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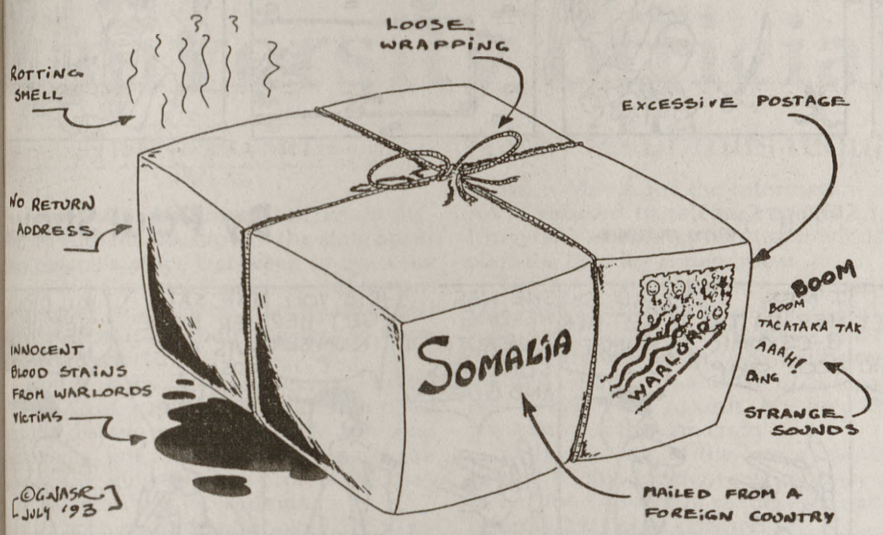
OPINION

Tuesday, July 13, 1993

The Battalion

Page 5

How To Detect If A Package Contains A Bomb:



Marriage as a basic human right Homosexual unions deserve legal recognition also

Marriage is an important right in our society, protecting couples and their children. A form of contract, marriage enhances the stability of relationships by legally binding together the parties' financial relationship.



MATT DICKERSON
Columnist

Unfortunately, even though the Supreme Court has described the right to marry as a "fundamental right," homosexual marriages are not yet recognized by the courts.

Marriage, a legal status thick with entitlements, effects inheritance, social security, adoption, taxes, medical benefits, immigration, welfare payments, the separation of property at divorce and even testimonial privilege. No wonder then that homosexuals would desire these rights.

Despite changes toward a more tolerant society, homosexuals still bear substantial discrimination. Aside from the right to legally marry the person of their choice, homosexuals are excluded from many important jobs in our community, including military service, government jobs dealing with national security, federal judgeships and many public elementary and secondary schools.

Most federal and state anti-discrimination laws do not protect homosexuals against discrimination for sexual orientation. About half of the states have anti-sodomy laws that criminalize — and thus marginalize — homosexuals.

heterosexual, decrease the durability of of sexual relations.

The upshot of all this? Excluding homosexuals from the "fundamental right" of marriage encourages instability in their relationships and encourages promiscuity at the margin. Adding insult to injury, homosexuals are then derided for unstable relationships and promiscuity.

Because some 20 percent of all male and over 30 percent of all female homosexuals were previously married, most of the children born to homosexuals are the fruit of failed attempts at a heterosexual marriage, not in vitro fertilization or other arrangements for homosexual households.

This would imply that those who disapprove of homosexual parenting performance have an interest in encouraging homosexual marriage: All else equal, homosexual unions will have less children than heterosexual unions.

There would also be fewer broken marriages due to homosexuals attempting the charade of a heterosexual lifestyle and less children thrown into the turmoil of another broken home.

Homosexual marriage and adoption are legally distinct matters, and should be treated as such. Very little is known, either way, about male homosexuals' parenting ability. Studies of lesbian mothers' children show little difference between single heterosexual women's children.

Either very little is actually known, or what is known demonstrates little difference between heterosexual and homosexual parents. Altogether, this raises doubts over confident dismissals of homosexuals' parenting ability.

Your freedom to swing your fist ends at the tip of my nose. That is, the exercise of freedom does not extend to harming others and extinguishing their freedoms. In a free and civil society, those demanding the restriction of others' activities bear the burden of proving some palpable harm.

It is not enough to say homosexual marriage "offends" or "repulses" you, and therefore ought to be disallowed. If it does offend you, welcome to open, democratic society. Rush Limbaugh often offends and sometimes repulses, but his speech ought not be restricted on those grounds.

Marriage, a fundamental right, ought to be extended to homosexuals because disallowing homosexual marriage creates a number of social problems. It promotes unstable homo-heterosexual marriages, unstable relations between homosexuals and homosexual promiscuity.

Marriage isn't a special "homosexual" privilege or right, it is a basic human right.

Dickerson is a sophomore economics major

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The Battalion



100 years at
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EDITORIAL

Restoring order

U.N. must use force to ensure aid

The United Nations attack on a Somali warlord's command center Monday was a necessary step to regain control over Mogadishu, which has reached a level of lawlessness comparable to that which prevailed before the U.S.-led military force intervened last December.

In the last five weeks, warlord Mohamed Farrah Aidid and his gunmen have killed 35 U.N. soldiers and wounded 137, making the surrounding countryside unsafe for relief groups delivering aid to the Somali interior.

More than 800 tons of food destined for the interior are rotting in port because the U.N. has been forced to reassign units normally used for convoy duty to secure a safe environment for aid workers.

It is important to note that these aid workers cannot operate without U.N. protection, as all routes from Mogadishu are extremely dangerous.

The dangers are not limited to relief workers and U.N. peacekeepers. Following Monday's attack, two journalists were killed by an angry mob of Somalis, two more were injured and two are still missing.

When the citizens of a country take to the streets and kill foreign journalists, it is evident that the U.N. must take some military action to stop this kind of anarchy.

Relief groups are concerned that these military objectives are taking priority over humanitarian ones,

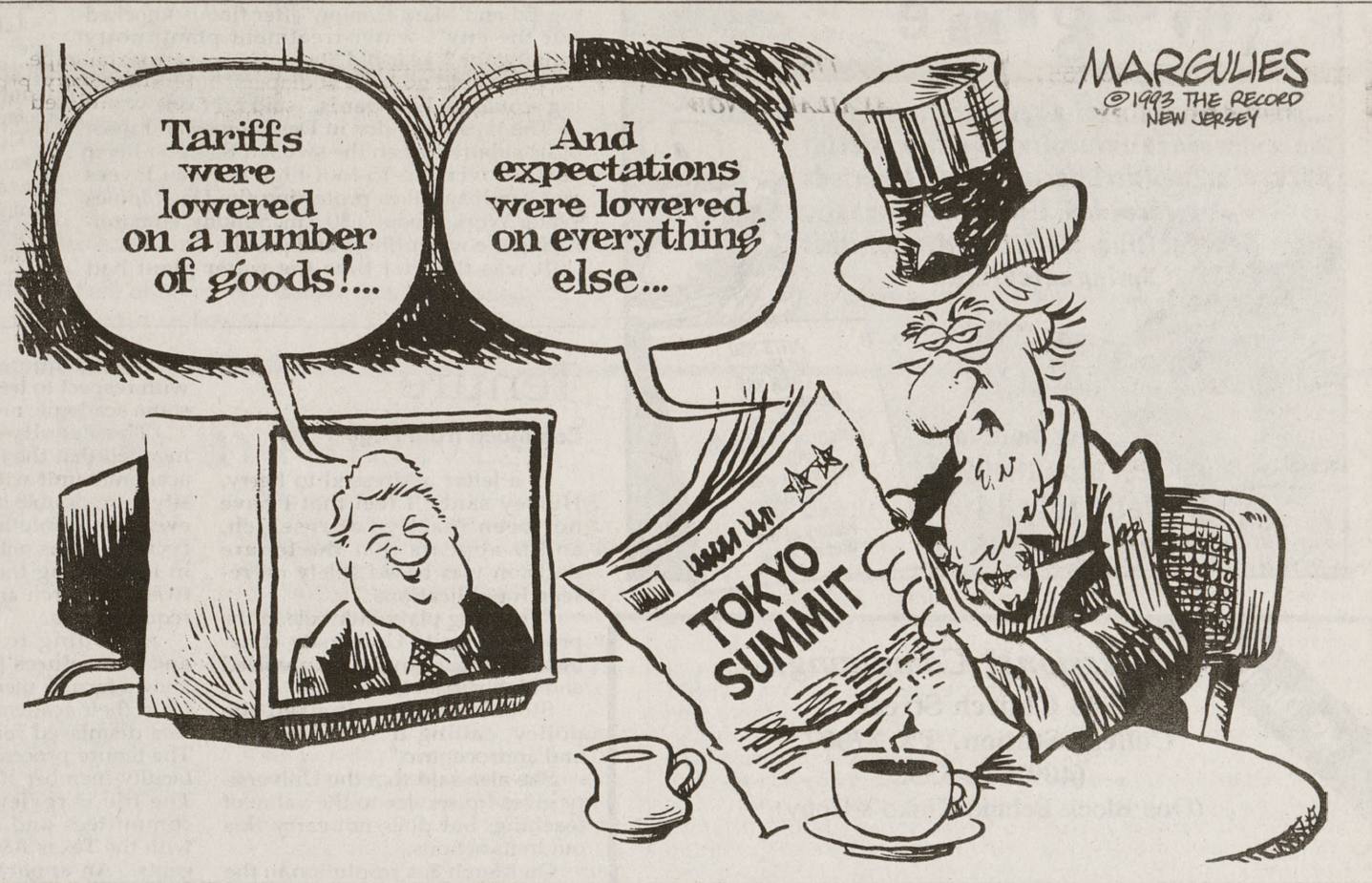
but these groups fail to see that these military objectives must be accomplished before food can be delivered safely.

It is unfortunate that so much food must be wasted while the U.N. concentrates on stopping Aidid's terrorism, but until the warlord is apprehended, he and his gunmen will continue to interrupt relief to the interior and endanger the lives of U.N. peacekeepers and relief workers.

It would seem that fighting off the warlord's attacks while continuing to escort aid convoys would waste less food and combat the symptoms of Somalia's starvation. However, immediately eliminating the cause of the starvation — warlords who hoard food — would lead to a quicker solution and cause less waste in the long run.

In addition, there have been concerns that disarray in the U.N. military operation and command system is fueling instability in Mogadishu and hampering relief efforts. If the U.N. is to fulfill its humanitarian aid mission, it must take whatever steps necessary to get its act together and eliminate the current anarchy in Somalia.

The U.N. attacks on Aidid have thus far failed to create a reasonably safe environment for relief groups to operate. The U.N. must establish order in Somalia as quickly as possible to prevent the waste of more food and the loss of more lives.



Schools need voucher system to ensure quality education

Every other week another study comes out reporting that American students are the worst in the world.

Our universities, however, are among the best in the world. Students from 86 different countries currently attend Texas A&M. Why do we do such a good job of education at the university level and not in public schools?

The answer is simple: with our university system, students can choose which school they go to.

To correct the deficiencies in our primary education system, we need the same free choice that exists in higher education. The best way to do this is to institute a school voucher system.

School vouchers were first proposed in 1962 by Nobel Prize winning economist Milton Friedman. Since then, the

idea has been gaining popularity. Here are the details of the system I am proposing:

First, schools that want to accept vouchers will apply to an accreditation board set up by the government.

Every student will be issued a voucher by the government each year that he or she will give to the voucher school of his or her choice in exchange for receiving one year of education.

The schools will then submit the vouchers they receive to their state governments and be reimbursed the cost of educating one student for each voucher they submit. The amount will be determined by the board with input from taxpayers and community leaders.

The accreditation board will ensure that every voucher school adhere to the following regulations:

A voucher school can accept only vouchers; no school can demand a voucher plus extra money.

Every voucher school must provide a designated core curriculum determined by the board. The schools would be free to provide additional classes and programs of their choosing.

Accreditation would be revoked from schools that teach material injuri-

ous to the students or the community.

This system will make schools more efficient by injecting free market forces into our educational system. If schools don't meet their customers' (students') needs, they will go out of business. Right now schools continue operating whether or not they do a good job.

Opponents of a voucher system say it will subsidize "the rich" attending elite private schools. However, because the voucher schools can accept only the voucher and no additional funds, "the rich" would be unaffected by the change of systems. They will have the same choice under the voucher system.

This plan will help the poor. Currently, they have no choice in where their children go to school. They can't afford private schools, so they have to send their children to their local public school. If it's a lousy school, too bad.

Two of the biggest problems with our current system are disparity of funding and isolation of inner city youths. The voucher system will address both these problems.

Disparity of funding will be eliminated because each student, wherever he or she may live, will get the same voucher, worth the same amount. Iso-

lation will be reduced because inner city families can choose to send their children to schools outside their neighborhoods if their local schools are crime-ridden and ineffective.

All that would matter in the acceptance decision would be the potential and ability of the student. Also, as in private businesses, voucher schools would be subject to federal anti-discrimination laws.

Also, high schools could specialize in the type of education they give above core curriculum. One of the biggest problems facing American business today is the lack of good vocational training and college preparation.

Our public schools do such a poor job in these areas because they have to cover the whole spectrum of students, rendering them unable to meet the individual needs of each student.

Under a voucher system, vocational schools will develop that will teach valuable job skills in addition to the core curriculum. College preparatory schools will teach advanced subjects such as physics and calculus. Students who plan to go to college will choose the prep schools and those who intend to enter the work force after high school

will choose a vocational school.

Educating our children and providing a trained work force are necessary to keep America competitive in the global marketplace. Our current school system is doing neither of these things. If we fail to improve our schools, we will doom ourselves to an ever decreasing standard of living. The best way to improve our schools is by providing choice through a voucher system.

Chris Marquette is a finance graduate student

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