

From Our Readers:

Undocumented workers not guilty alone

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Body

More arrests of undocumented workers in Gwinnett County, as reported in a recent news brief, and "employers could face sanctions." Shouldn't it be "employers will face sanctions"? Undocumented immigrants are not the problem. The problem lies with employers who offer jobs without checking work permits. Policy-makers should promote laws to arrest those who employ undocumented immigrants.

Nixon was nobody's racist

JOHN GLAVIN Marietta

Richard Nixon never declared a "Southern strategy," as Tom Teepen stated in his column "Ghost of past racial appeals still haunts GOP." Nixon, an opportunist more than a conservative, counted the votes and decided the only way to win was to peel the votes from the easiest source. That source was George Wallace, and not Hubert Humphrey. Nixon's understanding of race in the South led to a policy of upholding civil rights legislation by persuasion, not confrontation. His administration was a flawed group of men who nonetheless enforced civil rights laws while prodding white Southern leaders into doing what was inevitable (much as President Lyndon B. Johnson did) instead of using the more publicly confrontational tactics of President John Kennedy.

I am puzzled by the resentment of "Dixie." It has often been sung as a rallying cry for segregationists and racists, but to suggest that it is used exclusively "over every spasm of racial repression since" the Confederacy is much like saying the cross has become a symbol of repression since racists began burning them at rallies and on lawns.

Health Care Not an attack on men

GEORGIA GENERAL ASSEMBLY WOMEN'S CAUCUS Nine members of the state House signed this letter: Michele Henson (D- Stone Mountain), Dorothy Felton (R-Atlanta), Maretta Mitchell Taylor (D- Columbus), Louise McBee (D-Athens), Sharon Trense (R-Atlanta), Nan Grogan Orrock (D-Atlanta), Carolyn Fleming Hugley (D-Columbus), Pamela Stanley (D-Atlanta) and Kathy B. Ashe (R-Atlanta).

Martha Ezzard's column "When health care reform hits home" begins to tell the history of many of the issues on which the Women's Caucus of the Georgia General Assembly focused this year and the struggles it has overcome.

Ordinary consumers do need a "greater voice" in today's health care marketplace, where fiscal concerns often outweigh patient concerns.

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The Women's Caucus supported Sen. Nadine Thomas' (D-DeKalb) bill to eradicate drive-through deliveries and a bill allowing women direct access to their obstetrician-gynecologist. Both bills passed.

The Women's Caucus is choosing which health care issues it will tackle next year. Two issues are the identification and treatment of sexually transmitted diseases which often have much graver health consequences for women than men and improving the standard of care for cancer patients by participation in clinical trials.

It is time that HMO, managed-care and health care administrators realize that the health concerns of men and women are not always the same.

Legislation designed to protect and promote the health of women is not an attack on men, big business or managed care. But with an increasingly controlled health care environment, this legislation is necessary.

Women given priority

STEFAN TIGGES

In many instances, women's health care needs are given priority over those of men. I am an advocate for women's health care. I spend one day a week at Grady Memorial Hospital reading mammograms and I have been active in breast cancer research.

However, I cannot allow some vague assertion, repeated in Martha Ezzard's column that "there's still a tendency to dump on women" when it comes to health care to go unanswered.

The real danger in corporate-driven health care reform is shared equally by men and women.

For the same reason AT&T announced 40,000 jobs will be cut, insurance companies and HMOs will do whatever they can to cut costs.

Expensive treatments for everyone, not just women, will become increasingly difficult to obtain because of the impact on the bottom line. This is an inevitable outcome when the first responsibility of management is to maximize return to corporate shareholders, and patient concerns become secondary.

Tigges is an assistant professor of diagnostic radiology at The Emory Clinic Inc.

Bye-bye, Buchanan

MARK PHILLIPS Atlanta

In the letter "Dishonest attacks," the writer says Pat Buchanan has repudiated any racists supporting him. Yet Larry Pratt, his former campaign co-director, is merely on a leave of absence after it was proven that he had consorted with various race groups. Is this repudiation? The letter writer says Buchanan is not a misogynist, though he has been quoted as saying "women are simply not endowed" by nature to compete in Western capitalism.

Practically every speech Buchanan has made has been peppered with isolationist dogma. He wants to put up fences. He wants to institute high tariffs to keep out foreign goods. He wants to pull out of Western alliances. Yet, as the reader says, Buchanan would put the 7th Fleet between Taiwan and China and thereby risk a war with a country we could never conquer, a country with nuclear capability and an army that could become four times the size of ours.

This is the man the writer would have president, with his finger on the nuclear button. This man was a festering menace until the latest primaries. May he now retire into oblivion.

Paroling felons

ELAINE M. RONDEAU Marietta

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My family has been victimized twice by homicide and the indiscretions of parole boards; I vehemently object to the editorial that said, "The goal of the parole board is . . . to keep Georgia's most violent criminals behind bars as long as possible."

The board saw fit to release on parole 538 violent offenders in 1995 alone.

Please tell me how safe I should feel with that many felons back on the street.

The parole board serves nothing more than a bed management function.

Stolen property

KEN S. WIEDER Marietta

As the editorial "Confiscation out of control" points out, one need not be guilty of any crime to have one's assets and property confiscated by the government. Although property confiscation laws initially may have been intended to control and punish crime, they have become the crime. Personal property and assets have become unrestricted revenue sources for government. Government agencies are running amok with unabridged power to confiscate the property of innocent people they are sworn to protect.

Is it any wonder a growing number of concerned people distrust government?

Unfair comparison

JAMES ARD Lawrenceville

Dale McFeatters' analogy of pilots and politicians, in the op-ed article "A candidate untainted by experience," was entertaining yet wrong. In airlines, pilots who make bad decisions don't log much experience, whereas politicians who make bad decisions are often rewarded with a lifetime career in government. McFeatters should have chosen organized criminals to compare to politicians. While pilots' experience helps save lives, experienced mobsters are more effective at inflicting pain and holding onto power.

Inhumane wait

RANDALL WHIDDON Ashburn

Making murderers wait on death row for years is cruel.

These murderers should be put to death the morning after sentencing. For us not to rid the world of these hideous people does call our humanity into question.

Trampling human rights is terrorism, too

JAMES DAVID Marietta

I strongly disagree with the letter writer critical of the photo of the grieving Palestinian woman shortly after Israeli soldiers blew up her home. Destroying homes of innocent people is wrong and a violation of human rights, period. If Israel's policy of destroying homes of terrorists' families is the right thing to do, then why are Jewish terrorists such as Baruch Goldstein, who killed 30 innocent Palestinians, and Yigal Amir, who killed Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, not treated in the same manner? The families of the Jewish terrorists live in their comfortable homes while the families of Palestinian terrorists are left homeless.

Time to reconsider married priests

MARIANNE KAPLE Lilburn

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Regarding the article "Catholic priests a and married": In the past 25 years, more than 20,000 Roman Catholic priests in the United States have chosen to marry, and therefore have **not** been allowed to continue to officially function within the Roman Catholic Church.

How ironic that the church will welcome with open arms married Episcopal priests and their families and grant them full exercise of their priesthood but will **not** do the same for its own married priests.

Maybe married Catholic priests should join the Episcopal clergy, as some have done, and then convert back to the Catholic Church.

Graphic

Photo illustration: Richard Nixon and a Confederate flag / WILSON LOWREY

/ Staff

Photo: A blood-pressure monitor

Photo: A wedding

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