

Moran's mission: fix 'No Child' law

First District Congressman Jerry Moran, hardly a supporter of the No Child Left Behind law, has introduced legislation to ease the unrealistic burdens attached to what otherwise could have been a pretty good piece of legislation.

His Practicality in Education Act will utilize, what he calls, common sense ideas to make No Child Left Behind more realistic and effective. Congress is set to examine No Child and potentially reauthorize it this year.

Many educators across the land look at No Child Left Behind as an anchor around their necks. It seemingly leaves little time for teaching, thanks to overregulation. "We must not take the joy and passion out of this noble profession by requiring things that are simply not possible," he said. His Practicality in Education Act takes a closer look at No Child, by employing a common sense approach to make this federal program more realistic and manageable.

Republican Congressman Moran voted against No Child when it became law in 2001. His reason was simple: he feared it would place unnecessary restrictions on Kansas schools and increase costs to the state's taxpayers. Falling through the cracks would be the absence of corresponding improvement in the quality of education the students receive.

Since its passage, he has had numerous discussions with students, teachers, administrators, state officials and Department of Education officials to determine what measures are needed to fix some of the unintended consequences.

Dale Dennis, who has been serving as Interim Commissioner of Education, added this comment: "It is important the No Child Left Behind legislation be updated to make it more equitable and fair for all children and to reduce the paper shuffling for our teachers and administration."

The Practicality in Education Act places special emphasis on individual student progress and gives a more accurate picture of improvements and problem areas. It also allows schools identified as failing one additional year to improve before being labeled a failing school.

It also provides states with the flexibility to consider special education and rural teachers who teach multiple academic subjects as "highly-qualified" in all subject areas if they meet certain requirements. This is said to be particularly important in rural Kansas, where flexibility is needed in hiring school professionals who often teach several subjects and find it difficult to become certified in all areas.

Additionally, this legislation includes special considerations for English-limited speaking and special education students.

Rep. Moran is as passionate about "fixing" the No Child Act as advocates are that the act is doing as intended.

We side in with Congressman Moran on this one.

—Tom Dreiling

Mike Wallace stepped way over the line

The CBS Sunday night "60 Minutes" program, leading off with a look at Republican presidential candidate Mitt Romney and his family, received no more than a "C" grade from us, thanks to interviewer Mike Wallace's insistence on digging under the bed covers to find out what he wants to know.

The sleazy question as to whether the Romneys had premarital sex, was as morally low as they come. Why did the aging Wallace think the country needed to know that?

A lot of the Wallace focus was on Mr. Romney's religious beliefs. As a Mormon, he has come under attack from some quarters in this country. We can remember when John F. Kennedy was seeking the presidency and how his being a Catholic was an issue. It ended up not hurting him as he was elected President of the United States. And no, the pope didn't move into the White House, as was widely whispered back then.

We think most Americans are concerned with a candidate's ability to run the country. That's why we elect or reject them.

Maybe it's time for Wallace to take a hike.

—Tom Dreiling

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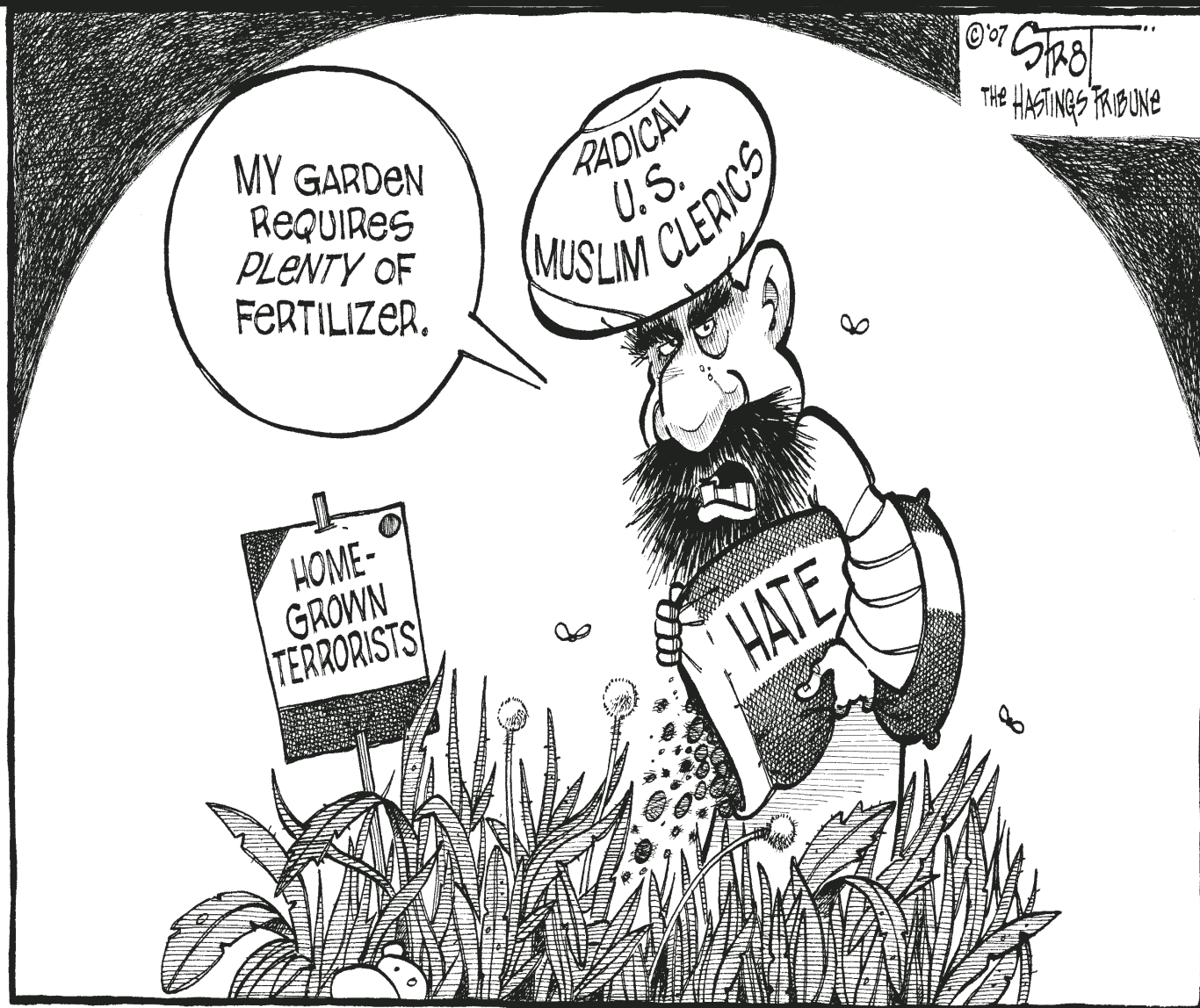
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My 'stuff' went fast at garage sale

Our little town had its annual city-wide garage sale Saturday. At least 23 families signed up to sell things they no longer needed or wanted. It's true, "One man's trash, is another man's treasure." I've never seen such traffic. Shoppers buzzing from one house to another. And, I was right in there with them.

We sold out immediately, so I had plenty of time to cruise town and look for bargains. I found the perfect lampshade for a unique lamp one of my daughters gave me; the cutest little shabby-chic three-drawer dresser; and two plastic platforms to put in my kitchen cabinet to stack spices on.

How did we sell out so quickly? Because I only had three items: an entertainment center and two light fixtures. Our new neighbor across the street, south, took all three, so we were done. Besides, every time I mention "garage sale," Jim says, "Carolyn, I'll write you a check for

Out Back Carolyn Plotts



\$26.52 and I won't have to carry it all out; you won't have to waste a day sitting there; and I won't have to carry it all back in at the end of the day." Smart guy.

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With a recent clean-up project almost done, Jim got the urge to plant a garden. We've never had any luck growing tomatoes in the location we've had them. So, it was time to try new "digs." He tilled up a nice little patch, amended the soil with some sand and I added the "finishing touch." I can't believe I'm admitting to this, but I actually agreed to pick up "cow chips" to fertilize the garden. Anything to

help the cause.

Last summer we "pastured" our two calves on our empty lots. Jim ran electric fence and every so often we had a round-up and moved them to greener fields. Of course, they left their "deposits" and Saturday night, I was out there, with a bucket, picking up chips. I kept telling myself, "Think of the tomatoes. Think, of the tomatoes." My grandmother used to burn "buffalo chips" in her stove, so I guess I can pick up a few chips if it means better tomatoes, zucchini and flowers.

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Sunday was Mother's Day. Here's how ingrained mothers are in our lives.

A high school science teacher spent an entire class period on the basics of magnets. The next day he gave a pop quiz. The test began, "My name begins with the letter 'M.' It contains six letters and picks up things. What am I?"

More than half the class answered: Mother.

Is this a way to handle business?

Drug re-importation has long been an issue in American politics. It's not surprising, therefore, that the Senate once again is considering whether U.S. consumers should be able to purchase medicines originally manufactured in the United States, exported abroad, then later re-imported back into the country.

But hidden in this latest legislation is a "forced sale" provision that not only would cause enormous harm to the health care industry, but also set a dangerous precedent for government interference into private business deals.

"Forced sale" is quite simple — the government forces an American company to sell its wares and sets the terms of the sale to any foreign firm planning to export those wares back to the United States. Not only would the U.S. company be unable to walk away from the table, but it also would have to sell at the lowest price charged to any other firm in that country. Furthermore, the quantity sold must be at least as large as that provided to any other foreign buyer in that country.

This forced-sale provision isn't just anti-American; it is an unprecedented intrusion of the federal government into the operations of U.S. companies.

Through forced sale, the government decides to whom a company will sell its goods, how much of those goods it will sell, and for what price. And if the company refuses to comply with the U.S. government's requirements for its transactions and operations in the foreign market, it will be prosecuted in American courts under American law.

Sound kooky? It should. It's common

The Drug Sales Controversy By Dr. Lawrence A. Hunter

sense to think that a business has the right not to sell a product or the right to refuse to sell to certain customers on unfavorable terms. But forced-sale provisions revoke these very integral principles of how business is conducted.

Proponents of forced sale argue that it's the only way to make sure that pharmaceutical companies allow the free flow of their drugs from foreign markets, where prices are cheaper, to the American market, where brand-name drugs tend to cost more. It's just free trade, they say.

To the contrary, it is just another form of government-managed trade and one that likely will fail to benefit consumers very much since most of the difference between the foreign price and the domestic price of the drugs will be eaten up by the reseller. The current prohibition against importation of pharmaceuticals back into the United States is controversial to be sure. But whatever one's opinion on the economic justification for the current importation ban, no free-trader could possibly support coupling its repeal with a forced-sale provision.

Drugs are cheap in foreign countries because foreign governments place So-

viet-style price controls on the drugs in question. Most pharmaceutical companies go along with such mandated prices, selling a finite number of drugs to the foreign market in order to avoid having their patents revoked — and their products stolen — by foreign governments.

It's a form of extortion given the color of law by a flawed international trade agreement that gives foreign countries with socialist and price-controlled health-care systems the right to revoke drug patents if they don't get the terms and prices they demand.

If buyers of prescription drugs are to have the right to re-import prescription drugs back into the United States, then certainly sellers of prescription drugs must be free to determine the terms upon which they will export those drugs to begin with, including whether they will continue to export them at all and the terms on which they will sell them.

Otherwise, the U.S. government would simply be setting prices on drugs sold in America by importing foreign price controls into American regulatory law.

If forced sale is crippling to American businesses and of no benefit to American consumers, then why would Congress try to enshrine such a principle into law? That's a question that all of us should ask of our representatives.

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(Dr. Lawrence A. Hunter is the former staff director of the Joint Economic Committee and the former chief economist of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce. He currently serves as a consultant to the pharmaceutical industry.)

Remember, Friday is Thumbs Up day in *The Telegram*.

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