

Deadline threatens chance for peace

Allowing himself little room to maneuver, President Bill Clinton announced last week that all American troops will be recalled from peace-keeping duty in east Africa's war-torn Somalia by March 31. Period.

Clinton did not provide himself a back door if things should go sour. He might as well have said, "Read my lips." If circumstances should demand a change in plans or an extension of the deadline, Clinton would not be able to adapt. He's stuck; Somalia, be damned.

The strict deadline is an obvious attempt to quiet those who believe that involvement in Somalia could end up as "another Vietnam." This paralyzing fear of military commitment is understandable, but it places unreasonable demands on foreign policy decision making. Are we going to abandon all causes that don't appear to be winnable in a matter of months?

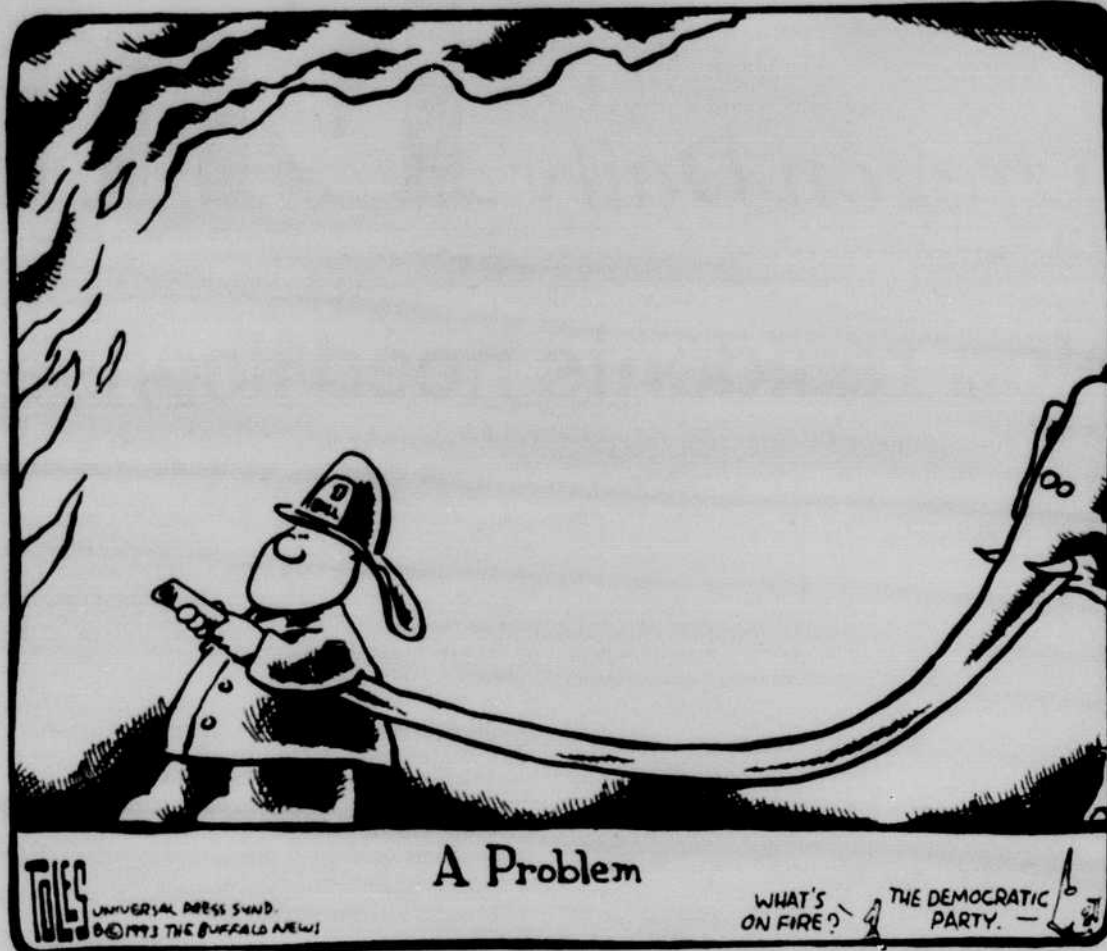
As the world's only remaining superpower, the United States has a responsibility to support the United Nations in its efforts to keep peace and provide relief to people in poor and war-torn nations. There is a limit to how long we should be expected to prop up a country, of course, but placing an absolute deadline for U.S. involvement there worsens it, will be difficult for Clinton to order the troops to pack up and go, knowing that the situation is little different than when they arrived.

The U.S. legacy in Somalia should not be one of heavy-handed control. We should make every effort to encourage peace talks between the warring clans, and hopefully leave Somalia with some form of transitional government in place. But expecting all that to be done by the end of March, even with an expanded U.S. presence in the meantime, is highly optimistic.

Fortunately, the president's announcement does indicate that he realizes that it was a mistake to abandon the stated role of the United States in Somalia from one of humanitarian relief to hunting down warlord Mohamed Farah Aidid. Whatever threat he may have posed, taking him on was a grievous error, which has already led to the deaths of at least 18 American servicemen and the capture of another.

Clinton has dispatched distinguished negotiator Robert Oakley to Somalia to help jump-start peace talks that have been stalled there for months. Clinton has stated publicly that there needs to be an "African solution to an African problem" and hopes that Oakley (who was the Bush administration's representative in Somalia) will inspire the neighboring states to take the initiative in helping to reestablish long-term order and a stable government in Somalia.

Such an arrangement would be ideal. Continued U.S. presence in Somalia will only foster anti-American sentiment in the region, no matter how noble our intentions. If our armed attempts to create a long-standing peace are going to be disregarded as evidence of American imperialism, then the only option available is to leave it up to the Somalis. And hope for the best.



A Problem
 T.S. UNIVERSAL PRESS SYND. ©1993 THE BUFFALO NEWS
 WHAT'S ON FIRE? THE DEMOCRATIC PARTY.

LETTERS

Driking on job?

As a longtime resident of Eugene, I decided to take advantage of having the University nearby by registering for a class this fall. Today, as I was waiting for my student ID to be processed, I glanced at the lead article in the *Emerald* (ODE, Sept. 30), regarding the "ASUO Executive pair" by Scot Clemens.

As I opened to the continuation on Page 3, I noticed the "Accent On" box highlighting each of the execs personally. I was astounded to see that the third item considered of greatest importance to highlight was their "Favorite 'Driking' Establishment."

Six years ago I took an undergrad economics class with Barry Siegel, who is an outstanding and interesting teacher. Barely half of the class would show up each session. I realized this when the exam came.

This fall I am taking Chinese 101 and attendance appears to be excellent. I trust this means that the students are there to learn this time.

However, my experience five years ago and the apparent fascination of the student body with the trendiest "driking" establishment leaves me with little doubt why the tax-paying public is and will be reluctant to increase its tax burden unless there is a greater reason to do so.

Gail Newton
Eugene

the courts overrule the OCA's initiatives, his group would simply replace the judges. Fisher scoffs at this remark and makes a weak joke about shaving cream and brain cells; then, he ironically says, "Think about it."

Ever since Pat Robertson's failed presidential run, his Christian Coalition, of which the OCA is a part, has explicitly stated its new approach: running "stealth" candidates who operate "below radar" by running in local elections rather than in the national arena (their words). It targets local offices: school boards, city councils, mayoral seats, and yes, Martin, they even run candidates for judicial seats.

These are races to which few voters pay much attention — races where a little of Pat's money goes a long way. Once the Oregon Supreme Court becomes packed with conservative Christians, it can interpret the law any way it sees fit, and we will all suffer.

The OCA has every right to exist. Oregonians should not try to ban the OCA; rather, we should try to render it politically impotent. If we focus only on the OCA itself, or its flagship issue, homosexuality, its ultimate platform proceeds unscathed. The OCA is the embodiment of Pat Robertson's "Think Globally, Act Locally" campaign; never forget it.

Tyler Hoffman
Eugene

serves as a LING 199 course for academic requirements.

Two other omissions that I'd like to have seen are the fact that it is taught on a voluntary basis and much of the credit for arranging it goes to Professor Tom Givon from the linguistics department. For people excited to know how much Arabic they already know, I mention, in passing, that the decimal digits (0 through 9) are Arabic. We Arabs use Indian numerals maybe because we bought their spices and got the numerals free.

If this is confusing, people interested may talk to me at 345-3160.

Abed Khooli
Physics

Enquirer

Please!!

Has anyone on your staff reviewed the content of your newspaper recently? I thought you were supposed to be a University newspaper, focusing on campus and local interests.

I don't mind the inclusion of some national news, since, for many students, your rag may be their only access to a daily newspaper. However, I am disappointed in your selection. Just look at your AP headlines from your Wednesday, Oct. 6, edition: "Portland women plead no contest to hand sex," "Prisoners may be tough, but security is tougher," "Buttafuoco finally admits he slept with Amy Fisher," "Priest admits to molesting 28 children in the 1960s," "Wife maims man, pleads insanity," and the ultimate: "Alligator gobbles up woman, 70."

Really!! This is what I expect to find at the Safeway checkout stand. I certainly expect something a bit more scholarly from a college newspaper! Or are you descending to the crass intellectual wasteland of modern-day pop society?

Rebecca Mikesell
Eugene

Stealthy OCA

The content of Martin Fisher's column on the Oregon Citizens Alliance (ODE, Oct. 4) comes off nearly as reactionary and shallow as any typical pro-OCA argument. The danger of this is that by failing to understand the OCA's goals beyond the gay-rights issue, Fisher depicts it as less of a threat than it truly is.

In the article, Fisher paraphrases Mabon as saying that if

Spicy numerals

I'd like to clarify a few points that might have been foggy after the publication of the article in Sept. 29 *Emerald*. The course is being offered winter term, but is not a regular course yet, i.e. although it has a CRN and title assigned to it, this does not mean it is going to be offered next academic year for sure. It is a three-credit course with graded option, as mentioned, and

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