OPINION

Page 9 • Tuesday, November 2, 1999

LET THEM WORK TO EAT CAKE

New policy forces New York's homeless to work for shelter den, who won

BEVERLY

MIRELES

singles and idea who is ranked that is epublican to e core, New ork mayor Rudy iuliani has leapt oast conser atism and into

Last week Giuliani proposed a plan that, if enacted, would affect nore than 80,000 homeless peo-Madden b ple in New York City. The plan gie to win the would force all able-bodied homeless people to work for a bed in one of the city's crowded shelters. Initially, Giuliani's plan seems

have a very American "pick ourselves up by your bootstraps' from Page 7 kind of idealism. What could be off on her E better than a plan that would get the homeless off the street and example of put them to work? After all, it is style occurred assumed, homeless people are in at the Big need of direction, not pity — nev-

ips at the Texas der pity. Unfortunately for everyone Bookout ran wit rain against some who hopes this idea will rejuvecompetition in nate Giuliani's campaign and the ing in mind that city's outward appearance, the a demanding splan is both a logistical and a sos country can be cial nightmare. fought through No one knows how Giuliani is

sh first on the going to enact the proposal. Will the homeless paint houses or said she was dis clean windows her performance Many of the homeless might

happy with my already have experience with "My hamst cleaning windshields — will k a little, but ishe they now do the same in the tter than that." city's names ked about how s The provision rewrites the defi-

I with the hamstrin nition of "unfair." Certainly, as es to bother her up hundreds of thousands of parents CAA Regional can attest to saying, no one said ips, she was quick the world was fair. as ever being a pro! However, life in the United

States is dictated by certain freedoms, whether they are fair or not. People have the right to not work, the right to not bathe and the right to be homeless without being punished.

Failure is an option, if not the most optimistic one.

By making homeless people work, Giuliani converts a the shelter system into a Northern version of share-cropping.

According to the New York Times, even those homeless who do work but do not make enough money to afford a place of their own, would have to spend the excess on their shelter bed, up to the actual cost of \$20,000.

When money is definitely an object, spending one's small excess is a problem.

It takes away a person's right to save money. Giuliani may think he is saving

the city money with the workingfor-shelter plan, but he is only relegating the homeless to continue in their poverty — an endless cycle of attempting to get out of the system while the city pulls at an already scant pocketbook

Homelessness should not be perpetuated by the city.

The proposal actually contradicts the city's former policy, which put those waiting for permanent shelter into temporary shelters.

Being in the shelters acted as a shortcut to permanent residency, but the plan backfired when the shortcut pushed many people into a more permanent homelessness.

Also, by modifying shelter procedures into a stepping stone to the subsidized housing system, the city perpetrated "big government," because the more people there are in

the shelters now, the more people will be affected by the shelter plan. The city's plan may affect many homeless families. By law, all people in the shelters must have qualified for welfare.

If shelter residents lose welfare eligibility, they cannot stay in the shelter, and their children can be taken into foster care. This will put even more of a burden on the city. Giuliani's idea also is vague.

As of yet, no one really knows what homeless people will be forced to do. And by leveraging beds for work, Giuliani could make people do almost anything.

Beds are always preferable to

MARK MCPHERSON/THE BATTALION

cement, but just what will these untrained and perhaps mentally unbalanced people will be forced to do for the city? And where will Giuliani draw the line on their ability to work?

So far, he has said that only the able-bodied and mentally healthy will be forced to work. But the line between healthy and unhealthy is arbitrary.

Perhaps Giuliani would have the city's doctors give the homeless physicals to confirm their ability to work. However, thiswould only cost the city more money and red tape.

Is Giuliani ready to put more monetary pressures on the city just so he can authorize a plan which can only serve to get him more press time?

Until Giuliani is clearer about his plan, it remains a useless proposal manufactured to get him more publicity in his Senate campaign against Hillary Clinton. He may try to get the plan passed, but in the long run, people will be able to attest to its senseless-

Politicians cannot be expected to solve every problem, especially in a metropolis like New York City. But they should not be allowed to make more problems.

Giuliani's plan is — superficially — an interesting one. If he could have every able-bodied cit-izen in New York join the work force, it would be a feat indeed.

However, with a plan as problem-riddled as this homeless shelter one, he is only making the problem more difficult. It is easy for him to decree what the homeless must do for a bed in the city. But for the homeless themselves, it is a problem deserving of a solution, not just a press release.

> Beverly Mireles is a junior microbiology major.

MIKE LUCKONCH ATLANTA CAPITTUTIONOR GO PAT GO! SAYS AMERICAN'S ARE DANGEROUSLY OBESE KILLING 300,000 YEARLY! AND WHO'S TO BLAME P

Baptist call for Jewish conversion not constitute religious intolerance

S everal times in the past few years, the Southern Baptist Convention has issued resolutions calling for an increase in the efforts CHRIS to convert others. HUFFINES These resolutions invariably have targeted specific religious groups, most often Jews but also Muslims and Hindus. The wording for the 1996 resolution is typical. In it, the Southern Baptist Convention resolved to "direct our [the Convention's] energies and resources toward the proclamation of the Gospel to the Jewish people." At times, these resolutions have called for these increases in efforts during Jewish holy days. This series of actions has not endeared the Southern Baptist Convention to their prospective converts, but the outcry against Baptist attempts to convert members of other religions is religious hypocrisy and media oneupmanship at its worst. According to the Anti-Defamation League (ADL) Website, Abraham Foxman, ADL national director, said, "It is pure arrogance for any one religion to assume they hold 'the truth.' Hari Sharma, president of the Hindu Temple of Greater Chicago said in a CNN interview, "Whoever publishes such a book does a disservice to the society. People should understand one another's réligions, not go back into history when we were attacking one another.' Curiously enough, most statements attacking the Southern Baptist Convention resolutions assume one particular fact not in evidence. Each reaction has been grounded in the belief that the Southern Baptists are acting out of contempt and intolerance toward other religions, which Foxman's comments illustrate very well. In a letter to the ADL which attempted to explain the resolutions, Convention President Rev. Paige Patterson outlined evangelical Christian arguments for efforts to convert Jews. The letter expressed no remorse for the prayer appeal and contemptuously invited us to return the gesture



and pray for them ... We will not engage in this kind of base spiritual narrowness, as the Southern Baptist leaders have done," Foxman replied in a

That is a contradiction. While the ADL preaches tolerance and understanding, Foxman is clearly misunderstanding the intent and purpose of the Baptist Convention's resolution, and in doing so is promoting intolerance. John Herring, university minister at First Baptist Church in Bryan, said the purpose of the Resolution is to share the good news of Jesus' salvation with everyone, and that when the Convention singles out a particular religious group it is so that members can pray for that group. Herring said Christianity teaches salvation can be achieved only through the redemptive grace of Jesus. Herring referred to John 14:6, which says, "Jesus said to him, 'I am the way, the truth, and the life. No man comes to the Father except through Me.' Note there is no disrespect here. Jesus did not say Jews are bad people and that Judaism is bad. He simply said, and Christians believe, that he is the only path to salvation. Even a lukewarm Christian knows Christianity is itself an extension of Judaism. Judaism preaches the coming of a Messiah, and Christians believe that Christ was the Messiah. By definition, to illegitimize Judaism is to illegitimize Christianity. To Christians, Jews have the right religious idea. They just missed one critical fact — that the Messiah has come. To share that fact, especially during holy days, when awareness of God and religion is heightened, is an expression of love and respect. But by waving the Holocaust and acting sufficiently outraged, it appears Foxman and the ADL are looking to score political points at the expense of the Baptists' honest attempt to help others. By stating that not supporting Jewish solidarity is somehow an attack on Judaism is a lie that is itself an affront to the Jewish people. The Southern Baptist Convention attempted to reach out to those they saw were in need, and groups who would place themselves before the ideals they espouse are raining hellfire upon them.



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areer points wan response to Amy Hinze's Dct. 21 mail call

was somew d for a power Having spent multiple somethours in peaceful, prayerful back, a Vikings coand non-confrontational Green rememborotest outside Planned Parinthood, I have to comment

t a standard for gon the fact that Hinze's re-Green said. "He ent letter grossly misrepreg as some of sented the actions of the cks that play 3razos Valley Coalition for t he could outwife (BVCL).

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ame in 1993, his nly seven percent of lanned Parenthood's busicommissioner ess. This statement e called Payton voids the real issue: Does eatest players in



MAIL CALL

abortion kill an innocent human being? If this is the case, then

the fact that Planned Parenthood only performs a few abortions is irrelevant.

It is not necessary for our community to support the injustice of abortion in order to have economical health services for women.

> Mike Sharma Class of '00 With 89 signatures

Players should display Ag spirit

I just wanted to thank the three football-team members who stood with the rest of the students during the War Hymn at the end of the game Saturday.

It was quite refreshing after having the team sing with us last year at the end of every game, only to have the team just head to the locker room this year. I hope the rest of the team will acquire the same team spirit as the Twelfth Man does.

Cory C. Stoddart Class of '02

Complaint about cartoon wrong

In response to Sabas Abuabara's Nov. 1 mail call.

I disagree with Abuabura's recent mail call letter. While "Fish" sometimes misses the mark, it is nowhere near as inane as the "Side Burn Club." The creators of the "SBC" have yet to make me (or anyone I know) crack a smile. Their strip is so unfunny

it is insulting.

Beth Sutherland Class of '02

The Battalion encourages letters to the editor. Letters must be 300 words or less and include the au-thor's name, class and phone num-

The opinion editor reserves the right to edit letters for length, style, and accuracy. Letters may be sub-mitted in person at 013 Reed Mc Donald with a valid student ID. Letters also be mailed to: The Battalion - Mail Call 013 Reed McDonald

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Foxman fails to note that the Baptist offer to pray is religious tolerance at its best. Instead of condemning the ADL, the Baptists are turning the other cheek. This gesture is especially courageous of the Convention, as Foxman and the ADL do not appear to be doctrinally sound. By stating no religion should assume they hold the truth, Foxman's statements accuse his own religion of arrogance.

To Christians, Jews have the right religious idea. They just miss one critical fact.

Exodus 20:2 (NIV) states, "You shall have no other gods besides me." The Jewish faith allows no other gods. It assumes it holds "the truth" about the nature of God.

The fault in this situation lies not with the Southern Baptists but with organizations like the ADL, who are attempting to one-up the Baptists using their own religious views as proxy. Clearly the top of this list is the ADL, not to be confused with mainstream Jews, the majority of whom are nice, reasonable people, not political bombasts like Foxman.

Apparently, the ADL feels the recent efforts to convert Jews is related to the Holocaust.

"Unfortunately, the backdrop for intolerance towards Jews in Europe, culminating in the Holocaust, was the absence of respect by Christianity for Judaism's legitimacy. Anything less than ardent support of the preservation of the Jewish people is an affront to the memory of those who were murdered by intolerance. ADL has long been involved in promoting tolerance and understanding among different religions," Foxman said.

Chris Huffines is a senior speech communication major.