

Editorial

Press manipulation bad foreign policy

The Reagan administration is noted for its manipulation of the press, but the recent disclosure of White House disinformation strategies is going too far.

The Washington Post ran a story last week accusing the administration of engaging in a "disinformation" strategy against Libya, namely leaking exaggerated or inaccurate reports of Libyan leader Moammar Gadhafi's mental instability, the dangers he faces of a coup at home and new evidence on Gadhafi's terrorist network.

The administration admits that memorandums and discussions that outline the disinformation campaign have been circulating through the White House, and have resulted in a presidential directive to take "steps" against Libya, principally a disinformation campaign.

Larry Speakes, White House spokesman, denied flatly that inaccurate information has been leaked to American journalists, but would not comment on whether such a campaign has been carried out in the foreign media.

This disregard for foreign news organizations can only damage America's credibility abroad. France did not allow American jets to fly over French airspace in last April's bombing of Gadhafi's home in Libya; recently they pulled out of a joint military operation with the United States to drive Libyan troops out of Chad.

The French pulled out of that operation following the publication of an article in the Wall Street Journal concerning mounting tensions between the United States and Libya. The article, based on administration sources, was later called an exaggeration.

Reagan can only damage his foreign policy with a disinformation campaign. The United States needs the support of other nations to combat terrorism; lying to those whose help we want will damage U.S. credibility and good will they may have toward the United States.

What's more, Secretary of State George Schultz supported a policy of disinformation unflinchingly in a recent press conference, saying that a disinformation strategy is appropriate where it advances U.S. foreign policy.

This is a complete reversal of former administration policy, which has been to leak information when convenient — but always accurate information.

It could be that the President is growing overconfident of his ability to manipulate the media, and now believes the media, putting forth his inaccuracies, can help him to topple Gadhafi.

This policy serves neither news organizations nor the public who rely on accurate information to understand the situation in Libya and what Reagan is doing to combat terrorist activities originating there.

Citizens block GWEN, fight national policy

The Air Force's recent announcement that it would not build a Ground Wave Emergency Network tower in Lane County comes as a tribute to the efforts of the No-GWEN Alliance.

The formation of the alliance and its dedication to opposing the GWEN tower is a prime example of how citizen action can affect an unpopular policy developed at the national level without concern for the people being affected.

The Air Force did not intend to inform the public of its plans to build the tower, perhaps hoping to construct it without public scrutiny. The GWEN alliance brought the plan into the public eye, and filed a lawsuit seeking to require the Air Force to file an environmental impact statement.

As a result of the lawsuit, the Air Force held public hearings and is developing an environmental impact study. Moreover, Sen. Mark Hatfield, head of the Senate Appropriations Committee, has slashed the budget for GWEN from \$97.2 million to \$20 million.

Shortly following this action in the Senate, the Air Force announced it would not build the GWEN tower in Eugene.

The GWEN proposal was a faulty one, and ignored the wishes of citizens in Lane County as well as across the nation. With 36 organized groups in 17 states, GWEN faces formidable opposition.

The example set by the No-GWEN alliance should help other anti-GWEN organizations across the country and may further serve as a guide as the Department of Energy considers making Hanford, Wash., the nation's largest nuclear waste dump site.



Letters

Inhumanity

As I sat studying Sunday night, I heard a commotion outside. I looked out my window and watched as four men chased a small animal under a car. The four men ran up to the car and began to scream at their prey underneath the car. One of the hunters took hold of a large fallen branch and flushed out his victim. What emerged was a rather small opossum.

As this meek animal attempted to scurry across Patterson street, it was brutally kicked — its body hurled across the street. The small creature took sanctuary under another car. It was again forced out. In shock, it stood still, undoubtedly frightened as hell as the man who kicked it yelled "You're ugly."

"Stop it," I yelled, horrified. "It's only a opossum, dude," was the answer.

I shouted at them how disgusting it was to treat a living creature this way. My words went unnoticed as they kicked it and hit it with a stick, later chasing it out of my sight, where, I assume, it met its demise.

As I consider transferring

schools, events such as this weigh heavily on my mind. Oregon is no longer the liberal-attitude school it seems to pride itself on.

As for the twisted individuals who tortured that poor animal, I only wish to say, you are sick.

Man's inhumanity to man is atrocious, but his inhumanity to nature is abominable. I only hope those four "dudes" are someday trapped just like their victim Sunday night.

Michael Pyle
International Studies

Bugging

When our forefathers came to this young nation, their preoccupation was to make a living, raise a family, obtain an education and pass on the American heritage.

The nation was especially united in times of war. Thankfully there has been no international conflict in decades, but internal disunity is widespread. There is no overseas blood-letting, but the domestic struggle would make Karl Marx shave his beard with joy.

Now we see:
Conflict between the law abiding and the law breaking.

Strife between labor unions and those desiring non-union workers.

Differences between government entities: federal, state, county and city.

One of the manifestations of home-side hostilities is the magnitude and multitude of electronic surveillance (bugging).

Big Brother seems to have an electronic interest in all Americans. Tax payers are being investigated by devices for which they have paid.

Big business has competitors, foreign and domestic, and protect financial interests with intricate devices preventing industrial sabotage.

Richly endowed by the Founding Fathers with privileged rights, some spiritual societies have departed from "surveillance by the Deity" to scarcely religions, home-grown intelligence systems. Has the "bug" replaced the Holy Bible? Has the computer bank substituted common sense? Or the sacraments? Or sanity?

Dr. Urban Terbiesten
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