

# Packwood played skillful deceit game

Sen. Bob Packwood played his cards skillfully. When *The Washington Post* interviewed him shortly before his Nov. 3 showdown with Les AuCoin about reports that he had sexually harassed former employees, Packwood denied the allegations. "I don't make any approaches," he said.

*The Post* finally published the allegations Sunday. Leonard Downie, executive editor of *The Post*, said reporters worked every day after the election gathering the information necessary to make the story complete. There was no way, Downie said, the story could have run before the election because the women's statements needed more confirmation.

Suspiciously, Packwood sent a three-paragraph statement to the newspaper on the Friday before publication. In the statement, Packwood declined comment on the allegations, but did include an apology for his behavior.

In a span of four weeks, Packwood went from denying any approaches altogether to apologizing for something that may have happened.

"My intentions were never to pressure, to offend, nor to make anyone feel uncomfortable, and I truly regret if that has occurred with anyone either on or off my staff," Packwood said in the statement.

One of Packwood's close acquaintances, Portland lawyer Jack Faust, told *The Post* that Packwood "is admitting to some human flaws. He's accepting responsibility."

It's convenient that Packwood has waited until now to accept responsibility for any pain he may have caused these women. The allegations against him include forcibly kissing female employees, grabbing at their clothes and suggesting further sexual activity.

Had *The Post* story been published before the election, Packwood would likely have lost support — and quite possibly his Senate seat. Fortunately for Packwood, the story had to wait, and he could deny involvement for a while longer.

Packwood played the game as best he could. He waited until he was safe and confessed when it would do the least amount of damage. Voters will probably remember that Packwood used the same tactic with Ballot Measure 9. He waited until OCA-puppet Al Mobley was out of the race, and then he criticized the measure because his Senate seat was not threatened.

He probably assumes most voters will have forgotten the allegations in six years when he comes up for re-election. As far as he's concerned, the sooner voters learn about it, the sooner they will forget.

Packwood did not actually admit guilt. He accepted responsibility for the women's pain while not admitting to anything. But the evidence in *The Post's* story is extremely thorough, including statements from the accuser's acquaintances on whether the women mentioned Packwood's advances when they reportedly occurred. *The Post* found confirmations for almost all of the women. Basically, Packwood has little chance of disproving them.

Packwood needs to do more than simply apologize via *The Post*. He needs to apologize to Oregon voters who trusted his character enough to vote him into office. Voters are the people who were cheated by his pre- and post-election confessions.



## OPINION

# University must get past phrases



This column is dedicated to Carlos Arias and Brian Hoop, who were sentenced to 60 days in federal prison for breaking windows, and to the four Los Angeles police officers who were acquitted for the near fatal beating of a human being.

"Yes I have cherished my 'demagogue' role," said Malcolm X. "I know that societies often have killed the people who have helped to change those societies. And if I can die having brought any light, having exposed any meaningful truth that will help to destroy the racist cancer that is malignant in the body of America — then, all of the credit is due to Allah. Only the mistakes have been mine."

Shortly after this statement, Malcolm X's physical voice was taken from our lives.

Malcolm X has always been described as the man who struck fear into the hearts of whites. It's important to understand that it isn't fear that struck whites, but instead it is the truth about the racist condition of the United States.

Malcolm X was powerful because he refused to allow whites to hide from their legacy of racism. He demanded for white America to stop worrying about the "so-called Negro problem," and asked for whites to start dealing with their own problem of internalized white supremacy. Sadly, 20 years after Malcolm X's death, white America has barely begun to respond to his challenge.

During the past three-and-a-half years at the University, I have spent considerable time and energy speaking on various panels, leading class discussions, writing articles and having one-on-one discussions with Euro-American students trying to cope with the complexities of race relations in the United States.

In class discussions, the genuine interest in racism always amazes me. There are very few times that a discussion has ended at the designated time. More often than not, the class runs over because of students' desires to be able to talk about these issues on an academic and personal level.

From these many experiences, I have come to realize there is a craving by the majority of students to truly come to grips with the impact of race in our society. Sadly, the University administration seems to be oblivious to this need.

Instead of showing decisive leadership of substance on this subject, the University administration continues to hide its head in the sand and fall back on the hollow slogans of "honor diversity," "constructive dialogue," "building community" and an array of other meaningless terms. The irony is that this rhetoric becomes a barrier to the very change it seeks to bring about. Sprinkling sugar on a pile of bull dung does not make it taste any better.

The University administration has deceived itself into believing that strides are being made in increasing tolerance at the University when in fact the very opposite has happened. A few years ago, the University was pleased to announce it had increased the Native American faculty by 100 percent.

What it failed to acknowledge was the increase was due to the fact that this University had finally tenured ONE Native American professor. Previously, there had been none. Nearly three decades after the civil rights movement, the University has one tenure-tracked Chicano woman and no tenure-tracked Native American or black women professors.

Most ominous is the fact that there has been a significant increase in confrontations drawn along racial lines in the University area, many involving students. As a whole, race relations are at an all-time low at the University and in the country.

This does not mean solu-

tions are beyond reach. University students have put together a comprehensive demand for courses relating to race relations in the United States. The time has come for the administration to stop trying to cover up the effects of racism on this campus and begin to acknowledge the distance we need to travel to establish a real university for everyone.

Malcolm X was not a teacher of hate but a prophet who predicted the consequences of the failure of the United States to become an inclusive democracy of all peoples regardless of race.

The film *Malcolm X* is not about the past, but of the present and a vision of the future. The life, and even the death of Malcolm X reveals the powerful and often painful path of true human dignity in this country. The message is as clear as the final scene in the movie when young black youths stand one-by-one, saying "I am Malcolm X." This is the true legacy of Malcolm X.

Like Malcolm X, University students are once again demanding true racial discourse, not by the administration or faculty — flaunting their experiences in the civil rights movement of the 1960s or by singing "we shall overcome; SOME-DAY" — but by committing to a true struggle of dismantling the white supremacist mentality of the University.

Students can no longer be satisfied with the excuses and the refusals of University administrators to let go of their caveman mentality.

Malcolm X, said to America during his visit with Martin Luther King, "If you don't deal with me, you will deal with me." Today's generation of students is increasingly aware that all the cards have been dealt. The only question is: Will the University of Oregon fold its racist hand before all bets are called off?

Eric Ward writes a monthly column for the Emerald.

# Oregon Daily Emerald

P.O. BOX 3158 EUGENE OREGON 97403

The Oregon Daily Emerald is published daily Monday through Friday during the school year and Tuesday and Thursday during the summer by the Oregon Daily Emerald Publishing Co. Inc., at the University of Oregon, Eugene, Oregon.

The Emerald operates independently of the University with offices at Suite 300 of the Erb Memorial Union and is a member of the Associated Press.

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