

Clarify mission for troops in Somalia

The United States should send troops to Somalia, but only if their mission is clearly defined in advance.

The United States has offered to send 30,000 troops to the war-ravaged African nation to support international aid efforts. The country has been split in half by a two-year-old civil war, leaving millions of Somalis without an infrastructure they can depend on.

As a result, famine has reached epidemic proportions. The international community has attempted to respond with food and medical supplies, but at least half of those supplies are being stolen by the warring factions for their own use.

The United Nations has a 500-man peacekeeping force in Somalia, but it has been completely ineffective and has trouble even protecting itself, much less protecting aid shipments.

The U.S. offer to send troops has been welcomed by both warring factions, but their hospitality may soon dissipate when they realize that U.S. troops will do nothing to assist either side.

The U.S. troops' mission will be to ensure aid shipments reach their intended destinations, primarily rural settlements whose populations have been displaced by the fighting. The troops will escort shipments, supervise their distribution and/or consumption, protect warehouses and keep the main airport and seaport operational for relief efforts.

However, the mistakes of past U.S. military peacekeeping efforts must be heeded, particularly those learned in Lebanon. If U.S. troops are going to be placed in dangerous positions, they should be given authority to return fire.

U.N. peacekeeping troops are often little more than targets. Just watch any nightly newscast to see U.N. troops executing their most well-rehearsed maneuver — retreat.

It should be noted that the role of U.S. troops will not be one of peacekeeping. The United States could care less about who wins the civil war. Its only concern is getting relief supplies to the millions of innocent civilians who have become unwilling victims of war.

The U.S. mission should be clearly spelled out, with identifiable and attainable goals. The same strategic planning used to effectively decimate the Iraqis during the Gulf War should be employed in this greater cause.

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MEANWHILE, BACK IN THE REST OF THE WORLD...

LETTERS

Show the way

It was with some hope that I read Erick Studenicka's article about the declining student turnout at football games. He covered a couple of possibilities for the decline. May I suggest a couple more?

First, the students are actually being educated and therefore realize that football has no place at an institution of higher education.

Second, more and more students are working to pay for the ever-increasing cost of education and do not have time for football.

Go Ducks?

Terry D. Way
Class of '89

No whining

Former U.S. Defense Secretary Caspar Weinberger's reputation appears to be tarnishing somewhat as he faces a trial for his alleged involvement in the Iran-Contra scandal. I urge people to remember Weinberger for the good things he has done.

Weinberger has had a long and impressive career in public service. He was first elected to the California Legislature in the 1960s and served with distinction. He was a moderate Republican who was known for his open-mindedness.

He served briefly as California Finance Director under Gov. Ronald Reagan from 1967 to 1969. His fiscal swift during his tenure led to an appointment with the Nixon administration as director of the Office of Budget Management.

As OBM director, Weinberger earned the nickname "Cap the Knife" for his sharp eye on government waste. He subsequently served as secretary of health, education and welfare under presidents Nixon and Ford. While secretary of HEW, he led a fund-raising campaign for cancer research.

From 1981 to 1987, Weinberger served in his most famous position as defense secretary under the Reagan administration. Under his authority, good order and morale were increased and the upkeep of military equipment was enhanced. The United States stood tall while Weinberger was secretary of defense.

Weinberger may be found guilty as charged, or he may be found innocent in his upcoming trial. Regardless, one must remember the good deeds the

former secretary of defense has performed in his near quarter century of dedication to public service.

Stefan Stent
Eugene

Cry wolf

In the Nov. 23 issue of *The Register-Guard*, there was an article written by Timothy Egan of *The New York Times* titled "Shooting of wolves given OK in Alaska."

While reading this article, I became increasingly outraged at what the state I call home proposed to do and the reasons for it.

Alaska put the five-year plan into effect last week, intending to reduce the number of wolves (by hundreds per year) and grizzly bears. Game officials will shoot them from airplanes, and private citizens will also be allowed to track and shoot them from air and land.

This action will cover a 43,000-square-mile area between Anchorage and Fairbanks, where more than 60,000 caribou, 30,000 moose, 2,000 grizzly bears and 700 wolves live. Keep in mind that all of these animals migrate.

Alaska wildlife officials say they "hope to produce a bounty for tourists and hunters."

Give me a break. Alaska is overrun by tourists and hunters from the "lower 48" every year because things are the way they are. The state needs to think about those of us that call "The Last Frontier" home, animals included, rather than cater to people that already visit Alaska.

I urge you to fight this heinous crime by writing your own legislators or Alaska legislators Jerry Mackie and Fred Zaroff, State Capitol, Juneau, Alaska, 99801-1182.

Jacqueline J. Lynch
Pre-Business

Take a breath

Everything seems entirely out of control. From breathing (that first and every breath) to dying. We are faced daily with choices affecting everything on the planet.

The mounting debt (trillions), the state of the planet, pollution, endangered species — all the way up the chain. Man endangers himself and the planet — maybe even the solar system.

I heard about the Japanese with their heavily laden ship of plutonium, traveling the ocean from France to Japan. Countries all along the way are saying "not in my territorial waters." Who knows what the radioactive life of this substance is and its potential for destruction.

And surely this is connected to the recent claims of sponge or plant materials deep in the ocean with cancer and AIDS-curing properties.

We're all members of this global community. So I say to myself, "Slow up ... take a deep breath ... try to love/like yourself ... the rest will come easier ... think globally, universally, and do the best you can."

Patricia Cahill-McLeod
Cottage Grove

Lynch mob

After having witnessed a public lynching of the Phi Kappa Psi fraternity on the night of Nov. 23, I was awestruck. I have always supported strong, organized and intellectual protest statements against the ills in society. However, the misguided mob that stormed the property of the fraternity did little to help its cause.

The members and pledges of the fraternity in question have taken a pro-active stance in educating the greek system about the tragedy of rape. Everyone present agreed with the anti-rape message being expressed. That was not the problem.

The protest lost its credibility when the individuals involved portrayed all fraternity members as rapists with their signs and repeated hateful jeers. This is simply not true. Rape is a problem of the whole society, not a single organization. Surely the group is aware of that.

If the reason for the march was an attempt to destroy the image of the Phi Kappa Psi fraternity, perhaps it was a limited success. But if the reason for the protest was to speak out against the sickness of rape, the group made little or no impact. There are countless more effective forms than the one chosen on the night of Nov. 23.

I was disgusted by the poorly led and unorganized mob I witnessed that evening. I believe the University deserves a much more responsible and respectable anti-rape voice.

Michael Jones
Political Science
Psychology

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