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EDITORIAL

OUR VIEW

State of the University would improve relations

“He shall from time to time give to the Congress information on the State of the Union and recommend to their consideration such measures as he shall judge necessary and expedient.”

President Barack Obama fulfilled one of his executive duties as described in the Constitution on Jan. 27, when he addressed the Senate, the House and the country in his first State of the Union. It's a time for citizens to hear what's going on in the country and what the President hopes to accomplish in the coming year. It's a time-honored, informative, worthwhile tradition. It's so worthwhile that we'd like to see our University presidents follow the trend and begin to address the school at-large in a yearly State of the University.

There are States of the City and States of the State, so why not States of the University? Once a year, students should get the opportunity to hear the goals, setbacks and successes the University experiences from the President. It's a good time for the administration to reach out to students. Often there is little discussion between the administration and students, and this would be a straightforward way to learn about the good, the bad and the ugly of our University.

As a new regime begins to step into the leadership role in the next year, it is a good time to begin this new tradition of communication. If the Presidential Search Committee and the Board of Governors choose Provost Troy Paino as the next University President, Paino would be the perfect president to begin the tradition. His public speaking skills and his recent election would offer a great opportunity for students to put a face on the office of the President and to listen to an

eloquent description of the state of our school.

Like the State of the Union, there would be enough coverage with Truman's student media outlets that the State of the University would reach most students. Although not all students will show up to see the President's speech, the campus media coverage later would fill students in on the highlights. It would be a way for the University administrators to get their intentions out to a larger audience. Alumni, parents and community members are likely to watch as well, building publicity for the school.

Most importantly, it is a way for the University to usher in a new era of discussion among community members. The recent forum with Paino is only the beginning. Administrators work to serve the interests of students, so they should make themselves available to inform the University and foster interest among students, faculty and staff. Students no longer can say they aren't well-enough informed on University issues, and administration can't say the University at-large won't listen.

The Constitution of the United States intended the State of the Union to be a platform to talk about what is going right and wrong. The University is quickly approaching times when budgets will be cut, jobs will be lost and the reputation of the University could be at stake. The State of the University speech is one way to bring the University together that won't cost any money or jobs and will only increase the prestige of the school. It would show that students and administrators take this institution and everything it stands for seriously.

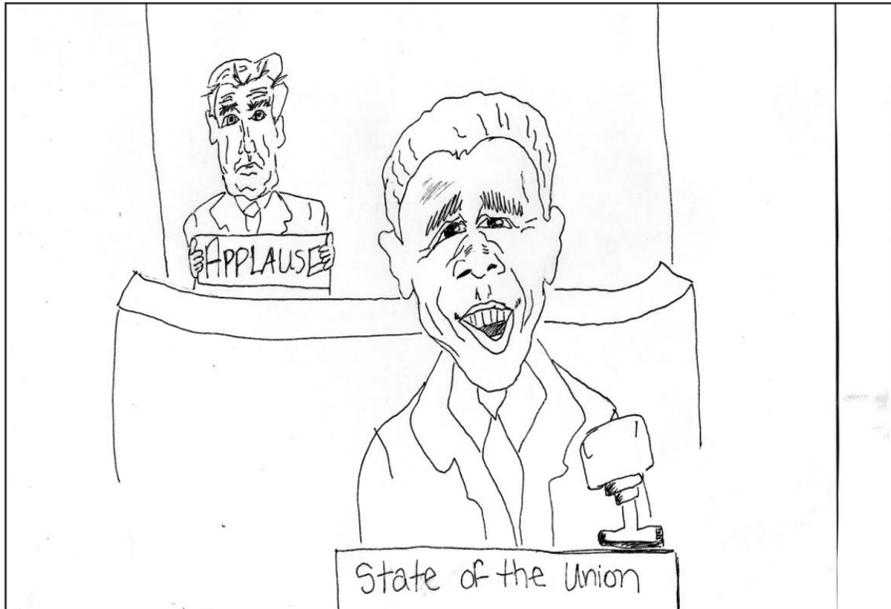
CORRECTIONS

To submit corrections or to contact the editor, please e-mail index@truman.edu, call us at 660-785-4449, or send a letter to Index, 1200 Barnett Hall, Truman State University, Kirksville, Mo, 63501.

•In the Jan. 28 edition of the Index, senior Katrina Biermann's first name was misspelled in the Athlete of the Week story on Page 18.

CARTOON

By Alex Boles



Letters to the Editor

Luetkemeyer represents Midwest

To answer the serial letter-writer Larry Iles, Kirksville resident's hypothetical appearing questions in the Dec. 21 edition of the Index, I offer the following.

The answer to the first question about "does anyone object to elected officials keeping constituents informed and counseled?" is no. Of course, no one except Iles would object to our Representative keeping his constituents informed, because it's part of his job. The answer to the second question about "should politicians practice what they preach?" is yes, they should.

To answer his 83-word, one sentence question consisting of the third paragraph which asks "what does Congressman Blaine Luetkemeyer think he is doing...?" The answer is Blaine is doing the peoples business, which is more than the liberal politicians of Larry's ilk are doing.

Larry calls Blaine a "reactionary." Larry is the reactionary since he believes in big government, high taxes, central federal control, fascist, nanny-state, administered by academics. And oh, yes, he says he is British in origination.

I originated in rural Memphis, Mo., and represent the ideology of the majority of the people in the U.S. (I am also a proud Fox TV fanatic.) In contrast to Larry's ideology, most of us are conservative, strict-constitutionalist voters of the 9th District, as is Congressman Blaine Luetkemeyer. Hopefully, Larry will look up the meaning of the Constitution in the dictionary. Blaine is the best Representative we've had in a long time and the best we are likely to have for a long time to come. He is just the right person to represent the inde-

pendent, patriotic, freedom-loving people of these United States.

In Larry's last 56-word sentence question, he made the accusation that our elections are not fair. I agree that sometimes they are not, but it is the union-heavy, Obama-Acorn cheating, community organizing liberals that cause unfair elections.

I want to receive Blaine's information and it is not, as Larry put it, "unadulterated propaganda" and "charlatism [sic] in fraud." (Larry meant Charlatanism.) Blaine is not promoting "extreme, right-wing ideology." Only from Larry's extreme, left-wing, socialist position would it look that way. Larry is a fanatical mischief-maker, and an avid promoter of the propaganda and fraud of the debunked climate change hoax. Larry should be taking his frustrations out on his Sen. Claire McCaskill, who is doing more harm to our country by supporting Obama's unpopular and harmful stimulus give-aways, private enterprise interfering, tax raising, terrorist protecting, misguided statist policies. By the way, Kit Bond has been an outstanding Missouri Senator.

But I do love the freedom Larry Iles is provided by our country of which he takes full advantage, and he must like the luxury provided by our capitalist system of which he is not a part.

*Richard C. Roberts
Truman alumnus*

Racist jokes abandon common sense

Several years ago, while waiting in an airport security line with our children, we made them read aloud a sign instructing passengers not to even make a joke about bombs,

weapons or any other type of threat. They wondered why not — don't airport security people have a sense of humor? I'm sure they do, we told them, but this is not the time or place to make that kind of joke, and nobody would be amused.

Living in a world where people actually do kill others because of their skin color or ethnic background, their religion, their sexual orientation or even their position on abortion, it seems common sense would tell us that it is simply not funny to make a joke about violence toward any particular group. The problem with such "jokes" is that the speaker may say they don't mean anything by it, but it does mean something to those in the group being threatened. It makes us into "others" rather than neighbors or friends, "targets" rather than people and ultimately "disposable." This kind of casual hate speech creates the illusion that hate is acceptable. So even though the person making the "joke" might have no intention of acting on their words, other people are listening and one of them might decide to follow through.

People make mistakes. We all do something really stupid at some point in our lives. Ms. Oetting, I appreciate the fact that you have apologized for your actions, and I accept your apology. While I was upset to hear your Twitter comments, I understand that you felt you were just kidding when you suggested a killing spree against Jews, and I understand that you never intended your "private joke" to become public. But to anyone out there who indulges in casual hate speech, let me ask you this: If someone took you seriously and acted on your words, would you feel comfortable going to the victims' families and saying, "Hey, it was just a joke. I didn't mean anything by it?"

*Barbara Smith-Mandell
Kirksville resident*

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Serving the University community since 1909

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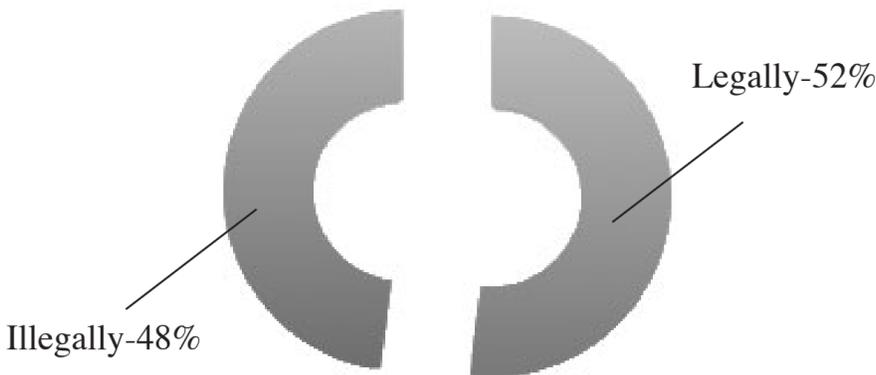
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