

Releasing criminals? 'Not in my backyard'

A few years ago, an unusual story captured the nation's attention. A sea-going barge, laden with tons of garbage, was traveling from port to port, trying to find a place to dump its unwelcome contents. Unsurprisingly, the barge was turned away time and time again, and for a while, no one could say where it would finally end up.

In California this week, a similar drama has been taking place. This time, the garbage nobody wants is not a boatload of banana peels and coffee grounds, but something even more contemptible: convicted serial rapist Melvin Alfred Carter.

The state has had a predictably difficult time finding a home for Carter, who has served less than half of his 25-year jail sentence. He was originally supposed to be released in the county where he was convicted, as state law dictates, but when the residents of that county protested, Gov. Pete Wilson ordered him banished "out in the wilderness someplace."

As a result, Carter is being lodged in a minimum security facility in Modoc County, a remote and sparsely populated part of the state that has proved not quite remote and sparsely populated enough. Many of the county's 10,000 residents have expressed outrage at their county's being chosen as the dumping ground for Carter, although none of them have come forward with an alternative place for him to live.

Where Carter will end up is not the big question here. He has to live somewhere, public outcry notwithstanding. The important question is, why is he out of jail already, just 12 years after being sentenced to 25?

By any reasonable definition, Carter has not paid his debt to society. He was convicted of 23 crimes, including rape, assault, burglary and attempted burglary. But his convictions don't tell the half of it: Carter has confessed to raping more than 100 women.

Prisoners are routinely released sooner than they should be. Carter, like many other inmates, was rewarded for good behavior and for his labor in prison, and the reward came in the form of an early parole.

Every state in the union is suffering from prison overcrowding. The lack of jail space is forcing criminals back into society long before they have served their full sentence, and often long before society wants them back. This was the case with Carter.

The residents of Modoc County will probably have to resign themselves to Carter's presence. Aside from killing him (which some of them have threatened), there is no way to force the state to move him, and there is no place for him to go anyway.

If they really want to put their rage to good use, however, they should take this opportunity to push for change in the justice system, requiring more mandatory sentences for violent and repeat offenders, and for the funding of more prisons to hold those offenders once they're convicted.

That ill-fated garbage barge, foul as it was, had to eventually end up somewhere. And so must criminals like Carter, unless the system undergoes some serious changes — in California and elsewhere.



LETTERS

Male kingdom

Regarding Daniel West's article about the ASUO women's advocate, Michelle Parks, there are several points with which I must take issue.

One, the assertion that all underrepresented groups are in an unsafe environment is ridiculous. I bet that an African-American female is safer at the University than in, for example, Chicago.

Ms. Parks made the very good point that the University celebrates "different types of white diversity." But she should have qualified the statement by adding the word "liberal." People at the University think that a nose ring and a bumper sticker celebrate diversity, but have no idea of how to deal with the real thing. That's why the racist demands and comments by so many people of "color" are tolerated.

A good example of this is Ms. Parks' assertion that the instructor of an ethnic studies class must be identically matched in the race and ethnicity to the subject under discussion. While I agree that this is indeed a valuable perspective, it is racist in two ways. The strict adherence to such a code would reinforce racial and ethnic stereotypes, and two, it negates the view of anybody not belonging to the racial or ethnic group in question. If that were the case, Ms. Parks would have no business commenting on "this white male kingdom."

Damien E. Marquez
Eugene

Fill in the blanks

Mike Shannon's letter (ODE, March 10) perfectly demonstrated the flaws of multiculturalism. Multiculturalism claims to teach sensitivity, but rather blatantly indoctrinates racism and nationalism. What many liberal multiculturalists forget is that this is America, The Great Melting Pot, not America, the Culturally Factionalized Stew. We are all Americans; yes, I am also white, but I am not Euro-American (like there's anything wrong with being Euro-American).

So here is the perfect multinational letter of whatever na-

tionality you are. If you're composed of mixed nationalities (heaven forbid) then just fill in the different nationality each day.

Yes, I am white but I am not Euro-American. I am (nationality)-American. As a (same)-American student, I have encountered numerous injustices at the University.

There is no (same) student union here. There is no (same) representation in the ASUO. And I am damn tired of being stereotyped as a (any number of racial labels that apply).

So as a member of an oppressed minority at the University, I would like to propose a (nationality) history month to raise the awareness of the (Historic nationality) people. Also, there needs to be more (same) instructors on campus.

I would also like to see at least one (same) history class added to the required curriculum for University students.

It's time for the (same) minority to fight for an end to this oppression. (Popular Nationalistic Acclaim)!

Ted Assur
Russian

Out of context

I want to address a quote that was published (ODE, March 11). It was the story about me releasing funds for the USSA conference in Washington, D.C. The quote read: "If we told the leadership (of the ASUO programs) that they had to work within rules, that would stifle each group's creativity so much that no one would want to lead."

The quote was taken totally out of context. There should not be a comma after the word "rules" because I was referring to the rules that were unnecessarily bureaucratic to the extent that the rules would be counterproductive to their original intended effects.

I did not mean that groups should not follow rules for the sake of creativity and "unchecked" leadership. I went further into discussion with Ed Klopfenstein, the ODE reporter about the fine line of leadership and personal ethics; it was in that context that I said those

words. Obviously it was a discussion that Ed was not expecting. He misinterpreted my personal perspective to be my official stance on the USSA matter, when in fact I was referring in generic terms. This misunderstanding was also the consequence of a lack of mutual modus communique between Ed and myself, an issue we since both have resolved.

Note that my decision to release funds for the USSA was based solely on the potential value added to the University's student body growth through the representation of our student delegates on a national level. The outcome of the initial investigation on the alleged misconduct within the USSA is not substantial enough to justify encumbrance to the potential value of this trip to the University.

Francis Neo
ASUO Finance Coordinator

Moms' money

The University of Oregon's Mothers was established in 1934. Over the ensuing years the club has assisted thousands of students with scholarships and emergency loans through the Financial Aid Office.

While not as active, the club continues to award scholarships. This year we will be selecting undergraduate students to receive the Golda Parker Wickham Award, named for the former Dean of Women, in the amount of \$1,500. This award is given to an outstanding student and puts emphasis on civic activities, need and scholarship.

The Opal and Robert D. Clark, named for the former University president and his wife, will be awarded in the amount of \$1,000. This award is given to an outstanding student and places emphasis on volunteer service, scholarship and need.

The Theresa Kelly James Award will be presented for \$500, and there are several general awards for \$750 each.

Applications may be picked up in Room 364 Oregon Hall or at any of the dean's offices. We encourage all full-time undergraduate students to submit applications.

Alice Dugan
Scholarship Chair
University Mothers' Club

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