

Church gimmick

The average family in the United States pays a minimum of \$925 a year in hidden taxes to keep churches from all tax — on real estate, on related businesses, on income and on their enormous wealth in stocks and bonds. Churches pay no sales tax, inheritance tax, personal tax or ad valorem tax. They may own and operate businesses exempt from all corporation tax!

The Wall Street Journal, CBS-TV, *United Press International*, etc., have found that the holdings of the Roman Catholic Church alone exceed the total assets of the five largest American corporations. The Protestants, all combined, own nearly as much.

The "lease-back" gimmick is a particularly pernicious method that churches use to take advantage of their tax-exempt status. A church purchases a business on paper for an agreed sum, such as \$1. Ownership passes with the sale and the business is then exempt from property tax and corporate tax. The lease payments to the new owner, the church, are tax deductible by the business as a donation to the church. Thus, land on which the business is located, the business's income generally, and the amount deducted by the business from the tax it would have paid are a contribution to the church. The church wins, the business wins — both the government and the ordinary taxpayers lose.

Every tax dollar that the church or any business avoids paying, you as an individual taxpayer must make up. If taxes are necessary to run the United States and the church takes a percentage out of those taxes, someone must make up for the slack.

The church in America, on the average, owns 20 percent of all privately owned land in every state of the union. When 20 percent of the land is removed from the tax base, the individual land or homeowner must make up the difference. If the churches paid their fair share of property tax in your community, your tax would not need to be raised as much each year to make up the deficit.

I believe that anyone has the legal right to be religious, but that the costs of religion should be borne by those who practice it. The federal government, under various programs of assistance, is spending \$50 billion a year both in direct cash grants and tax relief for religious purposes.

Helen Posey
Eugene

Response

This is in response to "Asian-American racism" (ODE, Jan. 27) and responses (ODE, Feb. 2 and 3).

Asian/Pacific-American Student Union members stated only that Asian/Pacific-Americans aren't eligible for scholarships. However, they can receive leadership awards through OMA. Members did not say they felt ignored by OMA or their policies.

To Lawrence Martin (ODE, Feb. 2): We don't deny people are discriminated against based on racial characteristics. We just want Asian/Pacific-Americans recognized as being part of this "discriminated against" group. In our society it's believed Asian/Pacific-Americans have no problems; they don't always voice them. When problems do arise, however, it's assumed they will work hard to overcome them and be successful. Also, by "trivial labels," are you referring to "Asian/Pacific-American"? This term acknowledges our nationality and recognizes our cultural heritage.

To Lisa Claypool (ODE, Feb. 3): Though the term "Jap" (I'll only state this once because I'm Japanese-American and personally hate this word) may not suggest hatred and prejudice in terms of the University's slides, you cannot compare this word to an abbreviation like "Am" for American. "Am" is an abbreviation and unacceptable abbreviation. Although its intent may not have been derogatory, the use of this term tells me that my life, as a Japanese-American, is not valued in this country. The abbreviation for Japanese is "Jpn."

Tina Koida
Co-Director
APASU

Misinterpreted

In her letter of Feb. 2 (ODE), Ms. Gray misrepresented George Kokis, the class he was teaching, and the circumstances in which the "attack" on her took place.

Professor Kokis' class was called Origins of Image and Mark-Making. This particular day we engaged in a play-acting exercise in which we imagined ourselves as arboreal apes. We climbed trees, moved about through the landscape, attempted to communicate with one another, but were not allowed to talk.

After a time, a man emerged from hiding and began to run toward our group, waving his arms and making roaring noises. Shrieks of warning went up as we realized this was a "lion" that was attacking our community.

The "lion" pursued those "apes" that had wandered from the safety of the group. The students who ran from the "lion" felt something in their bodies that touched on a different kind of knowledge — one you couldn't get from reading a book. It was part of a metaphorical journey through the long, long history of human evolution.

It was unfortunate that Ms. Gray was one of the students who wandered from the group and was "attacked." Equally unfortunate was the fact that the student playing the lion lacked the awareness that coming up behind a woman, grabbing her, growling and yelling, with paint on his face and a "lion" wig on his head, might cause a serious traumatic reaction.

Gil Martin
Eugene

USWAA

As the president (and sole member) of Unhappy Student(s) With An Agenda (USWAA), I find it necessary to share my personal problems, opinions and shortcomings with all of you. Although my dilemmas may seem a strict matter of personal opinion, or perhaps even of intense paranoia, somehow I believe you are all secretly interested in what bothers me. So, with no further ado...

1) Sometimes I have difficulty paying my bills. If there were greater socialization of utilities, this would not be a problem. Of course, our capitalist government is too busy making money off the blood of workers to care.

2) My classes all have tests. I have complained to the administration about these unfair requirements, but my comments have fallen on deaf ears. I continue to protest this archaic form of judgment and have attempted to make others aware of the sinister nature of this educational harassment.

3) I never liked my nose. There is nothing terribly wrong with it — I'd just like a new nose. It's injustices like these that force me to cry for a kinder tomorrow, for a world in which all fuzzy bunnies may romp and play, a world with no bombs or lumber or hair spray.

In conclusion, you are all probably evil. Thanks.

Scott Camp
Political Science

Wake up

I am a 20-year-old student from Nicaragua. I have lived in the United States for seven years. I have spent the last two years attending the University. I want to share a recent experience that I think is an example of the racism and stereotyping that is prevalent at the University and in Eugene.

Jan. 28, I went to a doctor's appointment at the Student Health Center. The visit was due to that fact that I was sick with the flu. It was necessary for me to have a blood test and a throat culture to confirm that I only had the flu. At the lab, I was attended to by two nurses. One of the nurses' duty was to take my blood and the other nurse was there to keep me distracted by talking to me and asking me questions.

To my surprise, the questions she asked were insulting and discriminatory. The first thing that came out of her mouth was, "Are you a Crip or a Blood?" My first response to her shocking question was, "Neither, I am a student."

I couldn't believe that she had asked me that. She then went on to comment about the clothes I was wearing. The nurse asked me if I was wearing a "rapper's outfit." Her questions were unreasonable and stereotyped me in a very negative way.

I don't think her questions were appropriate. It would be no different than for me to walk up to a white person and ask them if they are members of the KKK, based on their appearance. This is just one example of the ignorance that minorities have to

face in Eugene. The people of Eugene and the University think of themselves as liberal and open-minded people, but my experience as a minority shows that the reality is very different from the rhetoric. Eugene and the University need to wake up to the fact that this is not a very liberal place and minorities don't feel comfortable.

What I experienced with this nurse is a small example of how minorities are thought of and treated in Eugene and at this University. I would never recommend a Latino friend or any other friend to come to this University.

Arian Murillo
Undeclared

Bad abbreviation

I am willing to give Lisa Claypool and the other keepers/developers of the University's Asian slide collection the benefit of the doubt in using "Jap" as an abbreviation for institutional purposes. She, and the others she speaks for, may indeed be as free of intentional racism as she claims in her letter (ODE, Feb. 3).

But she needs to remember the enormous American hostility that went into the epithet after the attack on Pearl Harbor in 1941. Nearly 50 years have passed since the end of World War II, but the power of the abbreviation to provoke a negative connotation remains considerable. So, would not the kind and neighborly thing be simply to change the institutional abbreviation to "Jpn" and not insist on an apology from anyone who expressed concern about the issue?

Howard Killion
Eugene Church Director
International Students, Inc.

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