

opinion

Olum's lack of action keeps issue on hold

Why hasn't Pres. Paul Olum made his appointments to the fact-finding committee looking into the ROTC/sexual orientation issue yet? Why hasn't Olum given the go-ahead for the committee — a committee he called for — to meet?

Olum's seeming lack of swift and decisive action has become the largest obstacle in the formation of the tri-partisan student-faculty-administration committee. There are many interested people growing more and more impatient with Olum's inaction.

Sherri Schultz, ASUO executive assistant, in drafting a letter of "reminder" on behalf of the ASUO, is the latest to urge Olum to get the committee together.

In the letter, delivered to Olum's office, Schultz expresses the ASUO's "disappointment that the ROTC committee has not yet met; indeed, that apparently the administration appointments have not even been chosen."

The ASUO is not alone in its disappointment. The Emerald would like to have the ROTC/sexual orientation issue heard and resolved at the University. The issue is one we have covered extensively in articles and opinion pieces. Our editorial position regarding affirmative action guidelines and the Military Science Department is clear; we do not, in any manner, agree with discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation.

Along with the ASUO and members of the University faculty, we urge Olum to fulfill the promise and make appointments to the committee.

At the height of a five month controversy last spring, Olum agreed to establish the fact-finding committee. At the time, a letter from faculty members demonstrated their concern and sounded the alarm that "the atmosphere is such that prejudice and discrimination against gays and lesbians may be even more likely within the University community."

But Olum has done nothing. Schultz says she doesn't think Olum is absent-minded. Judging by Olum's lack of action, we're beginning to wonder.

Olum's inaction in the ROTC/sexual orientation issue reminds us of the Environmental Law Clinic controversy from two years ago. Opponents of the law clinic said the clinic was politically partisan and therefore should not be on the University campus. Olum half-agreed with opponents and implied he would phase out the program within a year.

Then the heated controversy cooled — the environmental law clinic is still on campus. We hope Olum will not let the ROTC/sexual orientation issue grow cold and forgotten.

Olum should answer the ASUO's letter with administration appointments and establish the fact-finding committee as soon as possible.

King national holiday does little for blacks

Sign it, Ronnie. And send us one of the pens.

The Senate chamber is resounding with the slap of hands on backs as the senators congratulate each other for establishing a national holiday honoring Martin Luther King. Glad white hands shake glad white hands for a thing well-done.

But what do the black faces in the gallery far above the Senate floor think? Does setting aside every third Monday in January, beginning in 1986, change their lives in the black ghettos across the country?

Certainly the former pastor of the Dexter Avenue Baptist Church in Atlanta is deserving of a national holiday. Didn't he organize the 382-day boycott of the city's buses in the 1950s when a black seamstress named Rosa Parks was too tired to walk to the back of the bus?

It's characteristic of King that he was leading a demonstration by striking Memphis, Tenn., garbage men on April 4, 1968 when a white man assassinated him. He never lived to see his dream become reality.

Pres. Ronald Reagan, probably with an eye on the black vote, mouthed the usual platitudes about the "symbolism" of honoring King. He didn't favor the national holiday but said he would sign it into law "since they (the House and Senate) seem bent on making it a national holiday."

So joyous holiday bells will soon be ringing over the desolation of urban America. Some Americans still must dream.

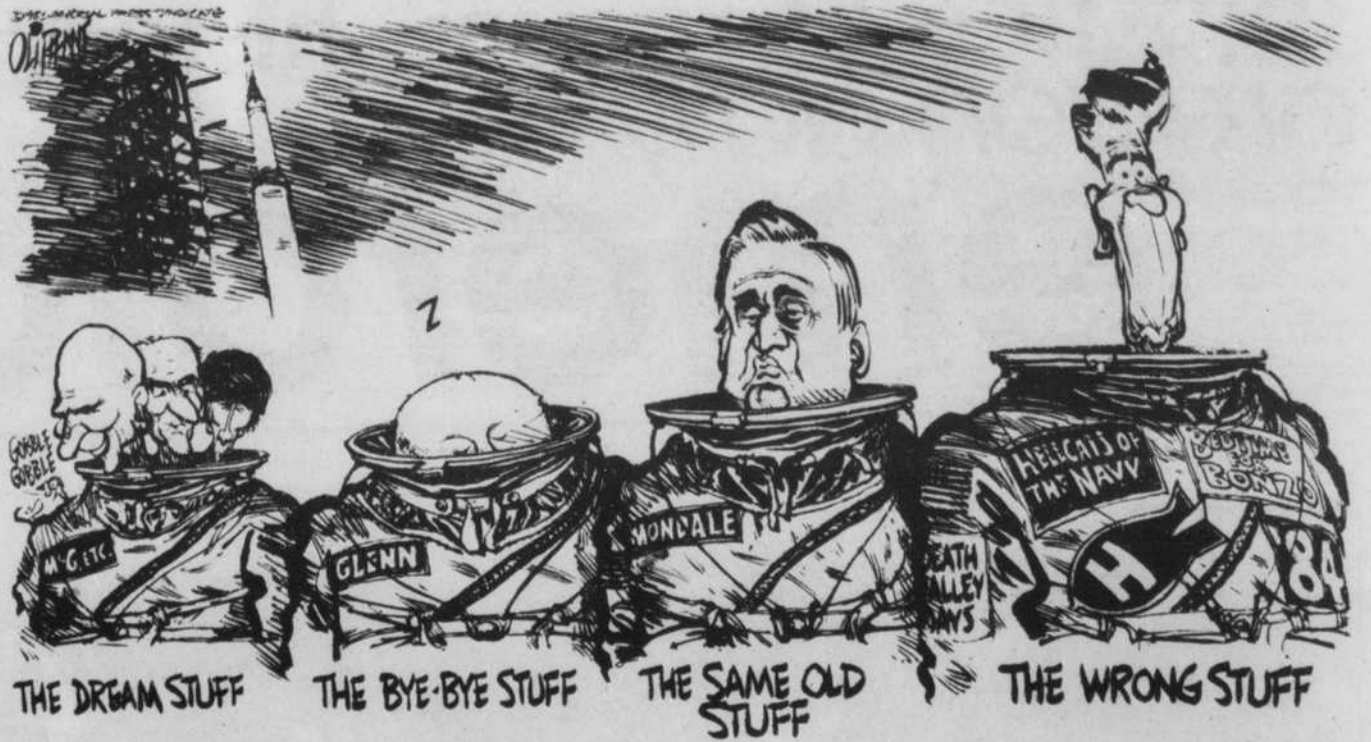
letters policy

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.

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

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



letters

Tempts

I'm glad to see that someone cares about the difference between good and poor music. Cort Fernald's review of the Moody Blues' new album in the Oct. 14 Emerald has some comments that show he knows what makes good music and what Fernald felt the album lacked. Why, then, the slurs and insults about the ages of the band and its members? Disparaging comments about anybody's age gives support to the lie that there is a right and a wrong age to be. We all know what it's like to be told we are the "wrong" age ("too young," for example) and how important it is for that to stop getting passed around. Give us more of the musical criticism we are tempted with in this piece. The insults are filler that just isn't needed.

I'm looking forward to more of Fernald's reviews.

Tihm Mixon

False image

Before leaving Eugene I would like to know exactly why the article in Monday's Emerald creates a false impression of what I actually said in the interview I gave on a trust basis.

Maybe it's just jealousy that makes some reporters take things out of context, a jealousy probably stemming from their own lack of coherence. Whatever the case, there is no doubt that I never claimed there was definitely going to be a war in the next 10 years; what I said was that Pres. Ronald Reagan's new concept of a limited nuclear war in Europe is, within the context of American worldwide deployment of and threat with nuclear missiles, is going to put NATO in a position to start a war and "win" it in 10 years' time. Certainly one can argue about the American administration's political intentions as to starting or preventing war. However, the quantitative (number of warheads) and qualitative superiority already established by the U.S. and NATO over the Soviet Union — American computer

technology being 10 years ahead of Russian guidance systems — has led us to assume that, logically enough, the spiral logic of mutual deterrence will never lead to politically productive and constructive relations between nations, let alone to domestic peace.

The peacetime war on the Soviets and the Third World countries is clearly reflected in domestic politics, where the war on minorities and political undesirables keeps the spirit of aggression alive that so many are trying both here and in Germany to counteract in non-violent civil disobedience and direct action.

The tendency in the article to emphasize some alleged apocalyptic vision or other of the world (last paragraph) is typical of the discriminatory thinking behind undifferentiated anti-communism, which cynically labels honest and idealistic people struggling to create a society in which one can live and work together and not against each other, as downright criminals and public enemies. Everyone who is fighting against social and political wrongs represents the real hope of a human future. In this sense, the Greens with all the active people here unite in knowing they are indivisible and determined not to let go of the hope of getting Reagan and his administration out of power.

Tom Todd
green party, Hamburg

Big 'werds'

News editor Frank Shaw, do you have trouble with big words? We know your writing style is designed for an eighth grader's comprehension, but that's okay, so are your textbooks. The point is some of us like to probe a little deeper, so we ask questions.

Questioning is basic to the the purpose of a university. Doctrines that restrict questioning, such as you preach, i.e., "peer pressure" or "a quick stab with a pencil" have no place in the University classroom. We are not all eloquent speakers and not every question is a philosophic gem, but

occasionally some of us need to have a point clarified. I'm sorry that questions in your classes don't entertain you, but that is not the primary purpose of education.

I question the merits of your column, Editor's Note. You seem intrigued with petty topics. Your writing is neither responsible nor mature journalism. Just what was the point of your article "Just when you thought it was safe to sleep?" Were you playing devil's advocate? Do you enjoy receiving negative letters? Or perhaps you want to silence those who disturb your sleep by interrupting the monotonous lecture of a professor equally bored with an unresponsive class.

Doug Emmerich
senior, LSS

Read it

Although we do not necessarily support the use of U.S. troops in foreign land, we must nevertheless protest the statement of Ron Phillips, coordinator of the Coalition Opposed the Registration and the Draft. He said, "The government has no right to say that against your will you must put on a uniform and die for us."

If Phillips were to read a handy copy of the U.S. Constitution, he would find that Article 1, Section 8 empowers Congress with the right to raise an army. The government has a "right" to perform this occasionally distasteful deed, just as it can force us to pay income taxes and do other unpleasant tasks. Let's not forget, Phillips, that this is the same Constitution that you manage to use to defend yourself when any form of government violates your rights, such as freedom of expression.

As stated, we do not cherish war. Yet we resent the double standard Phillips imposes. Let's face it, Ron, you cannot ignore parts of the Constitution which you dislike. The same document allowing you to criticize registration and the draft also allows Congress to raise armies.

Greg VanDyke
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sophomore, history

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