

opinion

The recourse to violence, life imitating TV

In Spokane, Washington, the mother of a convicted Rapist was arrested on charges of hiring a "Hitman" to kill the judge and prosecutor in her son's case. This may not be a case of life imitating art — but, a case of life imitating bad television.

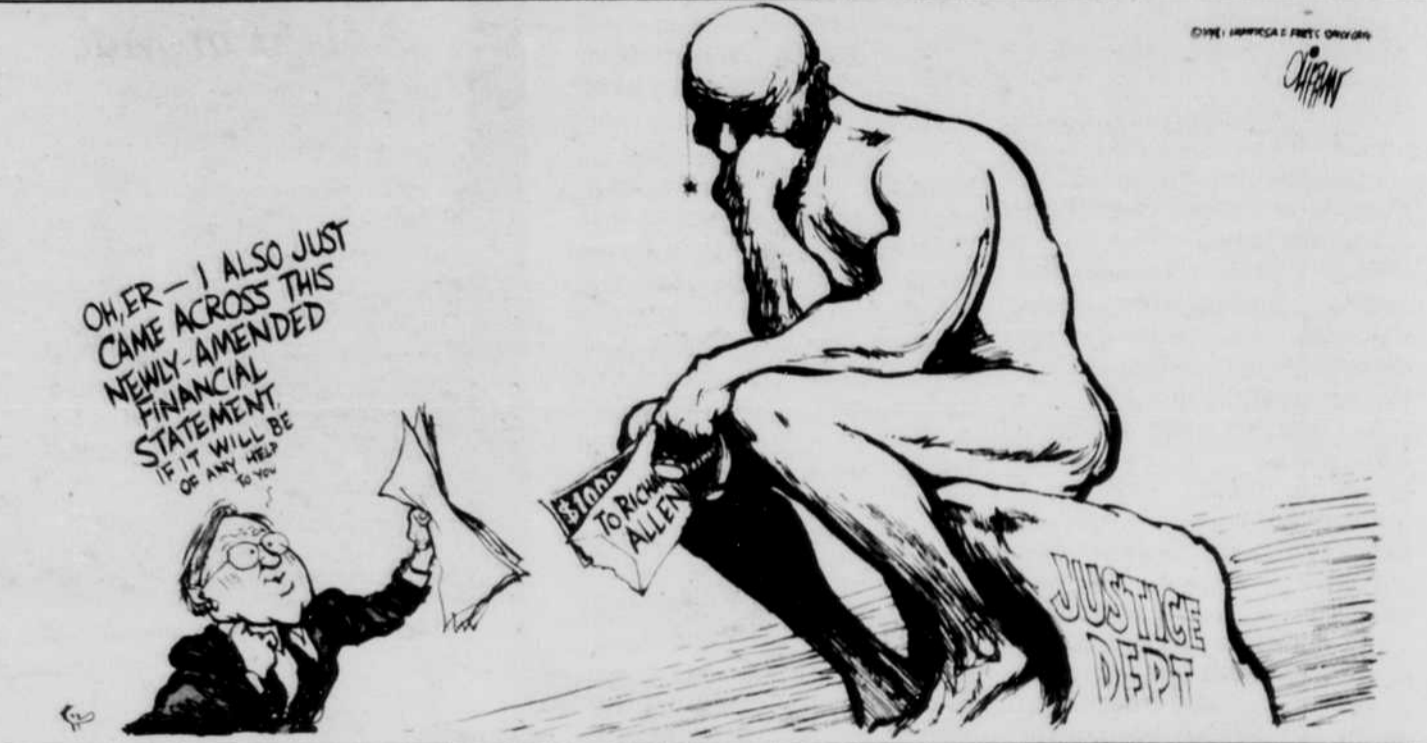
The Rapist's mother is charged with two counts of criminal solicitation to commit first-degree murder. The woman's actions are rather bizarre when one sees that her son was convicted on four counts of rape — and believed responsible for 20 sexual assaults over a two-year period. The trial judge went to great lengths — including a change of veneer (bringing in a jury from another county) — to ensure a fair trial. And yet, despite all judicial efforts for an untainted judgment in the case, the Rapist's mother is apparently gunning for the judge and prosecutor.

Why is this situation an imitation of television? It has all the earmarks of a poorly-plotted Kojak script.

But this case, more than television melodrama, is symptomatic of a cancer festering within American society — that violence, rather than the least tenable resolution, can eradicate misfortune. This attitude has manifest in recent years as the complexities of acceptable societal behavior become too much for many to cope with.

We, as Americans, are too quick to clear the street and go for our guns when words and deeds are frustrated. That old-west, dusty Main Street shoot-out saga of right defeating wrong in a free exchange of lead has played so long it is practically congenital. The shoot-out has become so common the lines demarking right and wrong no longer exist as perceptible boundaries of conduct. We have lost the moral terror.

What abets this violent tendency is the fact there are just too many guns, too readily available, in this society. What is the nec-



cessity to be armed — or have quick access to a gun? Having a gun presupposes its use. If one brings out a gun to "protect" himself it crosses a line where use is mandatory.

The Spokane Rapist's mother is one of a puzzling type — a close kin of Hinkley and Chapman and Oswald and Sirhan and Ray and too many others. They used a gun to solve problems — problems for the most part within themselves. They fixated on a celebrity as the object of their inner torment.

The difference between us and them? There may be little difference.

How often have the words "I'll kill you," in mock seriousness been said? Too often oaths are sworn, "If you touch that I'll kill you" or, "Do that and you die." The barrier dividing word and deed is a transparency more and more people step through without compunction.

And after a fashion — such murderous

behavior is regaled — witness the thousands who have been killers so dramatically on television and in motion pictures under the auspices of entertainment.

The FBI reports that deaths by handguns are the most common homicide in this country — and there is no end to the slaughter in sight. Handgun legislation is virtually impossible to enact because of the money and lobbying power against such legislation by the National Rifle Association. They oppose legal restraints on guns with an all-encompassing principle that turns something of a blind eye to the deadly accessibility of lethal weapons.

But guns don't kill, people do — and people are killing people at an ever-increasing rate. The carnage will continue with no regard toward right or wrong — only a perverse sense of justice, as in the Spokane case, to get a gunslinger's type of vengeance.

letters

Demonstrations failed

The anti-nuclear demonstration on this campus failed in its efforts to persuade against the use and proliferation of nuclear weapons. By showing films of the destruction and carnage wrought by the dropping of atomic bombs on Japan, we are repulsed, yet at the same time reminded of the brutally efficient way in which we ended Japan's reign of terror in the Pacific. For every day the decision to unleash nuclear destruction was delayed, innocent American soldiers were dying. Lest this campus' liberal majority has forgotten, Pearl Harbor was not a tea party. Rather, it was a hideous and unprovoked attack which left hundreds of Americans slaughtered. It marked the beginning of Japanese atrocities against this country's citizens, atrocities which we are finding out today were every bit as heinous as those Germany was inflicting in Europe. While the "nukies" have chosen to use Hiroshima and Nagasaki as the focal point in its argument against nuclear weapons, it is at the same time using an example which represents the utter fulfillment of the atomic bomb; that it should be used to crush and annihilate a country whose brutally aggressive attacks on us has erased their right to exist.

The misguided leaders of the anti-nuke rally were circulating a petition during the showing of the films. The petition called for a joint U.S.-Soviet "freeze" on the testing, production and deployment of nuclear armaments. The petition states: "This is an essential, verifiable first step toward lessening the risk of nuclear war." Perhaps this sort of pie-in-the-sky... idiocy would work if the Ruskies were the good guys they would have us believe.

As George Bush recently said, it doesn't take too much mental prowess to see how conniving the

Russians are. Afghanistan and the recent sub incident in the "Sea of Peace" are only two examples. To reason with the Russians, superior military strength is the first step. "Peace through Superior Firepower," though a tired adage, is none the less true.

As for the recent Emerald article describing the scenario of a nuclear attack on Eugene, I can only hope and pray. What better way to silence this areas liberal/pseudo-communist factions. In the final 40 seconds of their lives, as they see and hear the enormous red bomb screaming down through the sky, as they huddle together quietly urinating on themselves, they will have been convinced, albeit too late, that Russian leadership is every bit as ruthless, conniving and greedy as we've been told.

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Real terrorists

The U.S. government and media cries about "international terrorism," but we can't let them pull the wool over our eyes. Who are the real terrorists?

Who has the largest killing apparatus in the world? Who invented the atomic bomb and used it, and initiated the arms race? Who napalmed the Vietnamese and is now engaged in a genocidal war against the people of El Salvador? And closer to home — it is the U.S. government that committed wholesale genocide against American Indians and enslaved millions of African people for profit. And today the lynching, the murders of black children by cops, the malnutrition amidst wealth, sterilization, and the de-humanizing conditions continues to bring death and terror to black communities all across this continent. And yet the

U.S. government has the nerve to label any people or nations who fight this oppression as "terrorists."

Black people have always resisted this oppression and terror and have organized on every level for their self defense and liberation. A recent example is the attempted expropriation of a Brinks Armored car by the Black Liberation Army and members of the Weather Underground. This was not a self-serving "bank robbery" but a recovery of funds stolen off the sweat, blood and poverty of African people. The money was to be used as resources for the black liberation movement.

It's now "open season" on the black community. Police and FBI are kicking down doors, stopping, searching and terrorizing black people and the "left" — gestapo style. There are criticisms of the political line, strategy, timing and bungling tactics — criticisms that need to expose the errors of an approach which separates military action from the educational, community and organization work that must precede and accompany such tactics. Yet we must defend the Black Liberation Army and the entire black liberation movement against this unleashed FBI and retaliatory police terror. We must also support the white people who were taking a stand in solidarity with the BLA. Moreover, we have the responsibility to support the right of black people to organize for self defense and to seek out and unite with leading overall strategies in the black liberation movement such as put forth by the African People's Socialist Party.

The focus must be turned against the U.S. government for the criminal terror it has consistently waged against people around the world in order to build and maintain the wealth, power and privilege of a very select few.

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