

## U.S. doesn't help apartheid victims

The state of emergency imposed in South Africa is an effort to stop the bloodshed of the nation's people, most of whom are black. Or so Pieter Botha, South Africa's president, and others of the white minority government, would have you believe. In reality, the tyranny is a desperate attempt to dismantle the opposition to the government, and its system of apartheid, before the opposition destroys the government. What better way to destroy the movement that was beginning to threaten the government's stability, than to remove all rights from those who support it; to break up families, arrest opposition leaders and threaten public demonstrators with disappearance and death.

The state of emergency gives the government and its security forces almost unlimited power over its people. Under its provisions, authorities can detain and arrest citizens without charges or access to a lawyer, seal off entire townships, and even shoot blacks without fear of reprisal. More than 1,000 have been arrested since the emergency was declared July 20, and because the government doesn't feel the need to disclose where many of the arrested are being held, many have virtually disappeared. Those that had few rights before, now have none.

In the face of this blatant violation of human rights, the Reagan administration continues to stand by its policy of "constructive engagement," which stresses maintaining diplomatic relations with South Africa in order to somehow persuade the government there to change apartheid policies.

But it is difficult to accept that the Reagan administration genuinely believes that this policy of gentle nudging is going to convince the South African government to relinquish its reign of power over the nation, particularly when it took massive demonstrations and protests to give blacks equal legal status in this country. Rarely is power relinquished graciously.

The administration refuses to support the imposition of economic sanctions on the nation, clashing with both houses of Congress, France and the United Nations Security Council. The House and Senate approved similar sanctions against South Africa even before the state of emergency was imposed. France recalled its ambassador last week and banned any new investments in the country, and led the U.N. Security Council in voting to encourage nations to ban new investments and impose economic sanctions on the country.

The administration claims that economic sanctions will hurt black South Africans, citing the jobs and money provided for blacks by U.S. firms. But what black South Africans need is an end to apartheid, and the bottom line remains that "constructive engagement" has done nothing to achieve this aim. If the South African government were faced with sanctions from all of its major trading partners, it would be more receptive to change.

But the only thing the Reagan administration has done, is to repeat a familiar performance witnessed when international crises crop up: sharpened its rhetoric. After verbally condemning the action, the administration asked the South African government to lift the state of emergency.

Of course, when the layers of rhetoric are peeled away, the real reason the United States continues to support the government of South Africa is not because it is felt that blacks will benefit from the actions of the United States, but because the government is interested in protecting about \$5 billion worth of investments in the country.

But in the long run, the blacks of South Africa will succeed in seizing power. And if they remember the United States' policy of "constructive engagement" with the government that oppressed them, our investments will certainly be in peril.



A STATE OF EMERGENCY

## letters

### Religion

Tom Visoky (ODE, July 18) argued for prayer in public schools by quoting George Will's "22-page" analysis of Justice Rehnquist's dissent from the recent Alabama Case "proving that the authors of the Establishment Clause intended to prevent partiality toward any particular sect, not to require neutrality between religion and irreligion." He also paraphrases a "212-page" essay by John Whitehead by substituting "Christian sect" for "sect" and "Christianity and secularism" for "religion and irreligion" in the above quote.

Visoky's presuppositions that longer essays contain deeper truth, and that one person can "prove" what another intended or thought, are absurd. A first hand estimate is only approximate without feedback. A 200 year separation and indirect sources degrade this further. In his choice of paraphrase, Visoky attempts to establish a third presupposition; that the concept of "religion" is to be equated with "Christianity."

Such sectarianism may have been an element in the authors' minds. But the horrendous torture and murder of 9 million persons, mostly women, accused of believing in the Goddess Religion of Europe (witchcraft), by many Christian sects, continued in English speaking countries until 1730. I would like to see a convincing "proof" that the Constitutional authors were not mindful of this 60

years later, when "The Inquisition" is a household word 260 years later.

Finally, suppose the authors did not conceive of the need to protect the non-religious from Christian bigots. Wisdom remains such only if it is continually extended to the previously unconceived.

Jack Straton  
Graduate student  
Physics

### Abortion

The editorial printed in the July 18 ODE strikes me as failing to provide an adequate answer to the problem it addresses. Abortion is indeed a symptom, not merely of poor sex education or of unwanted pregnancies, but of the moral vacuum that has engulfed our culture. Child abuse is also a symptom. Both must be fought, however, because of the grievous wrong that they inflict on the helpless.

Having discarded the framework of biblical guidelines given to us for our benefit and protection by the One who designed us and created us to share His existence, we are left without a foundation for moral distinctions; whatever "seems O.K." is all the morality that we have left. Since individuals disagree about what is right, whoever is strongest or most adept at manipulating others is the "rightest."

Unwanted pregnancy and the refusal to recognize the right of the unborn to exist, are themselves symptomatic of an attitude that says, "I will do as I please, regardless of any conse-

quences," followed by, "It's not my fault." Our generation has said to its children, "go out and make up your own rules about right and wrong." We are now experiencing some of the results of such "freedom"; the statistics on teen-age emotional problems, drug and alcohol abuse, suicides and crimes of violence against others suggest that perhaps these young people need the moral training that we are denying them. Wisdom tells us to treat the disease, not just the symptoms.

William Moore  
Music

### Classified

You said you were too young to understand, Mr. Olum. Not responsible for the death and destruction of the bomb. Taken from college to work on a top secret/classified project. During the Second World War. Or so you tell the world. How sorry you are for all those who died. But you couldn't tell a soul. Until Manhattan was unclassified. Would things have been different somehow. If you took responsibility and said, "I will not allow secrecy. I will not allow another person, animal or plant. To face the cruelty, violence, death or destruction. Ever again." Besides... what have you to hide? The free exchange of information. Is UNCLASSIFIED.

Richard Gold  
Eugene

## oregon daily emerald

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