

Rights of some going up in smoke

Wed - June 18

I have as much right to hit you in the stomach as you do to smoke in my presence.

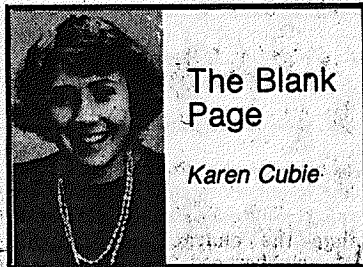
Our rights end when they infringe on the rights of others, and your right to smoke becomes a privilege when it infringes on my right to breathe tobacco-free air.

"There are much more toxic pollutants around than tobacco smoke," I've heard as one defense of a smoker's right to smoke anywhere and any place he pleases.

But does that give a smoker the right to add more toxic fumes to the air I have to breathe?

If that's the case, I should be allowed to bring a cannister full of nuclear waste into my office and slowly release it throughout the day.

"There are plenty of other dangerous pollutants around," I could



The Blank Page

Karen Cubie

say when asked to remove it. "You may never develop cancer from this, and if you do, it will probably be 20 years from now, so don't worry."

Smokers can stop smoking but I can't stop breathing.

If I have to breathe the smoke-filled fumes hovering above my office all day, I should be able to bring some vile smelling chemical

substance to work each day and force my smoking fellow workers to breathe it.

The newsroom end of the Gazette office is poorly ventilated and at the far side of the room from windows that don't open anyway.

I am surrounded by heartily puffing chain smokers enveloped in the smoke from their pipes, cigarettes, and cigars.

I feel like a human cigarette filter.

The smoke puffs out of their cancer sticks, floats towards me, passes through my lungs, and returns, freshly filtered, to the lungs of my smoking co-workers.

Every day I enter the office in fairly good health. By mid-morning, my mouth is dry, my throat is sore, my eyes are irritated, and

my nasal passages are dry.

By the time I leave the office, I feel like I've been eating tobacco all day.

I used to think I liked pipe smoke, until I started working here.

Pipe smoke may smell nicer at first, but it's harsher, and it feels like it's ripping my throat apart.

One pipe smoker's tobacco smells like peach jello. He smoked that one "flavor" for about a week, and I felt like peach jello was filling every crevice, crack, and pore of my body.

Peach jello is fine for dessert, but I don't enjoy wallowing in it.

How do I know the tobacco smoke is what bothers me?

No one in my apartment smokes. My breathing is not hindered, my throat is not sore, and I don't reek when I leave home.

I was never so appalled as when I heard city council member Harry Bloom's answer to a motion to ban smoking in the city council chambers during meetings.

"A smoker smokes his cigarette to more or less calm himself," Bloom said, suggesting that a smoker could suffer a heart attack or nervous breakdown without one." a Jan. 15 article by staff writer Allyson Harris reported.

Bloom's statement shows absolutely no regard for the health of anyone besides smokers.

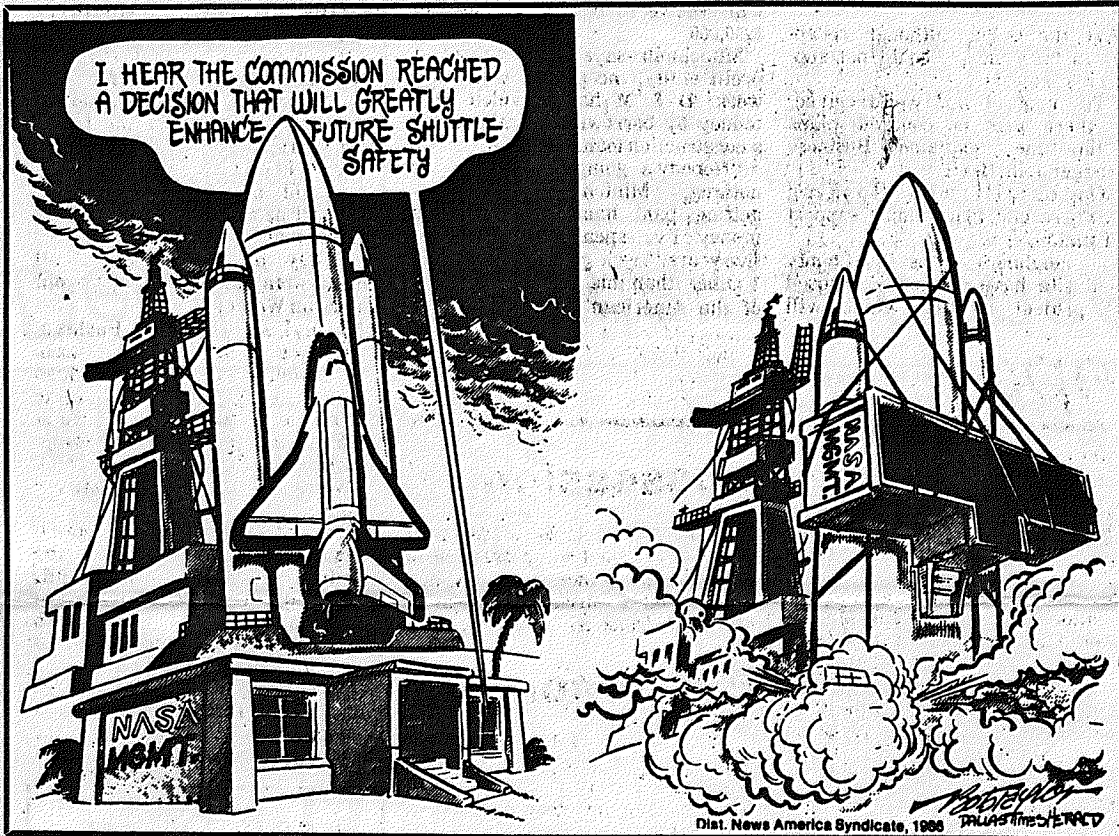
How many people do you know who have physically died because they couldn't smoke a cigarette?

I think anyone who can't go without a cigarette for three hours is going to die sooner than they'd probably like anyway.

I didn't write this column because I hate my co-workers. As a matter of fact, I rather like them. I just don't think they realize how their smoke effects non-smokers.

I also don't want to tell anyone not to smoke.

All I ask is you don't force me to smoke with you.

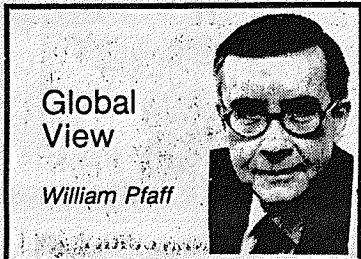


Dist. News America Syndicate, 1986 ILLUSTRATION BY JERRY BRUCKHEIMER

Decline of Britain's conservatives

LONDON — The "chicken American" phenomenon and President Ronald Reagan's conditional decision to abandon the SALT-II arms limits have come at a bad time for Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher. They have made her loyalty to Mr. Reagan and to the United States seem unrewarded, and allow her critics to say that she has been used and abused by Washington.

Her government is in serious difficulties; the press and political class, vocationally morbid, are



Global View

William Pfaff

economy convincingly on the way back to health.

itself has never displayed much compunction about ridding itself of potential election losers.

Labour's new leader, Neil Kinnock, has made his party a great deal more attractive to middle-class voters than it has been in recent years. It nonetheless remains the prisoner of the British trades union movement, whose block votes dominate its conventions and platform. It remains under a powerful and politically baleful influence from the anti-democratic far left.

Labour's problems are sug-

and in many local Labour Party organizations.

In the United States, the wild men (and women; no sexism here) tend to be on the right these days -- survivalists, gun-nuts, conspiracy theorists -- but these have only recently taken up "entryism" and tried to take over local elements of the major party organizations, as the Lyndon LaRouche people have done in Illinois and California.

In Britain today, the wild ones are mostly on the left, and the Labour Party, its programs and