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The job of the military is to defeat
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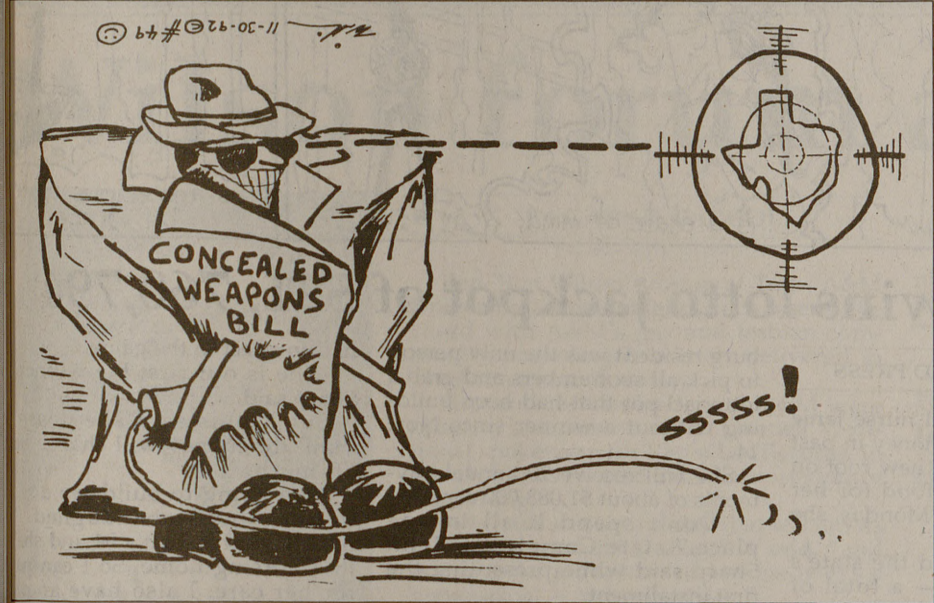
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OPINION

The Battalion

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Tuesday, December 1, 1992



EDITORIALS

Concealed danger

Gun-toting citizens invite disaster

Rep. Bill Carter recently filed a bill for consideration that will enable qualified Texans to obtain a license to carry concealed handguns. Carter believes his bill will place the average, law-abiding citizen on equal ground with weapon-toting criminals.

Law enforcement officials, along with Gov. Ann Richards, are not supporting the bill, and with good reason. The safety precautions already in effect, such as waiting periods and background checks, are simply not sufficient for weeding out every individual who should never own a gun. Additional precautions taken for granting a license to carry a concealed weapon will be no more successful.

The most serious danger is the

lack of training and expertise that many potential handgun carriers will have. Death and injury resulting from an error in judgment or the misinterpretation of a situation is a reality.

Just last week, two anti-crime officers opened fire and critically wounded an undercover officer who was in the process of making an arrest. The two officers believed that they had come across a mugging in progress.

When trained law enforcement officials make such astounding mistakes, we cannot expect anything better from untrained individuals hiding pistols beneath their coats. If passed, this bill will only succeed in increasing the opportunity for senseless violence.

Learning the lessons of life, love

Love has been called the greatest of all things — an awesome power which created a universe from nothing and hung it on nothing. Thanks to the roll of the genetic dice, human beings must confront their deep seated craving for love.

In our cold, cruel world love is a scarce commodity. Yet love enables the precious few who know its secrets to impart worth and significance to others.

The intrinsic characteristics of love hold magical powers. They can distinguish between the places of death and life. Between the corner tavern, the cemetery and the splendor of a field crowned in glory with lilies. In an era of disposable diapers, disposable razors and disposable relationships, the search for love provides a potential anchor in an age reeking of superficiality.

Love's lessons walk among us like so many kindred spirits. Love's vocabulary is made up of words like hope, restraint, giving, sacrifice, togetherness, tears, sweat, toil and faith. It is a vocabulary most often associated with negativity, yet only by enduring such tests can we sharpen love's double-edged sword.

Each person carries his/her own notion of love. Many believe the ultimate expression of love was hung on a tree at Calvary one terribly dark Friday afternoon. Whatever your personal, unique definition may be, love comforts us through the harsh reality that we entered the world alone, and we shall leave it alone. That gray zone of interpersonal relationships is where the bonds of love are forged. The resumé of man or woman blazing a trail of love often puts hard bodies and cold cash at the very top. However, the integral components of a true search for love must go beyond the shallowness typified by an episode of *The Love Connection*. "Love ya' — mean it!"

Our personal relationships often seem doomed by the past injustices (anti-love) committed against us and/or our partner. Failed expectations and damaged hopes threaten a future of happiness and fulfillment. In the wake of these threats, it's important that we ask ourselves what kind of love we are looking for. We must set a standard and establish a treaty with ourselves not to settle for anything less.

So what kind of love are you looking for? As an adopted child, I was surrounded with enough love for 10 children. Finding a love in the arms of a woman which can equal that past has been no easy task. During my years of



ANTHONY LOBAIDO
Columnist

searching, I have tried to live by one rule: if you want the ultimate love, you must be willing to pay the ultimate price. Throughout my life, I've searched for the girl to whom I could mouth these words: "If your face went through a windshield, you'd still be beautiful to me. If you were kidnapped and the kidnappers said I must walk a thousand miles to ransom you, I'd cross the hottest desert. If you were sick and needed medicine, I'd sell everything I owned to get it — if that's what it would take."

Ladies, don't settle for a man who isn't willing to get up in the middle of the night to take care of sick babies. A real man will be willing to change diapers, cook meals and clean house because real men do whatever is necessary to get the job done. Anyone can make excuses — the chosen ones deliver whether times are fair or foul.

Good men everywhere silently measure one another by such standards, for that is the way of love. The way is never easy, but it is a path that all good men must take. Contemporary America's greatest error is in thinking that greatness is synonymous with fame. Yet such high-minded notions will remain inconsequential as long as we remain a people who dream of truth but cannot live with it.

While we look to love as a guiding light to help us discern the things we should live by from the things that we are forced to live with, we must question our way through love's obstacles.

What is the anti-love behind the evil of the multinational corporations? Why do some people pound sea otter pups over the heads with clubs? Why do some women allow growing babies to be ripped from their wombs? Is it political ideology? Is it race? Is it a lust for power, money or comfort? Perhaps it is all of them, or none at all. Perhaps it is only the work of the evil ones, the weak ones, the ones who have left God out of their hearts. For love is patient, kind and gentle. It is forgives all things and keeps no record of wrongs.

All of the earth's races, cultures and tongues share the common desire to love and to be loved. We all cry salty tears and bleed rich, red blood. Love has brought us together, and I fear, it is the only thing which can keep us together.

It is my sincerest desire that each and every one of you will find a true and deep share of love's treasures — especially those who feel as though their insides have gone through a windshield. Love is something many a human has found to be worth dying for. It is certainly worth living for.

LoBaido is a doctoral student in educational technology

Unwise intervention

Somalia no place for U.S. military

With nearly two million Somalians on the brink of starvation, President Bush has proposed a plan to send 30,000 U.S. troops to that war-torn nation in an effort to ensure that relief supplies reach the needy.

The Somali crisis is exacerbated by factions of warlords who are attempting to enhance their political power and influence. Rarely is the word "quagmire" more justified than in such a situation.

The job of the military is to defeat and destroy opposing military forces. It would seem unwise to send our men in uniform into a situation with no clear, resolvable military objective, no definite enemy, and no time frame for our intervention.

While our hearts go out to all Somalians struggling for survival during this crisis, we must point out that the world is rife with similar

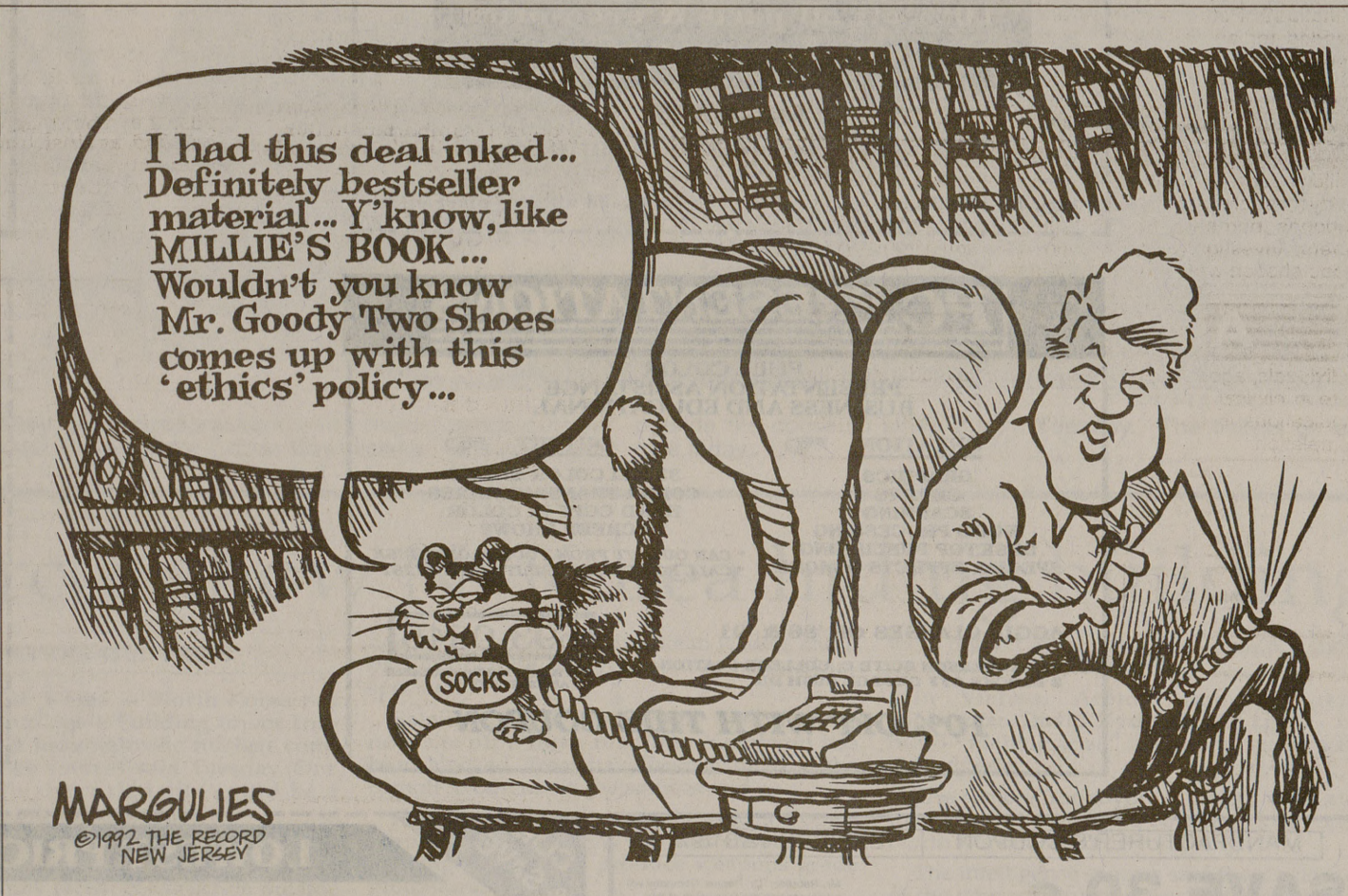
conflicts. If President Bush sends troops to Somalia, why not send them to Bosnia as well?

In pursuit of a "new world order," the United States has supposedly given up its role of global policeman in favor of a more inclusive multinational approach.

France, Britain and the Commonwealth of Independent States should work together to develop a plan that will not place the problem solely in the lap of the United States.

History has demonstrated that a nation cannot maintain a stable economy without a stable government. Somalia is caught within that cycle of what came first — the chicken or the egg.

As we seek to break that cycle it is important to note that only four of Africa's 45 countries allow their people to vote. American troops won't change that sad statistic.



MAIL CALL

Support of military gay ban misleading

Once again I came across Anthony LoBaido's cliched, yet grandiloquent, rhetoric, which he is fond of putting to paper. This time I am speaking of your article on banning homosexuals from the military. You failed to address individual rights and preferences. Wherever exist individual preferences should exist the ability to exercise those preferences as long as another individual is not harmed. If it truly mentally harms you to see a male get an erection, well, live with it. I seem to remember you, O Christian boy, recently having a test for AIDS because you, O Promiscuous One, slept around quite a bit. I lived. You see, homosexuals aren't the only ones prone to promiscuity. Not all ho-

mosexuals are promiscuous. To suggest that gays in battle "might well have their eyes on those around them instead of on the mission" is unfounded, insulting and quite presumptuous. Does being a homosexual preclude a sense of responsibility? Silly thought, Anthony.

And poor old Uncle Sam "will be left to foot the bill for the lifestyle decisions of homosexual soldiers." At least homosexuals don't breed. They can't go impregnate half the country they're invading and create a generation of fatherless children.

The sexual harassment that may occur with homosexuals is no more dangerous or wrong than harassment by heterosexuals.

It's all pretty bad. The military survived integration. The social and moral breakdown that some people predict with letting homosexuals in the military will happen because people let it, because they have something to hate.

I don't have to be a draft dodger to have sound opinions on what I think is wrong or right in the military. I can't be drafted. But I'll live. And you, LoBaido, despite your morals, may even get to heaven.

Rika Muhl
Class of '93

Column full of unfair gay stereotypes

LoBaido, your reckless use of some of the most damaging homosexual stereotypes possible in your last column defending the military's ban on gays was so uninformed that I feel I must publicly oppose your arguments.

Your first point is that "soldiers living and sleeping together in barracks might feel uncomfortable showering next to a man with an erection." Homosexuals are people just like you, not oversexed monsters who are turned on by everybody in sight; to imply that gays don't know when, where, (and with whom) to engage in sexual conduct is an affront to their intelligence and social values.

The second point I take issue with is the idea that homosexuals will spread AIDS through the military and cost the military huge sums for the health care of gay homosexuals. AIDS is not a homosexual disease, it is everybody's problem!

A more logical path to take with this argument is to ban promiscuous people from the military in order to keep health costs down! Your direct correlation between homosexuals and AIDS is an ignorant continuation of damaging stereotypes.

Finally, I was upset by your logic that homosexuals should not be allowed in the military because it will cause divisiveness in the organization. Like perhaps the turmoil that occurred when blacks were allowed in desegregated units, or when women were allowed in the military?

The point I'm trying to make is that change is often difficult and painful, but that doesn't mean that change should not occur.

I try to respect your right to have your own views and opinions, but I would appreciate it if, in your public display of those opinions, you tried to steer away from stereotypes, myths, and misinformation.

A. Lynn Snow-Turek
Class of '92
Graduate student

Rep. Wilson overly sensitive to criticism

Let me get this straight. A politician is complaining about what appears on the editorial page of a newspaper, in a cartoon.

Do free speech and freedom of the press still exist? Politicians have been skewered on

editorial pages for 200 years. If those with ultra-thin skins can't stand the heat, then they should get out of the kitchen.

It has become quite clear, in my opinion, that some members of a particular racial group have grown manic-paranoid about so-called "racism," and imagine it behind every tree.

Grow up, Ron.

Hank Taylor
Bryan, Texas

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We reserve the right to edit letters for length, style, and accuracy.

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