

their feelings lying around loose.” These alternates he dubbed “bunny rabbit strips” that would avoid controversy and be populated by regular swamp characters. These strips can be identified by the letter A added after the date in the first panel. Problematic strips, of course, did not carry this A (Kelly and Crouch: 198-199; Kelly, 1968: intro., *Life*, 8/71). Some civil libertarians and freedom of speech advocates saw this as something of a sell-out (*Time*, 1973).

Defenders of *Pogo*, fearing that the “bunny rabbit” policy might be construed as somewhat weak-kneed, subsequently claimed that while Kelly was a “liberal” satirist, he had never seen himself as a crusader (*Time*, 1973). In this they were probably correct, since Kelly often played down the importance of *Pogo* and, on occasion, claimed that he was not even a “liberal.” At times, he seemed embarrassed by the attention that the strip got and believed that its political messages were intended to be secondary to its humor (*Time*, 1973). He remarked about this in 1953:

Every once in a while some grinning gargoyle of a dedicated liberal searching for meaning, a professional liberal who believes in liberalism rather than in liberty, comes grinning at me with teeth set like a jack-o-lantern and says, “Walter, tell me, what are you trying to do? What’s behind the Strip?” Such a man is a cryptologist. The answer is simple, but unacceptable to such questioners. I’ve hinted at it all along. I’m trying to have fun and make money at the same time. (Kelly, 1959: 72)

In 1971, worn out and increasingly ill, Kelly decided to stop sending out any more “bunny rabbit” strips to nervous editors. “If a paper’s going to drop me,” he claimed, “let ’em” (*Life*, 8/71). By this time *Pogo* had launched into relatively non-controversial issues involving the environment and had only just begun satirizing the characters of the pre-Watergate Nixon administration. This had been accomplished by introducing into the Okefenokee a bulldog with J. Edgar Hoover’s face, Nixon as a spider, John Mitchell as an “eaglet,” and, in a series of particularly humorous sequences, Spiro Agnew as a hyena. However, by this time, because of his health problems, Kelly was using