

## Bush hardly bullish in this China shop

After a very quiet first 100 days in office, the opportunity finally came for the Bush administration to do something. And it blew it.

The developments and repercussions after China's imposition of martial law in Beijing are still exploding most everywhere around the globe — with the exception of Kennebunkport, Maine, where President Bush is vacationing and apparently does not want to be disturbed.

Viewers in the United States witnessed the army crackdown in Beijing, until the Chinese government ordered CNN, ABC and CBS to stop broadcasting. In the Soviet Union, the turmoil and chaos is getting air time. Even here at the University, 60 visiting Chinese students marched in Salem on Saturday, in support of their fellow demonstrators.

But so far, the official U.S. response has been one of all-too-mild concern. The releases announced by White House spokesman Marlin Fitzwater are expressed in such flimsy terms: The Bush administration finds the events "very disturbing." The administration urges "restraint" on both sides. The administration wants to be "prudent enough" not to incite the students to rioting.

Couching responses in such terms hardly captures the indignation the administration should feel about the use of martial law on earnest, peaceful demonstrators, as the hunger-striking Chinese students have been. Such a response hardly demonstrates U.S. resolve toward human rights.

This should have been an easy call for the Bush Administration to make. After empty saber-rattling and cries for human rights in tiny Panama, it would have seemed natural for the administration to be more than just a little miffed over the Chinese government's over-reaction.

Of course, China is a much bigger trading partner than Panama. There are lucrative trade markets over here, and after a decade of inching China westward in diplomatic circles, the White House is afraid to do anything to reverse that.

The Bush administration's caution is simply unnecessary. The demands the students are calling for do not mean the toppling of the communist government, but they are the kind of democratic reforms the United States should always support. Remember also, China needs the United States as a trading partner as much as this country needs the Chinese; harsh but constructive criticism from a friendly country such as the United States might have made the Chinese leadership act more responsibly.

## THE GREAT WALL



## Palestinians, Israelis on collision course

As the Palestinian uprising, or intifadeh, in the occupied territories of the West Bank and Gaza Strip nears the end of its 17th month, calls for escalation on both sides bode poorly for those seeking a Palestinian homeland.

We hope cooler heads prevail. The latest salvos fired from extreme elements of the Israeli and Palestine leadership virtually guarantee increased bloodshed:

- A leaflet distributed by the Unified National Leadership of the Uprising on Saturday "calls on the strike force to kill a settler or a soldier for every martyr of our sons," and Mohammed Abbas, described as a leading Palestine Liberation Organization guerrilla chief, Sunday called for Arabs to take up arms against Israeli forces.
- The first gun battle actually took place Friday, when three Arabs and one Israeli soldier reportedly were killed.
- Right-wing elements of the Israeli government, led by Prime Minister Yitzhak Sha-

mir, have promised to "meet violence with force."

The Palestinians' lack of patience with the "stones only" strategy is understandable in view of the body count; since the uprising began, 494 Arabs have been killed, compared with 22 Israelis.

But the sympathy those kind of numbers generate internationally — with the notable exception the United States — will rapidly deteriorate if the Palestinians begin responding in kind.

Further, experts on the region, including former West Bank military governor Arieh Shalev (1974-76) note the lack of firepower and warn the Arabs risk "harsh Israeli reprisals."

We don't claim to have the answer to this divisive and bitter conflict, but we know escalation of violence, force and inflammatory rhetoric on both sides isn't it. Clearly, both sides will have to soften the impact by turning away from extremism back toward the middle of the road.

## Letters

### Silence

An open letter to President Olum:

We are angry about the recent incidents of gay-bashing on campus, particularly in the ASUO presidential campaign, and we are dismayed at the silence of the University administration in the wake of these incidents.

While we appreciate the importance of free speech, we think the administration should discourage the exercise of intolerance and hatred on campus and speak out against the bigotry published in the University-related news and commentary publications. We have read anti-gay letters in the Emerald and an anti-gay editorial in the Commentator that were infuriating in their comments on ASUO presidential candidate Tim Hughes's sexuality.

An appalling poster was distributed attacking Hughes and demeaning his sexuality. This attack and the threats against his life should stir up outrage in the administration. Yet we have heard nothing.

We feel that you have a responsibility to the students,

staff and faculty to provide leadership against hatred and intolerance and to make this campus a safe place to work and live. We are painfully aware of the flagrant disparity between the University goals of fairness and safety and the actuality of the hatred and disrespect we experience.

We know you are committed to fairness and tolerance, and we admire and appreciate immensely your activities in the past in support of lesbian and gay issues. We hope you agree that these recent episodes demand a restatement and reaffirmation of this commitment on behalf of the University.

Peter M. O'Day  
Lucy A. Bernard  
Institute of Neuroscience  
and 70 co-signers

### Patriotism

It is evident from May 9's editorial that the Emerald knows nothing of American patriotism or pride in serving one's country. Lt. Col. Oliver North served his country well; he served his president well, which is more than any liberal

student on campus will ever be able to say.

To say that North should go to jail for doing his duty serving and protecting the United States of America is blasphemous at best!

In effect, the Emerald sends the message that to serve one's country is a punishable offense, in which case we must punish our Founding Fathers posthumously, as well as all surviving war heroes. Excuse me, but this is insipid! Woe be to the day the Democrats ever regain the White House!

Alen Menzies  
Political science

### Exploitation

Every so often an act of immeasurable folly occurs. Every so often we must shake our heads with embarrassment and shame. Such a time is now.

May 1, brothers of Sigma Alpha Epsilon performed a rite of passage with the intent of showing affection to a brother about to pin his girlfriend. The event was an anomaly, an experiment done for the first time

that evening. Though not as graphic as recent letter to the Emerald indicated, the scene did turn ugly. The brother was publicly humiliated and embarrassed, and subsequently, the SAE's and the entire Greek system should hang their heads in shame.

Although apologies have already been made privately, we feel it imperative to publicly express our sincere regrets concerning this happening. We extend our apology to Delta Gamma, SAE alumni and friends, the brother in question, the Greek system and to the University at large who must believe this will never happen again. SAE has stricken this from its chapter.

It is sad lessons must some-

times be learned in such manners. Dignity and reputation ride on many of the decisions we choose daily. In light of some of the irresponsible behavior seen at the University this term, we implore that careful and thoughtful foresight be instituted whenever planning an event on any nature.

SAE is a fine fraternity. We lament that such a traditionally powerful display of fraternal life and affection such as a pinning was exploited at the expense of so much humiliation.

John Stircklin  
SAE President  
Carson D. Bowler  
Interfraternity Council  
President

### 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.