

MARGULIES
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HUD: taking from poor, giving to rich

Molly Ivins
Syndicated Columnist

Ooooooo, are you reading this HUD stuff? Good Lord. Talk to me about ethics, Mr. Gingrich. Now here's how cynical I've gotten — if these people had been ripping off the Pentagon, I couldn't get real worked up about it — ripping off the Pentagon, everybody does it, it's practically a national pastime. All that happens when someone rips off the Pentagon is that we don't get to build another nuclear weapon. Big deal, we already have 20,000 of the damn things. (Actually, sometimes people who rip off the Pentagon fix it so we send American soldiers put to defend the country with weapons that kill them, but that's another story.)

But ripping off HUD? Rich, Republican consultants stealing money meant to house the poor while homeless people wander the streets? What I want to know is, after James Watt got \$300,000 for making three phone calls, did he give a quarter to a homeless person the next day? We've got families on the streets of every city in America and these people are using the money to build golf courses? As Mr. Welch said to Sen. McCarthy, "Have you at long last, sir, no sense of shame?"

And the interesting thing is, they don't. Don't know if you watched James Watt's testimony before the committee investigating this mess, but he smirked all the way through it. This guy Frederick C. Bush (no kin to the President, who has named him ambassador to Luxembourg, not one of your hardship posts) is sitting there telling the committee that he didn't lie the first time he appeared before them — he was merely inaccurate and incomplete and he forgot. Like, when he said he didn't know Deborah Gore Dean, the executive assistant to HUD Secretary Sam Pierce, he like, forgot that he used to take her out to dinner and have her over to his house and that. "I don't have a very good memory," says he. Bush's consulting firm got more than \$600,000 in consulting fees and contracts from HUD, courtesy of Ms. Dean, and this guy doesn't

remember her? Bush also doesn't have any political dirt. Sure, probably Ms. Dean didn't know Bush was deputy chief of George Bush when he was vice president and later became deputy director of his presidential campaign.

You know, stealin's one thing, from widows, orphans and the poor box is generally considered a form of activity. It wasn't enough the Reagan administration cut \$500 million out of spending on low-income housing they had to steal what was left? The golf courses? There has never been a mystery about why homeless people started appearing on the streets of America during the Reagan administration, it's real simple cause and effect: we stopped building low-income housing and the result was a lot of homeless people. That in addition to instituting a policy that was cruel and stupid, some people would then steal what was left. It's something that leaves me can't think of the right word for it, but I have a real strong stomach.

Meanwhile, the Texas Legislature already taken care of the whole flag-burning issue and no one needs to worry about it anymore. I don't know why the rest of the country doesn't go to the Lege for the kind of leadership always provides on the important issues but surely you, mah fellow Texan, knew the Lege would not leave us unprotected when the Supreme court is so likely to rule that flag-burning is illegal.

No problem. The Lege passed this session making it a defense in an assault case if the victim of the assault desecrated a flag just prior to the assault. In other words, in the Great state of Texas, it's legal to beat the hmm-hmm out of someone who burns the flag. A solution that is far more sensible and satisfying than messing with the constitution.

Hanging up on dial-a-porn

There's a lot of talk in Washington about how to somehow regulate or get rid of the dial-a-porn business.

In case you're not familiar with dial-a-porn, it is where you dial a telephone number for a fee and somebody on the other end answers the phone and talks dirty to you.

Kids can call. That's caused a lot of the concern.

I do think I know a way to put dial-a-porn, out of business, thus ending concerns and complaints, not to mention all the fun kids are having. Here's my theory.

Who likely keeps dial-a-porn in business are men who enjoy being talked to dirty by women. It follows then that if more women would learn to talk dirty to the men in their lives, there wouldn't be a need for dial-a-porn.

I put my theory to the famous sex expert, Dr. Norma Feelgood, to see if she thought it had any merit.

Lewis Grizzard
Syndicated Columnist

"Most certainly," she said. "It is true that many men are excited by bawdy language and it is also true that many women are not comfortable speaking in such a manner."

Before I went any further, I asked Dr. Feelgood if all sex experts spoke with an accent.

"It worked for Dr. Ruth," she replied. "I figure you'd have to lose."

"Why," I continued with Dr. Feelgood, "do some women feel uncomfortable talking dirty to their lovers?"

"Because many women are never exposed to such a thing in their early years and feel inadequate in this area," she replied.

My question was, "If a woman is willing to learn a more erotic vocabulary,

are there certain do's and don'ts in this area?"

"First," said Dr. Feelgood, "a woman should make sure to use correct grammar."

"I don't understand," I said.

"If a woman use, say, wrong tense or incorrect antecedent, this could break the mood," she explained.

"And one more thing," she continued.

"Please, go ahead," I said.

"Never say to your lover, 'Make me feel like a woman, big boy.'"

"Why not?"

"Man might stop lovemaking and say, 'OK, go make dinner.'"

I thanked Dr. Feelgood for backing up my theory, and she wanted me to mention if you want to know more in this area, be certain to read her forthcoming book, "Sex: An Oral history."

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Some Food Services policies hard to digest

Texas A&M has one of the best large-scale food services in the nation, and probably the best food services of any college, for its size, in the world. A member of the Food Services' sales team told us that last year A&M Food Services won a national award for providing the best food services for a major organization (including universities, corporations, government agencies, etc.) in the nation.

Yet any program has room for improvement, and there have been many complaints around this campus about our own Food Services.

In fact, Food Services gives many students indigestion. Not even ROLAIDS can spell relief for the students whose lives and pocketbooks are affected by the continuous changes they must try to stomach. Now don't get us wrong. It's not the quality of the food (although after three years of dining on-campus a little more variety would be nice), it's the quantity and price that we find repulsive.

While looking for an entertainment scoop for another section of the paper, a fellow Batt staffer (a very cool one) noticed that a Taco Special, consisting of three tacos, could be purchased for \$2.75 in the MSC. He also noticed that individual tacos could be bought for \$.75 each. Therefore, three tacos would be \$2.25, \$.50 less than the so-called



Timm Doolen



Juliette Rizzo

"special." That doesn't make much sense (or cents either).

It was also noted that four skinny chicken strips (\$2.95), an ice-cream-scoop-sized glob of overcooked macaroni and cheese, some limp stringbeans and a plastic cup full of orange juice cost \$5.43 (that's approximately \$.98 a chicken strip). So much for quantity.

Quality also seems to be lacking at times. In the spring of 1988, a friend was eating in Sbsa bit into a bone in his doughnut. He didn't report it, but to this day he gets queasy around pastry.

Food Services also left its mark on yet another poor college student. This time another staff member, after taking six other staffers to lunch, still couldn't

seem to get rid of all the money she had left on her Aggie Express card. When all else failed, she broke down on Saturday (the last day of finals) and decided to "charge it" (the act of purchasing miscellaneous food items from the Underground Store, thus subtracting the remaining sum from her \$50 balance). To her dismay, the remaining Aggie Bucks were already deleted from her account.

Due to new food service policies, the remaining money expired Friday, the last day of the first summer session. Our staffer was left questioning what day is actually the last day of the semester: the last day of classes or the day of the last final? Are students not supposed to eat well-balanced meals before taking on the hardest test of the semester? Food services failed to sufficiently display signs informing students as to when their money would expire. They say it

was clearly printed in the summer schedule book. It may have been documented in the class schedule book, but who really reads that publication in depth? And how many Aggies keep the booklet after registering?

The big question is: what happens to the many dollars the University covertly rakes in from expired meal plans? If a student is continuing his education the following semester, why doesn't the money carry over?

And why doesn't the University use the money it rightfully receives for more economically sound purposes?

Why do the cafeterias have to make us eat in front of the Academic Building two or three times every semester? Instead of spending all the money to drag the chairs, tables and cooking facilities to the Academic Building, they should

put the money into improving the quality of the food.

Also, several times throughout long semesters, the cafeteria workers dress up in silly costumes — a ritual that simply isn't cost-effective or necessary. Likewise, the Sunday brunches theoretically provide us with better food, but the lines are much longer and the food is that much better than usual.

Food Services, in order to keep the student clientele, needs to realize that several improvements need to and can be made.

A way to students' hearts (as well as their pocketbooks) may well be through their stomachs.

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