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**IN OUR
OPINION**

Marriott's improved service is only for contract renewal

Last year during our student government campaigns, we heard about how Marriott's dining

Marriott Dining Services

Students need to remember the less-than-stellar products and service they have received from Marriott.

contract is up for renewal. Marriott's five year contract with the University expires on June 30 of next year, and because of this, Marriott will have to submit a bid for the contract next spring, along with all the other companies who want the contract at USC. Marriott will be on a level field with everybody else, and their only advantage will be that they have been here for so long and we have seen what they can do.

But, in many ways Marriott's presence here for the past 12 or so years is going to be a disadvantage to them. We have seen what they can do, but we have also seen what they can't do. Marriott Dining services isn't perfect, any continuing student at the University knows this. On the outside, Marriott offers a quality dining service to the university. There is a wide variety of food at reasonable prices and a lot of the time it tastes pretty good. But for

many students the problems with Marriott are in the little things. The times when there isn't much to choose from, when the chicken isn't cooked very well or they keep running out of bacon. For an on-campus student who eats at the Russell House for one or two meals a day, these little problems add up.

When Marriott puts in its bid next spring, it's these little things from the past years that students have to remember. Marriott is a business, they are out to make money. And the University gave them a five year chance to make money off of us.

Five years is a long time and they have made a strong impression on students here at the university. So, this year if the service is a bit friendlier and the cut in your meat has a bit less fat on it, don't take that as your complete impression of Marriott.

Remember, all the times your bread got soaked with vinegar at Sub-City and how they ran out of everything at the Gamecock grill except double cheeseburgers.

Hiking the minimum wage is positive move for America

President Clinton signed a bill Tuesday that will increase the minimum wage 90 cents over the next two years.

Minimum Wage Bill

The benefits of the Minimum Wage Bill far outweigh the detriments.

The first increase will take place on October 1, 1996 when the minimum wage will be raised to \$4.75 per hour. The second increase will take place on September 1, 1997 when the minimum wage will be raised to \$5.15 per hour.

Opponents of the bill have attacked it saying an increase will force employers to lay off some of their employees and raise the prices of their products and services to pay the employees they can afford to keep. But, if people are making more money, they should be able to pay a little more for some goods and services.

The bill benefits small businesses by giving them an equipment write-off, and it creates a simplified pension plan for business employing 100 or less workers.

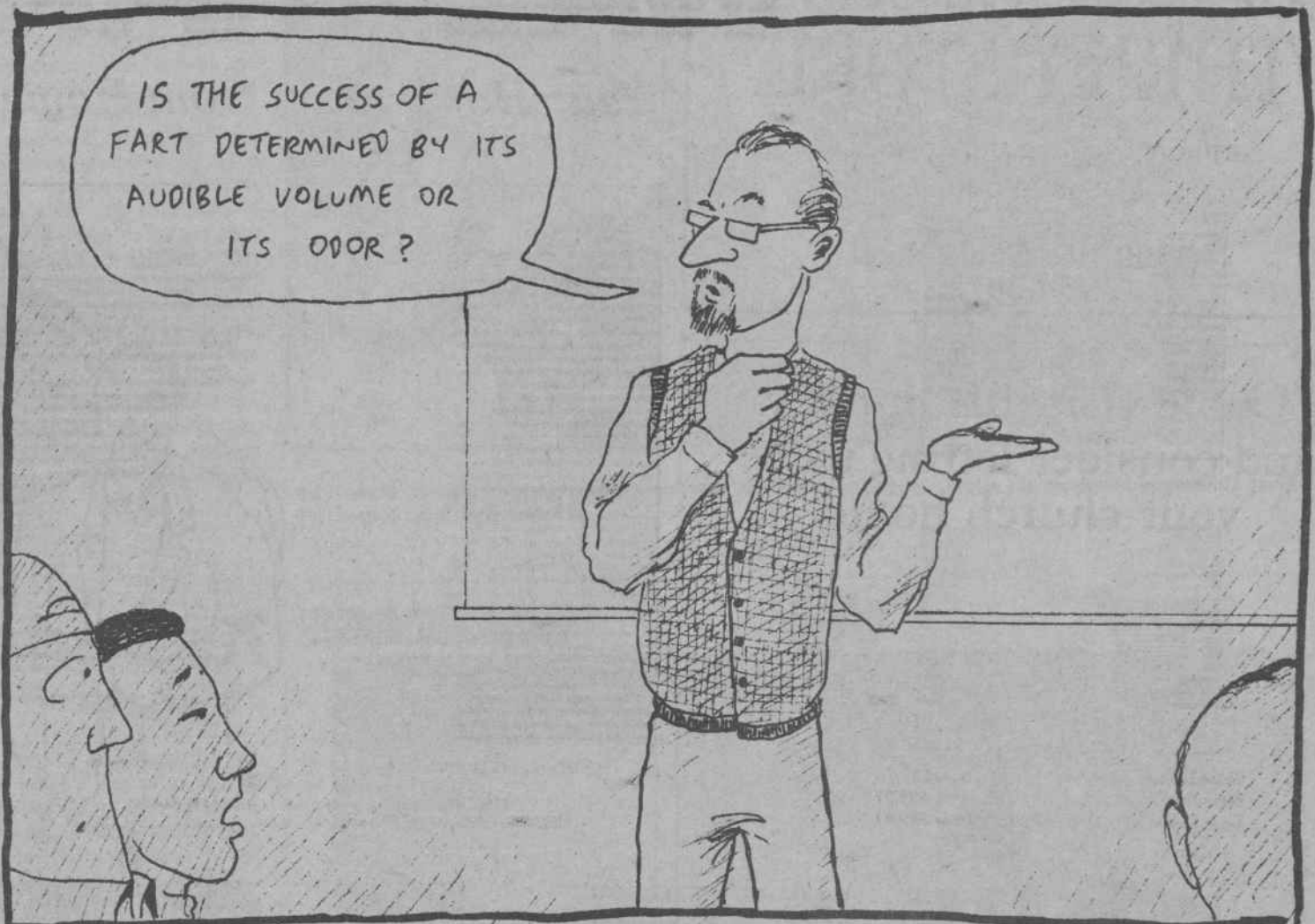
Currently, about 10 million Americans earn \$4.25 an hour. That is not enough money to support a family. It's no wonder people do not want to get off of welfare. The minimum wage increase will hopefully give people living on welfare an incentive to

get a job to support their families instead of living off of government aid. Overall, we believe the

minimum wage increase will be good for America. There are, however, some provisions that college students can't ignore.

First of all, the bill does not include workers who make tips. They will still earn only \$2.13 per hour, and they will only be paid more by their employers if they don't make enough in tips to earn the new minimum wage. This is particularly bad for college students who work part-time in the service industry to make money for their college expenses.

Second of all, the bill contains a "training wage" provision. This basically means people under the age of 20 will still make \$4.25 per hour for their first 90 days of work, so high school and some college students will not make the new minimum wage when they take summer jobs. This is one of the main reasons young people should vote. The "training wage" provision proves politicians don't take young voters seriously. If more young people voted, maybe we would get some of the same incentives as older Americans.



ANOTHER TELLTALE SIGN YOU SHOULD DROP THE CLASS

QUOTE, UNQUOTE

"Living in a house gives you a lot more independence."

John Leighton

Member, Sigma Chi Fraternity, discussing USC's proposed Greek Village

People responsible for Internet misuse, not computer networks

Cece von Kolnitz

Columnist

I read about "The Dark One" in yesterday's newspaper.

The headline over the Associated Press's article read, "2 missing teens lured by Internet, officials say."

According to the story, a man calling himself "The Dark One" used the Internet "to convince" two teen-age girls, Summer Nix, 13, of Spartanburg, and Casey Thompson, 15, of Pauline, to meet him at his car last week, and "they haven't been seen since." The article says authorities now consider the girls' disappearance a "missing persons case."

I don't see how the Internet could have "lured" them. A computer network doesn't have the power of persuasion. The people who use it do.

There is no Internet monster who flashes messages across users' screens that say things like "Run away from your house. Pierce your nose. Go with the Dark One."

I'm guilty of thinking of the Internet as a breeding ground for evil situations myself. But it's because of the people behind the communication, not the medium through which the communication takes place. It's hard for me to trust people I've never seen, whose voices I've never heard.

When one of my friends decided to fly to the state of Washington to see a man she met on a computer bulletin board, I wrote my own silly version of an "Unsolved Mysteries" episode involving my predictions about her trip.

I can still picture the whole thing. An actress, who is wearing a really bad wig and who is supposed to look like my friend but doesn't even come close, steps off a plane. As she does so, Robert Stack breaks in with a voice-over:

"She was excited about meeting the man she had only seen in pictures. Little did she know her excitement would soon turn to fear." Cue the scary music.

The camera follows my friend to the baggage claim where she finally meets mystery man. They hug. The someone-picking-at-a-piano music plays as they walk out to his car.

"He began acting strangely almost

immediately," Robert Stack says, looking into the camera with his bushy eyebrows lowered. "Let's get back to our dramatization," he says.

A woman wearing blue walks by the car. Stack, in another voice-over, explains, "A flight attendant passing by the car said she saw the man slapping the woman, yelling expletives and I told you not to bring your sleeping bag! I told you not to let anyone else see my picture!"

This vision of mine ends with the last time anyone ever sees my friend. She's at the end of a pier, with her back turned to the camera. A pier worker says, "I thought something was wrong when the man picked her up and threw her over the side of the pier."

Despite my prediction, my friend hopped on a plane to Washington anyway and had a good time. She wasn't mauled in any way or killed, and she returned home. Maybe my friend was just one of the lucky ones. Maybe her decision really did have the potential of turning into an Unsolved Mysteries episode.

But the important thing is it was her decision. The Internet didn't make her do it. Just like the Internet didn't make Summer or Casey get into The Dark

One's car.

In the article, Summer's mother says, "I don't know if I ever would (buy a computer) now...No...I would buy the computer, I just wouldn't have it hooked up to the Internet."

I don't blame her for feeling that way. But maybe instead of personifying and blaming the Internet, teens and others who use it could receive some education. Not the goofy kind that doesn't work, like sex ed videos, but a useful kind.

People could be taught how to use the Internet and at the same time, they could be taught about the problems first-time users encounter, like that message that flashes across the screen sometimes when someone first signs onto an access provider like America On-line. The message asks for a credit card number. Rule number one: don't give it to them.

Rule number two: It's okay to be suspicious of people who name themselves after the devil, serial killers or "Stalker."

Rule number three: You can't blame a machine for the existence of evil people in the world, no matter how well it relieves the pain.

Franklin outlines Student Government goals

Jamel Franklin

Guest Columnist

Students at USC, I would like to welcome you to a new semester of activism and opportunity here at this university of high achievement and excellence.

As Student Body Vice-President and President of the Senate, I am honored to serve you through representing the student body. I am happy to inform you that both myself and the Senate will be addressing several important issues to the student body this semester.

■ First I will establish a Senate committee to aid in implementing a specific, fair and non-divisive plan for the re-establishment of a Carolina tradition: the USC homecoming queen and king. ■ In terms of academics, we will vigorously research and lobby for a responsible academic forgiveness plan here at USC as so many other top

national universities have. A true academic forgiveness policy would be a strong motivational force for student learning here at USC.

■ I, along with a diverse group of student leaders, and the Senate, will plan collaborative events for the upcoming year such as a forum on race-relations and a fundraiser for the many predominantly black and predominantly white churches that have been victimized by this tragic eruption of arson in this state.

■ The Senate will further allocate money for student organizations and we will adjust finance guidelines so that the money can be more efficiently and effectively allocated to student organizations.

■ I will re-establish the Student Government Food Committee, first established last year by Vice-President Darcie Shively, to research and create a policy to lessen dining time restrictions and to be presented to the USC Board of Trustees next summer. This would give students more freedom in making

choices in their everyday lives.

■ I will also establish a Senate committee to review the use of city aid in transportation to football games for the 1997-98 football season.

■ The Senate will facilitate block seating for student organizations at sporting events as well as inform students about the changes in seating sections at football games.

■ We will aid President Wright in the publication of the new student government newsletter to ensure that you, the student body, are properly informed about important matters concerning this university.

■ We will aid the South Carolina Students Association in organizing our Spring 1997 strategies for lobbying the state legislature for more money in higher education and for student representation on the Board of Trustees.

■ The Senate will review and revise our annual election rules to make our annual elections as fair and as efficient as possible.

■ We will be encouraging every academic department to place course guides and

syllabi on the internet for their classes so that students will be able to make more informed decisions about their academic future.

■ We will be publicizing many open senate seats in the colleges of Applied Professional Sciences, Pharmacy, Nursing and Social Work.

If you are interested in serving the student body in the Senate please stop by Student Government in the Russell House. Senate meetings are every Wednesday afternoon at 5 p.m. in the Russell House theater.

Both myself and the student senate are here to represent the ideas and respond to the needs and concerns of the students at USC. If you ever have any concern about this university, Student Government is the place to address your concern.

I wish you, the proud students of the University of South Carolina, continued success and I will be a strong communicator and patient listener to you throughout this semester. Thank you and God bless Carolina.



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