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Congress makes the right legislative move

All too often the press is called upon to perform the duty of criticizing the government. The "watchdog" role of the media is perhaps the most highly utilized in our country.

However, once in awhile, governments on both the state and federal level deserve some congratulations. This is one of those times.

The so-called "reconciliation bills," pieces of legislation in Congress designed to make cuts in education, have been killed. American education has been saved from billions of dollars in losses.

For some time now, Congress has tossed around the idea of making considerable cuts in student loans, taxing institutions on student loans, increasing loan interest rates and eliminating the interest free grace period that students receive after graduation.

All the cuts to education could have been a potentially detrimental blow to an aspect of American life that might already be on its last leg. The importance of higher education seems to be faltering in the minds of Americans (and particularly in the minds of Federal legislators).

Justifying cuts to education seems to be almost impossible. Education can only be beneficial. Education will only increase opportunities; it can only make our nation a better place and our population a better one.

Perhaps the Congress came to realize this in the eleventh hour. Maybe a strange revelation struck the legislators. Maybe their own education payed off in this case.

Remember to keep a close eye on education money. If Congress feels compelled to try to make cuts again, let them hear you.

For right now, however, congratulations to Congress for a job well done.

Drew ventures into local Yankee colony

Folks, the reason I missed last week's newspaper was not because I was being held up by some angry Edgar Allan Poe society for my last column, but because I had a trip down to Garden City.

Now, as most of you faithful readers know, I wouldn't set foot in Myrtle Beach even if they were having a Drew Stewart Day, but every once in awhile, I like to see how the Yankees live so I drive to Garden City.

But this trip, I saw something very disturbing to me. Right smack dab in the middle of downtown Garden City, is the most hideous evil, scary place I can think of: an Eagles Beachwear.

When driving past it, I felt compelled to stop. I thought maybe the sign meant something about the Eagles rock and roll band, so I went inside.

Almost immediately, I hit the floor. There was more junk in that place than in Richland County Landfill.

Instantly, I ran out the door faster than a moonshiner runs when the sheriff is after him. To this day, I am still having bad memories of swimming shoes, fanny packs, and tee shirts that say "I'm with Stupid."

These Eagles and Wings stores have become synonymous with sand, water and Yankees along the Grand Strand. You can't throw a rock in that area without knocking over one of those floats with Elvis at the Last Supper that Eagles sell in their front windows.

Those floats aren't the only things Eagles and Wings sell that are tacky. Think about the half dead hermit crabs. You spend about five bucks on something that is going to live about 10 minutes when you get it home. Or what about those beach towels which have a picture of James Dean riding along side Jayne Mansfield on the back of a Unicorn?

The absolute worst thing I can think of is the shirts that associate Myrtle Beach with the South.

Folks, contrary to what any brochure may say, Myrtle Beach is as Southern as wearing Navy blue socks with Texas and walking shorts. It's become so Yankee-fied, I heard

DREW STEWART

Columnist

they were even planning on changing the spelling from M-Y-R-T-L-E to M-O-I-T-L-E.

It's not that I have anything against Yankees. Its just I prefer open country and plantation houses to high rises and congestion.

By now, you would expect most people to be turned off by the junk those places sell, right? Wrong. Tourists buy that stuff like dogs pee on the side of tires.

It used to be that those filthy stores were confined to the Myrtle Beach area. But now, they're moving everywhere. Next time I head that way, there will probably be one to greet me in Andrews or Kingsburg (depending on how I go).

Back in Summerton (pop.975), we began a program to increase Yankee-awareness around the greater Clarendon County area. Therefore, we built our own version of Eagles called Stuckey's.

Now compared to Eagles, Stuckey's isn't all that bad. But, they do make sure to sell plenty of those shirts with a Palmetto tree that looks more like a Florida palm on a beach shore which say "Visit South Carolina." Oh, well. I guess they had to have something the Yankees could identify with.

The little patch of land on which sits Stuckey's and Dairy Queen (the latter having been placed there so the Yankee tourists could have their own native food) is the only non-Southern thing you'll find in Summerton.

But you know one thing that struck me as funny?

If there are so many Yankee establishments in South Carolina, then perhaps maybe, just maybe, there is a town with lots of old houses, fields and stores that sells shotgun shells, Bass shoes, Confederate flag and genuine pit cooked barbeque up in New York somewhere? Here's one thing I did learn from a reader of the column. There is a place called Summerton, New Jersey. Go figure.



QUOTE, UNQUOTE

"Right now, it's 9 o'clock, people are starting to have a good time. By 10 or 11 (p.m.) they're getting liquored up and other things may take precedence over property at that time."
USC Police officer Gene Gabrys, on his various duties

Education needs to buck secular trends

Education is a vital public policy issue. It is obvious that our public education system, collectively, is not very good. One solution to improve education would be to create real school choice.

I believe parents must be given the opportunity to choose the type of education their child receives. The current system doesn't allow these choices for most families in our nation.

Our system of tax-payer funded public education is both illogical and immoral. The very doctrine of separation of church and state, with worship, education is in itself a religious experience. The current system of public education is rooted in secular humanism. This means every American citizen, regardless of their religion, is forced to fund secular humanism.

Parents and conservative grass-roots groups are fighting hard to remove secular humanist doctrines from our nation's schools. Such areas as sex education, American history, English reading assignment, psychology and science. All involve differing religious and moral viewpoints.

For instance, secular humanists be-

TOMMY TOUCHBERRY

Columnist

lieve sex education should focus on sexual decision-making while Christians believe children should be given moral and common sense reasons for postponing sex until marriage. Another example is the controversy over how to view American history. Most in our society believe we should emphasize the great accomplishments of our nation, while secular humanists believe we should emphasize the wrongs of the past.

Liberal educators often dismiss criticism of secular humanist curriculum by saying "moral teaching should be left to churches and synagogues." This type of thinking exemplifies their arrogance. First, they assume that "value-free" education is some sort of reasonable compromise, but morality has only two sides, right and wrong. You have to pick one or the other. Secondly, if a child is taught one viewpoint five days a week, how is a Sunday School going to overcome this in one morning a week? The answer is they can't.

There is no simple solution to this problem. I believe we must fix the system from ground up. We must move toward privatization and/or a voucher system model, so as to give parents reasonable choices in their child's education.

Ideally, schools should be privatized to allow market forces to decide the fate of each individual school. In addition, the government should use all education funding to give each parent a voucher payment per child while covers the average cost of tuition.

Now you may be thinking that some schools will have more money and resources and thus better. And you may also be thinking that lower income children will end up at the worst schools. I have a simple answer to these concerns.

First, doesn't this problem already exist. Suburban schools certainly have much more money than most rural and inner-city schools. They also offer a much better education. Using market forces, all the schools will improve. There will always be a relative difference, but the point is to improve every school.

Secondly, most parents will put their children in religious schools whether it

be Protestant, Catholic or Jewish. This change, in itself, will produce better educated children with fewer school problems. Sorry liberals, morality makes a big difference in education.

Finally, privatization would destroy the NEA, which might be the best thing that could happen to education. Principals would have the power to recruit the best teachers they could afford. Likewise, good teachers would see much higher incomes and bad teachers would be out of a job.

In conclusion, I offer these ideas for an ideal system. I realize it is not this cut and dry, but the theory of privatization and school choice has strong empirical evidence to support it. In areas where it has been tried on the small-scale, there has been much improvement. In addition, all other industries operate in this fashion; why shouldn't education. Isn't that the American way. Fortunately, Bob Dole has already made a campaign promise to push for school choice. I hope the other GOP candidates will do the same.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Save a national treasure: save the Wedge

Thank you for your front page coverage of our "Save the Wedge" campaign in the Nov. 2 issue of The Gamecock. I would like to make the following corrections in your news items:

1. The Faculty Senate did not vote to close the International Center for Public Health Research Center (also known as the Wedge). This one-sided decision was made by the provost last month without consulting the faculty and students at the School of Public Health. I brought up this issue at the Faculty Senate to ask the provost how and why he made this decision.

2. There are no "27 institutions with similar programs" in the country. Of the 27 Schools of Public Health in the U.S., USC is the only one with a unique vector research and training facility like the Wedge. It is the only research and training center on vector control of Malaria, Lyme Disease and other vector-borne diseases in the U.S. and the world.

I would like to invite faculty and students to join our "Save the Wedge" campaign. We are going to have a field trip to the Wedge on November 17, 1995. You are also invited to the Open House on Dec. 2, 1995, 1-5 p.m. at the Wedge in McCellanville.

We want you to see how this former rice plantation was converted into a training and research center on vector-borne diseases. The former horse stables were converted into laboratories. The former slave quarter was turned into an insectary and the old plantation house was turned into classrooms and dormitory.

We want you to see beyond the architecture of the Wedge and the amount

of money its sale will generate. We want you to know its past and present research and training programs.

We want you to imagine and see the faces of people dying of malaria and other vector-borne disease in developing countries. We want you to see the faces of young American soldiers who died of Malaria, Leishmaniasis and other vector-borne diseases in the war from World War II to the Persian Gulf War.

We want you to see the faces of Americans who are dying of Lyme Diseases, Rocky Mountain spotted fever, Dengue Hemorrhagic Fever and other emerging and resurging vector-borne diseases in this country.

Vector-borne diseases are still major public health problems in the U.S. and around the world. After learning all these facts, we want to know if you would allow the closing of a national and international treasure like the Wedge.

If you care about this issue and want to join our "Save the Wedge" campaign, please call me at 777-CARE or call the Wedge at 777-2998.

Francisco S. Sy, M.D., Dr. P.H.
Associate Professor of Epidemiology & Graduate Director

Weekend programming at WUSC well done

An all 80s weekend on 90.5 FM WUSC. What an inspired event! Kudos to Kerry Mitchell, promotions manager, who came up with the idea. Yet it was much more than just a great

idea—it was well executed. I certainly wouldn't object to this kind of 80s aural gratification a bit more often.

Which leads me to Ryan Wilson's recent column, *Give the Students Music they Desire*. As USC students, we all pay an activity fee that is divided up between a veritable plethora of different organizations, from which many of us never reap evident benefits. Yet, just because I pay this fee, I do not expect each organization that receives some of my money to pander to me.. It would be impossible for each organization to pander to each and every me at the university and they shouldn't have to do this. Neither should they dilute what they do, which so often happens in attempting to please the majority. However, each organization should provide a quality service, which I would argue WUSC does rather well.

I am a DJ at WUSC and have been for the last three-and-a-half years. I did not have any part in either the planning or the implementation of this past weekend's trip down memory lane.

But as a listener, I was overwhelmingly impressed with both the quality of the programming and the professionalism of the DJs. Both of which illustrate WUSC's continued ability to provide the Midlands with exceptional programming that is unavailable anywhere closer to us than Atlanta or Chapel Hill. I'm not just proud to be a listener; I'm proud to be a WUSC station member.

Julie P. McKay
Art Education Graduate Student
Almost Acoustic DJ

A Closer Look



write now

Reader responses are welcome. Letters should be between 200 and 250 words and should be delivered personally to The Gamecock, Room 333 of the Russell House



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The Gamecock reserves the right to edit all letters for style, possible libel or space limitations. Names will not be withheld under any circumstances.

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The Gamecock is the student newspaper of the University of South Carolina and is published Tuesday through Friday during the fall and spring semesters, with the exception of university holidays and exam periods.
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The Board of Student Publications and Communications is the publisher of The Gamecock. The Department of Student Media is its parent organization.