



FIRST PASS

cort fernald sidelong glances

It was late Sunday night. I noticed him hanging around the front door of the Emerald office. He paced about with short choppy steps. He raked his hair with his hand, grabbing a handful and bending his head back as if in great pain. In his other hand was a torn, crumpled slip of gray newsprint. Something was consuming him — something that must have been burning inside him for a long time.

My curiosity was piqued, though I didn't want to pry. I returned to my VDT and the wire stories I was editing, but kept one eye on the door.

An hour later he was still outside the office — tearing madly through the yellowing pages of old Emeralds. I paused by the mailboxes, watching him out of the corner of my eye.

He noticed me nearby and staggered up to me.

"C-can you help me," he struggled to say. His voice was distant, disjointed in time. He held out the crumpled piece of newsprint.

He had a wild intensity to his eyes. I started, recognizing that gaze. If not close — then he was damn near the edge of an abyss I had looked into many times before. I took the torn bit of paper and read.

It was a classified ad circled in red ink, one of those odd and anonymous personals you read so often.

Guy with the eyes is that all you do, look? I'm here, where are you? **Interested.**

Dark-haired woman I've watched you all term in class. You are the most beautiful woman I have ever seen. Just give me a wink. **Your admirer.**

At once I knew his anguish, the soulful looks during lecture, sleepless nights when her face and voice becomes so huge in mind, the aching heart that hangs like lead and makes possibility of meeting her hesitant and desperately futile. I wanted to say, "I know what you're going

through. I've been there." But it seemed a patronizing remark.

"You don't understand," he said, his trembling finger pointing to the circled personal. "I only have five days left. I have to find out who this is."

I began to get worried. He appeared obsessed with finding out who wrote that personal — so obsessed he might recklessly throw himself at anybody standing in his way. The anger fueled by his fierce frustration could compel him to do something rash.

As much as I empathized with the guy and wanted to help I knew that my efforts might end up in some sort of fight. I couldn't give out the name of the person who bought the personal. It was policy. It was bureaucracy. And it was too bad. This guy was really hurting.

I stammered something inadequate, suggesting he put in a personal asking the woman to meet him some place, some time.

It was a inane response. I could tell by the blank look he gave me it did nothing to ease his anguish. As if in a daze he took the personal from my hand, slowly turned and walked out.

Sometimes there are far too many people on this campus and a few get lost in the mass. It can be pretty lonely.

There are so many faces, so many interesting characters in the swarm moving between buildings to classes. It can be difficult to elbow your way through and become someone rather than just another somebody in a huge class.

I just can't forget that guy and his obsession for a woman with whom he has probably not spoken. I've been reading the personals and haven't seen any more messages. The "five days" have passed. And I wonder if he ever found her — or if she ever found him. I hope so. There are enough strangers in this world.

out of circulation in early January have I been able to get such a good laugh at the expense of a group's political ideology.

My special thanks to the

members of the Revolutionary Communist Youth Brigade for providing me with such a hearty chuckle.

Tim Love
pre-journalism

letters

Paid ad

Thank you for printing the paid advertisement "In Memory of John Kaiser" in the Jan. 13 edition of the Emerald. Not since "Doonesbury" was taken

out of circulation in early January have I been able to get such a good laugh at the expense of a group's political ideology.

My special thanks to the

members of the Revolutionary Communist Youth Brigade for providing me with such a hearty chuckle.

Tim Love
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oregon daily emerald

The Oregon Daily Emerald is published Monday through Friday except during exam week and vacations, by the Oregon Daily Emerald Publishing Co., at the University of Oregon, Eugene, OR, 97403.

The Emerald operates independently of the University with offices on the third floor of the Erb Memorial Union and is a member of the Associated Press.

News and Editorial
Display Advertising and Business
Classified Advertising
Production
Circulation

686-5511
686-3712
686-4343
686-4381
686-5511

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Managing Editor
News Editor
Assistant News Editor
Editorial Page Editor
Photo Editor
Sports Editor
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your turn

Defense Ignorance

Shortly before Christmas break I read some anti-nuclear letters and articles in the Emerald. The stories dealt with important subjects, such as civil defense and verifiability, which is good. But they also displayed disturbing ignorance of those issues on the part of some anti-nuclear people.

Here are some examples:

In a letter to the Emerald dated Dec. 7 1982, Clifford Baker calls the MX a "first-strike" weapon. But is it really? Baker didn't back up his assertion and he ignored the fact that the MX controversy has been over the missile's ability to withstand — not launch — a first-strike. To further weaken Baker's argument, one need only ask a few questions about the first-strike issue.

For example, would the 100 planned MX's be sufficient to launch a first-strike against 1500 Soviet ICBM's? If we wouldn't launch a first strike in the 1960's, when we had unquestioned nuclear superiority, why would we prepare to launch one now when it is widely believed that the Soviets currently have the capability to destroy us even if we hit them first? Furthermore, Baker never said what makes the MX a first-strike weapon. Does he imply that we can't launch a first-strike without it?

In his letter, Baker accused President Reagan of obfuscating nuclear issues. But by dogmatically affixing "first-strike" to the MX, he is guilty of his own accusation.

In the same Emerald, Charles Gray, a Eugene resident sympathetic to Europe's anti-nuclear movement, was quoted as saying that cruise missiles in Europe would be unverifiable because they fly below radar screens.

The non-sequitur in that argument is as blatant as it is absurd. How high a missile flies has nothing to do with verifiability, which involves counting missiles before — not after — they are launched. Clearly, Gray doesn't know what verifiability means. But that didn't keep him from talking about it.

Finally, in the Dec. 3 Emerald Bill Hallmark said that civil defense won't work and therefore we shouldn't worry about major Soviet activity in that area or invest in it ourselves.

But Hallmark missed a very significant point in the civil defense issue: It's effect upon Soviet nuclear strategy. If civil defense won't work, why do the Soviets take it so seriously? Consider the following Soviet policy statement: "There is profound erroneousness and harm in the disorienting claims of bourgeois ideologies that there will be no victor in a thermonuclear world war." Source: "Why the Soviets think they can fight and win a nuclear war," Commentary, July, 1977. See also, "Survival in Soviet wartime strategy," University of Miami Press, 1976.

Clearly, the Soviets think that civil defense is worthwhile. Hallmark basically ignored that important consideration in his letter.

Two salient points should be considered from these examples. First, the nuclear debate is already complex enough. Misinformation like the above examples only adds to the confusion and serves no constructive purpose.

Second, despite its humane appeal and "grassroots" support, the anti-nuclear movement will lack credibility with many decision-makers in government as long as such misinformation is produced by a few anti-nuclear people. And credibility with governments is important for any chance of real anti-nuclear success.

Misinformation, misunderstanding and misconceptions can only damage a worthy cause. Is it too much to ask anti-nuclear writers to make sure their grasp of the issues is a strong one?

Todd Weber

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letters

46 words

What contains only 46 words, is frequently made reference to, yet the vast majority of Americans have never read? Answer: the First Amendment to the Constitution which reads:

"Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, of prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech or of the press; or of the right of the people peaceably to assemble and to petition the government for a redress of grievances."

Notice the "separation of church and state" never appear here. They're not found anywhere else in the Constitution either.

The First Amendment was designed to prevent the federal government from creating an "official" denomination or interfering with religious practice. It was never intended to prevent religious organizations or individuals from lobbying for or

against certain legislation or even to ban voluntary prayer in the classroom.

The "separation" phrase was actually coined by Jefferson in a letter to the Danbury Baptists Association in response to their request to proclaim an official day of fasting. Though both Washington and Adams had made similar proclamations Jefferson had reservations about federal actions on this request.

But H. Frank Way commented in "Liberty in the Balance" that the "no establishment" clause has been substituted with Jefferson's phrase but "with an absolutism that Jefferson had never intended." In public education Jefferson opposed denominational control but "believed that the common core of religion should be included."

When considering today's issues related to this subject please keep the Constitution's original intent in mind.

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Thursday, January 20, 1983