



greg wasson

a quorum of one

If he'd had his druthers, he wouldn't be inside the Des Moines airport. But, it was a welcome change from the snow and sub-freezing temperatures outside.

Hitching from Boston to Eugene had seemed like a good idea but the blizzard had changed an adventure into a nightmare. Luckily, America is a land of instant communication and a telephone call yielded the requisite cash to wing it on home. Whoever invented mothers gave the world a blessing.

To pass the time till morning, our cross-country traveler parked in front of the pay TV and stole video from those rich enough to feed the machine. It being that time of day, Johnny Carson graced the screen.

The 18-minute gap on the damaging Nixon tape had just been revealed, and Johnny, obviously unconvinced by the explanation that Ms. Wood had unwittingly created the blank, observed that one had to be a contortionist to get a job as a presidential secretary.

"Jesus," thought the wayward undergraduate, "The Dick is on his way out."

Friday, events at the capitol seemed to spell

the same fate for another Richard, Sen. Dick Groener, D-Milwaukee. Senate President Fred Heard told a hushed Senate that Groener was once again removed as head of the labor committee, effective immediately. The deed done, Heard abruptly gavelled the body adjourned, giving Groener no chance to respond.

Groener was temporarily replaced five weeks ago after allegations that he had taken gifts from a lobbyist. He was reinstated within the week. Since then, there have been charges that the veteran senator used the Worker's Compensation system to financially reward friends.

At a press conference following his actions, Heard contended that he hoped that Groener will be cleared, but that the Senate can no longer deal under the cloud of suspicion. More likely, Heard finally has assurance that there are the votes to uphold his decision.

Groener has promised to appeal at today's session, but his efforts will likely prove futile. Facts already public demonstrate that Groener's conduct was less than ethical, if not criminal. The political piranhas are ready to swarm and the beleaguered senator provides easy prey.

But, in the words of one reporter, "It couldn't happen to a nicer guy."

What's more uncertain is the effect the Groener affair will have on Heard's presidency. After Friday's bombshell, eight angry Democrats met with Senate Minority Leader Bob Smith. Heard's control of the Senate has been described as tenuous and Friday's action may cause major cracks in his support.

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The political process is filled with actions that mask the real intent. Consider the oft-made motion to send a bill back to committee rather than subject it to final vote of all the members. Last week, Rep. Glen Whallon, D-Milwaukee, attempted such a move in the House.

Explaining his reason for the motion, Whallon told the body that the committee had received word of further testimony it wished to consider. With that he moved toward his chair, but stopped in mid-stride and returned to his microphone.

"If you want to know the truth," amended Whallon, "we don't have the 31 votes needed to pass the bill."

YOURS

Ticket home

In response to Caroline Petrich's letter (Feb. 16 Emerald): Regretfully, I must say that you are an epitome of headline readers or TV watchers. The U.S. Embassy seizure in Iran has been a complex issue for many Iranians as well as Americans. There were many hidden factors involved that are now beginning to unfold. We have tried in many of our teach-ins to raise these questions and have made efforts to answer them. The following questions were brought up: What was the role of the U.S. in Iran? Why did Carter admit the Shah to the United States knowing before-hand that such action would result in fury and anger and even seizure of the Embassy? What were the motives behind the students who took over the Embassy?

Thousands of people were murdered in the streets of Iran by the Shah's U.S. trained army and U.S. made weapons. Over 20,000 U.S. military advisers were working in Iran. A CIA coup overthrew a democratically elected government of

Mossaddegh in 1953. So when our people kick the Shah out of the country and the Shah gets the protection and support of your government, when he is admitted into New York, what did you expect from our people... candies, flowers and thank you cards? Yes, we rightfully defended the anger and outrage of Iranian people and explained why. But we also did not condone all the motives behind those who seized the Embassy. To your surprise not only do we condemn the suppression of democratic rights in Iran by the present government, but we also do not blindly defend everything that comes out of our country.

To sum up, if there is a hypocrite between the two of us, it must be you who ignores the multi-dimensionality of the issue and confined yourself to a glance at the headlines and focus on the "mistreatment" of some of the 52 hostages.

By the way, if your standard of civilization is respect for the rights of others to freedom and self-determination, wake up

Caroline. Read your history books and review U.S. foreign policy and you will find yourself in the middle of an uncivilized country.

People like you who are going to be our future journalists must exercise more responsibility when gathering facts. Caroline, I don't sell newspapers on this campus. Finally, I appreciate a one way ticket home but that won't prevent the truth from being spoken. After all, I'm not alone here.

Amin

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Power grab

The Reagan administration is only a few months old, yet there is already a police-state mentality seeping into the most sanctified of refuges. A blatant example of this is HB 2456, a bill before the state legislature which proposes to grant campus security guards police powers. That we need campus security guard is saddening, but it is a social reality. The purpose of these guards is to

act as eyes and ears; a way of keeping everything in the open and honest. The guards are not on campus to be enforcers or controllers.

This grab for power by campus security and their legislative supporters is horrifying. Traditionally, free thinking is the greatest enemy of the police state. Is HB 2456 a first, tentative step by Big Brother into the enemy camp. In response to this proposition, it is the duty of all Oregonians who believe in freedom, not just students, to raise their voices clearly, firmly, and in unison, "No Damn Way!"

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Grassroots

If you are concerned with preserving our environment, natural resources, restoring peace in the world, providing innovative employment opportunities, preserving the health and safety of working people and senior citizens; if you are concerned with the erosion of human and civil rights here and abroad, then I invite you to join in revitalizing the basic institution of social change in this country, the Democratic Party.

In a special effort to broaden the base of the Democratic Party in Oregon we are inviting the membership of all our natural constituencies; labor, women, blacks, hispanics, asians, youth, consumers, environmentalists, farmers, small business people and others to participate in Democratic Party affairs beginning with the Statewide Grassroots Conference May 15, 16, 17, at Oregon College of Education (OCE) in Monmouth.

We must all pull together now to make sure 1982 does not realign the electorate towards a right-wing Republican majority. Rebuilding the Democratic Party from the bottom up and insuring the nomination of progressive candidates is the effective way to combat Reaganism.

Write me or the Democratic Party of Oregon (P.O. Box 1012, Salem, OR 97308, 370-8115) to join the Outreach Committee or come to Grassroots May 15-17.

If the Democrats can be faulted for anything it is that we let Reagan define the issues of 1980. Now we must define the issues and at Grassroots we can start.

David McTeague

Democratic National Committee

Salem

Monday, March 9, 1981

