive fires and dubb-ing Mother Nature the ultimate fire-fighter.

We continue to watch in horror as fires push animals out and people from their homes in California.

We await Sunday's presidential debates and read about military coupes in Haiti.

A varietal menu of news, it is.
It's not these, but the stories that
divert our attention, make us look
twice, and catch our eye that can be
the most entertaining, and keep us
reading.

This, from someone who reaches first for the Sunday funnies before delving into the tough stuff. Who wouldn't rather read first about the antics of Calvin and Hobbes before studying sewer costs or business mergers?

BUT OCCASIONALLY, an eye-catcher makes it onto the regular news and feature pages: How about the ultimate for to-day's student and every teacher's worst nightmare: a notebook with an

Casey

AM/FM radio built in. Somehow, I don't think the average student would use the radio waves as a studying tool, but it certainly makes for fun reading.

Hans

Or if our lives hadn't been pro-cessed and packaged and made con-venient enough already, a major ho-tel chain wanted to name its new economy rooms "McSleep Inns."

economy rooms "mesteep inns."

You can guess who went to court
to take the "Me" out of their plans.
The judge ruled you might become
confused and think you were ordering a burger instead of making a
room reservation.

This time of year, we can't over-look the political news, especially the satirical cartoons. No matter your party affiliation, or your stand on the Issues, political blunders and

cartons are a delight in any presi-dential election year.

THEN THERE are the five men in Miami accused of smuggling endan-gered species of birds into the U.S. Animal protectionists might squawk about my making light of such a

The issue in itself isn't a funny one, but it's a different type of story and it makes a point about how we read the news.

Too often, we hear about how such Too often, we hear about how such terrible news fills our papers and newscasts. If we took it all to heart, we'd be "a nation depressed." Certainly, issues must be taken seriously, but we also have to learn how to laugh at them when possible.

Despite all these worldly con-cerns, and the heavy, heavy things weighing on our collective mind, al-ways remember, there's a bright side.

Just force up the corners of that mouth, and tell yourself that tomorrow's another day. They say laughter is the best medicine for what alls us. So pick up the newspaper—you're bound to find a chuckle.

Not driving on shoulder could be lifesaving act

I THOUGHT about state Sen.
Doug Cruce when I was stuck in
Telegraph Road traffic one morning.
A two-car collision at 10:30 a.m.
Ited up a couple of lanes.
Now, that stretch of road has a
paved shoulder and a zillion signs
warning you not to drive on the
shoulder.

didn't bother dozens of my northbound travelers, who,

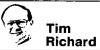
That didn't bother dozens of my fellow northbound travelers, who, blocks ahead of the accident scene, began driving on the shoulder.

That is, until a cop car came up the shoulder to help at the accident scene. The cop car turned on his European-style wailing siren. Those cars, vans and even a sod-hauling truck illegally using the shoulder pulled off into driveways in one big hurry.

pulled off Into driveways in one big hurry.

It became clear why our authority figures in the state Transportation Department and County Road Commission prohibit driving on shoulders. They're for emergencies, including a cop or an ambulance trying to get to an accident scene.

It turned out that a woman was hurt, From the way she was being strapped onto a litter, it appeared she had neck and back lingties. I was glad the emergency medical service



vehicle was able to get through. The road shoulder was choked with trav-eling vehicles. My firm opinion that southeastern Michigan drivers are the rudest and most boorish in America became firmer.

CRUCE, R-TROY, one of our am-tious and rising lawmakers, has his

CRUCE, R-TROY, one of our ambitious and rising lawmakers, has his own crusade, and it also has to do with boorsh drivers.

He has introduced a bill providing for stricter penalties against ablebodled louts who park in spaces reserved for handicappers. He would increase the fine from \$25 to \$50, add a "point" to the drivers ilcense record and have the vehicle towed away.

Away.

Lots of luck, Doug.

At present, police almost never enforce the law. If a Michigan drunk driver has one chance in 3,000 of

ever being arrested, then a person illegalty parking in a handicapper's slot probably has one chance in 10,000 of being nalled.

Cruce has an answer: "I'm proposing we train and deputize senior citizens and handicappers to issue handicappers and handicappers to issue handicapper parking violation dickets."

"Deputized" citizens issuing tick-tes? I smell trouble with that. But again, lots of luck, Doug.

WE RAN into the same experience with the 1983 "lough" drunk driving laws. I've written about this before.

You can send third-offense drunk drivers to prison, but you can't force a prosecutor to charge a repeat of the drivers to prison, but you can't force a prosecutor to charge a repeat of the charge first offense over and over.

Too can write all the ough penal. The county of the contrils. The Virgin. (The latter was a coffin-like device which, when the lid was closed, had spikes that would penetrate the bad guy's eyebals and vital organs.)

Raising the punishment — which is the Michigan Legislature's favor-lite response to a lot of social proliens — does nothing to increase the odds that bad guys and louts will be arrested and convicted.



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