

Apartheid — a crime against humanity

"You can blow out a candle but you can't blow out a fire. Once the flames begin to grow, the wind will spread it higher." — Steve Biko

Since the death of Steve Biko at the hands of South African security police in 1977 (the official report stated that he died from "self-inflicted injuries" during interrogation), the flames of protest in South Africa have spread like wild fire. Year by year, as the death toll of black South Africans struggling against apartheid increases, so too has social unrest grown. In 1985, this struggle for justice has reached new heights.

With each day that passes, more and more black South Africans are being detained, beaten, arrested and cold-bloodedly murdered by security police as they take to the streets in massive demonstrations against apartheid. A clear example of this brutality can be seen in the slaughter of 19 unarmed blacks in the town of Uitenhage on March 21. What was their crime? They had gathered in a funeral procession to mourn the death of other blacks who had been killed by police in protests two weeks earlier.

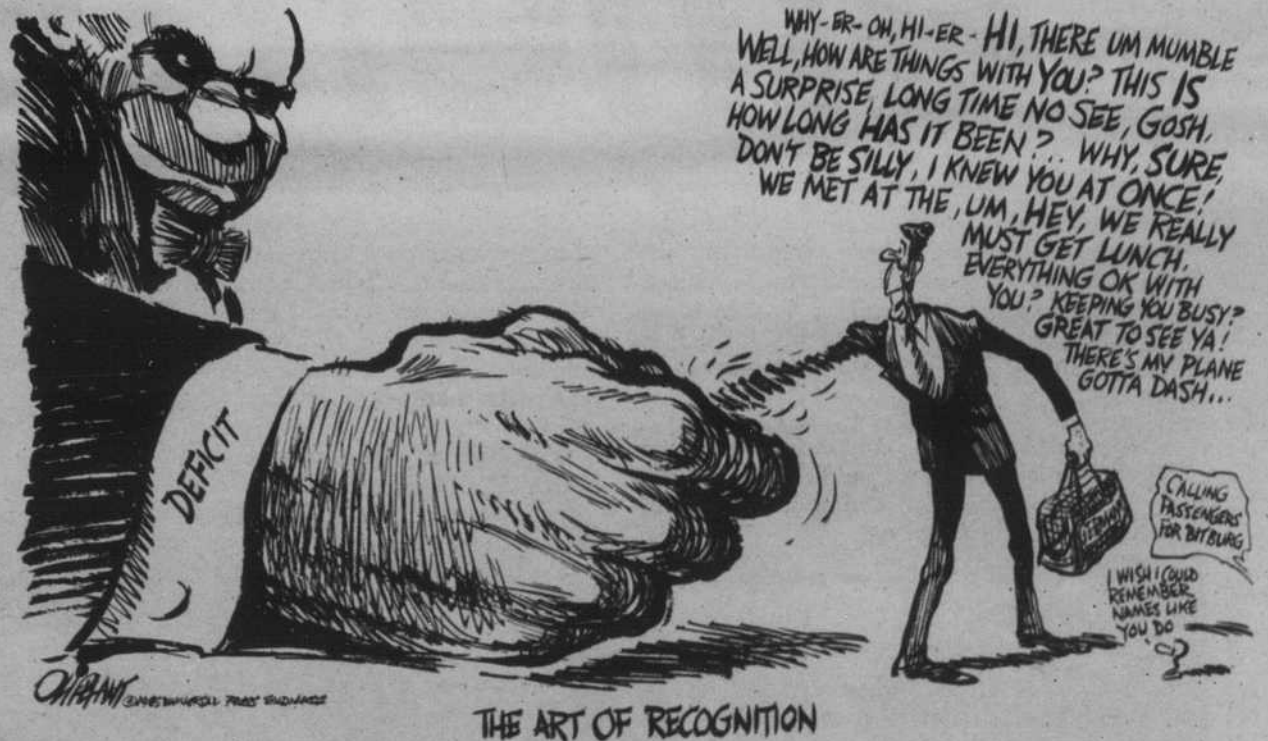
The system of apartheid, nourished and protected by the government of South Africa, represents a cruel and inhumane philosophy of racial superiority. Within that country, a black man or woman is a non-person. Although born in South Africa, blacks are not citizens in that land, they cannot vote, they cannot own "white" land and they must carry identification papers on them at all times or face arrest. Apartheid is nothing less than a crime against humanity. Steve Biko, one of South Africa's greatest spokesmen for equal rights and justice, recognized this and like thousands of other blacks, he gave his life in the struggle against apartheid.

Where do we, as students and as citizens of the United States, stand in relation to this struggle? We cannot claim ignorance. We will not be able to say to our children that we didn't know what was going on in South Africa. Whether we like it or not, the news media have brought the reality of South Africa into our homes. Hardly a day goes by without mention of the arrests and killings of South African blacks who seek freedom.

Today is a special day at the University. Today, all of us who believe in a better world must take a stand on South Africa. We must fight apartheid and one way to do that is to protest against our own government.

For over a century, the United States has supported South Africa with military and economic aid. By arming South Africa with the latest technology (computer systems used by police to monitor black "subversives", riot control equipment, etc.), U.S. corporations have helped strengthen the very apartheid system which they now claim to oppose. Americans must also cast off the illusion that President Ronald Reagan's South African policy of "constructive engagement" works. It does not. According to 1984 Nobel Peace Prize recipient Bishop Desmond Tutu, since Reagan became president more blacks have died at the hands of South African police than in the previous ten years combined.

Just as South Africans will determine their own future, we must determine ours. This translates into pulling U.S. investments out of South Africa and cutting U.S. military and economic aid to that country until apartheid is dismantled. Let your feelings on apartheid be heard. Join the rally in the EMU courtyard at 2 p.m. today. Together, we can take a stand for justice by calling upon our government to end its policy of cooperation with the racist leaders of South Africa.



letters

A tribute

For Al on May Day:
We are still struggling with the reality that Al Szymanski is gone.

If only he could have taken what he needed to renew his strength from those of us who loved him.

But he seemed to know only how to give.

We can turn to his writings for instruction and inspiration, so that contribution will forever be available to us. But there is now a great emptiness in place of his friendship, and only memories of his energy, warmth and kindness remain.

We miss you, gentle militant. "I have shut my balcony because I do not want to hear the weeping, but from behind the grey walls nothing else is heard but the weeping."

There are very few angels that sing, there are very few dogs that bark, a thousand violins fit into the palm of my hand.

But the weeping is an immense dog, the weeping is an immense angel, the weeping is an immense violin, the tears muzzle the wind, nothing else is heard but the weeping."

by Federica Garcia Lorca
Sandra and Michael Francisconi Eugene

Show support

The University of Washington, Harvard, Notre Dame, Stanford, the University of Texas, Michigan State University, Princeton, and campuses throughout the University of California system are but a few of the campuses that allow publication of course and teacher evaluations.

On Wednesday May 1 the University Assembly will vote on a motion to allow students at the University to see compilations of such evaluations at selected sites on campus.

The faculty at the University has repeatedly voted against all but the most restrictive access proposals over the past 10 years.

This intransigence has led students to take their case to the state legislature and prompted the 1980 Student University Affairs Board to debate calling for a student boycott of evaluations.

It is time for the faculty at the University to join their colleagues across the United States in allowing students to use evaluations as a part of their class selection process.

It is not an unreasonable request.

Students, please ask your teachers to go to the Assembly to vote for the access motion.

Faculty members, please express your confidence in your students and your colleagues.

Bring those colleagues with you to the Assembly to support this appropriate change.

Roscoe Caron Student Senate

Nonsense

Students for a Progressive Agenda, whose thundering eight percent student vote, has confirmed once and for all that our campus is indeed liberal.

One out of 15 students voting is a sure sign that apathy is dead at the University.

While walking through the EMU on election day, a cordial man wearing a SPA button gave

me some literature. I asked him what are the goals of this group. He responded by saying, "SPA is dedicated to the tradition of activism and change." This makes little, if any, sense.

"Tradition" is a maintenance of the status quo and "activism and change" means the active pursuit of change.

Oh well, SPA doesn't have to explain their philosophy or epistemological values.

I'm sure we'll all be told that America, the greatest, noblest, freest country on earth, is politically and morally inferior to that of Soviet Russia, the bloodiest dictatorship in history — that our wealth should be given away to communist Marxist failures in Africa, with apologies for the fact that we have produced it while they haven't.

We will be told to mind our own business in Central America but do as much as possible to interfere with South Africa.

If we asked our SPA leaders in the past what are the ideas we should fight for, their answer is such a sticky puddle of stale syrup — of benevolent bromides and apologetic generalities about brother love, global progress and universal prosperity (at the USA's expense) that a fly would not die for it or in it.

Will things be different with Lynn Pinckney?

Historically speaking, no.
Dan Goulet College Republicans

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 or style. Letters to the editor should be turned into the Emerald office, Suite 300 EMU.

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