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OUR OPINION

Bush AIDS plan is welcome step

President Bush's heartfelt speech on acquired immune deficiency syndrome last week was just what the doctor ordered.
For the past decade or so, AIDS has been a political hot potato. Scientific squabbling, bureaucratic stalling and homophobic finger-pointing threatened to turn it into a national scandal.
President Bush last week broke the radio silence begun by Ronald Reagan — who claimed he knew nothing about the seriousness of the AIDS epidemic until movie star Rock Hudson died of it in 1985 — and he did it in a warm and moving message.
"We're in a fight against a disease, not a fight against people," Bush said. "Once disease strikes, we don't blame those who are suffering. We don't spurn the accident victim who didn't wear a seat belt. We don't reject the cancer victim who didn't quit smoking. We try to love them and care for them and comfort them. We do not fire them or evict them or cancel their insurance."

Bush's speech was aimed at those who persist in wrongly seeing AIDS as a kind of punishment or retribution. Because many AIDS victims and sufferers are gay or intravenous drug users, this non-reasoning goes. This deadly disease was sent to punish them for their sins. Such self-righteous illogic ignores the fact the AIDS virus is a mindless killer that can't tell a gay from a straight, nor an innocent baby from a drug-user.
Bush's remarks came as he announced a proposal to spend \$3.5 billion on AIDS treatment, research and education. That's a welcome escalation of the federal government's war on AIDS, which has already killed more than 65,000 Americans and infected hundreds of thousands more.
Bush also called on Congress to pass a law prohibiting discrimination against AIDS patients and those infected with the virus that causes the disease. Wisconsin already has such a law in place, and few people, if any have found it an onerous burden.
As expected, AIDS activists immediately slammed Bush's efforts as too little, too late. They are wrong. Just as the AIDS virus knows no boundaries, fighting the disease must be an international effort and it is never too late. After the shameful foot-dragging of the past decade, Bush's declaration of war on AIDS and expression of love and concern for his victims should be accepted as giant steps in the right direction.

Hockey tradition grows with title

At Miami or Notre Dame, it's football that endures. At Georgetown or Duke, basketball provides year-in-year quality. But at the University of Wisconsin, the sport that can always be counted on for competitiveness, contest under fire and class is hockey.

For the fifth time, the hockey Badgers have brought home the National Collegiate Athletic Association championship trophy, this time with a 7-3 victory over Colgate University of New York.

Dare we use the "D" word — at in dynasty? For 20 years, Wisconsin has played hockey at a level equal to any collegiate team in the nation. Championship No. 1 came in 1973 and was followed by the thrilling overtime victory over Michigan in 1977. The third national title came in 1981 (the 1982 team was good, but fell one game short) and championship No. 4 was recorded in 1983. The past six years had not produced a national championship, but Coach Jeff Sauer's Badgers were always a threat and never an embarrassment.

Now comes the thrilling "Drive for Five," which caps a season in which the Badgers won the Western Collegiate Hockey Association regular season title, the WCHA tournament and the national championship in Joe Louis Arena in Detroit. Talk about a "hat trick." This has been a year of memories for Badger hockey loyalists... an 18-1 trend that began in January... a half-dozen comeback games in which the Badgers skated back from third period deficits... and incomparable teamwork.

This was a hockey team that lived by words spoken by a football coach, the legendary Vince Lombardi, who once remarked that it is amazing what a team can do when no one cares who gets the credit.

Let's credit them all, then. Sauer and his assistants, seven graduating seniors, the younger players who will be back to defend the title, the managers and the fans. But most of all, credit a tradition of excellence that never seems to wane.

Wisconsin State Journal endorsements

ELECTION



- State Supreme Court: Richard Brown
- State veto-limit referendum: Vote "Yes"
- Madison School Board
- Seat No. 6: Peter Williams
- Seat No. 7: Earl Kielley
- Dane County Board

- | | |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1st District: Carol Beckwith | 28th District: William Howard |
| 2nd District: Leslie White | 29th District: Ken Winkler |
| 3rd District: Jonathan Becker | 30th District: Judy Beardsley |
| 4th District: Gregory DeWitt | 31st District: Lynn Hansen |
| 5th District: Gilbert Halverson | 32nd District: Dennis Soley |
| 6th District: Richard Egan | 33rd District: Susan Gardner |
| 7th District: Mark Gurbani | 34th District: Louis Gardner |
| 8th District: Shary Shiggett | 35th District: Alan Beckwith |
| 9th District: Ron Swanson | 36th District: Beverly Hills |
| 20th District: John Pfeister | |

WISCONSIN STATE JOURNAL

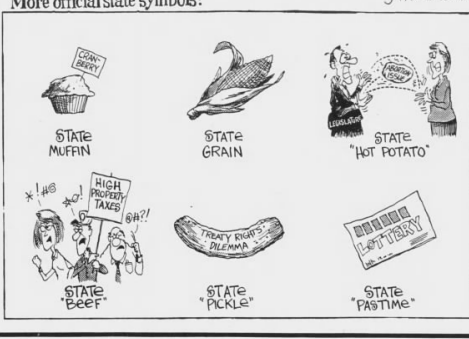
James E. Burgess, publisher

Frank Denton, editor Thomas W. Still, associate editor

State Journal editorial phone are shared by this national board.

OPINION

I'd love to compare my seven years with Rick Phelps... but he won't last that long. Jonathan Barry



Last words on Tuesday's vote

YOUR OPINION

We welcome letters of 200 or fewer words on matters of public interest. Letters are subject to editing and will be run. Please sign and include your address and telephone number. Names and hometowns will be published. Send letters to: Letters to the Editor, Wisconsin State Journal, P.O. Box 808, Madison, Wis. 53708

The March 23 story by Cary Segall regarding the Supreme Court's case-load (was) ... quite misleading. Basically, the story parroted the campaign rhetoric of Appeals Court Judge Richard Brown without providing any further insight into the issues.

Time after time, Brown has attacked Justice Donald Steinmetz for what Brown sees as the low caseload of the Supreme Court. It is the Supreme Court's Chief Justice, Nairn Heffernan, who ultimately determines the caseload of the court. Steinmetz accepts the schedule assigned to him (and) has done more than his fair share.

The Court of Appeals, the same court on which Brown sits, was created to relieve the Supreme Court of a heavy caseload, so that the Supreme Court would have more time to probe issues in depth and issue quality opinions instead of a large quantity of opinions.

Comparing the Wisconsin Supreme Court's workload with that of other states is misleading because some of those states are larger than Wisconsin and therefore have more cases to handle. In some states, not all of the justices participate in every decision, and Wisconsin in some states have larger staffs than do Wisconsin's justices.

In 1989 Wisconsin's Supreme Court accepted 11 percent of the cases it was asked to review, the same percentage accepted by Ohio's Supreme Court, while California and New York each accepted only 5 percent.

— Bob Malloy, Madison

No labels, please

The State Journal's March 23 front-page story on the Wisconsin Supreme Court race between Justice Donald Steinmetz and Judge Richard Brown did not publicize what I labeled Justice Steinmetz as the "conservative."

Such politically and ideologically "liberal" and "conservative" are of especially little relevance in judicial races of this nature, at least where the candidates themselves eschew the use of the terms.

Furthermore, the labeling was not only inappropriate — it was arguably incorrect. For example, although you labeled Justice Steinmetz as "conservative," the fact of the matter is he has been endorsed by all living former Wisconsin governors. That's right: Tony Egan, Marty Schreiber, Pat Lucey, and Gaylord Nelson are endorsing Justice Steinmetz. Is the State Journal going to call them "conservative," too?

At the same time as your story

YOUR OPINION

was labeling the candidates, it didn't even discuss the candidates' respective judicial philosophies. Why not? When covering judicial campaigns, please avoid using politically charged labels, and focus on things like the candidates' judicial philosophies and overall records.

— Mitchell D. Rose, Madison

Don't deny the obvious in school curriculum

I am concerned that Madison school district administration, the Human Relations Department and certain school board members are continually denying to the parents and the public that there is lesson plan material available for use by teachers directly with kids that suggests we teach homosexuality to be moral and natural.

Such is the lesson plan attached to the April 7, 1989 memorandum sent to all MMED Employees. Its suggested audience is fourth through eighth graders and we are asked to integrate their concepts (which means teach it) into our multi-cultural curriculum.

When there are efforts to deny existence of such material it illustrates a serious aspect of the many difficulties of staying on top of what is happening in our schools.

I hope avoidance of the subject, the misleading news stories surrounding this particular memorandum illustrates that we will not do we have to question but we have to dig behind the answers we get. We need faculty, administrators and board members who are willing to seek out answers and discuss them.

I think that Earl Kielley has been a board member willing to do this. Judging by the discomfort and the defensiveness of the people he asks questions of I feel we as teachers, parents and community should look into the events and materials more closely. We, like Kielley, should ask questions as to purpose, value and facts being taught in these materials. We need to look beyond the rhetoric of the various groups involved with these materials to see what they really want kids to learn. I hope Tuesday's election will be a statement by our community that will support leadership who will do the same.

— Halden J. Leedy, 2nd grade teacher

Look at Kremlin's gun control

I find an interesting similarity in what big governments around the world do.

The front page on March 22 proclaimed in headlines "Turn in firearms, Gorbachev orders," and the story under it says the Lithuanians should turn in their guns "for temporary storage" or they will be confiscated. On page 34 we read about our own federal government doing the duty. "A House panel voted Wednesday to restrict the sale and possession of U.S. assault rifles." President Bush's last year banned import of the semi-automatic rifles. The ban last year started out as temporary, too.

It would be wise if the citizens of the United States looked at other countries and saw how gun control supports the heavy hand of big government. And then do something about it.

— R. Bell, Madison

Count unborn, too

Ever since 1989, when I saw the first reports on the 1990 census, it bugged me that an oversight might occur.

President Bush has declared a high degree of anti-abortion opinion. Many others have also insisted that abortion kills unborn humans, thus it is illegal. If the unborn (fetus) is a human, then why is not our government showing responsibility to count fetuses in preparations for this and future census-taking? Many "man-hours" and dollars have and will continue to be spent on counting homeless and other non-participants in the census. Counters could also direct their efforts toward preparation. It would require a bit of teamwork to execute, but anti-abortion states might pick up this position "oversight" and run with it. Madison Mayor Paul Soglin could conceivably see this additional opportunity to raise the census count here for pay purposes.

— E. H. Fisher, Madison

"Natural" contraception

On March 22 a letter I wrote to The State Journal was published. In

Budget ideas explained

Some in the community have expressed concern about my willingness to cut unneeded expenditures out of the Madison school district budget. Let me be clear about this. I will search out and cut unnecessary administrative positions as well as programs which are no longer needed. In addition, I support increased coordination with county social services and with other Dane County school systems to find joint programs.

A school board member also must look for ways to reduce the current burden on the school system's property owners. My suggestions include:

One: The state of Wisconsin pays no property taxes to the Madison school district for state or university property. The state does pay the city every year for general municipal services, but the school district gets no special payment despite the fact that a large portion of the property within the district is state-owned.

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Equal right to kill

I just read the story about women officers wanting to go into combat. That may be equal, but is it good? I think not. I would rather see the women's movement lead society in bringing about peace, as women throughout history have done and are still doing. Falling into the same trap of killing one another is not liberation.

— Peggy Muller, Madison

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— Kathleen Kipp, Madison

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Monday, April 2, 1990

County races test confidence in Phelps era

In one very real sense, the conservative candidates running for 20 contested seats on the Dane County Board already have won their bid to beat back the mild-mannered man they regard as the anti-Christ, the Ayaatollah and Michael Dukakis all rolled into one, County Executive Richard Phelps.

In a late bid to make life less difficult for liberal candidates identified with this year's 20.5-percent tax-levy increase, Phelps promised to recommend freezing the county's tax rate for 1991 and called for a moratorium on new county hiring.

Assuming slight, above-average growth in the tax base (new construction and revaluation), that means Phelps has left himself no more than a 4- or 5-percent increase in property tax collections. Unless he finds a pot of gold at the end of a federal or state rainbow, or dramatically boosts borrowing — something the conservatives won't abide outside of new jail space — Phelps doesn't have much choice but to hold the line on new spending.

So, is everybody happy? Not by a town or city mile.

The conservative and moderate candidates on Tuesday's ballot smell blood. They believe they have Phelps and Co. on the ropes, and they won't be satisfied unless they win control of the 41-member county board.

"I believe this election is crucial," said Sup. Lyman Anderson, 31st District, Oregon, a leader of the not-to-loyal opposition. "Over a period of several decades, county government has emerged as the most effective, best-managed and most cost-efficient form of government. We have taken over city services, and improved them each time. Now (county government) is threatening to spin out of control."

Anderson says Phelps and the board majority lost a grip on the budget last year, when in addition to raising the tax levy, they approved \$5 million in new borrowing for items ranging from water softener and bird house repairs to sealing and caulking windows.

"The only time in recent years that we had increases of that magnitude was when we were expanding the jail, the airport, the Huber Center — all major capital expenditures — and when we went to countywide welfare relief," he said. "Certain departments of county government are now underfunded. We have already had to go to general fund reserves already in the year. These also were left out of the original budget, believe it or not, and money was borrowed from the Solid Waste Fund, leaving us with a cash shortage."

"I don't believe that Phelps can keep the budget under control, and that's before we even begin consideration of the 1991 budget," Anderson said.

Phelps has fired back in defense of his management of the 1989 and 1990 budgets, pointing out that when averaged over two years, the tax-levy increase has been 12.7 percent and the tax-rate increase 5.5 percent. He invites comparison with former County Executive Jonathan Barry, whose budgets showed an average annual tax-levy increase of 13.9 percent and a tax-rate increase of 6.3 percent.

"This county will never see under my administration the kind of steady property-tax increases they saw under the Barry administration," Phelps said.

He also notes that when Barry took office in 1981, the county's debt was \$4 million. It rose to \$25.5 million by Barry's last budget of 1988. True enough, but what Phelps doesn't mention is county government in the Barry era assumed a heavy load of new duties.

"I'd love to compare my seven years with Rick Phelps' seven years, but that wouldn't be fair because he won't last that long," said Barry, now in private business. "The fact is we got something for our money in borrowing and in the levy, including (an expanded) jail, a new airport, a new Huber Center, a new men's shelter, takeover of the city zoo, general relief, 911, a new roof on the Expo Center and an expanded Forum — all this during a period of no increase in state dollars to speak of, declining federal dollars and very flat equalized value increases with decreases in some years."

Phelps is vulnerable on the tax and spending issue, as are many of the lock-step liberal candidates on the ballot. But if the conservative group fails to win the day, it is because some of their candidates have been playing the high-tax tune to the exclusion of all other melodies.

County government continues to change, and this hotly contested election should erase all doubt that it has come of age. A decade ago, it was hard to drum up interest in county board races; this year, candidates are raising and spending thousands of dollars for the right to sit on a board that pays \$50-per-meeting.

In some races, the hold-the-line-on-taxes candidates also express interest in the environment, in recycling, in land-use, in jail crowding, and in more efficient delivery of human services. But in other races, that depth and foresight isn't apparent.

Some of the more conservative candidates are willing to move beyond the urban-rural foolishness that has dominated Dane County politics for far too long; others are not.

This is a referendum on Rick Phelps, but it's also a referendum on moving county government to a new level of efficiency and effectiveness. High taxes are imperative, but so is the future of Dane County.

Still is Associate Editor of The State Journal.