



greg wasson

## a quorum of one

The waning, if not the death, of liberalism has intensified my search for the silver linings. And, without too many logical contortions, they are often found.

Consider U.S. Supreme Court Justice William "Click your heels when you say that" Rehnquist, a 56-year-old walking argument for mandatory retirement from the federal bench. Rehnquist's writings and opinions show that he's dedicated to fulfilling ex-Pres. Nixon's promise to thwart the judicial revolution begun in the '60s by the more-liberal Warren Court.

Still, hope comes from the strangest places. One of Rehnquist's reactionary convictions is that the federal government ought to get the hell out of the state's business. The justice just put on

hold a lower court decision holding that Oregon's prisons are overcrowded and that the state has to reduce the population.

The Rehnquist ruling is a set-back for those seeking to improve the lot of those society has decided should be warehoused away.

And, don't forget passage of the Northwest power bill despite highly unpopular opposition by Jim Weaver, Oregon's feisty 4th district representative. *The Weav* gave the fight his best shot, but the utility-backed legislation steamrolled through a Congress concerned more about staying friends with those holding enough money to get them reelected than with the people they ostensibly serve. However, truth runs deep and Oregonians exposed to the legislation are beginning to realize

how poorly the state was treated.

Like my mother always said, look for the good. How about this: Jim Weaver is liable to be Oregon's next governor? As voters gain an understanding of the continued subsidies the bill contains of the aluminum industry, as they realize that a large portion of the bill is a financial bailout for utilities that invested heavily in nuclear power rather than development of alternatives that didn't offer the same dollar return, they're sure to say, "Weav, you were for us, we are for you."

It seems a foregone conclusion that Weaver plans to run for the statehouse. It may seem foolish, but like KLCC's Gerry Mackie says, "It was silly for him to go for the 4th district, but he's won that a number of times."

## YOURS

### On abortion

On Jan. 22, 1973 the United States Supreme Court granted an unprecedented right to one minority, women of childbearing age, the right to choose to kill other human beings, their unborn children. In the same year in *Roe v. Wade* and *Doe v. Bolton*, the Supreme Court ruled that the unborn child, throughout the entire gestation, is not a person within the meaning of the Fourteenth Amendment which guarantees to persons equal protection under the law and the right not to be deprived by the state of life, liberty, or property without due process of law.

The Court declined to decide whether the unborn child is a living human being. Instead, it ruled that, whether or not he is human being, he is not a person. In holding that the unborn child is a non-person the Supreme Court adopted the theory of the *Dred Scott* case of 1857: that free descendants of slaves could not be citizens because slaves were property rather than persons. The framers of the Fourteenth Amendment clearly intended to reverse the *Dred Scott* decision by ensuring that all human beings would be treated as persons. Consequently, the Supreme Court, in its 1973 rulings, chose a rationale used by the Nazis in their extermination of the Jews: that innocent human life can be destroyed in the pursuit of a solution. The Court has advocated the Hegelian principle of pragmatism: what is useful is right. The Nazis termed this extermination the "final solution."

The knowledgeable pro-abortionists are not denying that the unborn is living and that abortion kills this being. What they are saying is that some human beings may be destroyed because they are unwanted, imperfect or inconvenient. What they are offering women of child-bearing age is a solution.

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Eugene

### El Salvador

As Ronald Reagan takes office, the United States is becoming increasingly embroiled in what has potential to be a new Vietnam: the broadening civil war in El Salvador. The question is not: will the Reagan administration intervene in the conflict? Rather, we must ask: will Pres. Reagan and his advisers step up the flow of aid to the Salvadorean government and paramilitary forces? Will the U.S. send troops, perhaps the Rapid Deployment Force, to put down the popular uprising?

The State Department and media would have us believe that a "moderate" junta is caught in a shoot-out between right and left wing "extremists" in El Salvador. In countless instances, however, government forces have participated in the unspeakable brutal massacres of Salvadorean people. With the right-wing ORDEN, for example, were the National Guard and the Armies of El Salvador and Honduras when 600 peasants were slaughtered in a few hours at Rio Sumpul last May 14. Government forces were also clearly implicated in the

killings of the six leaders of the Democratic Revolutionary Front and the four American missionaries late last year.

Yet, according to State Department sources, the U.S. continues to commit more resources to support for the Salvadorean junta than to any other single Latin American country. After a brief halt, a minor shuffle in the composition of the junta has allowed U.S. military and economic aid to flow freely again. Equally disturbing, according to sources in exile, around 300 U.S. technical advisers are now within El Salvador itself, including advisers to lower officers stationed with the troops.

The parallels with the U.S. slide into Vietnam are unmistakable. As the commitment of American resources — be they weapons, dollars or military advisers — grows heavier, the incentive to send in American troops to protect that "investment" increases as well. The U.S. has no business directing the course of the struggle in El Salvador. Do we wish to see ourselves entangled in another unpopular, drawn-out, divisive military adventure on the order of Vietnam? If not, we need to tell the new Congress and administration about it now, for they are certainly steering us in that direction.

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### Flag desecrated

After reading David Wellsfry's letter ("Flag or mat?") Friday, several thoughts occurred to me. Seemingly, many people were "outraged and humiliated" by Ron

Phillips' "desecration" of the flag. It is unfortunate that some of these people are not at least comparably outraged and humiliated by what I view as government and corporate desecration of our flag.

Direct or indirect U.S. oppression and exploitation of foreign peoples abroad, past and present, represents a far more serious desecration of our flag. The symbolic gesture of Ron Phillips is insignificant in comparison.

Similarly, our flag has symbolic meaning; it represents freedom, sacrifice, and hope. Sadly, the product of the selfish, dangerous, ends-justify-the-means attitudes of many of our leaders violates this meaning. David Wellsfry is correct in stating that "our flag...symbolizes far more than just one soiled page in our national history." I might add that there are MANY soiled pages in our national history. These pages have added to our perception of hopelessness in the world.

While the Cuban and Vietnamese refugees, and 52 former hostages, have found reason to hope, many more people have not. Our hopes and fears are of equal importance. Contrary to David Wellsfry's belief, the opinions of these refugees and former hostages are not more meaningful "than that of one embittered man." It is important to understand the intentions of Ron Phillips. Apparently he believes the American flag, in its current condition, would make a fitting doormat. While I do not approve of his method, I understand his intent and share his bitterness.

As hopeless as we may feel, and as tainted and torn as our symbolic flag is, it certainly is not beyond repair. However, we must first recognize it's disrepair. To Ron Phillips this may have required using the flag as a doormat to get the message across. Apparently, he didn't succeed.

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'AS YOU MAY HAVE NOTICED, WE HAVE A PRESSING MUTUAL PROBLEM...'

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