

Look closer at spending cuts

There's been a lot of turmoil in Washington and around the country about the spending cuts being passed by the Republican-controlled House.

Our representatives were put there because we the people thought the Democrats had been in power too long and it was time for a change. So we handed the keys to our country over to the GOP and asked them to take over for a little while. And look what they get out of the deal — nothing but bad publicity.

So before a formal lynch mob is created, we should slow down and take a closer look at some of the cuts, because many of them are actually things we've been calling out for.

It's common practice to only rent a house or apartment that you can afford. So why should the government spend \$2.7 billion in rental assistance for the poor?

There are all sorts of places to live that are pretty cheap, and if an individual can't afford even that, what about the Mom & Pop Motel? If that's not a viable option, I'm sure there are a few savings and loans around the country that will graciously lend money to help, at a small interest rate.

Aren't they the thoughtful individuals?

That leads us to the cutting of \$1.89 billion to help modernize and develop public housing. Surely our fearless Congress wouldn't want people to improve on their shacks, because that would be against the idea of rental assistance, and why would they want to develop more of these housing units when the money could be better used for building, say, a whole new fleet of B-2 bombers?

Of course if we eliminate those programs, it's only logical to cut



Robb Goff

the \$404 million allocated for subsidies for public-housing authorities, because if there's no public housing, why do we need people to run the show?

Now the suits in D.C. not only create their own ideas, they listen to the people, and one of the things they often hear about is how bad pollution is getting. So in their infinite wisdom, they probably see the \$351-million cut in federal aid to highways as a positive thing.

Car emissions are part of the pollution problem, right? If highway maintenance declines, then fewer people will want to drive cars on the roads. And if fewer cars are on the highways, then there is less emission coming from the cars and that helps the pollution problem. Or so the thinking probably goes.

Now being really crafty, they decide to cut \$76 million in grants to local mass-transit systems, because why would they want to make life easier for the average Joe getting to work? Polls have suggested that people worry about their health and are having a hard time exercising, so by eliminating this grant, people will have to walk or ride a bike to get to work.

See, not only are they helping to solve the pollution problem, they are helping America shape up and become healthier. This, in turn, will result in Americans knowing

how to take better care of themselves and the dangers that are out there, thus the elimination of \$36 million in AIDS prevention and care is logical.

We must not forget about family values, since that is an important part of the GOP platform. Every time a child is taken from his or her parents, the Republicans scream foul, so why not keep them at home with the family? That must be the idea behind the elimination of \$1.7 billion from summer youth programs. Kids should stay with their families and not at camps. Family values, gotta love 'em.

My personal favorite is the cutting of \$159 million from the building of 13 new federal office buildings and courthouses across the country. Couple that with the \$272 million being slashed from law-enforcement, commerce and diplomatic programs and we should see that they are just trying to streamline the court processes.

When someone is found committing a crime, why wait to go to a new courthouse? Just call the judge and get 12 people to hold court on the spot. Give the jury time to deliberate. If it's a guilty verdict, get the police to haul them directly to one of the new prisons being built on the sites where the liberals wanted to create public-housing units.

So let's not look so harshly on these spending cuts, because everybody knows that Newt and Co. would never try to hurt the needy or the poor, or throw people into the streets just so the rich can have more tax cuts. That would be wrong, and they would never do anything wrong because they're Republicans and they're in touch with the American people.

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Presidential race hinges on abortion

The Democrats and President Clinton think they have found the wedge issue they've been looking for. It is abortion.

Those advising the president have encouraged him to use the nomination of Henry Foster as surgeon general to undermine the GOP's "big tent" strategy.

Fresh out of good ideas and afraid that the new Republican congressional majority reflects a mood in the country that could shut them completely out of power, Democrats have returned to an old standard they believe is the Achilles' heel of the Republican Party.

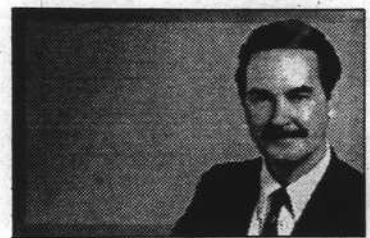
So desperately do the Democrats wish their strategy could win that The New York Times columnist Frank Rich last Sunday attempted to make the case for Sen. Arlen Specter (R-Pa.) — a pro-choicer — as a presidential winner. "Mr. Specter bears watching as the increasingly attractive alternative who could shape his party's most explosive internal debate," wrote Rich. Forget it. Specter won't win a single delegate. The momentum is headed the other way.

Not one pro-life incumbent, Democrat or Republican, lost in the 1994 congressional races. In the past, when pro-choicers won, much of the press and their ideological soul mates in the abortion lobby hailed the election results as proof of a national mood swing. They are silent about the 1994 election because it produced evidence of a swing in a different direction.

Republicans can, and should, take advantage of this new momentum by enthusiastically embracing the pro-life position but with a new focus: on women.

At the party's 1996 convention in San Diego, Republicans should feature women in crisis situations who have had their babies. Women could tell of their struggles and how deciding in favor of another life enhanced their role as life-givers and enriched their own lives. One speaker should be Gianna Jessen, the teen-age girl who survived a saline abortion and goes public in a new book, "Gianna: Aborted and Lived to Tell About It."

Couples who adopted children could laud birth mothers' selflessness. Women who regret their abortions could say what



Cal Thomas

many have told me: "If I had only known, I would never have done it," and "If someone had told me about alternatives, I would not have had an abortion." Life would be seen as a beautiful, and right, choice.

The strategy would be simply to tell the truth, which exposes the philosophically empty position of "choice" as bogus and indefensible in light of the momentous issue of life and death.

As long as Republicans remain reluctant to trumpet their pro-life stand and the reason for it, Democrats will dictate the grounds of the debate and keep Republicans on the defensive. This will allow Democrats to mislabel and manipulate public opinion. By emphasizing women, Republicans can counter the pro-choice propaganda at the very point of attack.

The chairman of the Texas Republican Party, Thomas Pauken, has it right in his new book, "The Thirty Years War": "You cannot talk seriously about American politics without dealing with the deeper questions of what set of basic values should frame our culture. ... For better or worse, the time for the final showdown between the conservatives and the New Left is drawing near."

How appropriate that this showdown should come over the fundamental issue of human life. Republicans should accept this challenge from Democrats (and from pro-choicers within the Republican Party) as they once accepted the slavery issue as their own. Coupled with their plans to fix what's wrong with government and the rest of the virtue agenda, Republicans can take the Democrats' "wedge" and over it march a Republican president into the White House on Jan. 20, 1997.

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Minorities in NHL penalty box

The other day, I was lying on the couch watching TV. Now, I should let you know that there is, in fact, nothing unusual about this. I often lay on the couch watching TV. "Big deal," you're probably saying to yourself (if you even decided to read this far).

Big deal, indeed.

It is not in the simple act of lying on the couch watching TV that the meat of this column lies. It is in the contents of the TV programming that my brain so eagerly drinks.

"What is there on TV," you might ask, "that's so great I need to read a whole column about it?"

"Not much," I would answer.

Not much, that is, in the normal flow of crap that is belched out by the cathode-ray tubes of the world — but I wasn't watching just any old flow of crap.

I was watching hockey.

As you may know, hockey is a game played by men of Canadian extraction, as well as by some Russians and other people from places where last names are not allowed to contain vowels.

The game consists of chasing around a little black disc and beating it with a stick until it falls into a netted thingy called a goal. Apparently, bonus points are awarded for making an opposing player vomit his own blood. I don't know this for sure, however, because the rules of hockey are as difficult to understand as the instructions that come with every "made in Taiwan" household appliance.

The games can be entertaining for a few minutes, but personally, I just don't have the stamina to watch a whole hockey match.

In short, I just don't like hockey. Never have.

I've never liked it because I



Doug Peters

always thought it was kind of stupid. Now I have an even better reason: Hockey is racist.

That's right — racist. Here's the deal. I'm laying there on my couch watching hockey, hoping for a burst of energy so I can reach for the remote and find something somewhat less stupid to watch.

Then it hits me. There is not a single minority on the ice. Not one. No blacks, no Hispanics, no Native Americans and no Asians. Not one single minority (unless Canadians count, and I don't think they do).

Being a politically correct, multiculturally oriented, somewhat left-of-center guy, I am obviously appalled. I mean, I'm no Mother Teresa, but I can smell the pungent odor of injustice as well as anyone, and it makes me sick.

I didn't let the feelings fester, though. I did something about them.

I picked up the phone to call the headquarters of the National Hockey League so I could voice my outrage. I eventually spoke with Gordon "Gordy" LaFlambeau, a Quebec native who served as public relations director for the league and who later confided that he was the inspiration for Monty Python's "I'm a lumberjack" sketch.

"Gordy," I said, "what's the deal

with this no-minority thing? I am shocked and revolted that an institution as large as the NHL can get away with such outright discrimination in the enlightened '90s."

"It's not a matter of discrimination, Mr. Peters," LaFlambeau began.

"My dad is Mr. Peters, you patronizing bastard," I interrupted. This white-power idiot wasn't going to put anything over on me.

"Uh, fine," LaFlambeau continued cautiously, "but it really isn't a matter of discrimination. Anyone is eligible to try out for a team. The only deciding factor is the person's ability to play hockey. Now the sad fact of the matter is that very few minorities play hockey. Of those few who do, a tiny number may be good enough to try out for a professional team. If a minority tries out for a team and he's good enough to play, he will make the team. That I can promise you."

"After all," LaFlambeau said, "we work strictly from the merit system here."

I hung up. "These guys are airtight," I thought to myself. "They've found all the stupid little loopholes — merit system, indeed."

Well, I may not have a legal case against these guys, but I can tell you one thing: I'm done watching hockey. I'm not going to watch it, I'm not going to read about it, and I might even write some angry letters to advertisers.

Yes, indeed, no more hockey for me.

From now on, I'm sticking to something more racially balanced. Like professional bass fishing.

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Mike Luckovich