

Opinion

There's no room for closed minds here any more

I am writing this week in response to comments made by Joe Hyde that were printed in *The Battalion* Friday, July 22 about the presence of homosexuals on the Texas A&M campus. I was horrified and disgusted by the majority of the comments Hyde made on the topic of homosexuals and their student organization, GSSO — the Gay Student Services Organization.



Barbara Jones

First I would like to establish one fact: I am not a homosexual. I am stating this fact not because I would be embarrassed or ashamed to admit it if I were but to point out the fact that there are many heterosexual Aggies that do not share Hyde's opinion that homosexuals are "a

bunch of contaminated little fruit flies." The homosexuals whom I have known in my life have been intelligent and sensitive people who deserve the respect of others.

Hyde stated in his guest column that biblical scripture states that homosexuality is an unnatural act. The fact is that there are many things in our society that the Bible would deem "unnatural" that are, in fact, today seen as quite normal. Hyde, as do many frightened and naive people, believes that homosexuals are responsible for the AIDS tragedy. Indeed, they are the ones who are suffering and dying the most from this terrible disease, but homosexuals can not be blamed for this horrible disease. AIDS did not start here in the United States, but is thought to have originated from an impoverished country in Africa.

Many people think that AIDS is God's way of punishing homosexuals. I would

then like to ask these people, is Herpes God's way of punishing heterosexuals? Is the drought God's own vengeance against corn crops? The fact is that our world is filled with unexplainable tragedies that can in no way be blamed upon those who are affected by it.

Hyde said that the GSSO should not be allowed to be recognized as an official student organization and called this a "travesty of justice." In response I say that Texas A&M is an institution of higher learning that is open to all those who want to further their educational pursuits. Universities are the last true "melting pots" left on this earth, and all should remain a place where all people, regardless of race, religion or sexual preference, can come and feel free to express their constitutional right to free expression. I can only remain grateful that I live in a country that protects the rights of all its citizens, regardless of how and with whom they desire to share their emotional feelings.

The University's recognition of the GSSO as an official student organization was regarded by Hyde as "a disgrace to Texas A&M." I feel that the only disgrace was that fact that this group have to fight so hard for this right to begin with. The GSSO had to take their cause to the U.S. District Court before they finally received the University's recognition as a legitimate student organization. If a group of Nazis wanted to form a group on campus, I would likewise agree they should be granted the same privilege, regardless of the fact that I would not agree with their views. Perhaps Mr. Hyde would be interested in such a proposal. Sorry, just a little humor. The point is that at a university all people, regardless of their beliefs, should be able to congregate and form groups on campus.

As far as Hyde's comment that students who are against the GSSO should boycott paying that part of their tuition that gets funneled to this group, I can

say only that this is ridiculous. I seriously doubt that each student pays a full one cent each to this cause.

I am all too aware of A&M's traditions and the fact that A&M is a conservative school, but things are changing. Now don't get me wrong; Texas A&M will never be a Berkeley, nor would I want the consensus of the student body that far to the other extreme. Texas A&M needs to keep up with changing needs and desires of its student body, for without us, there is not a university. With these changes will hopefully come a more diverse student body that will represent a mix of new ideas and philosophies that help expand the thinking of our counterparts.

I hope that Hyde represents that day of close-minded thinking that will be a part of Texas A&M's past.

Barbara Jones is a senior journalist and a columnist for *The Battalion*.

Jesse's too big to be mayor

A white Chicago politician recently mentioned to me that he thought Jesse Jackson, once he returned to earth, would probably run for mayor and be elected.



Mike Royko

"All he has to say is that he wants it and all the black hacks will step aside for him. Then he'll get the kind of massive black turnout that Harold Washington had, and a big white liberal vote, and he'll win easy."

I bounced this thought off a couple of Jackson's black supporters here for their convention and they laughed and shook their heads.

One of them said, "Maybe he would have taken it years ago, if he could have had it. But now? Forget it. The job's not big enough for him. It's beneath him. Jesse's not local. He's national, maybe global. No, he's not going to get bogged down in all that local stuff, budgets, petty ward rights. A lot of blacks are mayors. It's not big deal anymore. He wants something that's a big deal."

It's a little hard to grasp, that being mayor of Chicago could be considered a nickel-dime job, but they're right. Ten years ago, the prospect of Mayor Jackson would have had Jesse bouncing off the ceiling. But that was well before Harold Washington demonstrated that a black could be elected.

And it's ironic. If it hadn't been for a crude rejection, many years ago, Jackson might very well have become Chicago's first black mayor.

When Jackson was a young man, just out of college but with high hopes for himself, he came to Chicago with a letter of praise and introduction from a powerful white politician in home state of South Carolina.

He took the letter to Mayor Richard J. Daley. The idea was that Daley would welcome a bright young man and give him a position worthy of his obvious potential.

If Daley had done that, would Jackson have become part of the Daley Machine? Unthinkable? Not at all. That's what the late Mayor Washington was,

and the present mayor, and the other blacks who now aspire to the top job. Today they talk independent black political power, but back then they hustled the Machine vote, grabbed what goodies they could for themselves, and jumped up and saluted the pudgy Irishman.

With his brains, drive and ambition, it's likely that Jackson might have moved up through the ranks of the black wing of the Machine and been poised to take over when the time was right. If he was bold enough to challenge Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. for leadership when he was only 25, he would have chewed up the black hacks who now run Chicago's City Hall.

But Jesse got a break. He didn't think so at the time, but Daley did him favor.

Daley read the letter and said, yes, he might be able to arrange something for Jesse in his organization. If Jesse wanted to work a precinct and get out the black votes on Election Day, Daley could find a job for him collecting coins in a toll booth.

His sizable young ego bruised, Jackson said thanks, but no thanks, and took a different route to political power: The civil rights movement.

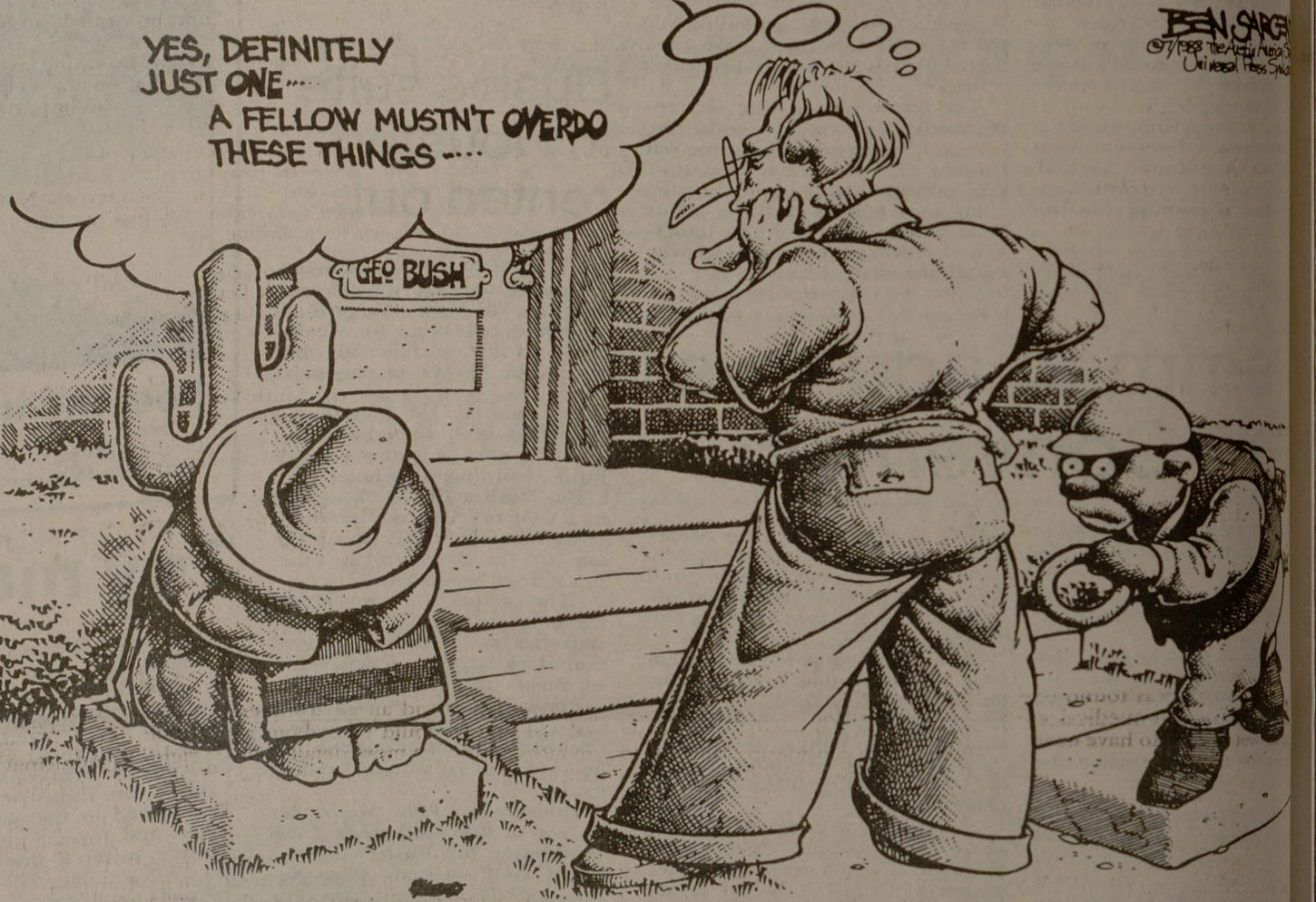
Now Jesse is as big or bigger than Boss Daley ever was. Sure, the whole world was watching Daley in 1968, but that's only because Daley's cops were cracking heads. The world was watching Jesse this week, and all he did was talk.

So being mayor of Chicago would be a huge step back for him, a humiliating drop in status. It could be disastrous for his image.

As a mayor, he'd have to get down in the bureaucratic tuck and try to cope with a shrinking tax base, a chaotic school system, murderous public housing, crumbling streets, gun-crazy street gangs, and all the other irritants of urban life. You can't solve these problems by talking at them, no matter how eloquently.

And in Chicago, he'd have an additional, embarrassing problem. Wondering who among his followers is stealing what, and who will be caught next. Among black aldermen, the biggest job turnover comes when a federal judge says, "I sentence you to..."

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BEN SINGER
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Mail Call

Let's hear it for Uncle Jenkins

EDITOR:

I don't claim to have a PhD in economics. In fact I'm pretty sure I didn't even enjoy the economics class I took at this university. And so I don't think I could be recognized as a seasoned economic observer on Capitol Hill. But none-the-less I, like all of those other economic wizards out there, have this overwhelming desire to needlessly alarm the American public.

I'm going to pose the question: Is the U.S. economy about to collapse? Well, is it?

A word of warning, when you carelessly use the words "economy" and "collapse" together in the same conversation you must also take the time to listen to some of our older generations talk about how bad things were during the Great Depression.

My Uncle Jenkins is pretty much all conference at this. If you happen to be with him for a weekend, that little debate can rage on for days. In fact if we could just take the time to coordinate these kind of folk's into a think tank on the subject, we might be able to create a useful government agency that will never let such a thing happen again. Or we just found a way to spend more federal funds. Actually I just kind of like the idea of getting Uncle Jenkins out of my hair.

Back to the subject at hand. There should be good reason for the reader to be concerned. Government spending is still raging out of control. We import more goods than we export, to the tune of billions of dollars each year. And the fact that we are becoming more and more of a debtor

nation is now headline news.

The federal deficit is looming around a figure so astronomical that there are contests to decide a name for it. I believe that the Senate and House joint "Spending" committee decided to call it "godzillion" just "the other day."

Many of the economists I spoke of earlier try to use constant buzz words and phrases to impress you. Though don't think they realize how many wind blown hair-splitting phrases and can put them together in a text that makes look like I know what I am talking about (though we know otherwise).

EXAMPLE:

National leading economic indicators are up or they're down. The prime lending rate is moving. The trade deficit is growing or it is shrinking and of course new hires are either up or down. Oops, I almost forgot about the "finag factor" and the "thrombifalator curves."

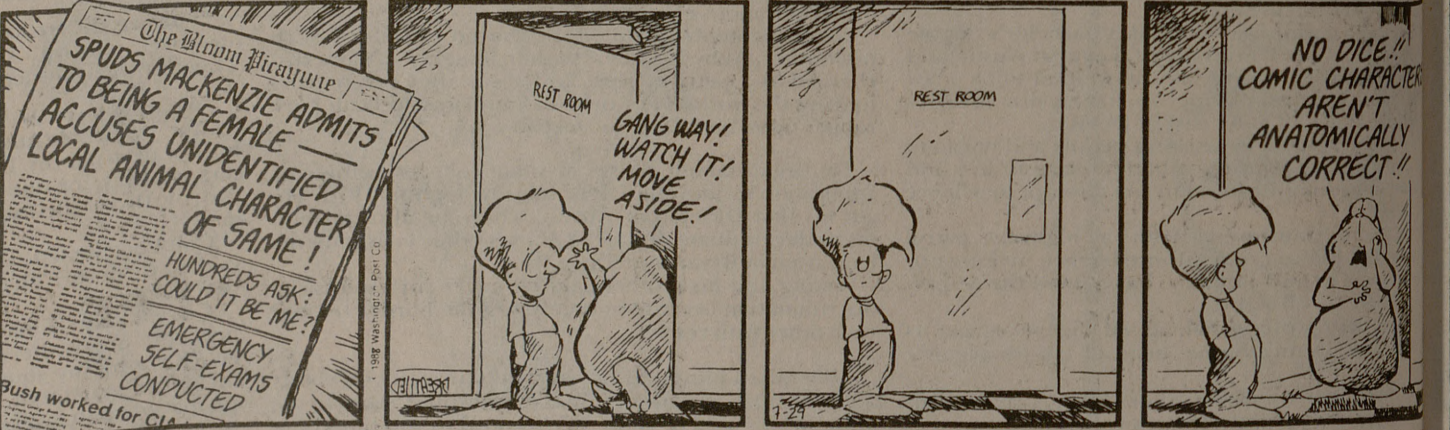
So what do all of these economic terms mean to trends? Well, if we took some of the so-called economic experts to heart, months or even years ago... they would have told you that by next week at the latest, we are going to have worldwide economic depression... or severe thunderstorms, whichever comes first.

Randy Lemmon '85

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BLOOM COUNTY

by Berke Breathed



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(USPS 045 360)

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The Battalion is a non-profit, self-supporting newspaper operated as a community service to Texas A&M and Bryan-College Station.

Opinions expressed in *The Battalion* are those of the editorial board or the author, and do not necessarily represent the opinions of Texas A&M administrators, faculty or the Board of Regents.

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

The Battalion is published Monday through Friday during Texas A&M regular semesters, except for holiday and examination periods.

Mail subscriptions are \$17.44 per semester, \$34.62 per school year and \$36.44 per full year. Advertising rates furnished on request.

Our address: *The Battalion*, 230 Reed McDonald, Texas A&M University, College Station, TX 77843-1111.

Second class postage paid at College Station, TX 77843.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to *The Battalion*, 216 Reed McDonald, Texas A&M University, College Station TX 77843-4111.