

"Is the school system filled with such self-importance that it feels my children's futures are solely dependent on its efforts."

ERICA MARIE, Today's mail

A8 • Monday, September 8, 2003

OUR OPINION

Don't compromise state's vigilance against CWD

Legislators standing in the way of a ban on deer baiting and feeding in Wisconsin should accept a new study on chronic wasting disease as their cue to do an about-face. The results of the study, released last week, are further evidence that Wisconsin should ban baiting and feeding statewide as part of its effort to control CWD.

The proposal for a partial ban, to be considered by the state Natural Resources Board today, will help to address the emergency created by legislators' shortsightedness. But it is not a good enough solution.

Last week a study in the respected journal *Nature* concluded that CWD spreads more easily than previously thought. It also added to evidence that the disease spreads through contact with saliva and feces. That information is important to the baiting and feeding argument because baiting and feeding bring deer together in ways that invite contact with saliva and feces.

Baiting and feeding deer have long been suspected contributors to the spread of CWD. After CWD was

Research supports a ban on baiting and feeding.

discovered in Wisconsin's deer herd, the state banned baiting and feeding. But that ban has expired. The state Department of Natural Resources proposed another ban, which the Natural Resources Board approved, but legislative committees rejected it. Consequently, there are now no restrictions on baiting and feeding in Wisconsin.

Some legislators have argued a statewide ban was too severe. They proposed compromise legislation that would permit baiting in northern Wisconsin and feeding throughout the state, except where CWD has been found. But if any more evidence is needed that Wisconsin cannot afford to compromise its vigilance against chronic wasting disease, the study in *Nature* is that evidence.

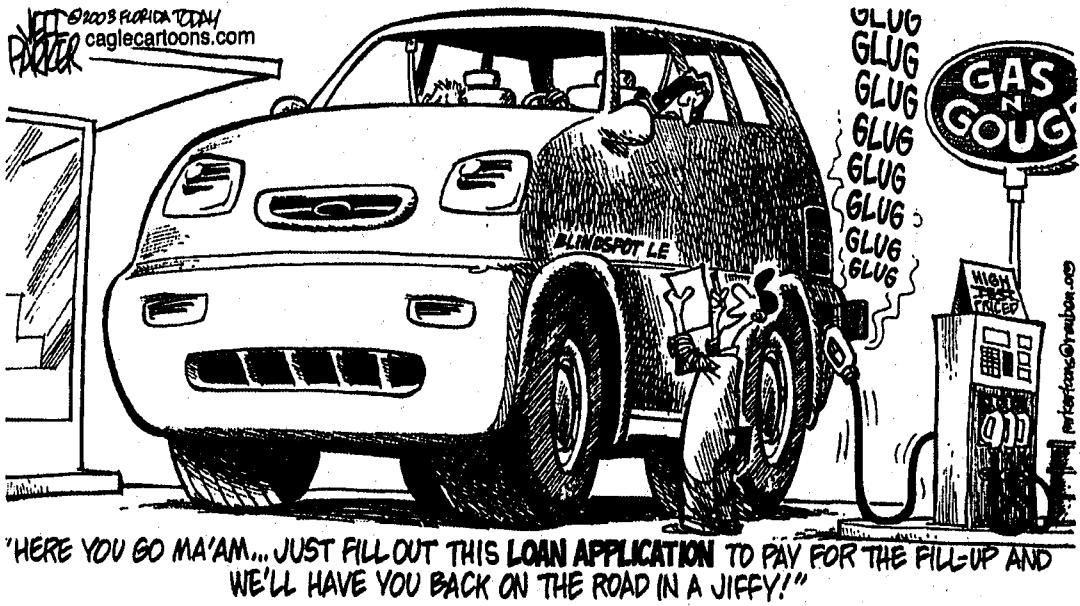
Lawmakers ought to accept what the experts are telling them. The Legislature should pass a statewide ban on baiting and feeding deer to take effect before the fall baiting and feeding season begins.

OPINION

Wisconsin State Journal

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TODAY'S MAIL: UNLEARNING RACISM

Look at home for problems, too

Madison's School Board will try a radical new strategy to resolve the achievement gap that separates minorities from their white peers. The board has hired a consultant to explain why institutional racism holds back students of color. Glenn Singleton's strategy assumes there are policies and behaviors embedded in the school district's procedures that benefit the dominant race. His core thesis is based on what he describes as institutional racism, "A system of advantages and privileges — both consciously and unconsciously, in precise and imprecise ways — that promote white skin, white culture and white consciousness over other experiences." He further states, "Educators must be aggressively anti-racist, not merely non-racist."

The factors with the most impact on the achievement gap are not even mentioned in this strategy. Minority parenting practices and responsibilities in this area must be considered if there is ever to be a truly genuine resolution to this so-called gap. This article was heavy on rhetoric, but until all the factors are made known, there will never be a resolution to this "assumed" problem.

— Don Annen, Madison

know about our children as parents. Fostering a relationship between the student and the school, if sincere, is a noble idea indeed. But the school system should also evaluate the relationships they cultivate with the parents of their African American students, as we are as much a part of the process as they are.

How many parents of black students have been invited to this conference for their input? I checked my mailbox . . . nothing. Or is the school system filled with such self-importance that it feels my children's futures are solely dependent on their efforts?

— Erica Marie, Madison

Minorities must change views, too

Regarding recent articles on the new strategy to deal with the gap in achievement between white and non-white students, I would guess that after all is said and done, not much will change. If I'm right, the whole program will be about how the white majority hate and fear the non-white minority, and until we understand that, there can be no change in outcome of non-white students. Nothing will be said about how non-white students must change their outlook to start closing the gap.

How are non-white students going to have to change? Well, student Travis Knight figured it out as mentioned in the Aug. 23 story; he dressed more mainstream and was not bothered. Those who looked like they were going to cause trouble were stopped. I don't care if you can figure cubed roots in your head, if you look like trouble you are trouble. People pick up on the image you project. Defense attorneys have their clients dress in nice clothes at their trials so they project an image of respectability to the jury. If they came in cut-offs and dirty T-shirts, the jury would see them in a very different light. A side benefit is that if you dress the part, you will act the part.

Race matters. Some say that whites don't expect non-whites to learn. How about the studies that show that non-whites who see their peers doing well or trying to achieve are apt to accuse the achievers of being "too white" or "Uncle Toms." Doesn't this have to change too? If the very people who need to get an education are the ones holding their brothers and sisters back, don't they have to be confronted with their racial views?

When did getting a good education so you could make a good living and contribute to the community become a racial thing? Is anyone going to tell non-white students to get over their hate and fear of whites? I'll bet they don't. I wish you good luck, but I don't think you will see much change.

— A.T. Joyce, Apple Valley, Minn.

Black parents often disregarded

Since moving to Madison from Chicago and transferring my four children into the Madison School District, I've often felt "at war" with the school system.

Almost immediately upon registering my 4- and 5-year-old in Dane County Head Start, it seemed the administrators were trying to shove me into various social or clandestine monitoring programs. This act of apriorism (or more aptly, stereotyping) and assertiveness places black parents in the awkward position of feeling like they have to answer to someone in authority, as opposed to working with a school system which should be answering to us since they're with our children every day.

Furthermore, when a black parent speaks up and requests that a child is placed in a different class, our opinions are not valued or accepted. Why are we disregarded? The answer is the lack of respect for blacks, and the ethnocentric unwillingness by some to accept that we are active, intelligent thinkers and involved parents. I say this to challenge some of the information in the article — blacks do know their rights. But because our rights are seldom respected, so many feel "Why bother?"

Local public school staffs feel they know more as administrators and teachers than we

Coming Tuesday
Guest columnist Richard
Chandler

GUEST COLUMN

Build economy through education

By Richard Carpenter

The need for a more specially educated work force in Wisconsin means government attitude toward and support for educational institutions must rank as one of the state's top priorities. Fortunately, Wisconsin is



Carpenter

recognized for an already impressive educational infrastructure that:

◆ Provides the instructional framework for the state's future work force.

◆ Provides the educational and training skills that enable the state's current work force to use new technologies, improve productivity, keep jobs in and attract jobs to, Wisconsin.

◆ Serves as a major vehicle for enriching and enhancing the lives of citizens by providing them with information and knowledge about economics, history, the arts and civic life that will help them lead and enjoy their lives and participate fully in life in Wisconsin.

◆ Represents a significant investment of public and private dollars. The 2003-05 state budget allocates \$10.52 billion to the K-12 system, \$1.52 billion to the University of Wisconsin System and \$236 million to the Wisconsin Technical College System.

There has been a great deal of discussion about how the magnitude, complexity, cost, performance and missions of Wisconsin's educational infrastructure should interact with the efforts to protect, grow and enrich the state's economy.

For example, most agree that states whose education systems change to meet the needs of the new economy will have a competitive advantage, and many believe that Wisconsin's new economy will need a steady supply of highly paid professionals and people with the advanced skills needed in technical support jobs, business services jobs, hospitality and consumer services jobs, and health care and personal services jobs.

But are the current levels of funding and support sufficient to enable the schools and universities to do what the government and business communities believe the educational infrastructure should be doing?

Those who think education is inefficient and lacks coordination are inclined to believe education can do what needs to be done with existing, or even reduced, financial support. Those who think otherwise are more likely to believe additional investments need to be made in support of the new, expanded demands being made on the systems.

Another issue: Is there an appropriate correlation and synergy between what the schools and universities and the government and business communities believe the educational infrastructure should be doing and what the systems are actually able to do in terms of current operational, organizational, geographic and statutory structures and requirements?

These questions and issues will receive significant attention in the coming months through the Building the New Wisconsin Economy project. Wisconsin's educational system looks forward to joining the discussion.

Carpenter is president and state director for the Wisconsin Technical College System of 16 colleges.

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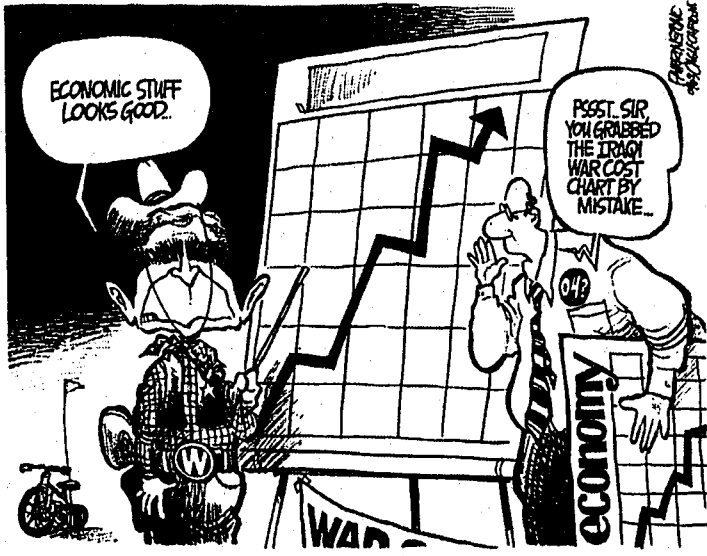
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To Hill, 'thou shalt not kill' meant kill and kill again

Paul Hill died happily Wednesday night. He went into the afterlife with taxpayer-supplied poisons leaking into his veins. In the hours before his execution, he told reporters he expected to receive a grand reward upon arrival in Heaven because he had done what God told him to.

I am a religious man, and it is pretty common in my circle for people to report conversations with the Almighty. One friend says God told him to organize a crusade to stop people in his city from killing one another. Another says God steered her away from making \$8,000 a week as a television writer and told her to study for the ministry instead. My mother used to tell us how God consoled her when doctors said my sister, a tiny infant, prematurely born, was probably going to die. Mom said she stopped weeping immediately. My sister will be 39 this year.

So I'm used to God talking to people. Still, I am, shall we say, perturbed by the idea that He told someone to procure a 12-gauge pump-action shot-



LEONARD PITTS JR.

gun and commit double homicide.

But that's how Hill — a former minister turned anti-abortion extremist — always justified his actions in July 1994. He said he killed an abortion provider, Dr. John Britton, and his bodyguard, James Barrett, outside a Pensacola, Fla., clinic because the Lord wanted him to. The Lord ordered him to whack a guy.

Sounds more like "The Godfather" than God.

I'll tell you something else that strikes me as strange. Every person I've ever known who says God told them to do something has struggled with it, usually because what God wanted was not what they did.

The guy who leads the anti-

violence campaign dithered about it for years, concerned about how much of his life it would consume. The woman who turned her back on TV riches revisited that decision when overdue notices began piling up in the mailbox.

Small wonder. You feel that nudge at the rim of consciousness compelling you to take a leap, pushing you toward something you could never have conceived on your own, and it's only natural to feel stirrings of doubt. To say, Hey, God, is that really you? Are you sure about this? 'Cause it doesn't make a lot of sense to me.

Hill, however, seems to have been a stranger to doubt. The idea of committing the murder first came to him shortly before he actually did it, he told a reporter once, "and as each day passed, I became more certain."

Indeed. Certain enough that he shot two men to death to express his reverence for life.

Now Hill is gone to what he was sure would be a great reward. And one wonders if it ever occurred to him — if it occurs even now to those who

seek to wrap his corpse in a martyrdom flag — that his reasoning is identical to that of a Palestinian suicide bomber, those pious lunatics who commit murder in the assurance that they will be awarded virgins in Heaven.

As if God were not just a hit man but also a pimp.

For the record, I find it chilling to think government could force a woman to bear a child. And I am galled by

those people who seem to think the only purpose of sex is procreation. I'm honest enough to admit, though, that the pro-life folks get to me sometimes. There is a certain moral weight to their observation that abortion stills a beating heart.

But that weight is compromised every time the movement produces a zealot like Paul Hill.

I don't mind telling you, people like him scare me.

People who have every answer and never a single question, people blessedly assured that extremism in the defense of their cause is no vice . . . such people seem less righteous than self-righteous. And dangerous.

Doubt is not a sin. It is the product of a rational mind, a fail-safe against arrogance and error. Against creating God in our own image. All of which Hill was emphatically guilty of.

Someone once asked him if Jesus would have pulled the trigger on that 12-gauge. "Absolutely," he said.

Pitts is a columnist for the Miami Herald.

What do you think?

We're tossing out our regular lineup of syndicated columns this month to give some new writers a try — and we'd like your comments on who should be published regularly in the future. E-mail

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