

Editorial

Life during wartime demands apology

As an apology, it is 45 years late. As reparation, it will never be enough. But recent Congressional legislation to offer \$20,000 and a formal apology to each of those 66,000 Japanese-Americans interned during World War II is a commendable and noble act.

Unfortunately, President Reagan, who has been rather veto-happy as of late, has threatened to put his stamp of disapproval on this bill as well. He cites its \$1.3 billion price tag as being too much.

If anything, \$1.3 billion is far too little. The internment of American citizens and legal aliens in the country is a dark stain on this country's history. Hysteria and paranoia frequently have led to the suspension of basic human rights during wartime. By forgetting these citizens and the torment they went through, by not assuming our guilt, we only set ourselves up for future moral indecencies.

The president also is ignorant as to how high the cost of an apology could run. A federal appeals court has ruled that surviving Japanese-Americans internees can file claims of up to \$200,000 against the government, a figure 10 times what the legislation offers.

During his eight years in office, Reagan has been more father figure to the nation than president. This is an opportunity for him to do both roles — sign the internment legislation, and allow the nation to assuage its guilt.

Keep school doors open for people with AIDS virus

As the U.S. Surgeon General prepares to mail 114 million pamphlets explaining the AIDS virus to households across America, Eugene School District is reviewing a far-sighted proposal to keep students and faculty members who contract the deadly disease in school.

The pamphlet will explain that AIDS is in no way transmitted by casual contact. The policy will prevent outbreaks of violence between schools and mis-educated, fear-stricken community members, such as have occurred in Florida and Idaho last year.

AIDS is a killer, but its victims deserve — and must continue to be given — certain basic considerations and understanding. Employment and education are two of those considerations.

These are the facts: The virus is not transmitted through bites, sneezes or by touching bathroom facilities. Students and co-workers have nothing to fear by being in the same classroom or office with a person with AIDS. Continued education, and a commitment to education, is necessary to curb the irrational fear that seems to follow this plague around.

The school board plans to conduct a public hearing over this proposal on May 18, and to make a formal decision June 1. We encourage readers to attend the hearing, and hope that strong rational voices will call for the enactment of this policy.

YOU CAN CATCH AIDS FROM TOILET SEATS, FRENCH KISSING AND TOUCH FOOTBALL.



NO, WAIT... THAT'S HOW YOU GET PREGNANT



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Letters

Hold hands

I feel compelled to write this letter in response to the Emerald's attempt to create an acceptable platform for its readers to address issues and concerns. The letter from the editorial staff (ODE, April 25) tip-toed through an apology sent out to the gay community for printing Jon Wollander's letter bashing homosexuals.

The attempt was very admirable: it's disheartening to note our journalistic wonder only managed to stick its foot in its mouth once more.

The editorial staff feels Wollander's attempt to "criticize responsibility for the spread of AIDS" would spark "intelligent and reasonable discussion of issues." I question how reasonable and how intelligent these discussions would be.

I detect a sublime stream of homophobia running through the very hallways of the Emerald office. In an attempt to stop attacks on groups and individuals it appears as if the editorial staff is subtly suggesting that they condone attacks on the homosexual lifestyle for the "spread of

AIDS."

Yet, what good can come from pointing the finger of blame at homosexuals. The time is long past for us to reach out our hands to one another, regardless of personal sexuality. The underlying message in recent editorial columns suggest the Emerald staff shudders at the thought of holding hands with a known gay person.

Cheri Scantlen
Student

Rant and rave

I am concerned about the Emerald's increasingly restrictive letters policy (ODE, April 25).

To complain, loudly and in public, is a cherished American tradition, to say nothing of its being a right. Most of your stated criterion for denying publication of a letter can be summarized under the last item on the list: group affiliation. To disallow commentary which "judges persons solely on the basis of... group affiliation" is to spit in the face of free journalism. It is also dangerous.

Intolerance and bigotry are not eliminated by gagging their proponents. Let them rant and rave in public forum so that the rest of us may never forget that they exist, and who they are.

For every Jon Wollander, there are 10 others capable of challenging his every statement with logic and the truth — do not deny us this opportunity.

Please don't demean the intelligence of the majority of

your readers by being anything less than a free press.

Hiawatha
Graduate, music

Knock Knox

One is dismayed at the bravura with which Aaron Knox rides into the editorial position at the Oregon Daily Emerald for 1988-89. Perusing Knox's recommendations for improved Emerald coverage and, supposedly, substance, one instead finds "lightening up" and "establishing a more consistent and readable format" as agenda items for Knox.

Let's hope that indeed, the Emerald becomes "lighter." My education at the University and my reading of the Emerald have left me with an insatiable urge for more coverage of morality-spurning rock bands, fashions for the corporate ladder, and the ubiquitous half-page ad or EMU food service quiz.

I'll be ecstatic to not have to read anything "heavy" or of consequence. Thank you for your concern. I truly anticipate the increased spill of journalistic ink on a bloated athletic budget, and the waste of photography paper on the goings on of pumpin' pectorals or flinging frisbees.

It's grand to think that culture (and its discontents) should be so marginalized as to be of such little import. Personally, I'm beside myself with anticipation.

Christopher Beauchamp
Art history

Letters Policy

The Emerald will attempt to print all letters containing comments on topics of interest to the University community. Comments must be factually accurate and refrain from personal attacks on the character of others.

Letters to the editor must be limited to no more than 250 words, legible, signed and the identification of the writer must be verified when the letter is submitted.

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