

opinion

Chinese puzzle

The state of Oregon is caught on a Chinese puzzle and much like the straw-device that catches fingers, it's a problem that isn't easily extracted.

The bind began last week when Gov. Vic Atiyeh issued a proclamation that adopted Taiwan as a sister state to Oregon. Atiyeh said he had a "strong reason to believe" that this move was the "will and pleasure of the people of Oregon."

Whether it was the "will and pleasure" was never gauged by Atiyeh or his office. But that's not the point. That the sister state was Taiwan is the point.

It seems that Atiyeh in his benevolence toward the tiny wayward Chinese island failed to notify the Legislature over the announcement. While at approximately the same time, the Legislature approved a resolution to adopt Fujian, a coastal province in the People's Republic of China, as Oregon's sister state. Fujian is across the Straits of Formosa from Taiwan.

Oops — the state now has twin Chinese sister states.

The Legislature's idea was that Oregonians would want to improve trade and carry out "numerous economic, educational, cultural programs and other relations" with China. That's a good idea — but which China?

This double dealing would be advantageous for the state if the twin sister states weren't so adamantly opposed politically. And a teapot tempest has been brewing ever since.

The crux of the argument is a case of the longstanding clash between the executive and legislative branches of government. Some sort of resolution is needed in the case — either Taiwan or the mainland state.

Atiyeh's proclamation on Taiwan was signed June 15 — perhaps this should take precedent? But two days after the signing, Atiyeh's authority was challenged by a number of senators who said he didn't have the constitutional authority. The Fujian proposal was introduced to a Chinese ambassador in Washington, D.C. by Mae Yih, D-Albany. The proclamation by Atiyeh was overlooked in the push to get Fujian as a sister state.

The heart of the matter is whether the state can confer sister state status on two states of diametrically opposed politics and economics at the same time. Dr. Sam Won, president of the Chinese Consolidated Benevolent Association in Portland notes the benefits of having a two-China policy in Oregon. "We do business with both Taiwan and the mainland," he says. The People's Republic needs "lots of lumber and Taiwan uses a lot of grain. Having two sister states is not favoring one over the other."

Sounds good, and profitable too. But it seems headed toward more problems than solutions. Once the People's Republic discovers the state trading with their foe across the strait, and vice versus, well, in the end Oregon state will lose. Like the Chinese puzzle, one person has to let their finger go or be caught in a bind forever.

Levy election today

Today is an election day throughout the county and a number of very important ballot measures will be decided. Probably the most important to the quality of life in Lane County is the \$2.9 million "A" ballot property tax levy that will fund the Sheriff's department.

Passage of this levy is crucial to the security of the citizens of the county. If the ballot fails the Sheriff's department will have to layoff 50-60 people and substantially cut back the law enforcement in outlying areas of the county.

Voters are sometimes blind to the realities of essential services when dollar signs are attached to their property taxes. This is most unfortunate. Voters may have that extra \$5 from their property taxes, but it may be the money the thief steals in the night.



'SOME RACE OF ALIEN PREVERTS IS SENDING US DIRTY PICTURES OF NUDE PEOPLE FROM OUTER SPACE — I TELL YOU, IT'S A COMMUNIST PLOT TO SUBVERT OUR BASIC VALUES!'

cort fernald sidelong glances

This has been a month of living medically, a time in which the frailties of my human flesh have been sadly proved conclusively. Those frailties aren't moral, would that they could be made of a stuff more pliable than snapping sinew and brittle bone. Instead, the forces of chaos have done their worst and successfully set my various bodily parts askew.

Almost a month ago, during an intramural softball game, the first break occurred. I was tagging a runner at third base and was given a nasty forearm for my effort that compacted the end of my thumb. There was the usual shoving, but I knew the runner had crunched something. It was difficult to get my glove off. A trainer on the field thought it might be a jammed thumb. And I took that cursory diagnosis as gospel for a number of days because I knew it was broken — badly broken.

After the colors of my hand changed through the spectrum of injury I went to the health center. A series of X-rays revealed all I tried to ignore, the thumb was broken in three places. I went to an orthopedic surgeon. I sat morosely in the casting room as the technician was making small talk slapping the warm plaster on my forearm. "Pretty soon you'll be as good as new," he murmured shaping the cast. Four weeks the doctor had said. Four weeks, though my city league softball team was starting the season in two weeks.

I hated every moment watching them play, even though I tried to be encouraging. Every time a grounder slid through the infield I thought "I could've got that," even though I probably might have missed it as well.

Then the week arrived when the cast was cut off. I spent that whole week working my weak thumb into strength with a tennis ball.

Ready? Well enough.

I have often talked to softball old timers, those grey-haired legends from the beer leagues who've been so many decades on the mound that they haven't any idea how many spinners they've thrown, who give you a weary glance when they say there's more to the game than running, throwing and hitting. They couldn't fool me — it was a physical game. The ball didn't have eyes. The worst player can't be the best one day. And when you're the most tired you couldn't possibly play such an exceptional game. Things like that were too illogical.

To shorten the month-long tale, my first at bat I got a hit and stretched it to a triple. All I recall was seeing the catcher bobble the ball and knowing I had to slide to make it into third. Blackness. The next thing I knew I was flopped on third with my teammates pulling me up. Safe — but I had a huge crushing ache in my head and no idea what had happened.

It turns out the catcher just heaved the ball as hard as he could and it zeroed into my temple. The result was a massive skull fracture and serious medical complications that kept me in the hospital for a week. From softball? All this physical deterioration from a fun game played by quasi-athletes?

The kind of smart platitudes that mutter there is wisdom gained when a person finds they aren't impervious to harm are wasted on me. I get more cranky than wise discovering I am plague to maladies I can't blame on myself. Suffice it to say that I am ornery enough to step onto a baseball diamond if only to see what medical adventure awaits me next. I refuse the frailty of my physical form even though it seems the target of forearms, softballs and God knows what other metaphysical missiles.

letters

Tribute

We read with interest the opinion in the editorial on "Ride, Sally Ride." We agree with the article that a tribute to Sally Ride is terrific. It is about time that the most qualified person got the job. Our first U.S. woman in space is long

overdue. But it finally happened and we're proud of it.

It is especially important to commemorate a great event whether a woman or a man is the object of the attention. We are marketing Ride, Sally Ride T-shirts because we believe in our hearts that it is a special event that should be captured for all to remember.

The opinion of the Emerald should be taken in its context,

even though it is one sided. We believe that any "first time event" in history should be honored, not exploited. We chose T-shirts as our media. The Emerald chose an editorial. We just hope that the message on the shirt is taken as a great tribute to a woman. No matter what anyone thinks, "Sally rides forever."

Rise Cleary
pres., K-Rise enterprise

letters policy

The Emerald will attempt to print all letters containing fair comment on topics of interest to the University community.

Letters to the editor must be limited to 250 words, typed, signed and the identification of the writer must be verified when the letter is turned in. The Emerald reserves the right to edit any letter for length, style or content.

"Your Turn" is an Emerald opinion feature submitted by members of the University community. "Your Turn" columns must be limited to 500 words and typed.

Letters to the editor and "Your Turn" columns should be turned into the Emerald office, Suite 300 EMU.

oregon daily

emerald

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