

OPINION

# A vital message for South Africa

The United States may soon be sending an overdue, but vitally important, message to South Africa — America will not support apartheid.

The House of Representatives approved Wednesday a bill that would put economic sanctions on South Africa until it ends its apartheid system of racial separation. The Senate Foreign Relations Committee Tuesday approved similar legislation.

The House bill calls for bans on U.S. bank loans to the South African government, new commercial investments in South African business, new imports of Krugerrand gold coins into the U.S. and sales of computers or nuclear fuels, equipment and technology to South Africa.

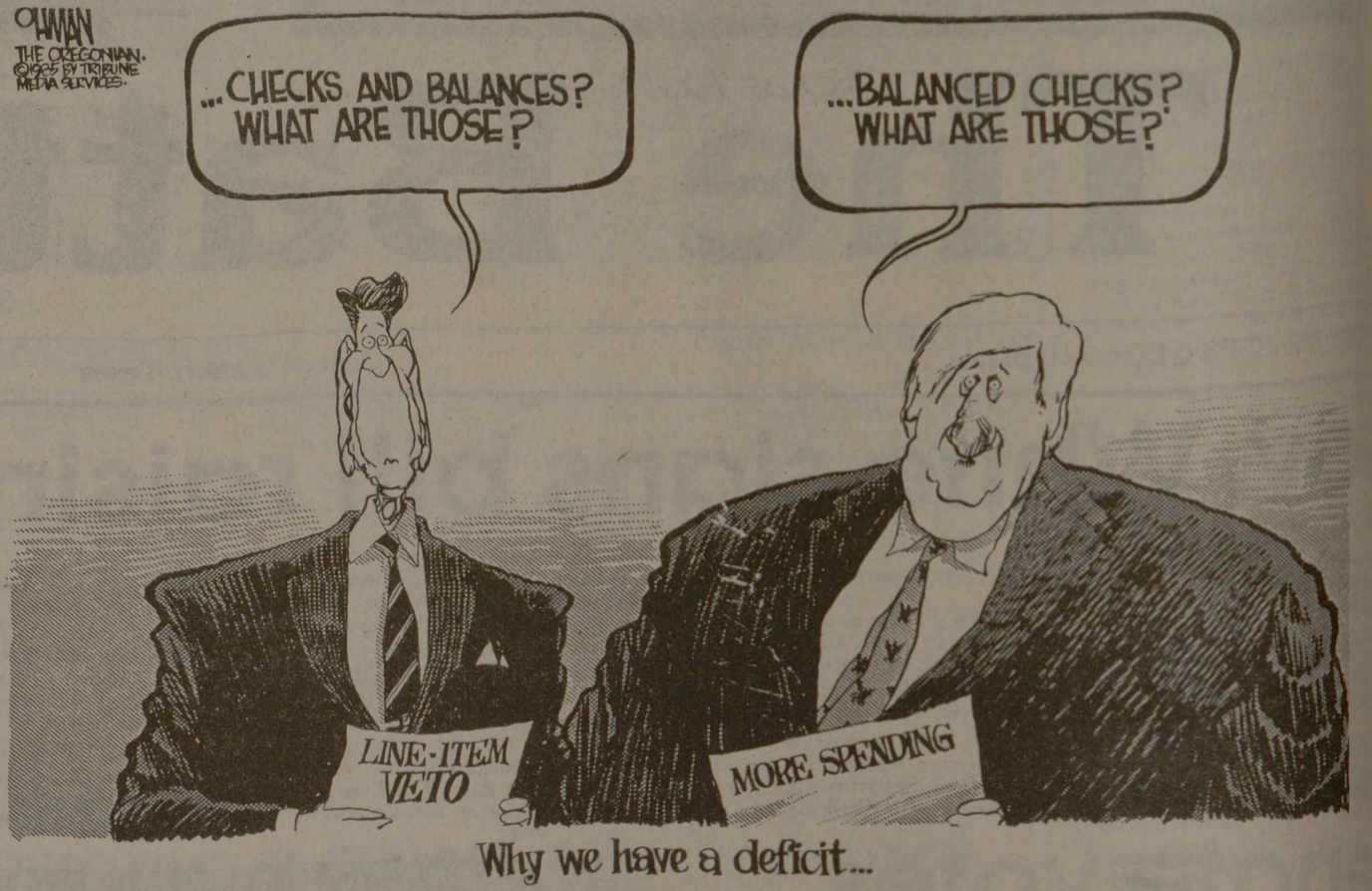
This legislation would be a step in the right direction.

Without foreign investment, apartheid will crumble, and the people who have been oppressed for too long will have an active voice in the government.

The time is now to tell South Africa that apartheid will not be supported with American dollars.

The Battalion Editorial Board

# Portfolio



# Homes won't ruin 'stable' community

Gov. Mark White has once again demonstrated his superior talents as a manure spreader and his inadequacy as a communicator. To overcome objections in residential neighborhoods, White proposed locating homes for the mentally retarded in "industrial areas."



Loren Steffy

"You don't just go out there and move them in next door to a stable neighborhood in which it would tend to diminish property values or endanger the stability of the neighborhood," White said Thursday.

White failed to clarify what constitutes a "stable" neighborhood, or how a home for the mentally retarded might "destabilize" it. In some cases, White's statement might hold some merit, but such a general comment merely appeals to the stereotype of mentally retarded citizens.

Many "homes" are actually halfway houses designed to teach mildly mentally retarded or emotionally disturbed people how to survive independently in society. They are not asylums for raving lunatics who might escape and nail children's foreheads to the underside of Dodge Ram Vans, if they were, community concern would be understandable. The idea is to integrate these people into a community setting and away from the institutional environment.

If the homes were located in "industrial areas," residents of the homes would have difficulty learning how to interact with "stable" society.

The problem with a halfway house in the neighborhood is not what detrimental effects it would have on the community, but how many people would allow themselves to be blinded by misconceptions.

John Murphy, president of the Texas Association for Retarded Citizens, said studies show homes don't hurt property values, and retarded citizens actually benefit from living near residential communities because of the close proximity of typical families.

When White was presented with this idea, the governor whipped out another stereotype.

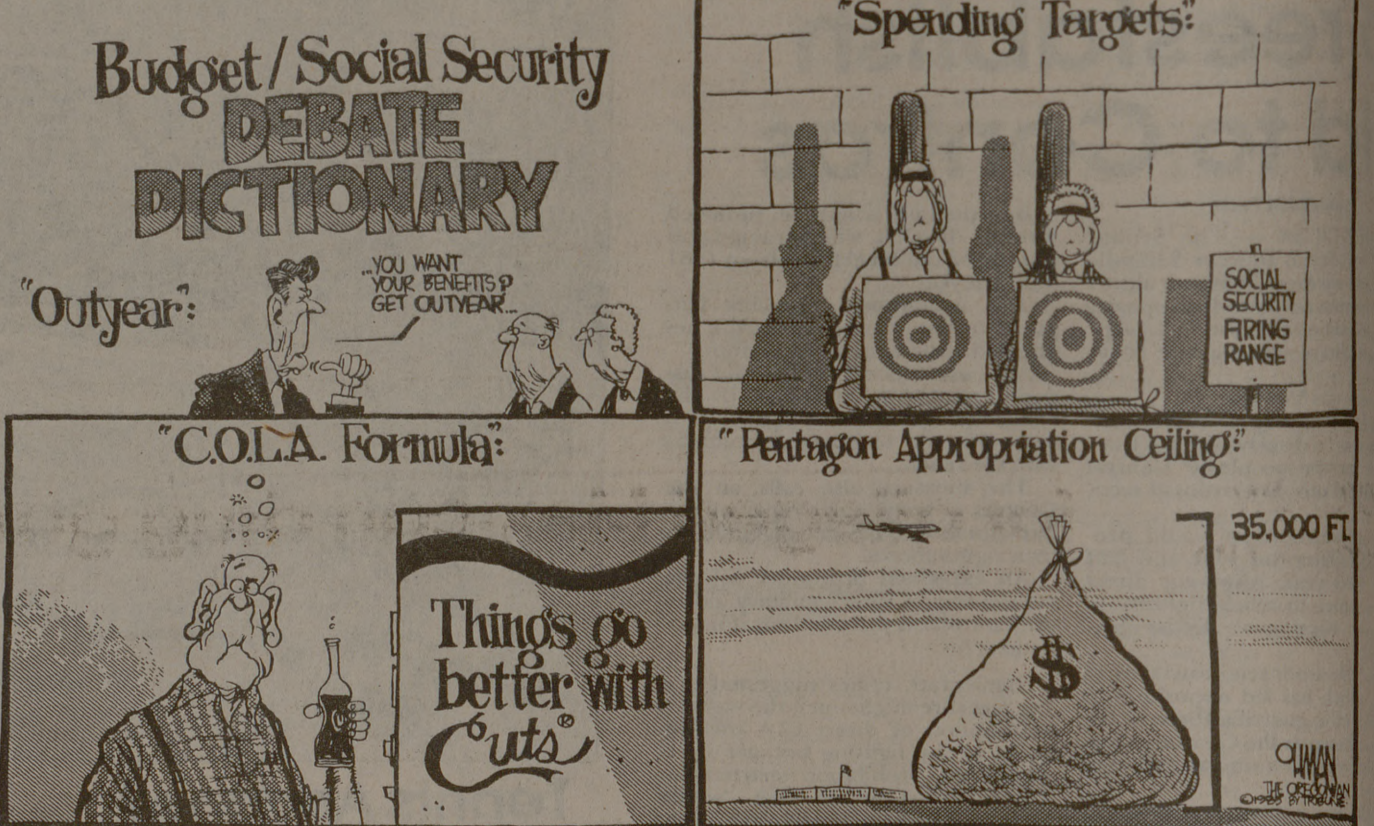
"Probably the problem many of them has is they didn't have very good families to begin with in some cases. That may be part of the problem. To put them back in the area that created the problem is not going to solve their long-term situation," White said.

Mental retardation has myriad forms. Possibly, family problems could result in some mental disorders in some people. However, mental retardation can also be the result of an assortment of other complications which are unrelated to family environment. Many good parents, who head "stable" households have children who are mentally retarded.

Because the eventual goal of many homes for retarded citizens is to get the individual to be a self-sufficient member of society, locating them near the community they eventually will try to join seems anything but a problem.

The problem is the unwillingness of people to aid the less fortunate. If residents, and for that matter the governor of Texas, can't let go of their stereotypes and help the mentally retarded enter the community, then maybe they're the ones who should be shipped off to "industrial areas" for safe keeping.

Loren Steffy is a junior journalism major and the Opinion Page editor for The Battalion.



# Reagan merely is invoking 'make my day' syndrome

By ART BUCHWALD

Columnist for The Los Angeles Times Syndicate

A bunch of us Washington sophisticates were lurking around a bar the other day when President Reagan, who was barnstorming the country selling his tax reform, came on the air.

"Hey," said Beaver. "There's Ronnie, the people's lobbyist."

The President had the crowd in his hands when he attacked the "special interests," "bureaucrats" and "so-called experts" who had "forgotten about the America that exists beyond the Potomac." Mr. Reagan got everyone riled up because he told them Washington didn't care about them. His message was that it was just the voters and him against "the government."

Capehart said, "Boy, he sure looks mad."

Beaver laughed. "He isn't mad. He's putting on an act. There's nothing that plays better in Peoria than a President of the United States who hates Washington."

Capehart said, "But he is Washington. All those buildings out there are filled with Reagan bureaucrats. His people have been here for five years. Why does he make it sound as if he doesn't know who is running the country?"

Beaver said, "Because he just struck a political gold mine. Everyone is against 'special interests,' 'bureaucrats' and the 'so-called experts.' What better way to

sell a tax reform program than to set up all the straw men in Washington who are against it?"

Dumbarton said, "I haven't met anyone who is against tax reform. I've met people who are against parts of it. But hell, most of them are Reagan's best friends. The housing industry, the oil lobby and the fat cats have been his biggest supporters. I don't think the President has ever addressed a lunch or dinner for less than \$1,000 a plate. If special interests didn't buy those tables I'll eat all the food left on their plates."

I said, "Knowing the President as well as I do I'm sure he is just resorting to Pat Buchanan's rhetoric. When Mr. Reagan attacks Washington he really means the Democrats in Washington who are interfering with his programs. And when Mr. Reagan says he wants the government to get off the people's back, he really means he wants Tip O'Neill to get off his back. The President's strategy is to turn the American people against their elected officials. Being the guy on the white horse is the role he plays the best."

"Well said," Beaver told me. "We must always keep in mind that those special interests he's flailing are the ones he and Nancy keep inviting over to the White House for dinner. And those tax reform stonewallers that he holds up to ridicule are the very corporation types that keep meeting in the President's kitchen. The biggest mistake we could

make is to take seriously anything Ronald Reagan says on the road."

Dumbarton said, "It makes Ronnie happy to pretend he has nothing to do with what goes on here. And I'm one of those who believes that anything that makes Ronald Reagan happy is good for America."

Capehart was still the dissenter, however. He had an exception. By demagoguing against this town he takes no responsibility for the fact his Administration is the 'Washington' he is attacking. They're the 'so-called experts' that are running the country."

I could see Capehart didn't get the big picture, so I tried to explain it to him.

"The President has discovered you get no ovations from the American people when you defend their government. But he knows he can set them on fire by making them think everyone in Washington is a crook. When Reagan raves and rants about the 'special interests' he's just invoking his 'make my day' syndrome."

Capehart wasn't convinced. "There's something wrong with all this. Why doesn't he level with Americans and tell them how much it really costs to run the country?"

Dumbarton said, "If you had a \$200 billion deficit and your Defense Department was paying \$600 for an ashtray you would only talk about tax reform, too."

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The Battalion also serves as a laboratory newspaper for students in reporting, editing and photography classes within the Department of Communications.

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