

# Editorial

## Spare jail sentence for Silas T. Bissell

We're pleased to see that the FBI can catch their man — even if it takes 17 years. Last week, bureau agents arrested Eugene resident Silas Bissell, alias Terrence Jackson, for a 1970 bombing attempt of a University of Washington ROTC building.

Attempted bombing is a major offense, and his arrest was meritorious, yet we believe the Seattle courts should go easy on him.

Since 1970, Bissell, by all accounts, has led an exemplary life. He is described as being soft-spoken and low-key by those who know him. He was employed as a physical therapist for Sacred Heart Home Health Services since 1981, and his Eugene Municipal Court record shows only two minor dog-control violations. It is obvious Bissell long ago had left the life of campus radical.

If convicted he could face a total of 15 years in prison and \$20,000 in fines. This penalty seems a bit too harsh for someone whom FBI agents described as "a gentleman" at the time of his arrest.

Moreover, Bissell was a productive member of society and was well-liked by neighbors, friends and his physical therapy patients. To incarcerate him would be carrying justice too far. Not only that, he would become a liability for the state, which would bear the cost of his imprisonment.

It would be in everyone's best interest, including Bissell's, if he were sentenced to community-service work, rather than a jail term. In this way, he could repay his debt to society in a constructive manner and spare taxpayers the burden of keeping him behind bars.

## U.S. can't offer protection for Americans in Lebanon

If there is a saving face to the Reagan administration's foreign policy quagmire, it's the president's recent admission that there is little or nothing the government can do to protect U.S. citizens who have refused to leave war-torn Lebanon.

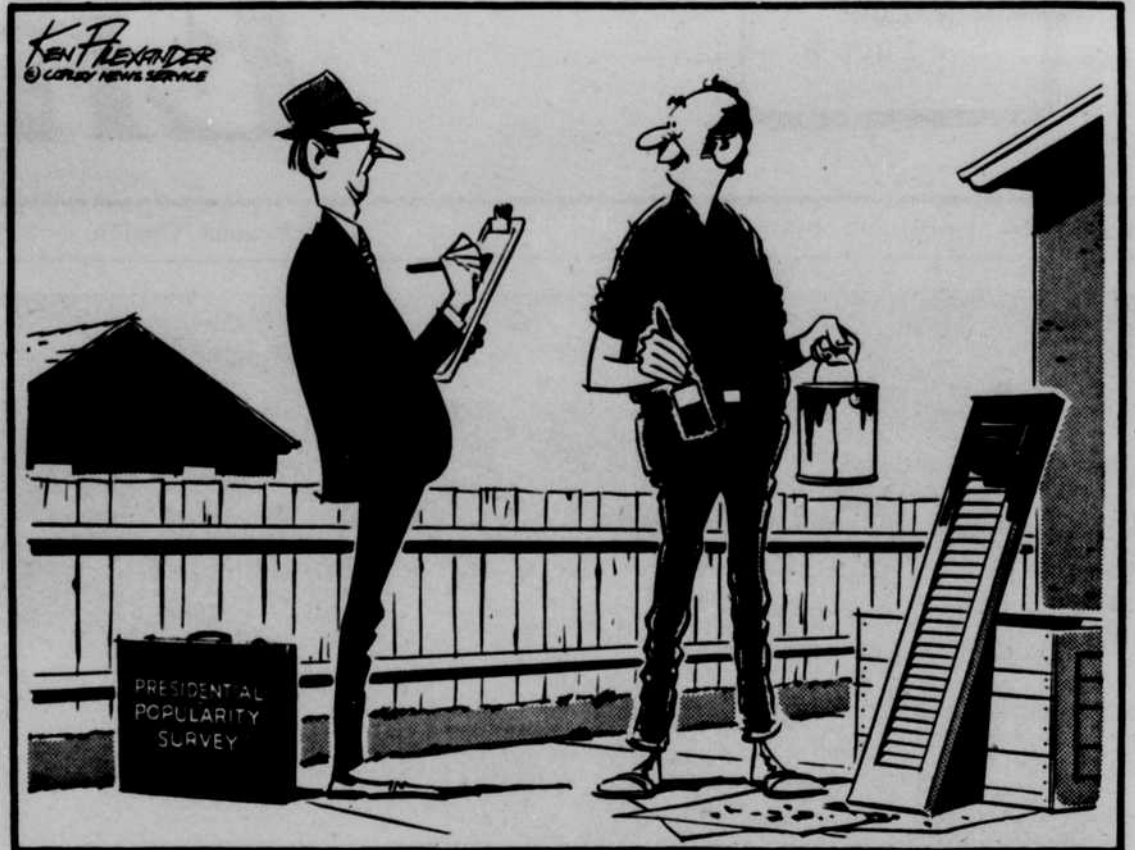
This stark reality is a hard pill for Americans to swallow. It goes against our ethics to stand helplessly by while our citizens are abducted and held for ransom. But it's a reality we nonetheless must deal with.

The three Americans kidnapped over the weekend were warned by the U.S. government that it could not guarantee their safety, yet they, and others, chose to remain in Lebanon. They have stayed for a variety of reasons; some have converted to Islam, some have Lebanese spouses, others have traditional and job-related ties that keep them there.

The point is these Americans have chosen to stake their fortunes in that chaotic Mediterranean country — they are there by choice and must bear the consequences of their decisions.

The administration can ill afford to jeopardize what little strength it may have left in the Middle East in the wake of its embarrassing and hypocritical arms deal with Iran. The president rewarded kidnapping when he initially swapped arms for hostages. Hopefully, he has learned a painful lesson.

The principles of our foreign policy cannot be compromised by the decisions of a few reckless Americans remaining in Lebanon. Perhaps these Americans will realize this before they too learn a painful lesson.



"HE LIES, HE'S RUINING THE ECONOMY, HE HIRES TURKEYS, HE'S NOT VERY BRIGHT AND I'D VOTE FOR HIM TOMORROW"

## Letters

### Rights

Your editorial of Jan. 9 dealt with the release of Andrei Sakharov by the USSR. Why doesn't the Reagan administration now reciprocate by releasing Leonard Peltier and other American Indian political prisoners?

Peltier, the American Indian Movement activist, has spent 10 years in federal prisons even though the FBI now admits that it suppressed key evidence (his gun did not fire the fatal shots) that would have led to his acquittal in the death of two of its agents in 1975.

Last year, 58 members of Congress signed an amicus brief requesting a fair trial for Peltier, and 46 religious leaders, including Bishop Tutu, signed a similar brief. Yet Peltier continues to be denied his day in court.

Closer to home, David Sohapp and two others have been jailed for fishing on the Columbia River in support of their Indian treaty rights. The so-called government "salmon scam" of 1981-82 resulted in the arrest of 35 American Indians, 16 of whom lived along the river and

were carrying on their ancient traditions of fishing for sustenance, trade and religious ceremonies.

Sohappy, a gentle, non-violent man, is a religious leader and a direct descendant of Smohalla, the Indian prophet of the Dreamer faith who inspired Chief Joseph and the Nez Perce in their resistance to settler aggression of the last century. Like Joseph, Sohappy is being persecuted for his Indian religious beliefs.

What ever happened to our First Amendment rights, let alone our basic human rights?

Steve Talbot  
Instructor

### Advocate

Since the Greek system wouldn't heed me as a critic, I've decided to act as consumer advocate for them. Lambda Chi is presently having winter rush. Gentlemen, this is your chance. If you take the opportunity to join, you'll have all the women you can get it up for.

Why join Lambda Chi?  
The SWIMMING POOL, you fools.

What will a swimming pool do for me?

It'll provide you with women who have few clothes on. The fewer clothes on, the less you have to take off.

Why should I join a frat that only pays off during the warm months of the year?

Because the kind of women that want the pool during the

warm months will do almost anything during the cold months to ensure that they'll have this warm-water activity in spring. One lady on the Lambda Chi Court said she "only became part of the court because of the swimming pool."

I'm sure that they'll go to all the functions with their new found swimming pool. What's more, they'll bring more women with them. Who wants to swim?

One last parting consumer comment.

When a woman is willing to give herself away for beer, you could call her a "beer slut." Because of this, it is possible to make advances on them when drinking. Therefore, get into this:

Q) What does a frat boy say to a sorority girl who turns him down?

A) Have another beer!  
I'm your consumer advocate:  
"Have a nice dip."

Blake Louis Sliter  
Political Science, English

### Protest

It has recently come to our attention that the Housing Department, through SPORT (Sports Pull Our Residents Together) is planning a Jello Awareness Week (JAW?). This program allegedly involves various recreational uses of jello. It seems sad and embarrassing to us that in this, the age of widespread famine and malnutrition

## 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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