

Editorial

Reagan — abstain; Ortega — get with it

On Sunday, the following headline appeared on a local newspaper's front page: "Ortega agrees to open talks with rebels." Monday, the following headline appeared on the same paper's front page: "Reagan to seek more Contra aid."

The day after Nicaraguan President Daniel Ortega finally conceded to talk with the Nicaraguan rebels, called Contras, President Reagan responded by saying he would ask Congress to approve military aid to them by February.

It's ironic that the day after Ortega moves to comply with the provisions of the Central American Peace Plan, the Reagan administration moves to act against it. The peace plan specifically forbids extra-regional governments to aid "irregular or insurrectionist movements."

And if any movement in Central America is irregular, it's the Contras. After all, they were resurrected out of Nicaragua's old National Guard by guns and money from the United States — or maybe that's not so irregular after all.

Yet Reagan has good reason not to believe Ortega's promises about reform in general and negotiating with the Contras in particular. Although he promised this weekend to restore civil liberties and make other concessions, Ortega has been slow to comply with the peace plan's provisions.

However, if Reagan seeks and gets approval to supply more military aid to the Contras, who do better as terrorists and drug traffickers than combatants, Ortega will have a valid excuse not to comply with the peace plan.

Peace in Central America deserves a chance, although it might require more time than the Reagan administration has yet allowed. Thus Reagan should abstain from seeking more aid to the Contras, as such aid will only be counterproductive toward achieving peace in the region. If Reagan persists in seeking such aid, Congress should strike it down.

Ortega, on the other hand, must get with it.

Children's agenda key to fighting crime problem

Someone has finally offered a potential long-term solution to Oregon's growing crime problem.

In his State of the State address Friday, Gov. Neil Goldschmidt presented his audience, the City Club of Portland, with a vision for overcoming crime in Oregon. And that vision focuses on the real root of crime: how society treats its children, children that become adults.

Goldschmidt did not provide any specifics or suggest particular programs; he merely urged that the government and people of Oregon focus more resources on developing the state's greatest resource: children.

"As carefully as we have used and preserved, as passionately as we have cared about our forests, so must we husband and harvest the new growth of talent and hope that lies within the next generation," Goldschmidt said.

During the speech, Goldschmidt delegated some of the responsibility to develop and implement a "complete agenda for children" to local and regional communities, adding he wants to give it to the 1989 Legislature.

And thus it becomes the partial responsibility of this community to develop some innovative ideas to help children become better adults.



PALESTINIANS FINALLY GETTING LAND IN ISRAEL

Letters

Response

In response to Mike Drummond's article, "Muslim students protest Israeli actions in Gaza" (ODE, Jan. 14):

The issue of the "Palestinian's [sic] demand to establish a homeland — a homeland lost when Israel defeated Egypt during the Six Days [sic] War in 1967" implies that the Palestinians were under home rule prior to the Six-Day War. The Gaza was ruled by Egypt and Jordan ruled over the West Bank.

A question is raised by a statement attributed to Ahmed Zaiden, who was quoted as saying, "We would like to see the Palestinians have their own identity and their own leadership. And for 40 years Israel has not given any of that." Forty years ago would coincide with the founding of the state of Israel, not with the the war in 1967.

Interestingly enough, the vote against partition of Israel, which created two separate states, was led by a Moslem bloc of nations. The War of Independence followed an invasion by the Arab states after Israel declared statehood. The pre-1967 borders were established at that time — borders much broader than had been proposed for the Jewish

sector by the partition plan.

As for the comparison of Zionism to racism, it is important to learn about the statements and values of prominent [sic] Zionists. Chaim Weizman said in 1936, while president of the Zionist Organization, "Our contention is that Jews and Arabs in Palestine must be treated as two communities, two units with absolutely equal rights, these rights being independent of numbers."

I urge a continued dialogue, not only in Israel, but here.

Leslie Glasser
English

Cry for help

An incident on Dec. 6 has scared me; not so much from the actions of the participants but the lack of action from others.

In the early hours Sunday an argument started on the male floor of my dorm. It was a domestic quarrel between a couple previously witnessed by many as having screaming fights. On this occasion the shouts could be heard from the floor above.

This time, though, verbal abuse turned into physical abuse. The woman involved screamed comments in the nature of, "Stop hitting me," and "Get away from me." These screams prompted not one guy on the floor to knock on the door, even just to say "keep the noise down — I can't sleep." Everyone stayed behind closed doors.

True, the man involved is large and muscular, yet when the woman managed to make it to the third floor and wake the women there with her screams someone was out, armed to defend her, in the hall within seconds and half a dozen others

were in the hall within two minutes.

She could have been raped or killed that night without aid. It scares me to know that if it had been me, my calls for help would have been unanswered. I'm glad the girls on my floor aren't afraid to defend their friends; they help me feel safe, not my male protectors below.

Elizabeth Willard
Pre-journalism

Safest sex

I see I wasn't the only one disgusted by the dorm "Safe Sex" dance last week! (ODE, Jan. 14) Promises of free condoms with admission were displayed all week on a banner spanning the Carson dining hall doorway.

Free condoms with the price of admission? Give me a break! I'm sorry that the sponsors, anonymous as they were, needed to resort to that to attract a crowd.

I have nothing against dances, but principle kept me from this one. I'd encourage others to do the same for similar events.

In his commentary last week, Craig Harris asked what parents would think about sending their kids into a dormitory system that openly allows this kind of advertising for a dorm event.

Most parents would be appalled, I would think. Housing says that titles of dances with sexual innuendo do not break policy, but if you ask me, they are in bad taste and the policy should be changed.

And what exactly is this "safe sex" everyone from Dr. Ruth to dorm dance sponsors are promoting? Statistics on the reliability of condoms aren't very impressive.

Besides, what about other STDs, unwanted pregnancy and emotional trauma often related to premarital sex? Monogamy or abstinence are the only real "safe" routes and if more people lived by them, the U.S. wouldn't have an epidemic of AIDS, unwanted pregnancies and STDs.

Karen Engels
Journalism, English

Wednesday, January 20, 1988

Oregon Daily Emerald

P.O. Box 3159, Eugene, Oregon 97403

The Oregon Daily Emerald is published Monday through Friday except during exam week and vacations by the Oregon Daily Emerald Publishing Co., at the University of Oregon, Eugene, Oregon.

The Emerald operates independently of the University with offices on the third floor of the Erb Memorial Union and is a member of the Associated Press.

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