

Charges of racism unfair, inaccurate

The Black Student Union threw the first punch in this year's struggle over race relations by hurling insults and accusations at the Student Senate last week.

The issue was the BSU's \$1,195 request for a top-of-the-line IBM-compatible computer for bulk mailing/fund-raising and word processing purposes.

The problems started when the BSU's co-director called the Senate racist because of its new policy restricting funding requests for computers. The Senate's rule now requires that organizations must prove they cannot accomplish their missions with existing computer resources before they will be given money to buy their own.

Before the Senate had finished voting on the funding request, BSU members began leaving the meeting, but not before a parting shot by one member who called the Senate's denial "... a lynching. They might as well have lynched us from a tree and burned us up on a limb."

The Senate then finished its meeting by declining to fund a computer request from the Office of Student Advocacy.

The BSU's actions do nothing but harm the already fragile "official" race relations on this campus. By citing the Senate's refusal as an example of institutionalized racism, the BSU is crying wolf to an audience tired of false alarms.

Last year, MEChA, the Chicano student union, used similar tactics with the Senate's precursor, the Incidental Fee Committee, to get desired funding. When the IFC first failed to capitulate to MEChA's demands, members dug up the specter of racism and waved it at the IFC. Not wanting to appear racist, the IFC funded the request.

This method relies on fear and intimidation rather than utility and merit.

Racism is a very serious accusation. The mere insinuation that a person is a racist is enough to destroy a career and reputation. It is a term that shouldn't be abused to gain a few technological trinkets in a fit of juvenile anger.

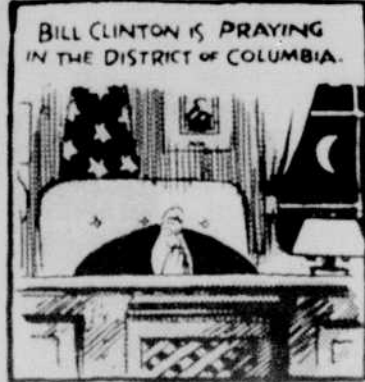
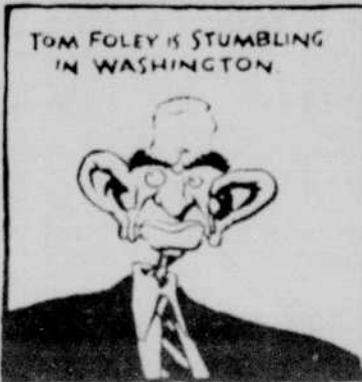
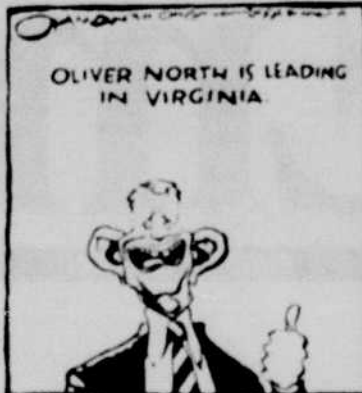
The BSU lost its bid for a state-of-the-art computer because it could not prove that an absence of a computer in the office would leave its mission unfulfilled.

The Senate pointed out that the new \$13,940 Media Resource Center is just a four-second walk from the BSU's office. The Media Resource Center offers two high-powered Macintoshes with CD-ROM, a scanner and laser printer for all ASUO groups to use. The BSU said using the center caused it to miss important telephone calls.

The bottom line is the BSU doesn't need a computer to fulfill its mission. The Media Resource Center exists so that the ASUO doesn't have to buy a computer for every student group. The BSU simply wants a computer and is willing to use any means necessary to get one.

By using racism as a threat, the BSU hoped the Senate would cave in, as history suggested it would. But the Senate stood its ground, refusing to be cowed by an empty threat.

Unfortunately, if the Senate grants any requests for computers in the future, the BSU will have a field day.



LETTERS

The EMquirer?

Sometimes it is difficult to tell the difference between the *Emerald* and the *National Enquirer*. What I read last Tuesday was so bad I could barely keep my eyes on the page. For those of you who had the misfortune of reading James Leong's article on the elitism of whites, you probably know what I am talking about.

How does such poor journalism ever make it to publication? Let me explain the most probable scenario. Boy gets an assignment concerning elitism, he runs out of material and is forced to reach into his bag of over-used, fictitious stereotypes. And what does he pull out? The greek system.

This article was not only poorly written, but also way off line. The greek system has always encouraged people from all backgrounds to join its chapters. The C.O.L.O.R.S. program is just one of many educational mediums that it sponsors to encourage the importance of strengthening interracial relations. The quotations used from the interview with Mark, the disgruntled Asian fraternity member, were blatantly distorted and false. This is probably true because no one who really felt that way could be found. I spoke with Mark before writing this letter and found that you had never even formally interviewed him.

The statistics regarding expenses in the greek system were so far from reality, they were comical. Do you honestly think that greeks spend \$1,000 on parties and travel? I don't know how you made up the number for pledge and membership fees, but they were wrong too. The overall expense of living in a fraternity or sorority is almost even to any other cost of living on campus.

If you are wondering why there aren't more minorities in the greek system, take a look at the number of minorities at this school. The actual number of non-white students in the greek system varies between 10 and 30 percent, compared to the University average of 22 percent.

James, your article was pathetic. You had a great opportunity to write about the need for all students to open up to

each other, and you blew it. Reporting false stereotypes like you have done is not only bad journalism, but also harmful journalism. With this article you have single-handedly belittled the efforts of hundreds of greeks on this campus. Next time you need some facts about the greek system, rather than make them up to fit your story, please consider giving me a call.

Donavan Dichter
IFC President-elect

Hail Womack

I applaud Brian Womack's commentary on Measure 16, and wish to add to his list of reasons why we should be concerned if this measure passes on Nov. 8. Proponents of this measure tell us to look at Holland to see how assisted suicide is working there, so being curious I did.

Derrick Humphreys, founder of the Hemlock Society, admits that Measure 16 is simply an attempt to open the doorway to legalized euthanasia. In Holland, two types of euthanasia and assisted suicide are illegally practiced regularly by Dutch physicians. The Rammelinck Report, conducted by the Dutch government, revealed some eye-opening practices. Sixty percent of all euthanasia patients were given lethal doses without their consent or knowledge.

In Oregon, where we have no real socialized medicine, people who fall under the new Oregon Health Care plan will be at risk of becoming casualties of this measure. Under controlled cost plans, physicians receive benefits for keeping patient treatment costs low. Given the choice between exploring expensive treatment options or implying that suicide might be an option, a physician is placed in a morally compromising position. The question is no longer "How can this patient be saved?", but "Is this patient worth saving?" And we have a right to be concerned—if not for ourselves, then for those who are society's throwaways: the elderly, disabled and poor. If euthanasia doesn't work in a socialized country, we can be sure it will have disastrous effects here.

We are a society that has deformed aging, making it a feared part of the life process. We ignore the elderly, disabled and terminally ill because they

remind us that one day we will die too. But more importantly they remind us that we will need the help of others which threatens the independence we worship as a society. We leave many of the elderly to die alone in nursing homes or shut away from human contact.

Perhaps the real problem here is that we have transformed dying into an unnatural process, one to be feared and controlled. Perhaps the real problem is that we know we will die in the same way that we have lived.

Kristen Parmeter
Sociology

Rules are rules

Knowing that all University services and programs must follow the University of Oregon policy statement on affirmative action and equal opportunity, we were surprised and disappointed to see U.S. military recruiters at the Career Fair sponsored by the Career Center.

According to a Career Fair organizer, all agencies are asked to comply with the University affirmative action policy when registering for the event. Both the military recruiters and the Career Center know that the federal government can bypass the University policy. Thus, the military does acknowledge the policy, but they are not bound by it.

We approached the Career Fair table and asked a representative why they, as a University service abiding by the policy, sponsored an agency that discriminates. They told us that the military has previously participated in the fair and that many students express an interest in military careers. There is also a population of students that are interested in careers in the military but cannot pursue them, if they are openly lesbian, gay or bisexual.

We recognize that we cannot change the existing laws that govern military eligibility, but we expect the Career Center to adhere to University policy and deny access to the military for recruiting on campus. By inviting the U.S. military to recruit at the Career Fair, the Career Center has made it clear that it supports the discrimination of homosexuals.

Douglas Knecht
Jennifer Williamson
University students

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