

### Amnesty, anyone?

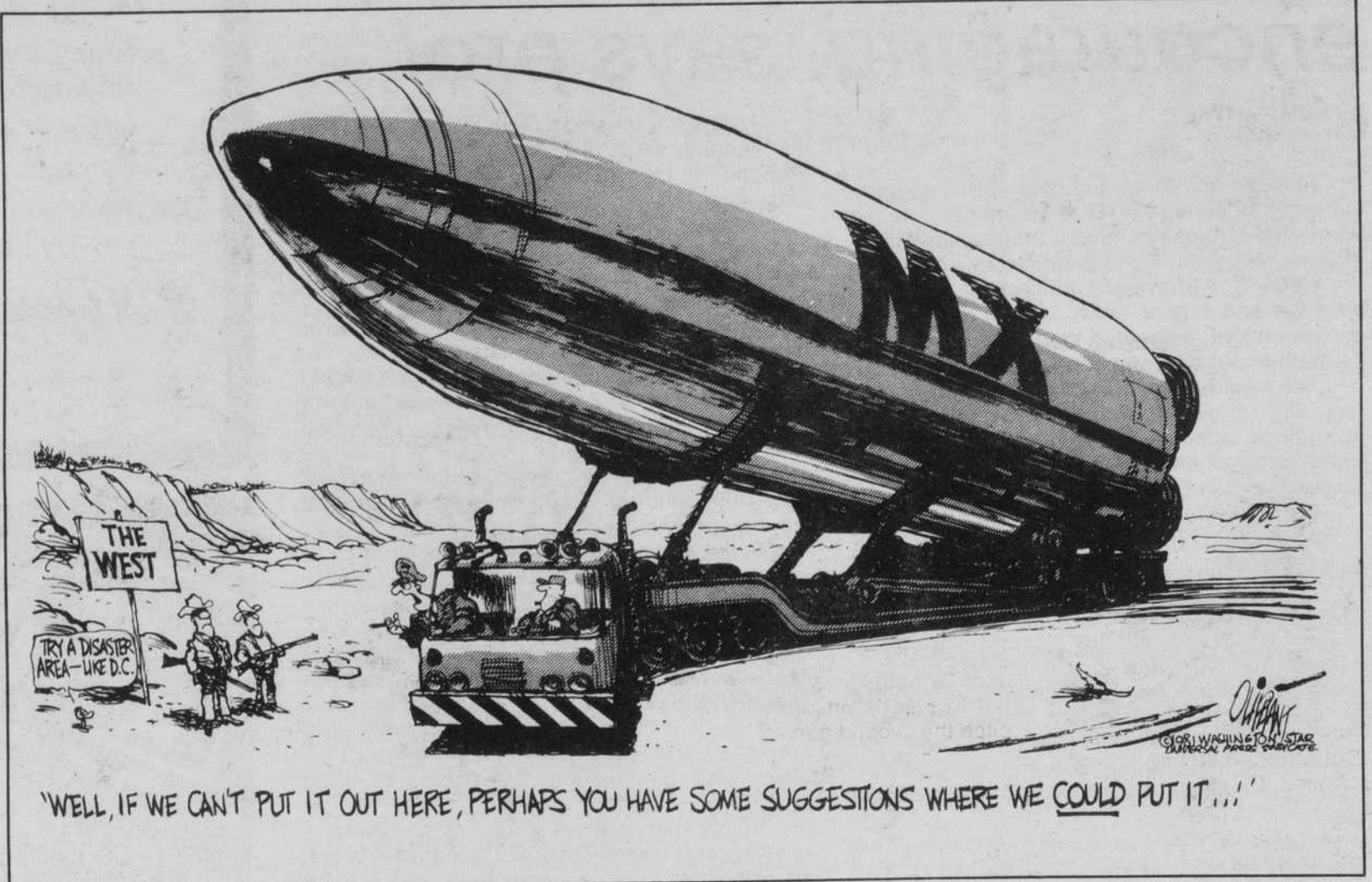
The local Amnesty International group would like to thank you for your article about us. We greatly appreciate such accurate and kind publicity of our work on behalf of prisoners of conscience. Although we normally meet on alternate Mondays, our next meeting will be Wednesday, May 13 at 6:00 p.m. in EMU Century Room F. This change is to accommodate the visit of the west coast campus coordinator, Craig Rock, from Amnesty's San Francisco office. Regular meetings will resume May 18. Anyone interested in learning more of Amnesty's work from the campus to international levels is most welcome.

**Stephen Fuller**  
Institute of Molecular Biology  
**John Girdlestone**  
Biology department

### Leave vets alone

It is rare that I have felt the need to write to an editor to express an opinion about anything, least of all one which is so sensitive to myself and others like me. As a Vietnam veteran, I was saddened to see emblazoned on your front page the statement, "They Sleep With Guns." It feels strange after all these years of put down and living with memories that most people can't even imagine to be the focus of attention again. We were once the center of negative attention: characterized as pawns, baby killers, and drug-crazed addicts. All of us who came back had to adjust to living in an essentially uncaring society, each on his own terms. Some of us had more difficulty than others but none of us received much help or understanding. Without transitional support it was a long, slow process and when we ran into obstacles we fell back on old skills and attitudes which served us in good stead before. So some who still felt threatened slept with weapons by their bed, and some who felt alone and unwelcome fell back to the attitude of "if you aren't going to help me then leave me alone." I think most Vietnam veterans will tell you that, with or without your help (as in the past 10 years), they are just doing the best they can.

I have a Seiko watch, a Purple Heart, and my divorce papers and, like many other veterans, I also have the nightmares, the memories, the guilt, and yes,



the pride that came with serving in Vietnam. Experience taught me that there wasn't much positive concern for Vietnam veterans so I tried not to bring the issue up and simply endeavored to do the best I could in life. Now comes along a new wave of interest in the Vietnam veteran, unlooked and unasked for, to stir up the old memories. I feel that your headline, whatever your intention, did not do veterans a service and all I can say is — if you aren't going to help us, then leave us alone!

**Arthur DiRocco**  
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### Reasons forgotten

"They sleep with guns" told us of the stress which many Vietnam veterans endure without any reference to the cause of that stress — U.S. aggression in Indochina. This didn't all happen in a vacuum. These men, at the tender ages of 18 and 19, were forced, or propagandized, to go 8,000 miles from home to kill peasants who were fighting for control of their own country. The American government and the American people

have not accepted their responsibility for the massacre of over a million people, nor for the present suffering in that part of the world which we tried to "bomb back to the stone age." We so easily forget, but those who saw the death and destruction cannot forget. We must share in that guilt and channel that rage against the institutions which take our children for cannon fodder. When the Vietnam veterans see us struggling to make sure that this does not happen again, they may at last feel some peace in their hearts. It's up to us.

**Olive Bowers**  
Graduate, sociology

### Guns in bed?

Thanks for the particularly good issue May 4. I especially appreciated Greg Wasson's editorial. He managed to at least touch upon some of the issues-behind-issues — e.g., the myth of the neutral free market of competing ideas.

Also, I'm sure many people were encouraged to see some coverage of Vietnam vets' issues, especially since the

turkeys in charge are planning still another excursion into wholesale slaughter for yet another generation of innocents.

However, the second article on Vietnam vets (May 5) was more than slightly disturbing in its implications. Ms. Hoyt quotes Reesa George as saying that "They (Vietnam vets) sleep with their guns. . . Everyone I know does." If I don't know better, that statement would probably make me paranoid of ever getting closer than hello and good bye to a vet. Pardon my Sagittarian bluntness, but I've known at least five Vietnam vets who did not take their weapons (if they had any) to bed with them.

I think the problem may be that Ms. Hoyt simply did not interview a sufficient number of people to get a more realistic spread of viewpoints. I don't feel that this was done intentionally, but unfortunately it does contribute to the current attempt to discredit the vets as simply a bunch of nut cases. This attempt is a part of the effort to intensify the militarization of American society in preparation for the next "intervention." I'd be interested in hearing any other responses to this article.

**Cathi Beavers**  
Sophomore, anthropology

### Sexist dance

I would like to comment on the International Night, sponsored by the Foreign Students Organization, which took place in the EMU Ballroom on Sunday evening, May 10. A wonderful array of foods, music, dance, and traditional clothing were presented, mostly in good taste.

It is unfortunate that the event was tainted by the performance of "Middle Eastern" dance, by Americans, who claim that their "art" is an accurate representation of Middle Eastern cultures. It is not. "Belly dancing," performed semi-naked and with a veil serves only to reinforce the stereotyped role of the Eastern woman, and the sexual exploitation of all women.

As if that wasn't enough, when the "dance" was finished the master of ceremonies, Adesina Adeniji, made the disgusting comment, "She can really shake it."

I support International Night as an opportunity for the many cultures represented on our campus to work cooperatively, promoting greater cross-cultural understanding. I believe that this can be done without sacrificing the dignity of women. Better luck next year.

**Teresa Chapman**  
Junior, sociology

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