

Holocaust 'revisionist' sends Emerald a check

■ **OUR OPINION:** Advertisement is hate-founded, but do we print it?

Every week the seven-member editorial board convenes to determine which issues will be discussed in this column. It's not often that we are presented with an opportunity to discuss how those decisions are made, nor do we present to you the many topics that are rejected.

This week was different.

On Tuesday we received a check for \$80 and an advertisement that offered students free information from a World Wide Web site. The money and the message came from Bradley R. Smith, the founder of the Committee for Open Debate on the Holocaust. The Web site offers students the text of an article titled "46 Unanswered Questions Regarding the World War II 'Gas Chambers.'"

In brief, the article questions the notion that mass executions took place by poisonous gas in several Nazi concentration camps during World War II. Mr. Smith would probably deny this, as the article does not deny overtly that these gassings occurred. Rather, it merely "questions" the killings by asking why no locks appear on the doors of the chambers, why no traces of delousing gas can be found, etc.

We recognized this as camouflaged anti-Semitic propaganda. The Holocaust is perhaps the best-documented event in modern history.

Yet, we were faced with a dilemma. Should the public know that Holocaust "revisionists" such as Bradley

Smith exist, or should we ignore him? Would not printing his advertisement be considered censorship and if so, would it be justified? If we printed it, should we keep the money or donate it to the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum?

One of the missions of this newspaper is to present items of interest and importance to the community. Our editorial policy is to engage that community in a dialog about the issues that concern them and/or should concern them. Neither of these policies aided our decision.

The Holocaust denial movement does exist and has gained significant attention in recent years. It is newsworthy. But if we printed the advertisement we would be calling attention to an ideology that we find abhorrent. We did not want to aid Mr. Smith in his quest for more followers.

Without the aid of a policy, we had to determine who would benefit from the printing of the ad and who would be harmed.

Six million Jews were exterminated at the hands of Nazis — a massive death that began with propaganda. Printing the advertisement would have upset thousands of people, not the least of whom would be descendants of the people who died in the gas chambers Mr. Smith is questioning.

Printing the ad would have benefited Mr. Smith only and caused a debate around an issue that is clearly not debatable. It is censorship, but the potential harm outweighs the potential good.

We gave Mr. Smith his \$80 bucks back. He can peddle his hate somewhere else.



Republicans buying Alexander's ideas

Now that we can look back on Tuesday's New Hampshire results, and because primary season is in full swing, we should take a look at the status of each of the three major Republican candidates.

With his slim victory in New Hampshire, Pat Buchanan has shown that he and his followers are a true force in the GOP.

The pugnacious journalist is the most dichotomous person in the race. On Buchanan's dark side, we have his inflammatory racial rhetoric, his railing against immigrants, his ultra-right social views and of course, through his campaign manager Larry Pratt, his possible ties to extremist groups.

On Buchanan's good side is his concern for the plight of America's blue-collar workers. His provocative ideas about the world economy and its effect on the American work force make even the most avowed free-market supporters, myself included, question their dogma. Buchanan has forced the Republican Party to try and determine whether its soul lies in corporate America or in middle America. For this, he should be given credit.

The Republican establishment has loaded its guns against him. William F. Buckley Jr. has called him anti-Semitic, Gingrich and Dole have called him an extremist, while William Bennett has said that he flirts with fascism.

However, in the unlikely event that Buchanan does win the nomination, there is not much the party elders can do to stop him.

Bob Dole barely won in Iowa, and his second-place showing in New Hampshire (though he lost by only 1 percent) shows that the man who was once thought to have a lock on the nomination is vulnerable.

In the long run, however, his loss to Buchanan could prove to be better for Dole than a victory. If moderates in future primaries are afraid of Buchanan, they will probably turn to the old war horse. Also, Buchanan's victory could inspire big-name moderate Republicans (e.g. Jack Kemp, Colin Powell, or former South Carolina Governor Carroll Campbell) to come out and endorse Dole.

On the other hand, the GOP paradigm shift from pragmatism (e.g. Dole and Alan Simpson) to ideology (e.g. Gingrich and Gramm) has hurt Dole and his old-school peers. This shift could lead some voters afraid of Buchanan not to deal-maker Dole, but to idea-man Alexander.

Lamar Alexander's surprising third-place finishes in Iowa and New Hampshire have given the former Tennessee governor great momentum.

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While Dole, Buchanan and Forbes have slung dirt at each other, Alexander long ago took a “no negative ads” pledge (a la Ron Wyden) and built the most politically ideological platform of the campaign. His conservative ideals have been packaged to sound simultaneously visionary and moderate, and they have been selling.

Along the same lines, he has been able to point to himself as having both the insider qualities of Dole (from his days as a governor and the secretary of education) and the outsider qualities of Forbes and Buchanan (as a lawyer, president of the University of Tennessee, and a businessman). This has made voters comfortable with giving him the responsibility of the presidency without the fear that he will be another typical politician.

His biggest selling point, however, one that Alexander gives the most play while campaigning, is the question: “Who do you want to see in that debate against Bill Clinton?”

This immediately reminds voters of Dole's propensity to snap during times of tension and Buchanan's fiery Huey Long-style rhetoric. Alexander has the best chance of any GOP candidate to beat Clinton not only in a debate, but also in a national election.

The one problem that may plague Alexander is a shady investment deal involving his wife while he was governor (gee, that sounds familiar). If these allegations of impropriety prove true, voters will turn on him for taking the hypocritical stance of an outsider when he may have been acting like a typical politician all along. In this event, Dole can look forward to the nomination of his party. Buchanan wouldn't have a chance in a head-to-head contest with Dole.

The other candidates — Forbes, Lugar, Keyes, Taylor, and Dornan — are no longer factors (except for Forbes' money). Not to disregard the strengths of any of their resumes or ideas, but they simply do not have enough popular support.

If they truly cared about this race, they would drop out now to let the party decide between three different visions; one that recalls our sheltered past, one that looks at the pragmatic nature of our present, and one that looks toward an idealistic future.

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OPINION
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