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**IN OUR
OPINION**

Red Cross blood shortage indicative of apathy

The Red Cross is experiencing an emergency shortage of blood. The organization had to import about 400 units of blood just for the months of

Giving Blood

Donating blood is quick, easy and saves lives.

Red Cross' lack of blood.

Giving blood does not take a lot of time or effort, but the effects are immeasurable.

Americans have gotten a little too apathetic lately. When a quick, simple and life saving procedure such as giving blood becomes too much of a hassle, we are definitely in trouble.

Unfortunately, people do not think about things like giving blood until they are in an emergency situation and their life depends on a blood transfusion.

Have we gotten so selfish that we can't see the need for blood until we are personally affected? We should all take time out of our busy schedules to give blood. Who knew saving someone's life could be so easy?

We may never receive a personal "thank you" from the recipient of our blood, but the personal satisfaction is eternal.

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City Year volunteers provide service for communities

Despite what some people might think or say, Americans aren't totally selfish. They do care about, and give back to, their communities. Unfortunately, American's philanthropic giving is very lopsided.

City Year

Volunteering with City Year is a welcome departure from monetary donations.

the duties that is most needed in our country: hands-on community service. These City Year members spend an entire year of their lives going out to schools and around the community to provide service. Sure they are paid, but who can expect a young person to give up a year of their time for free in this day and age.

This program is funded by the US Government and comes out of our tax dollars.

Unfortunately, there is much talk in Congress about cutting this program. This and a lot of other programs are looking to be cut by Congress, and many people are saying that they can be funded from private sources. That would be great, it's just that people tend not to give money to programs such as City Year, and these are some of the programs that we need the most.

A large percentage of the money that Americans give to not-for-profit organizations is devoted to funding for the arts and education. Of course, the arts and education are extremely important, but they are not the only nonprofit programs in this country that need to be funded. And many of these programs, such as those that help America's poor, are funded by the government.

One of these programs that helps provide service to the poor and needy of this country is Americorps.

City Year is the local Columbia part of AmeriCorps. This group of young people performs one of



Quote, Unquote

"Here at City Year, I feel like some of the things I do make a difference."

Tjuan Dogan, USC graduate student and City Year program director

Clinton's attack on tobacco is election-year politics

**John Frick
Columnist**

Big Brother Bill strikes again! College Students take note: Hide your pipes, throw away your lighters and guard your rolling paper. Bill Clinton and the Federal Government are coming after you — TOBACCO???

Surely, this is a mistake. With illegal drug use doubling during the Clinton presidency, he can't possibly be going after tobacco. Everyone pull up a chair and get comfortable; demagoguery 101 is in session and Professor Clinton has begun his lesson.

In case you hadn't heard, the President last week announced new regulations on where and how tobacco companies can advertise. The specifics are disturbing when you consider just how far-reaching they are. The long arm of government continues to grow.

The new regulations are aimed at reducing usage among minors. The rules now say that tobacco companies can only

advertise normally in magazines that have a readership by minors of less than 15%.

In those that have more than 15%, advertisements can only be in black and white lettering—a move designed to thwart the "youthful" tendency to notice colorful cartoons and pictures. While this seems ridiculous enough, there's more. All you NASCAR fans will have to do without events or teams named for specific tobacco products. It's a move that will probably not break any hearts, but it could break some banks of drivers and teams.

The problem with these regulations, however mangled they may seem, is not in the details and specifics. It lies in the general approach taken to solving the problem of smoking by minors.

Did any one of those technocrats in Washington ever stop, for even a moment, to think of the most common way that youth begin using tobacco? People don't see a cartoon camel in a magazine or watch a Virginia Slims Tennis Tournament on television and then decide that they must now smoke.

Nine times out of ten they are sitting around outside at a party when one of

their friends offers them a cigarette, or throwing the baseball around at practice when they're offered a chew. Most of the time it's not even a "peer pressure" situation.

Curiosity, coupled with the effects of seeing tobacco being used by the two groups most influential on teens (those being entertainment and sports personalities), are the ingredients which lead many times to their initial experimentation.

The approach places the responsibility of minor tobacco use on everyone but the minors themselves and their parents. If the president was truly concerned about this problem, he would do to underage tobacco buyers what is now done to underage alcohol buyers.

A harsh position you say? Don't think for one minute that Clinton's team of spin doctors couldn't sell this to the American people if they wanted to. A concern about drunk driving and it's deadly effects was a spark that led to the drinking age being enforced as strongly as it is.

With thousands upon thousands of smoking related deaths each year, I know the same people who convinced Americans

that Republicans were going to starve their school children and their grandparents could easily lead a campaign to squelch under age use. But they won't, because this issue is typical of Bill Clinton's philosophy.

I find it very interesting that the president just happens to address this issue as presidential rival Bob Dole hammers away at the Clinton drug record. It's very easy logic to follow.

While Dole attacks the drug record, Clinton grabs a similar issue which is easy to demonize, and does so, shifting the focus of the arguments and getting some good press to boot. It's another straw man set up to absorb the political fire while the president reloads.

The answer to the problem of youth tobacco use lies not in Washington, or even Columbia. It lies in the homes and the heads of those minors who choose to do so. The fact that even a believer in big government like President Clinton would not take real steps to address this problem is a sad testament which speaks volumes about what leadership means to him. It's politics above principle, and symbolism over substance.

Cal Ripken Jr. a good candidate for president

**Fred Leach
Columnist**

The Democratic National Convention got underway in Chicago on Monday.

Two weeks ago, the Republicans held their Convention in San Diego. Now everybody knows that the conventions are where the parties pick their nominee for President of the United States. Bob Dole was the Republican's choice and Bill Clinton will be the choice of the Democratic party.

As I was watching the convention, however, a question popped into my mind. Who out there has the characteristics of a good President?

I pondered this question and quickly thought of a person whom I feel represents everything that is right with America: Cal Ripken Jr. of the Baltimore Orioles.

For those of you who may not know anything about Cal Ripken, he is the short stop for the Orioles, who, a year ago, set the record for most consecutive games played, breaking the record held by Lou Gehrig.

Now I know that Cal may not have any experience in politics, since he has been playing baseball all his life, but in spite of that, I have thought of several reasons why he would be a good President.

First of all, lets look at Ripken's streak. He started it in the early eighties and he finally broke the mark in September of 1995. When the original Iron Man, Lou Gehrig, set his mark in

Cal Ripken Jr.

Imagine what it must take to play 2,131 consecutive games. I believe there was only one kid in my high school class that had perfect attendance for 12 years.

Most people certainly do not have perfect attendance at their work, and those special few that have been endowed with such a work ethic are to be admired.

Persistence, courage and integrity are all essential ingredients in achieving such a goal, as they should be essential in choosing a good leader. These traits are plainly present in Cal Ripken Jr. His persistence and courage helped him play through pain, and his integrity helped to keep an eye on the goal.

If one were asked to use one word to describe Ripken, one might use the word loyal. Loyalty is unfortunately very hard to find in this world, especially in the world of sports.

In this world of free agency, and players changing teams almost as much as Bill Clinton changes his stance on issues, it is refreshing to see a guy like Cal Ripken who stands first on his beliefs, manifested in loyalty to the Orioles organization and the city of Baltimore, not to mention his many fans all over the country. Ripken is known as a franchise player.

These are the guys who stick with teams through the good and the bad, and upon whom the teams are built around, in a sense. They are few and far between, but they stand head and shoulders above those whose aim is only

Are kindness and being humble necessary traits in a leader? I think that it is. I was in Fort Lauderdale this past spring break, and I went to a spring training exhibition game between the Orioles and the Braves.

These spring training games are typically the times when eager fans flock to the ballpark, hoping to get closer to their heroes than they normally would. Most players typically interact with the crowd more than during a season, signing autographs and taking pictures.

However, I have been to games before, and there the superstars don't even sign autographs. Such was the case in Ft. Lauderdale when a particular first baseman, whose first name we share, walked right by a six or several year old child asking very politely for an autograph.

In his kindness, Cal Ripken signed autographs for about an hour before the game, missing batting practice.

As I was standing in line, I heard the humble man say that he didn't understand why folks were making such a fuss over him. Perhaps it is because of the things that I have mentioned, or perhaps it is because he is a hero.

America is sorely lacking in heroes these days, role models which our children can emulate. But it is comforting to know that there are still folks like Cal Ripken out there. People who overcome adversity, who possess integrity, loyalty, and when are called upon to be a hero, accept it with grace and a humble attitude. A Ripken presidency would be nice.

Saturday, Aug. 24th, so he is now officially old enough to be president.) But as nice as it would be, I really don't think that Cal would be willing to give up playing ball, not to mention his consecutive game streak, to be president. (I sure as heck would rather play ball than be president!)

However, there is a man who possesses the attributes that would make a Ripken-like president. This man is Bob Dole.

Bob Dole is a man who was born into poverty, but who rose out of it through persistence and hard work. He is a man who answered his country's call when she needed him. He is a man who charged a machine gun nest in World War II, almost dying in order to save his comrades. He was nearly paralyzed and was never expected to walk again. But, again, through endurance and fortitude, he overcame that obstacle. His opponent is a man who, when the country called on him, dodged the draft, and protested against the country in the Soviet Union.

Bob Dole has stood firm in his beliefs while also accepting the differing views of others. He has been loyal to his country, to his party, and to his wife.

How this country can even consider electing Bill Clinton to a second term is beyond me. America is like a ship caught in a whirlpool with Bill Clinton at the helm.

Bob Dole would provide us with the moral leadership necessary to be president. He would steer us in the right



News: 777-7726
Advertising: 777-1184
FAX: 777-6482

Student Media • Russell House-USC • Columbia, SC 29208

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