

Cuban trade embargo mean-spirited

■ **OUR OPINION:** Cuba, Castro have changed their ways and the U.S. should make the necessary moves to befriend them

Garry B. Trudeau's cartoon-strip characterization of President Clinton as a large waffle is a spoof that Clinton has once again brought on himself.

Our grievance with our decisively indecisive president is over Clinton's refusal to look beyond superficial (and selfish) reasons for keeping Cuba under the heavy heel of an economically crippling American embargo.

While he does shoulder much of the responsibility, Clinton is not solely to blame for this unnecessary embargo. The Republicans, led by Senate Foreign Relations Committee Chairman Jesse Helms, R-N.C., and Rep. Dan Burton, R-Ind., have been putting their legislative muscles behind a bill called the Cuban Liberty and Democratic Solidarity Act — a nice-sounding piece of legislation with an even nastier intent. The bill advocates nothing less than the overthrow of Fidel Castro and his regime through some kind of "final push," in Helm's words. This is blatantly a case of beating an already dead horse.

Yes, Castro has been a tyrant and Cuba has had more than its fair share of human rights abuses, but Castro's Communism is dead, and it is now time to extend a helping hand of goodwill. The Cold War is over and there is no reason to continue to punish the

people of Cuba (whose daily food intake is less than 1,800 calories per person), for the sins of an old guy with a funny beard who's finally trying to get his country out of its 36-year slump.

America's trade freeze with Cuba has outlived its usefulness. Castro has had to face the reality that, without the raw goods and financial aid of the former Soviet Union, his country will have to continue seeking other means of self-sufficiency. And Castro has been taking small steps in a direction that just might save his country. Cuba is undergoing an agrarian revolution — finding that it can be self-sufficient through basic sustainable agriculture. The Cubans are planting pesticide-free crops using oxen and the sweat of their brow, and its working for them. They are beginning to feed themselves.

Meanwhile, back in the U.S., where the harvest of presidential hopefuls is beginning to ferment and stink up the political landscape, Clinton is spending most of his time trying not to offend large numbers of people he hopes will be voting for him. Clinton is not about to endorse the Cuban "Liberty" bill and jeopardize his favor with the anti-Castro voting block in Florida's Cuban-American community.

The policies and beliefs that are keeping this embargo in place should be discarded like neon active wear — get rid of the stuff. Not only is it ugly, it makes us look bad to the rest of the world.

Next.



LETTERS

Vermin

Oh dear, I have just read some of the most charming, bleeding-heart-liberal tripe in John Davidson's letter "Try tolerance" (*ODE*, Oct. 10).

My stars, you'd almost think Davidson has some vested interest in the derelicts who defile our pristine campus. Perhaps our friend over in Legal Services has some sort of (ahem) financial stake in the welfare of the poor miscreants he refers to as "people without evident financial means who choose to be near the University."

As we all know, the vagrants and other such assorted vermin who swarm about our campus are among the main propagators of crime in our area. By this, I refer to both misdemeanor and felonious crimes. I'm sure when student vagrants happen to be arrested for selling LSD to an undercover police officer, they are quite overjoyed to know that there is a big, strong vindicator in Legal-Services Land willing to take on "The Man."

Neither do I assert that Davidson is paid according to the number of clients he serves, nor do I assert that he happens to be a lawyer. It certainly must make the Big Boss Man or Woman quite happy to see that one of his or her employees is being requested so frequently (wink, wink — nudge, nudge).

On to the topic of the assorted litter and refuse on our darling campus roads.

As I'm sure you can tell by now, I hold a very, shall we say, "negative" perspective on the vagrancy issue. I have attended South Eugene schools since middle school, and I have seen the ideals of frenetic rebellion, blatant irrationality and uncontrolled "small" drug use held up as the greatest of all moral codes. I have seen many of my grade-school playmates metamorphose into the

seamy mass of stinking humanity you see crawling along 13th Ave. every day.

To grow up in Eugene is to witness the idolization of all that is putrid, rotten and decaying in the fabric of our nation. No matter what some so-called expert will tell you, the vast majority of the trash congregating on 13th Ave. have chosen to be in their situation and are capable of building a bright and rewarding future for themselves. Bear this in mind: "By contributing to the social illness that these people have chosen for themselves, you are only reinforcing and strengthening every depravity you once felt comfortable in scoffing at."

By refusing to acknowledge their decaying existence, we are bringing them one step closer to realizing their plight. The next time a smelly, lice-infested, dirt-encrusted, patchouli-wearing parasite comes up to you and asks you to provide him with something for his dog, I suggest you take the high road and offer him a frying pan and a good recipe for Canine Flambé. You may reply to this letter via e-mail at: "kavi@ursula.uoregon.edu."

Kavi Chaitanya Grace-Luke
Philosophy/Pre-Business

Liberal 30s

I am not an *Emerald* alumnus, but I was a reader of the *Emerald* back in the 1920s and early 30s while I was a student at the University.

I'll relate this small incident. It was spring 1930 and the *Emerald* sent out reporters to interview those of us in the senior class in the ROTC.

I happened to be cadet colonel and I told a reporter that I liked ROTC "fine." The next day Dick Neuberger, the student editor, ridiculed my remarks saying I was only an "ROTC stooge."

He, like others, had a pacifist bent at that time. Of course he, like I, went on into Army ser-

vice during World War II. I think that as a U.S. Senator, Dick (and later his wife Maureen) supported the U.S. military.

A few years ago, writing a letter in *Old Oregon*, I signed my name as a retired colonel. Some other alumnus took the occasion to wonder who such a fellow might be who was on the military side. He also objected to having ROTC on the campus in the 30s and still thought the U.S. participation in World War II was a bad idea!

It's too late now, but in retrospect I think I should have studied journalism. Writing letters to the editor is now my biggest hobby.

Karl S. Landstrom
Arlington, Virginia

GTF reps

Diane Rau, Graduate Teaching Fellow Federation union representative, and Larry Williams, who managed the GTF Health Plan, have been having difficulties negotiating their employment contract with elected union officers.

Williams has already left for another job and Rau appears to be under extreme pressure to force her to quit. As graduate teaching fellows, we come and go, as do GTF union presidents, but stability and experience in our union representatives is essential. Rau has successfully seen us through four negotiations with the University. She served as chief negotiator for the last two, which made the GTF one of two graduate student unions with medical and dental benefits and wage increases at a time of shrinking budgets.

I do not know what is motivating the current union officers, but I think it is important they inform us and act for the best long-term interest of the union and not some momentary flirtation with power.

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