

## U.S. intervention won't save Panama

Panamanians and Americans alike are still waiting to see what will happen following the Wednesday nullifications of last weekend's Panamanian elections results. After visits by former U.S. President Jimmy Carter, Bush administration officials and international observation teams, overwhelming evidence of a rigged election had been brought to the fore.

It seems Panama's military dictator Gen. Manuel A. Noriega was up to his old tricks. Noriega's candidate Carlos Duque and his campaign forces contend they were officially leading the election at a 2-1 margin. The opposition candidate Guillermo Endara and his forces, however, claimed a 3-1 victory. Determining a victor by recount was impossible, because as many as 127,000 ballots had apparently been destroyed after counting. The election was nullified after armed Noriega supporters savagely attacked and beat Endara with iron bars Wednesday.

In an effort to bring democracy back to Panama, the U.S. is considering military force in order to help Endara claim his victory. The use of military force, however, would only hinder Panama's continuing elections process, and such a move would play right into Noriega's hands.

True, it is unfortunate and unfair that Panamanian citizens are obviously being stripped of their democratic rights — though election fraud was predicted several months ago. But for the American military to use force where it doesn't belong and isn't wanted won't bring relief to Panamanians; rather, it will give Panamanians an enemy in common with Noriega.

Moreover, further economic sanctions against Panama won't be effective either. This would only lead to a stronger and more vicious anti-American campaign. And, as the sanctions have brought so little relief in the past, it's doubtful they would do much good now.

The threat of further sanctions, or an invasion, might however, do some good.

It's possible, according to Carter, that Noriega's second thoughts about the election are due to the paranoia he must be feeling. Noriega is losing support from members of the Panamanian Defense Forces, and Latin American foreign ministers are also considering ousting Panama from the regional Group of Eight organization because of the election fraud.

Given the bind in which Noriega must now find himself — between the Group of Eight, American forces, widespread knowledge of election fraud and the Panamanians' unhappiness — he might just come clean and allow the ballot counting to proceed as it should next time. But even if he doesn't, our past failed experiences in Panama clearly point to our keeping our noses out of their business.



"OF COURSE, GEORGE OLD PAL! EVERYTHING WILL BE ON THE UP AND UP... AS USUAL."

## Navy owes apology for long-kept secret

Though we can be sure this isn't the first secret held from the general public by the U.S. government, it is certainly one of the more serious after-the-fact admissions.

U.S. officials acknowledged Monday, after 24 years of insipid secrecy, that an A-4E Skyhawk attack jet carrying a hydrogen bomb rolled off the deck of the aircraft carrier Ticonderoga and into the Pacific Ocean off the coast of Japan on Dec. 5, 1965.

Until now, the 16,200 foot watery grave held the plane, pilot and weapon. And while it is impossible to recover any of the three, the secret is out — and it doesn't bode well for our relationship with Japan.

Japan, being the only country ever attacked with nuclear weapons, is outraged at the admission, and rightfully so. Japanese law bans ships carrying nuclear weapons from sailing in its territorial waters or from calling on its ports.

The secret shows blatant disregard for treaty stipulations with Japan. And it's also quite obvious that the Navy has kept this secret because of the questions to be raised about nuclear weapons aboard ships in Vietnam.

This incident breathes more life into old arguments that U.S. warplanes operating off Vietnam were loaded with nuclear bombs,

and that U.S. warships carried these atomic weapons into Japanese ports under violation of Japanese policy. This is, indeed, the tangible evidence needed to bring truth to mere rumors.

The Navy also contends that the submerged nuclear weapon poses no threat to the environment. It is unlikely, after 24 years, that the bomb will explode. But how can we be sure the weapon isn't leaking, particularly if it can't even be found? Marine life — a fundamental link in the food chain — could be in grave danger. This, in turn, poses a threat to human life. We're not trying to create horrific case scenarios, but this is a serious incident.

But of course, the most ominous message of all is the Navy's sworn-to-secrecy attitude and the lack of regard for the Japanese.

If the Navy has anymore such secrets, they should come clean now before this mushrooms larger than life. The Navy also owes an apology to the Japanese — though it is an "open secret" that U.S. warships routinely dock in Japan with nuclear weapons aboard, and the Japanese have never challenged this. Just how open is this secret if it was virtually unknown until this recent admission?

## Letters

### Commitment

The Incidental Fee Committee recently voted to deny the Athletic Department a 9.5 percent increase in revenue allocation to non-revenue sports (an additional \$2.45 a student a term). This increase would permit the Athletic Department to maintain current operations of non-revenue sports in the face of increased tuition and inflation expenses.

The University student body has historically displayed a deep commitment to non-revenue sports, specifically women's athletics. This commitment is especially evident in two ways: students voting to use their incidental fees to support non-revenue sports and consistently large attendance levels at various athletic contests (e.g., a Pac-10 attendance record for viewing a women's softball game).

A strong commitment to non-revenue sports has reinforced this university's national image as an institution promoting equality for all individuals regardless of gender.

Additionally, at the University, nationally competitive women's athletic teams (e.g., basketball, volleyball, softball, track and field) consistently achieve GPAs above 3.0, an example to all universities that scholastic excellence need not be the sacrificial lamb to intercollegiate athletics.

I and other concerned students have been circulating a petition which will be presented to the IFC that will ask students to voice their continued support toward non-revenue sports at this university.

Intercollegiate athletics isn't just an opportunity for student-athletes, but for the entire University student body.

Doug Spencer  
Graduate

### Reality

I am so glad Susan Price (ODE, April 21) was thoughtful enough to let me know what "reality" and "morality" are. Without her obviously omniscient knowledge, I would con-

tinue to muddle along believing my own "reality" was justifiably correct.

Reality, Ms. Price, in case you were unaware of it, is strictly a matter of personal perception based on personal knowledge. How we act upon those perceptions becomes the basis for individual "moralities."

One of the "realities" of abortion is the willful destruction of a living creature. We, as a society, would be appalled if the following were to occur:

A young woman, uneducated in the ways of pet ownership, buys a puppy. But after three months, she tires of the constant hassle. Puppies do a lot of disgusting things, and the proper care of a puppy can put a real cramp in one's lifestyle (and pocketbook). The woman takes the puppy and lops off its head. End of hassle.

Most women who choose to end the life of their unborn child justify their actions just as the woman in the scenario. Society is horrified at the needless death of a puppy. Yet the death of an unborn child is OK.

Such hypocrisy!

My "reality" states that all life is sacred, and that before one destroys any living creature, whether puppy, spotted owl, deer or unborn child, there needs to be a stronger justification than "it's inconvenient" or "I don't want this child" or "I can't deal with it."

W. Kent Plumb  
Pre-education

### Dream of cars

I have a dream. Having walked through the temporary General Motors car dealership on 13th Avenue, I see a bright, noble purpose for the University now emerging. Instead of students limping all the way to

Franklin Boulevard for their 1989 car financing, let's establish a permanent auto row on 13th Avenue from Oregon Hall to the Bookstore.

Deady Hall's first floor can be better utilized as a French restaurant, Johnson Hall will serve as a Hotpoint refrigerator showroom, and maybe the Ballroom can be renovated for a Rubenstein's furniture campus outlet.

Yes, now I have a dream — free enterprise zones on every corner celebrating our ever-increasing buying power as future graduates! Let the credit card offers roll in and don't forget: Let freedom ring!

Paul Sturtz  
Eugene

### 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.