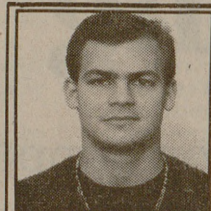


Texans should be allowed to vote on lottery

Ann Richards said it well when she stated that "Texas, I believe is missing a bet by not taking a chance on a state-run lottery."

Fortunately, our Texas Legislature still has an opportunity to better the cause of lottery supporters. Rep. Ron Wilson, D-Houston, and Sen. John Montford, D-Lubbock have proposed a state lottery bill which, if approved, would generate an estimated \$731 million for Texas over the next two years and probably much more in subsequent years.

A lottery will require a constitutional amendment — certainly not a novel idea in Texas — which must be approved by two-thirds of the House and Senate before being voted upon by us. The bill has good odds of passing in



Matt McBurnett
Columnist

the Senate, but it will face a tough battle in the more conservative House.

Our governor wants to put the issue on the May 4 ballot, which places the Legislature in the unfamiliar position of having to act quickly.

The last lottery proposal which was voted upon died in the House by one vote in 1987. Let us hope this one has better luck.

I see the a state lottery as a necessity, and I simply cannot understand why it is not supported wholeheartedly by

every person with a lick of sense. Lotteries are now being used 33 states and in the District of Columbia. Gov. Richards' figures indicate that lottery revenue accounts for about 2 percent of all state-generated revenue. Texas can easily use an extra \$731 million to help cover what is estimated to be \$4.6 billion budget shortfall.

Opponents of the lottery put their money on very shaky arguments.

Some are as follows:

★ A lottery is akin to gambling; therefore, it is immoral.

★ A lottery depends on the bad luck of its participants to be effective. In other words, as Rep. Billy Clemons said, "The only way the state wins in this deal is if the people lose."

★ This lottery will provide Richards with more leverage, sort of an ace in the hole, when she eventually tries to

convince Texans that a state income tax is necessary.

★ The lottery is very unpredictable and cannot be counted on for a set sum of money.

First of all, as with gambling, bingo and raffles, lotteries are voluntary. Why not take a chance? Most likely, a participant in the lottery will lose. At least the money spent on the ticket will go to a somewhat worthy cause: The state. Our main alternatives, a state income tax and higher sales taxes, are not voluntary.

A lottery can be seen as a voluntary tax with good incentive to participate.

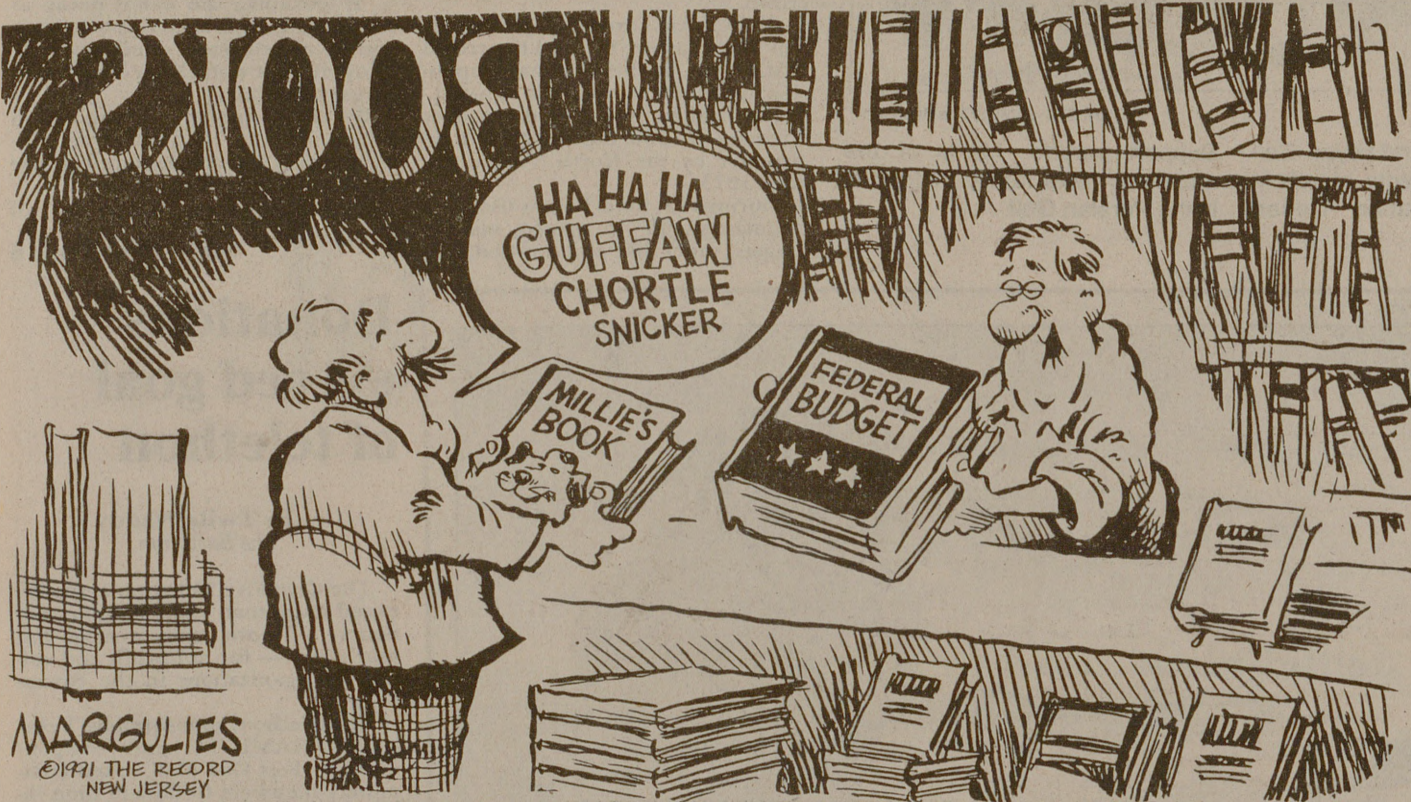
No one will be happy if the future holds that Richards must push for a state income tax. But if the lottery is

approved, at least the tax rate will be lower due to the extra millions that the lottery will generate.

Finally, I do not see the lottery as being unpredictable. The most recent Texas poll held that 76 percent of Texans favor a lottery. The same poll indicated that 66 percent of all respondents and even 59 percent of the Baptists polled would participate in a legal lottery. Where is the instability?

In all fairness, the people of Texas should be allowed to vote on the lottery. As our representatives consider the bill, they should be reminded that as far as gambling goes, a lottery is peanuts compared to the gamble we voters took in electing them to office.

Matt McBurnett is a senior electrical engineering major.



MARGULIES
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NEW JERSEY

"You think that's preposterous? Wait'll ya see George's book!..."

Disappointed with both sides

We're at war, not a pep rally

After a month of war-by-the-campus-side, attending war rallies and peace rallies, I must say (in disgust) that I'm disappointed with both sides. I know I speak for several when I say that I've had enough of this mass-emotional banter.

Peace advocates shout, "Support the troops — Bring 'em home!" but don't show us how to end the war. War advocates shout "Support the troops, Gig Saddam!" but few, if any, are enlisting in the Marines to make good on their words.

I am sick of peace signs and those people peddling little yellow ribbons. We are at war, not a pep rally.

Someone needs to tell Hussein, and those on our side too, that there's no such thing as a "holy" war, a red-ass war.

Whether our vocabulary consists of phrases like "pounding positions" or "jihad (striving)," we are talking about KILLING. Both sides would like to blame the other for this mess, but neither will escape responsibility.

Bud Cox
Reader's Opinion

We still have a lot of people who think we are in the gulf for the sake of freedom. It's time for us to be honest.

We are defending one Arab dictatorship from another. Kuwait and Saudi Arabia are non-constitutional monarchies. They were NOT free before Aug. 2 and they WON'T be free after we have gone.

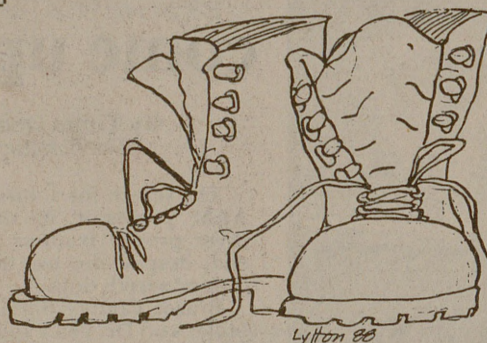
If we were truly concerned about the victimization of innocent people, we wouldn't have allowed Syria to invade Lebanon shortly after Hussein took Kuwait.

Conservatives tell me we are fighting for the right to have our influence over the control of oil supplies in the gulf. Being honest, I suppose they're correct.

We believe we can be fair dividers. To some, this is a noble cause.

Everyone must decide for himself. But, let's be honest.

I'm not yelling at the war. I'm asking y'all to look ahead.



There is a reason Hussein exists today. He lives on the tensions in the Middle East. If our policy does not deal with those tensions, it is bound to failure.

To be students of a "world-class" university, our duty becomes to work at influencing that policy instead of shouting like we're in some high school pep rally.

Bud Cox is a senior mechanical engineering major.

MAIL CALL

The Battalion is interested in hearing from its readers and welcomes all letters to the editor. Please include name, classification, address and phone number on all letters. The editor reserves the right to edit letters for style and length. Because of limited space, shorter letters have a better chance of appearing. There is, however, no guarantee letters will appear. Letters may be brought to 216 Reed McDonald or sent to Campus Mail Stop 1111.

Don't blame Saddam

EDITOR:

The recent point about our media, namely CNN and its footage, being too open and acting as a Saddam Hussein propaganda tool seems to be blown way out of proportion.

It shouldn't be forgotten, however, that these critical people are the same ones who believe that when someone is missing or dead, whether allied or Iraqi, Hussein is to be blamed. Common sense would thus dictate that gruesome pictures of dead civilians and/or troops along with authoritative claims that Saddam Dunit would serve to turn or enlighten more people against the supposed monster.

Is that not propaganda in itself or an attempt thereof? Is this not why this footage continues to be shown on CNN? If it were all that terrible to the authorities concerned, believe me, it wouldn't be shown.

Let's face it guys, I doubt that Hussein is in more control of what is shown on CNN than the U.S. government and/or military. Sure, it's a propaganda tool for him, but then why is it broadcast continually? If you know that a mad man will use a gun to kill you, for God's sake, don't sell it to him!

Not only is CNN not trying to keep the Iraqi footage from being broadcast, but the station is currently selling their broadcasting rights to Third World countries for kitty litter. Let's all momentarily step out of the picture and redefine fundamental terms such as propaganda.

My argument is not whether a target is civilian or military, whether Saddam is right and Bush is wrong, or vice versa; it simply means that we should not let any form of propaganda, whether Iraqi or American, cloud our personal, and hopefully sensible judgments in this ugly affair. We should not become victims of ignorant slumber during this hour of need of intellectual alertness.

Amer Qavi '89

Support U.S. military

EDITOR:

As do most Americans, I strongly support the war against Iraq. I do not like to see people killed on either side, but loss of life is always a part of war.

Recently, a so called "bomb shelter," actually an Iraqi military building, was destroyed, supposedly along with several hundred Iraqi civilians. As I watched news reports, I was very upset at the way the U.S. military was portrayed by the media. They continuously blamed the U.S. military for the unnecessary bombing of that building.

I can understand how all people feel sorry for the Iraqi civilians, and the U.S. military did apologize. The United States obviously did not intentionally kill Iraqi civilians, but the media acted that way. Many people, especially American citizens, condemn the U.S. action and wage protests on behalf of the Iraqis.

Have these protesters been locked in their closets for the past six months? Haven't they realized that Hussein has purposely murdered hundreds or even thousands of Kuwaiti civilians during his invasion? What about the innocent Israeli and Saudi civilians who were assaulted with Scud missiles?

These protesters condemn the United States and they totally ignore the atrocities committed by Saddam Hussein. These so called "Americans" are a disgrace to this country. How these protesters can be so ignorant is beyond explanation.

Previously, it was stated that anti-war protesters be sent to Mexico. I have a better solution. If these people can accept Hussein's vicious actions, why not send them to Iraq so that they can greet Hussein personally.

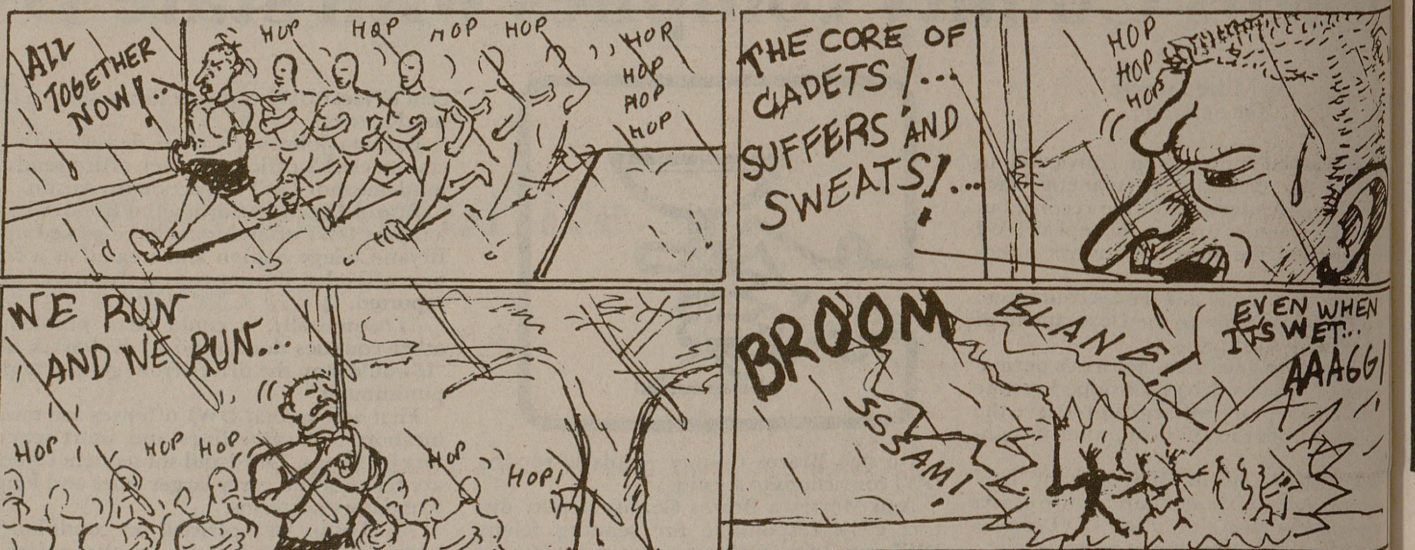
I am sure that he would like to thank them for the trouble and the protests they have caused here. Maybe they could even walk alongside the Iraqi people, chant anti-American slogans and burn the American flag.

We should all support our military and quit worrying so much about harming Iraqi civilians; start praising our military for the good job they are doing.

A. L. Wright '94

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by Nito



The Battalion

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