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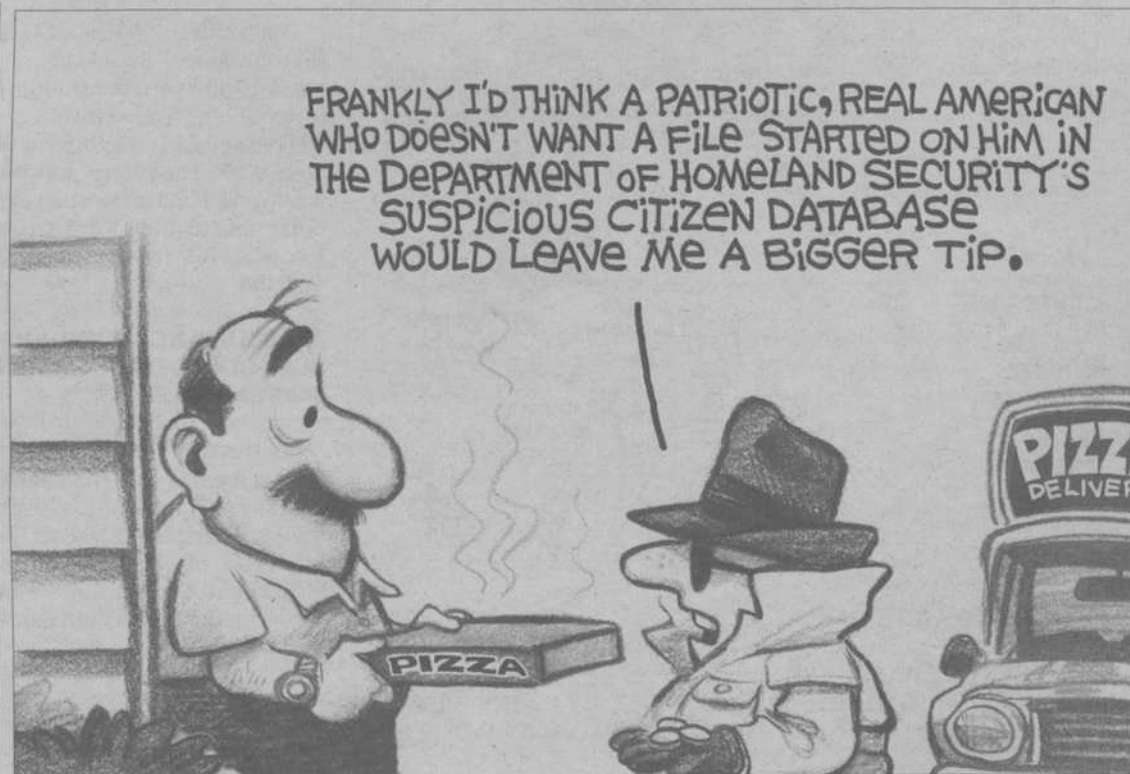
Groundhog Day?

It's not Groundhog Day and Lou Holtz isn't doing a Bill Murray impression. But given his comments last Friday about possibly allowing troubled running back Derek Watson back on the football team, you might think otherwise.

Gamecock fans were thrilled when Watson chose USC over the University of Tennessee after the one-win 1998 season. However, since the 2000 season, he has been a lot of trouble for USC. After his arrest in the spring for marijuana possession and subsequent removal from the football team and USC, we thought we'd heard the last of Watson. Not so.

If Watson is allowed to return, he would red shirt the 2002 season and use his final year of eligibility in 2003. He wouldn't be taking playing time away from more deserving seniors Ryan Brewer and Andrew Pinnock, who both, by the way, have clean records.

Life dealt Watson several hard blows when he was growing up. We want him to make something of himself. But USC needs to move on, and so does Watson. Why are we even having this discussion again?



CARTOON COURTESY OF KRT CAMPUS

Gifted S.C. students flee state



TERRANCE BEEKS

GAMECOCKVIEWPOINTS@HOTMAIL.COM

I recently spent an interesting evening engaged in a conversation with a great girl who knew a thing or two about politics and current events. Sadly, it's easier to find a young adult who knows every word to Eminem's "Without Me" than one who knows who the U.S. secretary of state is and what that job encompasses.

We discovered that we both want to attend law school. The next question was the usual, "where do you want to go?"

I thought she was going to respond by saying USC law like so many other South Carolinians. However, she said, "University of Cincinnati or anywhere but here in South Carolina."

I was taken aback because I was accustomed to hearing people say USC law was their first choice. I in-

quired as to why she wanted to leave. She responded, "I don't want my kids being subjected to the life of a black person in South Carolina." I didn't understand my friend completely at first, but eventually I did.

During one of the televised debates prior to the primary, candidates were asked what they thought was the biggest issue facing African-Americans in the state.

Most of the candidates danced around the issue, obviously not prepared for a question that addressed one-third of the state's population. Mark Sanford shared a conversation with a black student at Duke University from South Carolina. He asked her if she planned to return to the state when she graduates from Duke. She told him no, saying, "black students from South Carolina who attend Duke don't return to South Carolina." Sanford said we must do something about that. I agreed with him, at least on that issue.

There's a group of South Carolinians that have been ignored for far too long. That group isn't the poor, uneducated or handicapped. The group I'm concerned about is young, ambitious, educat-

ed and motivated black people living in South Carolina.

Why didn't my friend want her child subjected to living in South Carolina? Why don't black students from South Carolina return to South Carolina? People want to live in communities with people of similar interests.

I believe educated, black professionals flock to Atlanta and Charlotte because there are other educated, black professionals there who are ambitious and goal-oriented. It isn't such a rarity to find "up and coming" executives, doctors and lawyers who happen to be young and African-American like it is in South Carolina.

It's sad to think South Carolina's most talented feel compelled to leave the Palmetto State. I too might leave South Carolina for law school, but I have decided to return. I will not return because I think that South Carolina is the greatest place on Earth. It isn't. I will return because I know there are talented and gifted black children here who need someone to look up to. I'll stay because of them. They are our future.

Beeks is a fourth-year Political Science student.

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PLACING ADS

The Gamecock
1400 Greene St.
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29208
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CONTACT INFORMATION

Offices on third floor of the Russell House.
Editor in Chief: gamecockeditor@hotmail.com
University Desk: gamecockdesk@hotmail.com
Viewpoints: gamecockviewpoints@hotmail.com
The Mix: gamecockmixeditor@hotmail.com
Sports: gamecocksports@hotmail.com
Online: www.dailygamecock.com
Newsroom: 777-7726

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The Gamecock is the student newspaper of the University of South Carolina and is published Monday, Wednesday and Friday during the fall and spring semesters and nine times during the summer with the exception of university holidays and exam periods. Opinions expressed in The Gamecock are those of the editors or author and not those of the University of South Carolina. The Board of Student Publications and Communications is the publisher of The Gamecock. The Department of Student Media is the newspaper's parent organization. The Gamecock is supported in part by student activities fees. One free copy per reader. Additional copies may be purchased for one dollar each from the Department of Student Media.