

We'd rather pout than face truth

The truth hurts sometimes, don't it? Bad enough looking the economic fool in front of the world and everybody, but now we have to hear it from the new big kid on the block. Hard for us Americans to take, with our egos at least the size of Lincoln Continentals.

Tired of U.S.-directed hostilities, Japanese media and government officials have given the gift horse back his gift. Not willing to accept the responsibility for America's anger, they are now laying the blame for strained relations at the feet of U.S. oversensitivity, misunderstanding and inaccurate reporting.

Well, we always were touchy when it came to our pedestal.

The latest comment drawing the attention reportedly came from Prime Minister Kiichi Miyazawa, reflecting an observation previously voiced by several other Japanese officials. The message? Basically, that the United States is not on the economic ball, and we only have ourselves to blame.

After Miyazawa was notified that he'd hurt America's feelings, he apologized, saying he sincerely hadn't meant to do so; there was just a basic lack of communication.

But too bad — apology not accepted. We'd rather stay mad; it's easier that way. The big bad Japanese; it's their fault America's economy is a mess, unemployment is on the rise and our cars won't sell.

Admit it — using a scapegoat works.

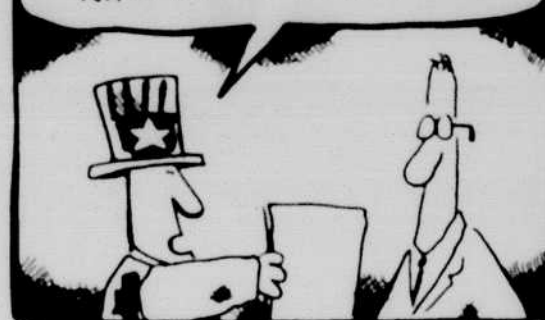
And it's awful, ain't it, when someone beats us at our own game. How dare they compete with us, and win? Heck, we only wanted to force our market system on the world if we remained king. Who do these guys think they are anyway?

But wait. Japanese officials have tried throughout their economic rise to maintain peaceful relations with the U.S., yet tension continues to increase. Why?

For starters, we need someone to blame our troubles on, and we miss our place as number one in the international economic game. So instead of looking for the grain of truth in Japan's observation of us, we'll keep our grudge; it's too hard to admit otherwise.

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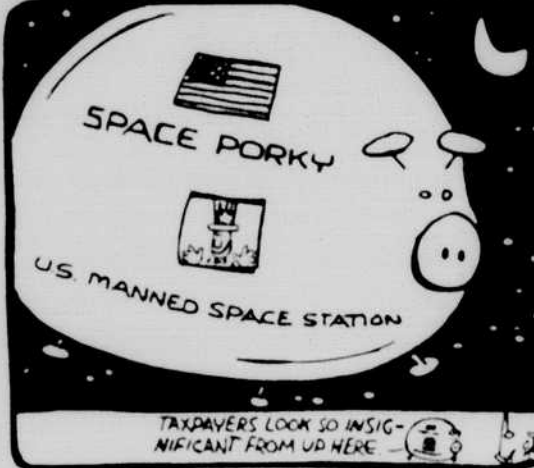
MR. SCIENTIST, I HAVE AN IDEA FOR COMPETING WITH JAPAN. WHAT DO YOU THINK?



WELL, IT'S NOT SOMETHING ANYBODY NEEDS, SERVES NO PRACTICAL OR SCIENTIFIC PURPOSE, WOULD COST \$40,000,000,000.00 OR SO, AND NO ONE WOULD WANT TO BUY IT EXCEPT YOU.



SOLD!



COMMENTARY

Name calling hurts Zionist debate

By Jason Moore

"No, I don't believe that, in your heart of hearts, you hate Jews," Jewish Student Union co-director Phil Zuckerman told me during a phone conversation Jan. 17.

It was a strange comment coming from the man who has led a McCarthyite campaign charging "Jew-hatred" against the *Student Insurgent*.

Yet, I double-checked my notes, and sure enough, here was a frank admission that the current slanders of the *Insurgent* and its editors are based on a lie.

The present controversy stems from last month's publication of "Zionism is a form of racism" by University doctoral student Gary Murrell. In that piece, Murrell argues that Zionism, as a political (not religious) ideology, claims special rights for Jews to a homeland. His arguments are undeniably radical, many would say inflammatory. But are they anti-Semitic?

Professor Israel Shahak, whom Murrell quotes, does not think so. And Shahak should know, having survived the concentration camps of the bona fide Nazis. His comments are certainly worth repeating, especially in light of Zuckerman's slanderous attacks on the editors of the *Insurgent*.

Shahak told Murrell, "When you got back to the United States, you will have to decide how to characterize Israeli politics in your own way. You can't use the words I use because first, nobody will believe you, and second, you will be called a Jew-hater, or worse. I know what a Nazi is. I survived one group of Nazis, but now I live in a Nazi state — my country has become a Nazi state."

Israel, is not, in my view, either Nazi or fascist. It is, however, a state where capitalism and nationalism have interbred to produce particularly violent,

imperialist, and yes, racist anti-Palestinian policies.

What is at stake here is the right to criticize. Period.

Zuckerman knows that when he attacks a political organization as anti-Semitic (or "anti-Jewish" as he likes to say), that the result is to discredit everything that organization has to say. It is not debate, but demagoguery, when he falsely accuses the *Insurgent* of "Jew-hatred."

Anti-Semitism, like racism, sexism, homophobia, and class chauvinism, is truly an insidious force that must be fought at every opportunity. But to criticize Zionism, which is a political ideology, is not the same as criticizing Jews. In fact, about half the Jews in Israel are not Zionists. In fact, radical critiques of Israeli state policy like those articulated by Murrell are heard every day in Israel, and quite often, on the floor of the Knesset, the Israeli parliament.

So why should Murrell, the *Insurgent* or anyone else give up the right to criticize Israel for the fear of the anti-Semitic label, when Jews in Israel make the same arguments?

This question, and many others, remains sorely unanswered by the hatred and resentment recently directed at the *Insurgent* and its editors. The JSU leadership is so sure they are right (or so scared of debate?) that they seek to intimidate and silence opposing viewpoints.

I believe, on the other hand, that everyone benefits from an open and honest debate on the questions of Zionism, nationalism, and the rights of Palestinians to a country of their own. Hysteria and name-calling serve only to obscure the real issues at state.

Zuckerman calls the *Insurgent* editors "Jew-haters" because we have allowed anti-Zionist views to be expressed in the paper. Yet, on page two of every issue, our editorial policy reads, "All articles, with the exception of unsigned editorials,

reflect the views of individuals, and not necessarily those of the editorial collective."

One might think at first that Zuckerman, not having dealt with the *Insurgent*, is just not acquainted with our editorial policy. However, such is not the case. Zuckerman has contributed, by his own estimation, nearly a dozen articles to this publication over the past two years. Zuckerman knows what he says to be untrue.

The *Insurgent* editorial board no more endorses the views expressed in Zuckerman's and other Zionists' numerous articles than we favor Murrell's work. If the editors wish to take a collective position, we use editorials to do so. Zuckerman and his allies ought to know better.

Yet, no matter how much the *Insurgent* is accused of anti-Semitism, it cannot derail our commitment to debate. Where else can students engage in the kind of debate on Zionism that appears in the February issue? Zuckerman, JSU co-director Jonah Bookstein, Rabbi Hanan Sills, and the entire progressive Jewish community is now, and has always been, welcome to contribute to the paper. And on numerous occasions, they have done so.

It was with this commitment to debate in mind that Murrell urged me to ask the JSU for an opposing viewpoint when we first discussed publication of this piece. At the end of fall term, I took his advice.

The JSU knows as well as anyone that the "Jew-hating" claim is as preposterous as it is baseless. Remember Zuckerman's admission?

Truth is always the first casualty of demagoguery. The fury directed toward the *Student Insurgent*, whose editors have spent countless hours in the struggles for peace, justice and a hate and violence-free world, offers no solutions.

Jason Moore is editorial page editor of the *Student Insurgent*.

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