

## joan nyland suitable for comment

It's not quite spring in Washington D.C.

It's a cold place this time of year. But it's an interesting place, in all the ambiguity that word implies.

A beautiful city by night with the Capitol, the Jefferson Memorial, and Lee's mansion across the river all lit up. The broad avenues are lined with golden lights. The Potomac sparkles.

In the daytime, the nation's capitol is a different story. White pillars, white marble buildings, the White House stand out against the black wrought iron, the black streets, the city's population, blacks.

Traveling two or three streets from Pennsylvania and Constitution avenues and the "mall" (a green parkway from the Capitol to the Lincoln Memorial bordered by national museums and used for demonstrations) the tourist confronts worn out buildings, many untouched, according to my Washington friend, from the riots in the 1960s.

The broad avenues so appealing by night are the worst city roads I've ever traveled. If the roads are the District of Columbia's responsibility, the "city" is too poor to repave them. If the roads are the national government's, no one has gotten around to maintenance. No one seems to know.

Capitol Hill is a disheartening place.

Oh, the architecture is grand and the history looms large, but the actual dialogue in Congress "ain't" much to write home about.

As far as I could tell, the Power lies in deciding what will be heard and voted on and this had all been decided long before I wandered into the gallery.

After the initial bill is written it's mostly rhetoric on the floor, little self-gratifying speeches that are heard by a small part of the House. When the amendment or bill comes to a vote a bell rings and our elected leaders run from their desks to vote (where the House members could have been watching the side show on television).

The day I sat in on the House an amendment to the nuclear freeze joint resolution was being considered, I don't remember which bit. Les Au-

Coin, D-Oregon, stood at the door after the bell rang and put his thumb down, so that Democrats "out to lunch" would know how to vote as they walked into the room.

Rumor on Capitol Hill had it, that the nuclear freeze resolution would have to be through Congress by St. Patrick's Day — Speaker Tip O'Neill intended to be celebrating. But the debate dragged on and was postponed.

That isn't to say Tip didn't drink his whiskey and join the rest of the lawyers, one-seventh of the Washington D.C. population, in pub hopping. I wonder if he loosened his tie? Nobody ever loosens their ties in Washington D.C.

Arlington Memorial hangs over the Capitol. Thousands of straight white perpendicular gravestones spread out over what was once the beautiful front yard of Robert E. Lee's home. It doesn't seem to bother anyone that all the victims of momentous Congressional decisions stare at them 365 days a year, year in and year out.

It did bother some that one plaque at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier read to the victims of the Vietnam Conflict.

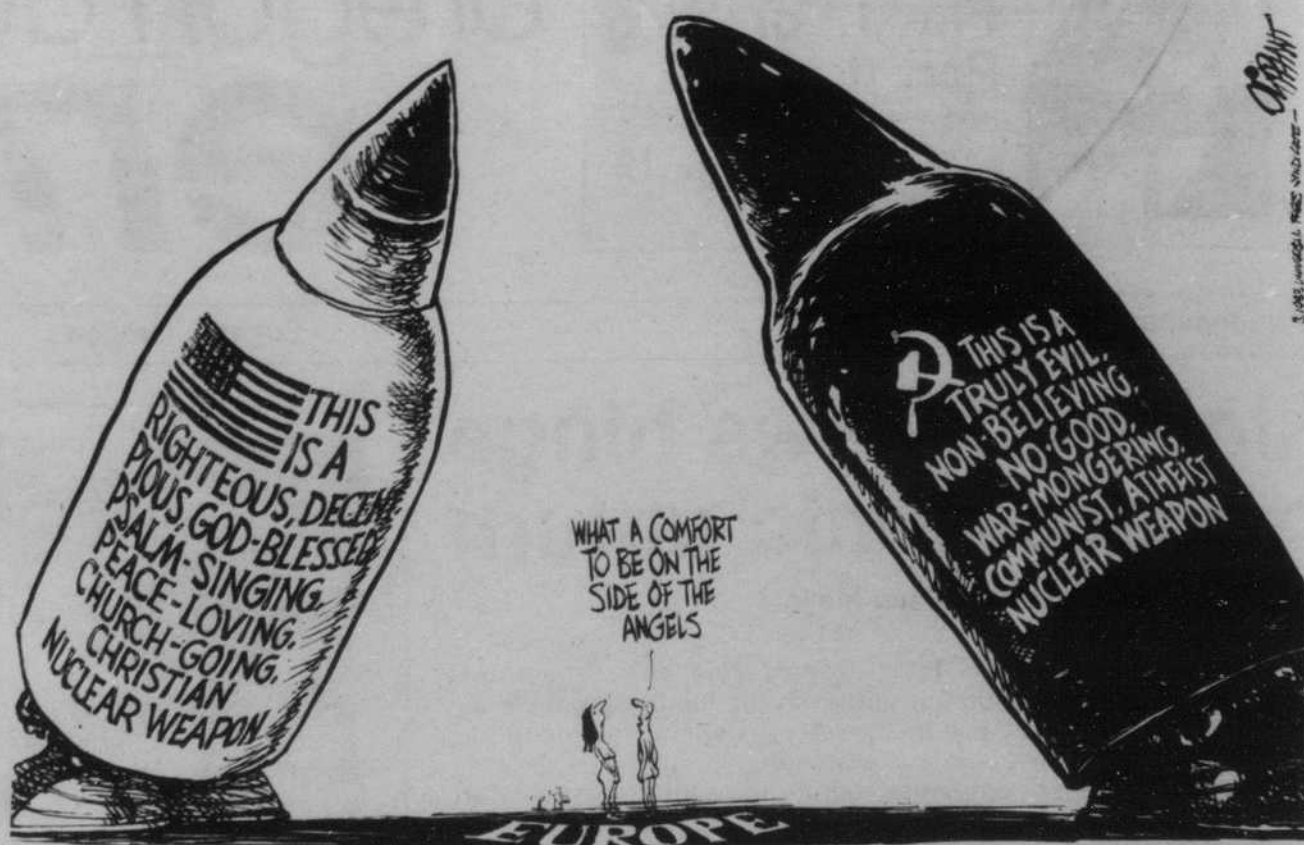
It bothered me that at the exact same time I read about the slaves at Lee's Arlington House a group of black men were gardening in the yard.

I can't quite understand why John F. Kennedy is buried in Arlington next to all those he sent to Vietnam. I never got to the new Vietnam Memorial, but I'm comforted by knowing it's on its way to the Lincoln Memorial.

I hope my picture turns out of the little old lady sitting in front of the White House with her picket sign reading something like: "We could use some wisdom in this House."

And I would like to think that maybe one afternoon Pres. Reagan will wander around the Jefferson Memorial and read about how the primary responsibility of a nation is to educate its citizens. I doubt he will.

I would like to see Washington D.C. when the cherry blossoms are out. But I missed it this year. I'm told by the natives it's always a very short season.



your turn

## South African divestiture

South Africa is the only country in the world where racism is practiced blatantly and legally. South Africa is a country which constitutes laws to preserve a population of four million whites with superior occupations, high incomes and sole governing power over 22 million indigenous non-white South Africans.

South Africa practices a legal governing system called apartheid (apart hate) which administers laws that determine where one can live, what time one must be in at night, whether one can vote, etc., solely on the basis of a person's skin color.

In essence, South Africa is a country where one fifth of the population enjoys the freedoms and luxuries of a capitalist life because of Hitlerian-type laws which deny the majority of the population of the most basic human rights.

Two bills, House Bill 2772 and House Bill 2028, are presently being considered in the Oregon House of Representatives before the House Subcommittee on Aging and Minority Affairs. The bills relate to how Oregonians invest their public dollars and whether we condone investments in genocidal coun-

tries like South Africa simply because of high profit returns.

HB 2772 demands the State Accident Insurance Fund (SAIF) and the Public Employee Retirement System (PERS) redirect their investments out of large corporations and banks which have substantial business in South Africa.

Excluding other state trust funds, SAIF and PERS alone have well over \$900 million invested in over 140 United States corporations and banks which do business in South Africa. Why aren't these monies being invested in our state, where over 170,000 Oregonians are out of work? And why are we investing our retiree funds in a country that completely ignores its own retirees' fundamental rights to vote or collect retirement benefits?

The first congressional hearings on the two bills took place on March 10th and a second hearing is scheduled for Thursday, March 31st. Opponents, such as the Oregon State Treasury and the Oregon Public Employees Union (OPEU), fear that divestiture will depress the SAIF and PERS funds because South Africa, rather than apartheid, provides unmatched revenue returns.

Nonsense. Similar legisla-

tion to HB 2772 and HB 2028 has been passed in Massachusetts, Michigan, Connecticut and other states to prove these opponents wrong. In fact, each of these states have found reinvesting in their own economies to be more profitable.

Our legislative and administrative officials in Salem need to hear our voices. I strongly urge all Oregonians who oppose racial inequality and who support growth in the Oregon economy to write Gov. Vic Atiyeh, State Treasurer Clay Meyers and our state legislators to support the passage of HB 2772 and HB 2028. (All these officials can be reached by writing to: Official name, Salem, Oregon, 97130).

University students and the Eugene chapter of People for South African Freedom will be in the Erb Memorial Union this week with a petition to sign urging support of the two bills.

We Oregon citizens have the moral obligation to see that our funds are supporting Oregon economic growth, rather than supporting the oppression of 22 million people in another country.

Kevin Gilroy

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## oregon daily emerald

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"Your turn" is an Emerald opinion feature submitted by members of the University community. "Your turns" must be limited to 500 words and typed. This editorial column will not be edited by the staff, but selection will be based on appropriateness.

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