

Opinions

Your Right To Say It

Cartoonitorial



JIM HEFFNER
Columnist

A misplaced comment

A couple of weeks ago I penned a column concerning the ridiculous call for therapy anytime the slightest mishap occurs in this country.

As a part of that column, I discussed the Veteran's Affairs Department of the government's call for increased therapy for female veterans, largely instituted because of the Clarence Thomas hearings last year. Those hearings focused a great deal of attention on the subject of sexual harassment.

I wrote, of the Tailhook convention in Las Vegas, "Why were the women there and were they sober?" Boy, did that ever stir up a hornet's nest!

First came a letter from Melanie Dixon of Kings Mountain. Miss Dixon took me to task for the comment. She wrote, "In my opinion, there is never any justification for sexual harassment or any other sex-related crime in any situation."

She is right, and I was wrong. The comment had no place in the column. I was trying to make a point about the excess of therapy in today's world, not about sexual harassment.

I do have some thoughts on that subject, but this was not the time or place for them.

The letter was the first volley. I received several phone calls and two ladies with whom I work let me know they were in agreement with Miss Dixon.

I have no excuse, and I apologize to anyone who took offense.

TOO MUCH - Mississippi State football coach Jackie Sherrill is in trouble again. This time he allowed a bull to be sterilized in front of his football team.

Sherrill, whose coaching methods sometime run to the esoteric, had the animal neutered on a practice field before his team defeated the Texas Longhorns 28-10 on Sept. 5. He said he allowed the procedure because it was educational and motivational.

Needless to say, the president of the university was none too happy with Sherrill.

I am reminded of Bill Musselman, who, while coaching basketball at the University of Minnesota, told his team, before a big game, "Losing is worse than death, because you have to live with losing."

I guess it takes all kinds to make a world. I, for one, can live without that kind.

I am a firm believer that, if you participate in any kind of competition, you should do your utmost to win, but there are sane methods of motivation available to all coaches.

SAY IT AIN'T SO, ROSS - I see the little Texan is back in the big race. What a waste of time and money! He has absolutely no chance to get elected, and his solutions to the country's problems are sophomore-ish.

The first thing Perot would like to do is raise the gasoline tax fifty cents per gallon. Does that make any sense? He correctly points out that other countries pay much more than we do in gasoline taxes. So what? Is he trying to say that because other countries suffer we should share their suffering?

I get tired of people like Perot telling us constantly that the United States uses 25 percent of the world's energy. They never tell you we produce 75 percent of the world's goods.

Why doesn't he just mount up and ride off into the sunset? We'd be better off.

SENSITIVITY INDEX - Have you heard that DC Comics is about to have Superman killed? It's true, he's going to be knocked off by a superlooney named Doomsday.

Get this: John Horner, president of the National Mental Health Association, has complained to the comic book company;

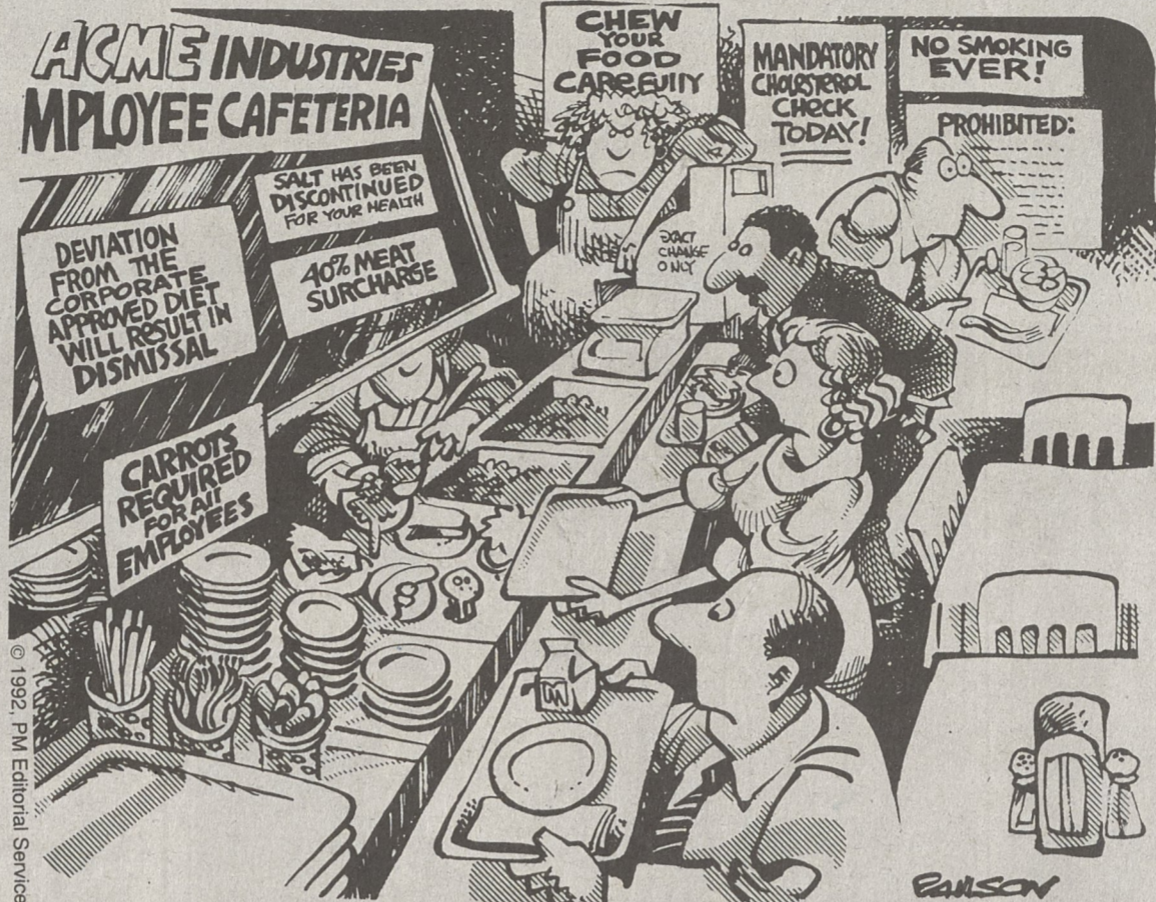
"It's time to stop using people with mental illnesses as the fall guy, the scapegoat or the villain," said Horner. "Messages of ridicule or rejection about particular groups are delivered to people in the real world."

Two questions come to mind. What does all that gibberish mean, and, do they let insane asylum inmates read comic books?

TEERING IT UP - I heard this one from a local golf enthusiast. Seems a wealthy businessman received a note that read: "If you want to see your wife again, bring \$100,000 to the 15th green at the country club at 10:30 sharp tomorrow morning."

The guy didn't get there until 12:30, whereupon a masked man with a large gun stepped from behind an oak tree and growled, "You're two hours late. What took you so long?"

The husband rolled his eyes and said, "give me a break, I'm a 32 handicap."



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Our View

Is taxing the wealthy a valid issue?

Two of the three candidates for president, Clinton and Perot, say that, if elected, they will raise taxes on the wealthy.

Clinton doesn't get into specifics, his target is just "the wealthy."

Perot would raise income taxes on individuals who make more than \$55,500.

Bush, remembering his "Read My Lips" promise from the last campaign, claims he would not raise taxes at all.

Tax increases on the well-to-do has been a theme pursued by Democrats since time immemorial. Almost every Democratic candidate in recent history has claimed the wealthy do not pay their fair share.

According to a report from the Tax Foundation, a Washington, D.C. based non-profit, not-partisan research and education organization, that may not be true.

The Tax Foundation, in existence since 1937, says

the top 10 percent of income earners paid 53 percent of all federal individual income taxes during 1990, the most recent year they've been able to assemble data for analysis.

Not only that, but the wealthy's share increased steadily over the decade ending with 1990. They paid 48.6 percent in 1980. Their average 1990 tax payment, despite claims that legislation had favored them during the Reagan years, was \$22,342. That's 9 percent greater than in 1980 after an inflation adjustment.

During the same ten year period, taxpayers in the lower half of income earners paid less taxes, declining from 7.4 percent in 1980 to 6.2 percent in 1990.

This report, from a reliable organization such as the Tax Foundation, makes us wonder if tax legislation since 1980 really favored the wealthy, as claimed by some Democrats.

Further, is taxing the wealthy a valid issue for the current presidential race?

Separate ballot may be confusing to voters

Cleveland County Elections Supervisor Debra Blanton, says there has been a rush by non-registered voters to get on the books for the upcoming election. According to reports from her office there was an absolute crush of people trying to beat the deadline last Monday at 5 p.m., and that's admirable.

It's a good sign that those who have failed to exercise their franchise in the past few elections have seen fit to place themselves in the voting mainstream again, or for the first time.

Those who are voting for the first time should be forewarned.

Official ballots, this year, as was the case in 1988,

list the presidential election as a separated entity from other national and local races.

In other words, a voter cannot vote for president by marking the straight ticket box on the ballot.

North Carolina legislators, for reasons known only to them, changed the law after the 1984 election to provide for separate balloting for president.

We don't think that was a good idea. The statute only served to create confusion, and perhaps that was by design.

At any rate, those who intend to vote a straight ticket should be sure to check your choice for president, as well as the straight ticket box on November 3rd.

Employment with benefits may become obsolete

The face of the American workplace is changing, and it isn't for the better.

Large companies are hiring full-time employees less and less, preferring to use part timers to lighten, or avoid, the benefit load.

The part timers are being referred to, in corporate America, as the contingency work force.

The restructuring of businesses is forcing more and more Americans into contingency work with no job security and few benefits. Education, training and flexibility are the keys to success in this less-predictable workplace.

Permanent, full-time jobs with fringe benefits, may become obsolete as we know them.

Let's let Barbara and Hillary settle it

Out in Arizona, two candidates for the state legislature who finished in a tie in the primary election have come up with a novel way to settle their deadlock, according to the U.S. News and World Report.

Unless a judge puts a stop to it, the two Republicans plan to sit down to a game of five-card stud, winner take all.

The candidates figure since their state is part of the old West, there are only two reasonable ways to break the tie, with pistols or cards. Since gunfights are illegal, they chose the poker game.

That might not be such a bad idea for Bush and Clinton. Better yet, why not let Barbara and Hillary have a bake-off?

George will hit harder in the late innings

Sunday was going to be the big night...when Atlanta would wrap up the National League pennant and George and Slick Willie would slug it out in the first of three Presidential debates.

The Braves couldn't get many hits to fall in, and neither could George, Willie and Pepper.

I've read and heard reports saying that each of the three Presidential candidates won. I guess, in each person's opinion, the guy he was pulling for won the debate.

I tried to remain neutral and, in my opinion, none of the three fared much better than the Braves. Clinton got a couple of bingles, and Perot kept the game exciting with his cute quips. Bush never got past first base. If he expects to win, he has to come up with some clean hits in the middle innings (Thursday) and a prodigious home run in the bottom of the ninth (next week). Maybe he'll celebrate his victory with a stop in Kings Mountain next Wednesday!

Perot may call all of his volunteers together, give them a big pep talk and urge them to "win one for the quipper" because his team plays together. "Divided teams lose, united teams win."

Clinton, a learned speaker, didn't hurt himself because he's well ahead in the polls and didn't make any



GARY STEWART
Editor

mistakes. He'll face tougher pitching in the middle and late innings and he'd better play good defense, also. Some say defense may not be one of his strong points.

Bush has experience on his side. He's a crafty veteran with a good fast ball. Defense is his forte. He stands as tall as any previous U.S. President in defense and foreign policy, but people are looking for domestic policy, or offense, this go-round. His only hit may have been when he announced that he's putting James Baker in charge of his domestic game plan.

Perot is a natural comedian and would be home run king on a Saturday night comedy show, but not in the White House. If he does get elected, I want to be in

Washington the day after his inauguration and see everyone "faint" when he runs all the lobbyists over to the Smithsonian. But I don't expect to be there. Even though Perot may be a wizard in business, I don't think too many Americans feel like he can solve our problems in 10 minutes. If Perot had been the President during the Persian Gulf Crisis, Saddam Hussein would have owned that part of the world while Perot was calling meetings of all his task forces.

I agree with Perot on one thing. He does have big ears. So do I, and I'll be interested in hearing what all three candidates have to say as the debates continue. By this time next week, there will be a winner.

SPEAKING OF BASEBALL - Tom Trott came by the other day with a copy of the record book of the South Atlantic League (formerly the Western Carolinas League) of which our own John H. Moss is President.

John Henry has always taken pride in the number of major league players who came through the WCL and SAL. The combatants in this year's AL and NL championships are loaded with John Henry's former players.

Toronto has 22 men who came through the WCL and SAL, including Roberto Alomar. The Braves have

Perot splits vote

Dear Editor:

This concerns the re-entry of Ross Perot into the Presidential campaign.

By re-entering the campaign, Mr. Perot has practically handed the election to George Bush. With the cry for change ringing across the nation, there was only one candidate those wanting change could turn to. That was Bill Clinton. Now with Mr. Perot back in the race, the change vote is split, thus reassuring Mr. Bush's re-election.

According to some political experts here in the Washington, DC area, if the election were being held now, the percentages of the vote would be split an average of 54% for Clinton and 46% for Bush. With Perot in the race, Clinton's percentage would be cut down to 42%, with Perot taking 12%. As a result, Bush wins the election, though with less than 50% of the vote. A similar scenario was recently played out in Great Britain when Prime Minister John Major won the election with less than 45% of the vote due to a divided opposition. This is what happens when there are two strong opposition candidates going against an incumbent. In most cases, the incumbent wins.

I hope that when we go to the polls, we will pick the candidate that will best serve the nation. We must not vote for change for change's sake.

Sincerely,
John Hardin
46850 Muirfield Court #103
Sterling, Virginia 20164

Thanks for support

To the Editor:

The West School Parent-Teacher Organization and students would like to express our appreciation to everyone involved in making our recent hot dog supper a success.

Special thanks to the local businesses that donated items, the West School cafeteria staff, Mr. Toney, Mr. Nicholson and to the individuals who attended the supper. The funds raised would not have been possible without your support.

West Elementary PTO
Marty Childers

We have seen enough

To the Editor:

We have seen enough jobs sent overseas. We have seen enough textiles made in Saipan and stamped with "Made in the USA" labels.

We have seen major units of large companies shut down, and business being sold at auction while distributors were going broke.

We have seen an all-time high in bankruptcies in which large and unpayable medical bills played a large part.

We have seen every industrialized country in the world adopt a system of universal health care except the USA and South Africa.

We have seen an administration in Washington that is fueled only by the almighty dollar.

We have seen enough! As for me and my house, we are going to vote for Bill Clinton and Al Gore on November 3.

Sincerely,
Dean B. Westmoreland

Thanks for M-Day support

To the editor:

On behalf of the City of Kings Mountain, I want to take this opportunity to sincerely thank those "faithful festival-goers" who came downtown on October 3 to enjoy our Mountaineer Day celebration. We were indeed fortunate to have a beautiful, crisp fall day on which to enjoy the variety of food, entertainment and displays.

From food vendor comments and input from entertainers, the day was well worth their while. Most of the vendors reported selling out of their main food items and business in the stores was reported brisk. I hope the vendors, entertainers and the citizens who came to enjoy the day were as pleased with the festival as the Parks and Recreation staff.

Special thanks go to the City Sanitation, Public Works, Police and Fire Departments for all their efforts in making this a safe, enjoyable event. Without their assistance, the Parks and Recreation Staff would not be able to provide this annual event. Denise Falls, Recreation Program Supervisor, is to be commended for her diligence in coordinating all the activities.

Again, thanks to all who came out to support our Mountaineer Day celebration and, for those who have comments on ways to improve your festival, please feel free to give us your input.

Sincerely,
David Hancock,
Parks and Recreation Department

19, including Otis Nixon, Pete Smith, Francisco Cabrera, Rafael Belliard (who played at Shelby), Lonnie Smith, Jeff Blauser, Ron Gant, Tom Glavine, Dave Justice, Mark Lemke and Mark Wohlers. Oakland has only three (and no big names) and the Pirates have 20, including Mike Lavalliere, Bob Walk, Zane Smith, Andy Van Slyke (who played in Gastonia), Jose Lind and Orlando Merced.

MORE POLITICS - A report which came out of Raleigh today will do nothing to boost President Bush's chances in this Democratic state. According to the Clinton-Gore headquarters, a group of Raleigh printers claim Bush contracted with a Brazilian printing firm to provide more than \$1 million in campaign paraphernalia.

"We the People" reports that a national survey last week reveals that more than half the candidates in national congressional races say they favor term limits. North Carolina candidates who favor it include Lauch Faircloth, who is running for the U.S. Senate against Terry Sanford; and Congressmen Cass Ballenger of the 10th District (which until this year included Cleveland County).