

INTERPRETING POLITICAL CARTOONS



Activity 4

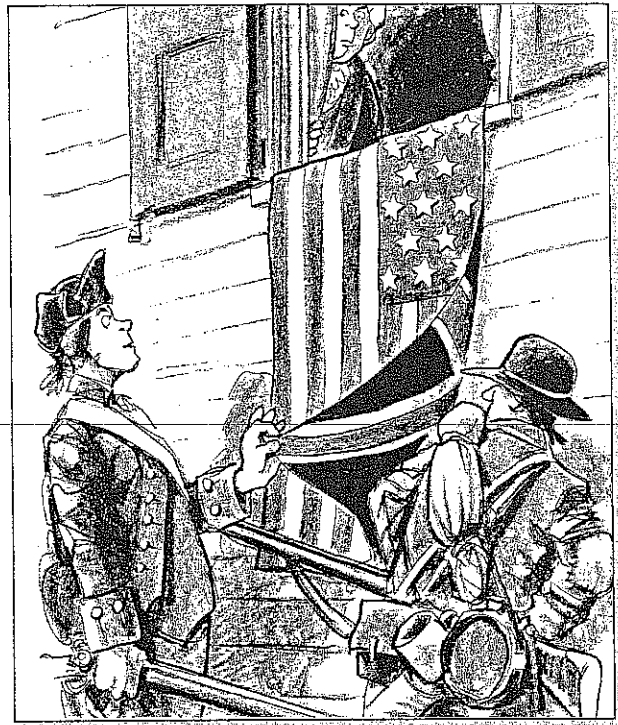
A SOLDIER'S LIFE NEVER CHANGES

Bill Mauldin is one of America's foremost political cartoonists. He first rose to national prominence for his Willie and Joe cartoons in *Stars and Stripes* during World War II, in a feature called "Up Front." Willie and Joe were two average infantrymen. Through them, Mauldin showed and commented on the realities of the war for the common soldier. Mauldin was beloved for how he gave voice to and honored the common soldier in his cartoons.

DIRECTIONS: Study the cartoons below, and then answer the questions that follow.



"Well, no one can accuse us of being mercenaries."



"Interesting lining on your flag here, mister."

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(continued)

ANALYZING THE CARTOONS

1. What is a mercenary? Who served as mercenaries in the American Revolution and for which side?

2. To what class does the man looking out the window belong? How do you know?

3. What about the dress of the soldiers in the left cartoon tells you their low rank?

CRITICAL THINKING

4. **Analyzing Information** How well are the soldiers in the left cartoon being paid? How do you know?

5. **Synthesizing Information** In *The American Crisis*, Thomas Paine wrote that, "These are the times that try men's souls. The summer soldier and the sunshine patriot will, in this crisis, shrink from the service of his country...." Explain what Paine means by a "sunshine patriot." Who in these cartoons is a sunshine patriot, and how do you know that?

6. **Making Inferences** Mauldin was commissioned to draw these cartoons to celebrate the anniversary of a famous event of the American Revolution. What was that event? Give evidence for your answer.
