

Wall falls in wave of glasnost reform

Five years ago it would have been impossible. Six months ago it would have been unthinkable. Three weeks ago it would have been improbable.

But Nov. 9, 1989 will be listed in history as the day the Wall came down.

It came without notice and caught nearly everybody by surprise. The East German government's announcement of open borders left many Western observers in shocked amazement.

East German Communist Party leader Egon Krenz had to do something to keep his countrymen home. His work force was draining away. Nearly 1 percent of the entire population — most of them highly-trained workers — had emigrated, without any end in sight to the attrition. Having most of the government resign seemed to have little effect.

So the Wall was torn down and free elections were promised. And so far, Krenz's gamble appears to have paid off. Exit visa applications are way down. East Germans didn't necessarily want to leave their country; they just wanted the ability to.

Mikhail Gorbachev's *glasnost* era has turned Western notions of the Cold War, Eastern Europe and "The Evil Empire" completely upside down. Five years ago, with the Cold War at its chilliest, who would have thought we'd see a freely-elected legislature in the Soviet Union, a non-communist government in Poland, Hungarian calls for open elections and the end of the Wall?

Democratic reforms have taken the Soviet bloc by storm. Long-standing credos are being challenged. Gorbachev has called for the dismantling of NATO and the Warsaw Pact. Ethnic Germans on both sides of the border, caught up in the passion of the moment, have asked for the reunification of the halved Germany. However, both Soviet and American officials have said this isn't feasible. At least not yet.

A day after East Germany's border opened, another crack appeared in the Iron Curtain. Bulgarian President Todor Zhivkov, one of the last of Eastern Europe's hardliners, suddenly resigned.

Apparently, Zhivkov fell behind the times. With East Germany going along with Gorbachev's reforms, Bulgaria is one of the last outposts of Stalinism left.

Zhivkov was replaced with a younger protegee; former Foreign Minister Petar Mladenov who is supposedly as hard-nosed as Zhivkov was. But then again, they said the same thing about Erich Honnecker and Krenz.

About 28 years ago, John F. Kennedy stood in front of a mass of newly-constructed concrete and steel, and turned the Wall into a Cold War symbol by declaring "Ich bin ein Berliner". Now the symbol has been destroyed and no one can be sure of just where this reform will all end.

Who would have thought?



Deng's resignation doesn't signal change

With all that happened in East Germany last week, the announcement came with little fanfare and was relegated to the inside pages of most newspapers. If the story of the decade (the Berlin Wall coming down) hadn't come along, it probably would have been the story of the week.

Last Friday, 85-year-old Chinese Party Leader Deng Xiaoping stepped down.

Political experts say the aged leader's move leaves The People's Republic of China rudderless and without sufficient leadership in higher positions. His hand-picked replacement, Jiang Zemin, is untested and has virtually no power base.

So what does this all mean?

Deng garnered headlines last year with his bloody suppression of the student's democratic uprising. While Eastern Europe is moving toward more freedom, China continues on its own path of Marxist doctrine.

While younger leaders in the Communist bloc have signaled the start of democratic reforms, this probably won't happen in China. To keep the country in line, Jiang will have to depend on his mentor's political clout and legacy of patronage.

Jiang's only political experience is as mayor of Shanghai — hardly qualifying him for leader of the largest population on earth. He will not have the political base to launch reforms, as have Communist leaders Mikhail Gorbachev and Egon Krenz before him.

A few years ago, China was seen as progressing toward a free-market economy. But Deng and his cohorts objected, and the country has reversed itself. While the Iron Curtain crumbles, China remains stagnated in political theories long-proven outdated.

Hard-liners are securely in command of the Chinese government, but there is some question of which faction actually is in charge. The military still wields its own power, and it is highly likely that Jiang, to keep his post, might have to make concessions to the generals.

A change in leadership could mean the start of a new era, but it seems unlikely in a country that has massacred thousands of its own countrymen.

No, China will continue to plod on its ideological course, shut out from the loosening of Marxist ties all over the world. Reformers have gone into hiding once again, and things appear to be the same as before.

Letters

Correct errors

We'd like to correct some errors in your recent article about the new GTF contract ("GTF Takes Offer From University" ODE, Nov. 6).

You state, "... the \$150,000 health supplement fund will pay for about 30 percent of every GTF's health care costs." The \$150,000 is to be shared among approximately 1,000-1,200 GTFs over an 18-month period. This means only 20-23 percent of the cost of health insurance for a single GTF is covered (at 1989 rates).

Of course, health care costs for the same period may be much higher than just the price of health insurance. Examples of additional health care costs many include (and are certainly not limited to) the insurance deductible, a percentage of health care costs after the deductible, preventative check-ups, eye care and dental care.

If one further considers that

during the period since the last GTF contract was negotiated (i.e., 1987-89), the cost of student health insurance has risen 50 percent for a single student, the average cost of renting an apartment in Eugene has increased 23-28 percent, and the overall cost of living nationally has risen almost 9 percent, while the GTF salaries went up only 3.5 percent in each year of the contract, it might become clearer why many GTFs, even with the new contract, are feeling borderline desperate.

Kathleen Freeman
Erick Mata-Montero
GTFs

None needed

In response to Gary Darby's letter on men being treated like scapegoats by women who accuse them of using exclusive language (ODE, Nov. 6), a more valiant response would have been, "Yes, I am responsible

for perpetuating oppression through language ... and you are too. Together we should introduce a more inclusive language that acknowledges the other 95 percent of the population that is not young, white, able-bodied, heterosexual, professional and male all rolled into one."

My point with regards to using exclusive language is that placing blame on either sex is hardly the issue; as male and female, multi-colored and capacitated speakers, we are all to blame for supporting the monstrously dysfunctional vehicle of thought called language.

Luckily for us, many people are learning they don't have to play with the hand they're dealt. They realize that language is not static, but rather mutable and dynamic if we learn to mold it to include ourselves instead of letting it mold us into undesirable stereotypes.

At least 95 percent of us have and continue to be subliminally manipulated by oppressive lan-

guage, but I am confident that it can be eradicated. As targets of language discrimination, we 95 percent should support this movement.

Discrimination implied by some words and phrases isn't as transparent as that in others, yet no matter how covert these words' undertones are, uttering them reflects the mentality and world views of both our ancestors and ourselves, and we are therefore all guilty if the same crimes of prejudice.

We, the majority, must acknowledge our crimes and let education and reform begin. No scapegoats necessary.

Megan Taylor
Student

Overshadow

I am writing in response to the cartoon accompanying the article on the Counseling Center on the front page of the Nov. 6 *Emerald*. The particular illustration I found to be offen-

sive to the quality of the article itself.

The "Monday In-Depth" article (entitled "Help on the Way") written by one of your reporters, Polly Campbell, comes across as a soft, caring sort of writing. It pictures the Counseling Center as a very comfortable place to be in for any student who needs professional counseling help for any problem they might encounter. This was a lively and colorful article.

Not so much with the cartoon included with it. Stephen Mosley's drawing is way too harsh for the article. It shows a dark overshadow which is too much of a contrast. I feel that a cartoon that seemed a little more alive would have been more appropriate.

Maybe this will give you a little something to think about in your decisions of which cartoon should go with which individual article.

Kurt Brown
Student