

D.C. could benefit from Jackson's lead

Just a year ago, Jesse Jackson packed 'em into Mac Court while running the political gamut in his campaign for President of the United States. One year later finds him tossing his hat into the ring for mayor of Washington, D.C.

But is Jackson doing this for the good of D.C., or is he doing this to secure a future bid for the presidency? If he is doing this for the presidency, we can only hope D.C. can be changed for the better in the process.

True, the two biggest qualms about Jackson when he ran for President were that he had never been elected to a public office, and he had never run a major organization. If he were elected mayor of Washington, D.C., he could kill two birds with one stone.

Jackson isn't stupid; he's well-aware of the fact that leading D.C. could easily blossom into leading the nation. Because, as mayor, Jackson would be forced to get along with members of the White House and Congress — and in doing so could rub political elbows and scratch political backs in his hopes for the future.

As mayor, Jackson would also have to raise revenue, balance budgets, conquer the crack quandary, steady competing demands, find a reasonable solution to the nation's worst homeless situation, and answer the charge that D.C. is the nation's murder capital.

He'd also be in charge of selecting a competent staff and then delegating responsibility to them — a task that would serve him well in further politicking.

All of these mayoral tasks would benefit Washington, D.C. Perhaps it would take a man like Jackson to clean up the city and return its respect. And it's not as though current Mayor Marion Barry would be a hard act to follow — just a messy act.

This all seems to be a rather Herculean task for the reverend, but in the past, he has proven his commitment to social issues and social justice. And luckily, he wouldn't be able to prove his administrative abilities without doing some good for the city.

If elected, we hope he can turn the city around in his quest for turning the nation around. There is one thing left to worry about, though: What happens if he becomes mayor and then loses a future bid for the presidency?

Well, if he's doing a good job, maybe he should think about staying there. Permanently. If they'll have him. The goal now is to force Barry from his lifetime commitment to the office.



Moral consciousness calls for grape ban

It probably wouldn't bring an end to grape jelly, but it would have a far-reaching impact.

For the past five years, the United Farm Workers union and other organizations and concerned citizens have boycotted table grapes. UFW President Cesar Chavez fasted for 36 days last summer to push his moral message: End the use of pesticides on table grapes.

To some, this may seem an insignificant subject — but it isn't — as demonstrated by the long-term commitment of those who want to bring an end to the use of cancer-causing agents in the nation's agricultural fields.

Heck, Jesse Jackson even lent his support to the cause by joining Chavez in last summer's fast. Of course, Jackson lasted about 15 minutes, but his morals were in the right place.

And our morals should be in the right place too. High rates of cancer and birth defects among farm worker families have been

traced to the high use of pesticides in the fields — and it didn't take a genius to figure this out.

Moreover, the farm workers — who tend to be immigrants, minorities and poor people — have little influence with the growers because they are oppressed by their employers. And in many states, agribusiness carries a lot of political influence, so the workers are squelched in the political process.

The workers have no voice. We have to be their voice.

It will take the consumer voice at the market, in the form of a boycott, to end the use of these cancer-causing agents.

The Eugene City Council has voiced its support for the grape boycott — taking pains to not have grapes included on occasions when meals are served at city meetings.

It only makes sense to follow the raised consciousness of the city council and boycott table-top grapes. And if it brings the demise of grape jelly, would it really matter anyway?

Letters

Greekbashers

Spring term — birds sing, flowers bloom, love is in the air and anti-Greeks strive to defame the system. A bit of a paradox, isn't it?

The purpose of this letter is not an "evasive attempt" to shrug off acknowledgement of the actions of some members of the Greek system, as Andrew Shreve (ODE, May 8) would like to believe. I agree that there are things that individual Greeks have done that are reprehensible. However, when the only action that antagonists of the system take is to write angry letters to the newspapers, their complaints have only one purpose — to defame the Greek system.

This doesn't mean I think these complaints aren't valid. But to automatically blame the entire system is a cop-out. Isn't it possible, just by the smallest bit, that these are individual cases, and not something condoned or promoted by each house or the entire system?

What I'm getting at is this: The attitude of those who write against the Greek system is

simply antagonistic and non-constructive. It may be said that the Greeks have brought this upon ourselves, but this doesn't make it right.

To all the Greekbashers waiting to respond angrily to this letter, think first. Be prepared to offer more than defamatory statements. Stirring up bad feelings doesn't accomplish anything. If you want something done, think of something.

If however, you continue to describe Greeks as "racist, sexist, homophobic, alcoholic snobs" (ODE, April 27), then you are no better than those who you accuse.

Craig Namba
Vice president
Sigma Phi Epsilon

History lesson

How ironic that commemorating the end of Holocaust Memorial Week, Ollie North is found "not guilty" of nine out of 12 charges against him for his involvement in the Iran-Contra affair, based on his defense that he was only follow-

ing the orders of his superiors.

It's too bad the jury in the case was sequestered during this week of remembrance. They might have recalled trials of Nazi death camp guards who claimed they should not be punished for executing thousands of Jews because they were only following orders.

This defense did not work for the Nazis, but apparently Col. North is a "patriot" (unlike the Nazis) and therefore is not responsible for his actions.

Has history taught us nothing?

Stephanie Mencimer
Journalism

Not solidarity

We are concerned! We are concerned about the future of this University under the leadership of ASUO President-elect Andy Clark.

Prior to elections, in a debate at the EMU, Clark responded to a question on divestment by stating that he is "one with his

African brothers." (What about his sisters?)

While this is a valid statement, Clark contradicted himself recently by drawing the scholarship winners for General Motors. General Motors has direct investments in South Africa, where a white minority government rules over and oppresses the black majority population.

Clark, by his action, has not demonstrated his solidarity with the blacks in South Africa and this ethical contradiction between words and actions must not go unnoticed.

Clark has not shown a great deal of political awareness thus far, and in the future we hope he will have the personal integ-

riety to have educated himself on all the issues involved.

Jennifer Schneider
Michelle Homer
Students

Good spelling

The person or persons responsible for the defacing of the concrete barrier at the south end of Allen Hall should be proud. It is surprising that the kind of people who would participate in such vandalism would be able to spell both "capitalism" and "exploitation" correctly.

Tracy Sumner
Journalism

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.

The Emerald reserves the right to edit any letter for length or style.