

Former Moonie remembers 'first friend'

Five minutes after Chris Edwards arrived in Berkeley, California in May 1975, he found a friend. He accepted a dinner invitation that night from his new friend and joined him the next day for a "restful farm vacation".

Seven months later, Edwards was kidnapped by his father

By SALLY HODGKINSON
Of the Emerald

and deprogrammed of the "extensive brainwashing" that he said began with his Berkeley "friend." Now, three years later, he is touring the country speaking out against the "Moonie" cult he was caught

up in and plugging his book "Crazy for God: The Nightmare of Cult Life."

A full room of people greeted Edwards Thursday night in the EMU as the University became the most recent stop on his two-month speaking tour.

"I know that there are people in the audience who are thinking, 'This couldn't happen to me.' That's what I thought," he said.

During his two-hour talk, Edwards used familiar phrases like glassy eyed, brainwashing, empty smiles and deprogramming that the audience sometimes laughed at. But as Edwards progressed through his story, laughs were few.

Edwards, who had just graduated from Yale when he

arrived in California, said his friend seemed a little too friendly and odd when he first met him, but Edwards considered him harmless. Later, at the dinner party, his suspicions of his new friends (who identified themselves as a social workers group) grew, but he said he felt uncomfortable criticizing their interest and concern for him.

Three nights later, while he was at their farm surrounded by barbed wire he said he decided that "these were not just just friendly, loving people. It was clear to me that they were fanatics and part of a systematic attempt to control my mind."

But repeated chants, lectures, singing and games had him "acting and looking like a 13-year old. I spoke childishly, imitated the leaders and quickly replaced my thoughts with theirs."

Edwards said that the constant contact with members and their ideas wear down resistance to the mind-control process. "Things were repeated over and over again. We were isolated from the outside and then from ourselves. I couldn't even go to the bathroom without a member going with me."

After four weeks at the farm, Edwards was promoted to selling flowers for the cult. His



Chris Edwards Photo by Ed Warren

old personality, he said, was taken over by a new "heavenly child" who believed completely in the group's doctrine.

After he had worked his way up from selling flowers to taking care of Moonie leaders' kids, Edwards was kidnapped by Ted Patrick, a controversial deprogrammer, at the request of his father.

"Four and a half days later I came out of the hotel room without glassy eyes. The deprogramming saved my life," he said.

Edwards' involvement with the Moonies didn't end then. He said his family was harassed so much during the four months following his kidnapping that they had to hire a bodyguard.

Eight weeks ago, with the publication of his book and his speaking tours, the harassment has started again, he said.

Edwards said he isn't very concerned with the groups current activities because of the recent interest in cults. "They aren't smiling anymore. But my fear is the group's potential violence."

Nuclear power (Continued from Page 1)

cident will mean for the country, but that he "never has had any confidence in nuclear power, and I don't have any confidence in it now."

"In 1970, I researched the plans for the Trojan plant, and I wrote a series of articles on the 'China Syndrome,' and what a meltdown was. Then I saw the movie, and Harrisburg followed. It's the classical theory about what happens in a meltdown, and people were convinced it couldn't happen."

Peddicord suggested that if all nuclear power plants in the U.S. were shut down, "people could evaluate the impact from the loss of power and look for replacement sources."

"We could impose conservation and say, 'OK, no more power.' That would lead to difficult times, and people wouldn't like it," he added.

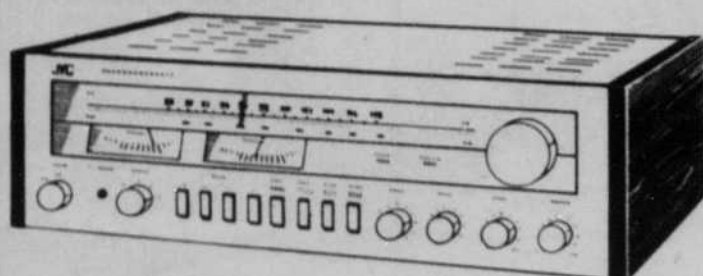
Pittler disagreed. "We're not getting what we're paying for (with nuclear power). It's time to get rid of the stuff and look ahead. Let's decentralize power sources and develop sources that are regionally appropriate."

"It took us 10 years and billions of dollars to get on the moon because we decided we were going to be first on the moon," he said. "And now the government says it will take 100 years to get solar power on our houses. I just don't believe it."

Peddicord complained that "people criticize the federal government for what it spends money on. Why don't local utilities begin to initiate their own power sources?" he asked.

Bartels said EWEB is trying to do just that. "I have no doubt in my mind that we can find other sources of power to replace the 13 percent of our energy nuclear plants provide. We just needed a shock like Three Mile Island to get us to rethink the energy situation."

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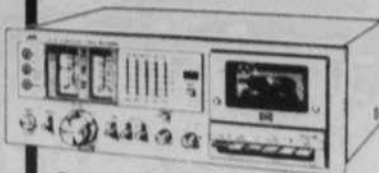
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Frohnmayr articles error

The Emerald has made the same error twice in reporting Rep. Dave Frohnmayr's voting record on course evaluation legislation. Frohnmayr did criticize a course evaluation bill in House debate last session but later voted for the bill; he did not attend an earlier committee vote against the bill. In fact, Frohnmayr did not serve on the committee reviewing the course evaluations bill last session.

He does have a vote in the committee this year and is voicing "strong reservations" about HB 2831, which would permit public access to student course evaluations. We regret the error.

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