

## editorial Poetic justice

Question: how can the U.S. avoid picking the losing side in the internal political struggles of a country? Easy, don't pick any side. This solution isn't that easy to follow, however, given the present mentality in Washington towards U.S. foreign policy. In the case of Angola, mentality seems to dictate that whenever possible the U.S. must act to tip the balance of power in favor of the "pro-western" faction. Despite the desirability of having such a faction in control, what this mentality does not take into consideration is the advantage the U.S. could enjoy if it maintained a "clean-handed," neutral position in Angola. Now unfortunately, the U.S. is closely identified with the two factions being supported by troops of white supremacist South Africa; not the best position to be directly identified with on a largely Black-dominated continent.

Last year when the Portuguese attempted to withdraw from their former colonial possession of Angola by granting it independence, the transition of power quickly degenerated into a three-way civil war. Three factions attempted to assume control. The Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA) became identified with the Soviet Union. The National Front for the Liberation of Angola (FNLA) attracted Western support and became allied with the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA) which enjoys Chinese Communist support. All three had been active in the effort to drive the Portuguese out but couldn't agree how to share the pie after the Portuguese left.

The political instability created attracted the attention of Washington, Moscow and Peking. All three are interested in the strategic importance of Angola. The most direct and convenient route for the shipment of copper from Zaire and Zambia is the British Benuela Railway which transverses Angola from its eastern border with Zaire and Zambia to Angola's west coast ports on the Atlantic. The most severe fighting has occurred along this railway as the rival factions seek to control it. Incidentally the leader of the Western-backed FNLA, Holden Roberto, is the brother-in-law of the president of Zaire. The advantages to Zaire of having the FNLA control and safeguard the railway are obvious.

To complicate the situation even more, it appears that the alliances may be shifting. Last week secret talks were underway in Zambia among several African states who seek a peaceful solution to the conflict. Reports from the meeting indicate that UNITA feels it has more in common ideologically with the Soviet-backed MPLA than its present ally, the Western-backed FNLA, and that it may be prepared to accept second place to the MPLA in a united Angolan government. If accord is reached, the two factions could claim the political allegiance of 58 per cent of the population with 20 per cent loyal to the FNLA and the remaining 22 per cent undecided.

Even though the U.S. Senate has cut off any further funds for military aid to Angola, the damage has been done. The stigma of covertly meddling in Angola's internal affair is attached to us. We will be forced to deal with any emerging government from the position of a former antagonist. While it is true that a hands-off position on our part would not have kept the Russians out, their scope of involvement would have been severely restricted. If our involvement hadn't forced other factions into the Soviet camp, how well would have blue-eyed, fair-skinned European (Russian) troops been welcomed by African nationalists who are just now casting off the remnants of European colonialism?

One course of action, however, offers some hope. We must clearly disassociate ourselves from any direct military involvement in Angola. From this position we can then work diplomatically through the Organization for African Unity and with other African countries to publicize the presence of Russian troops in Angola. Their presence would then be even more obvious and less justifiable in the absence of our involvement. With us out of the picture militarily, how long would they be hailed as liberators? Given Russia's use of a similar tactic in Vietnam, it would almost be poetic justice.

**Duck Soup**  
Oregon Daily Emerald



### 'You will do as we say, Liebchen!'

get signatures, but disguise the true motives of the petition or fail to state critical issues that are also included above your John Henry. Ask for information such as who they are associated with or what their main objectives include. Without a careful understanding of the petition you may be promoting a violent demonstration or communist movement without being aware of it.

Therefore my plea is not for students to disregard all petitions, but to take interest and make sure you understand the arguments, both pro and con of the petition before you sign.

Kevin Knode  
Bus. Ad., Soph.

### Let us know

This is in reply to a letter to the Editor in the *Emerald* of January 21, 1976, by John Billingsley regarding the shortage of texts for certain courses.

Your complaint is not new, in fact, most bookstores around the country have been listening to this for years. Unfortunately, no one has come up with the perfect solution. During the opening rush of winter term we had a professor come in saying that he had ordered 25 books for a class and felt that this was adequate. Much to his surprise 75 students registered for this class. This was only one instance in this particular school where many classes suddenly swelled way beyond expectations. How do you suggest the bookstore take care of such a situation?

Our overstock of text books for winter exceeded 25 per cent of our purchases. This means that out of every four books we purchased for classroom use we had one left on the shelves. This is about the national average for college bookstores today. This happens to us at the end of every quarter. Four times a year. Returning books to the publisher is a very costly process considering the fact that we have already paid freight to get them and then have to pay again to return.

Come in and examine our text shelves and look at the thousands of books left over. We carry 3,200 different titles for the opening of school. If we followed your suggestion and expanded every faculty member's order by 5 extra copies, this would amount to 16,000 extra books with no guarantee they would all sell. This would just aggravate our costly re-

turn problem. The American Bookseller's Association figures it costs somewhere in the neighborhood of 50 cents a copy to return a book to the publisher. This covers freight, packing materials and labor.

Our text department is already operating at a loss with the 10 per cent discount to students. Any further losses mean higher prices for other items in the bookstore. We do not like to run out of books. Our sole purpose is to serve the students. So, if you can help us with a solution which is economically feasible, please let us know.

We would like to bring to your attention our new SOUNDING BOARD in the main lobby of the store which was activated by the Board of Directors. Whenever you have a criticism or suggestion, you can drop it in the box next to the board and you will have an answer on the board within ten days.

A copy of this letter will be on the board along with a copy of Mr. Billingsley's letter.

G.L. Henson, Manager  
U of O BOOKSTORE, INC.

### Bear in mind

I would be very interested to hear the Revolutionary Student Brigade's definition of the word "oppression." According to their recent leaflet commemorating Chou En-Lai and the Chinese Revolution, the people of Communist China have largely succeeded in their war against oppression. The leaflet goes on to infer that this "condition" is in fact ever-present in our country and exists, to a large extent, because of our capitalistically-oriented system.

Bearing in mind that the people of this country enjoy many more freedoms than do their Chinese adversaries, and hence have far greater control over the direction of their lives, I find it hard to reconcile that we are an oppressed group and have still to attain those victories enjoyed by the Chinese people.

Mitch Carter  
Business

### Sin committed

I fail to see the point of all the emotional controversy regarding the Concorde SST. Anyone familiar with the plane knows that its only advantage over conventional passenger aircraft is its supersonic speed, up to 1400 m.p.h. To achieve this speed, the cabin is very narrow resulting in an aisle just 14 inches wide, and the two

seats to either side scarcely wider. All seats would be first class, too, meaning that for one's discomfort one would have to pay outrageous fares much higher than on present aircraft.

Boeing engineers are currently working toward the goal of an efficient, clean burning, quiet and comfortable SST. They have stated, though, that it is not technologically possible at this time, with fuel prices as high as they are, to build a cost-effective SST.

How long, then, do the British and French think they could subsidize this aircraft's operation, given the critical economic situation? I fear they have committed the sin of making the same mistake twice. The premature operation of the de Havilland Comet in the early 1950s brought disaster. Though operation of the Concorde should prove to be less spectacular, few, if any, airlines will be able to make a profit by it.

The main cry against the SST regards its potential damage to the ozone. About two weeks ago, the World Meteorological Organization stated that, based on their studies, flights of 30 to 50 SST's flying at 60,000 feet would not affect the ozone.

I feel then, that until a reasonable SST is built, the Concorde should be allowed to fly scheduled service into the United States and so to fail, economically, on its own merits. Such a policy might settle both environmental and diplomatic squabbles.

Bruce E. Smith  
Sr., geology

### Letters policy

The *Emerald* will accept and try to print all letters containing fair comment on ideas and topics of concern or interest to the University community.

Because of space limitations, letters must be no more than 200 words, typed, triple-spaced, dated and signed with the person's major. No unsigned letter will be published.

Longer opinion columns will be published whenever possible after being submitted to the editorial page editor.

The limit on opinion columns is 800 words, using the same format as letters.

## Letters

### Priorities low

On the totem pole of priorities the student is the lowest. He (she) is always the one that incurs payment for any improvement in conditions for faculty, staff or university facilities. This has gone on long enough.

By instituting a union for students, we can gain an important voice in what we must pay for in tuition and fee hikes. We can ensure that faculty and staff positions will not be enhanced at the cost of our education. And we can ensure that programs and policies controlled by the university will have the students' interest in mind.

I urge you to let the ASUO know your feelings about a student union. The sooner they know where students stand, the sooner they can institute the union and

start protecting our rights.

Michael Stepka  
Recreation and Park  
Management

### Please read

I have been confronted several times in the past two weeks to sign petitions for various campaigns that have been circulating around campus. By observing the petitioners, I became aware of many students who for some obscure reasons sign without even reading the petition. Now I would like to promote a petition not for anybody to sign, but only to read.

To all U of O students that have been or will be approached by fellow petitioners. Please and I emphasize please for your own well being, read what you're signing! Don't feel ignorant by asking questions. Many times petitioners highlight certain points in order to