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## PERSPECTIVES

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DON'T GIVE CHINA  
COLD SHOULDER

AN EMERALD EDITORIAL

*The United States has no reason to start a new cold war with China, especially given its own behavior*

**T**he Cold War is over. Long live the Cold War.

For the past seven or eight years, there have been some very nervous policy-makers scurrying around Washington and their other haunts. The Soviet Union is gone. The "Iron Curtain" has fallen. The Warsaw Pact is being swallowed by NATO, and the corruption of capitalism has replaced the corruption of the Communist Party.

This has left a lot of people scrambling to justify their jobs. Foreign policy pundits, whose expertise relied upon a dichotomous world view, have taken to grappling with the many-fronted New World Order. Arms suppliers and the Pentagon have begun to argue that the United States needs to be prepared to fight two separate wars at the same time, all in the interest of continuing to build massive stacks of weapons.

Nevertheless, nothing has replaced the glory of the Cold War years, when throngs of Americans willingly swallowed every piece of anti-Soviet propaganda shoved down their throats.

Enter China.

It isn't hard to determine why desperate policy-makers have settled upon China as the enemy of choice. Not only does China have a sufficient population to provide a realistic opponent for massive warfare, but it has fought directly and indirectly with the United States in the past. With China as an enemy, there is no need for

multiple-front scenarios and tales of terrorists with poison gas; China alone provides all the justification the Pentagon needs for its hundreds of billions of dollars worth of toys.

Moreover, China is still a nominally Communist state despite ongoing reforms designed to forcefully plunge the Chinese people into the world economy. China's "Red" status means we don't even have to rewrite our old paranoid rhetoric about evil empires and the great Red menace.

The media have been all too willing to help create a monster out of China and its president, Jiang Zemin, who recently toured the United States on a diplomatic visit. President Clinton heroically stood shoulder to shoulder with Jiang and denounced Chinese abuses of human rights in a scene disturbingly reminiscent of the kitchen debate, and the press greedily snapped up the camera-ready footage.

Why Clinton wasn't obsessing about China's prison labor and rights policies earlier when China once again received Most Favored Nation trading status, remained unasked by the media.

China certainly has committed an assortment of human rights abuses. Complaints have been raised about the excessive number of Chinese citizens who have been sentenced to death. Notably, the United States during its recent anti-crime fervor added a long list of capital crimes to the federal law

MOVIES 12

NOW PLAYING

COLD WAR:  
THE SEQUEL

CHRIS HUTCHINSON/Emerald

books.

Perhaps the biggest concern is China's use of prison labor. According to an article by Carl Riskin in the Nov. 10 Nation, however, China's prisons produce less than one-fifth of 1 percent of the Gross National Product. More significantly, as Riskin notes, the United States has long used prison labor to manufacture a variety of products, paying those prisoners far below minimum wage.

Even as Americans complain about the use of poorly treated Chinese laborers, they continue to purchase clothing and other goods made in sweatshops domestically and abroad. In all the scandal over Nike's use of Viet-

namese labor, no one has suggested Vietnam's leader is the next Stalin.

China's biggest problems have little to do with Communism or its president. Like many developing nations in the region, China is experiencing the pain of unrestrained global capitalism. The workers are suffering more from a polluted environment and a growing inequality of wealth than they are from the teachings of Mao.

The United States doesn't need to fight another Cold War. If we are concerned about human rights and the fair treatment of labor, we should start by worrying about our own actions and the actions of those nations we prop up with foreign aid and investment.

Neither the Chinese citizens nor the people of the United States stand to gain from high-minded talk about prison labor and government suppression. These issues need to be addressed on a worldwide level but not in such a way as to deliberately create conflict.

The only people who will benefit from the current, confrontational approach to China are those same policy-makers who are now wandering aimlessly, hoping for a new enemy to justify their salaries.

*This editorial represents the opinion of the Emerald editorial board. Responses may be sent to ode@oregon.uoregon.edu*

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

## Rioting lacks reason

Since when was rioting vanguard at parties attended and facilitated by University students? Yes, I'm the nerdy student who screamed, "Listen to the voice of reason," and: "Don't hurt yourselves. Be careful!" Maybe I screamed for the rioters to stop for my own conscience (in case someone was hurt), or I really do care about the student body and consequences. Living for today is fun and games until a van is rocked over and crushes a student, right? We can sit back and revel in thrills the Halloween parties brought, but think about the what ifs. What if one of your friends was blinded because glass splinters hit their eyes? Have we become so bored that blood is the only solace? Would social connections and true humanity reveal its face if a student had been crushed? If blood made an appearance, we could reach out to our friends and pull them close to cry for the injustice.

At the University we can alter this cliché from, "If you don't have something nice to say, don't say it" to "If you're bored and out of beer, don't riot." What kind of precedent and example are we setting for juveniles and children that look up to University students? There can be long term consequences for the rioting on Alder Street and 17th Avenue. The University was partly established to teach students to ask questions like these of themselves.

What are the reasons for this growing boredom and resulting destruction of public and

private property? Do we need a famine or slower economy to appreciate the things we take for granted — food, clean water and housing? Appreciate the excess and take advantage of your wealth by spreading it around. Halloween is over! The holiday season is beginning, and I urge students to use their extra energy and spare beer money to do the world some good. Be a part social change, whether it be altering the justice system or giving an old winter coat to the Salvation Army. Do not destroy what others have diligently worked for because you're living the good life. If anything, listen to Otis Redding and "sit on the dock of the bay watching the tides roll away." Axl Rose's "Appetite for Destruction" will lead us down insufficient paths and end in dissatisfaction.

Sara Bartley  
Journalism

## MEChA most helpful

On behalf of the students and staff at Kennedy Middle School, we would like to express our appreciation for the wonderful role that University MEChA students have played in the lives of Latino students at Kennedy. Through the Ganas Project, these MEChA volunteers have shared their life stories, their goals and dreams, their tutoring and their affection and support for our students.

Week in and week out during the past school year, MEChA students have devoted hundreds of hours to teaching these students about the positive aspects of their cul-

ture and history, about the need to be successful in school, about their potential to be college students and about the need to be informed and active members of their community.

Role models play a key role in the world of a middle school student. Far too often our students are presented with negative and self-destructive role models and media images. The MEChA students have served as powerful role models of productive, positive and caring young adults. The University community should be proud of the long-lasting contributions by these MEChA students.

Our sincere thanks are also extended to Ganas initiator and guiding spirit, Jim Garcia, acting director of the University Office of Multicultural Affairs. Valuable support for Ganas has also been provided by University Associate Vice President Jim Buck. Their recognition of the potential of this dynamic University-Kennedy program has been essential to its success.

Kay Mehas  
Principal, Kennedy Middle School  
Kevin Boling  
Assistant Principal, Kennedy M.S.  
and one co-signer

## International honor society

I wanted to draw your attention to a very special group of students omitted in your article on "Students to carve jack o' lanterns for children, elderly" (ODE, Oct. 28). This group is the Golden Key National Honor Society in which several of our members par-

ticipated in Sunday's event in conjunction with the Mortar Board Honor Society. In fact, the success of the event would not have been possible without their enthusiasm, as well as the donation of several very large pumpkins by growers from the Eugene Saturday Market.

Golden Key National Honor Society is now an *international* junior and senior honor society, boasting of active chapters in all fifty states as well as in Canada, Australia and Malaysia with continued global expansion and cooperation as a major goal. Our school has 250 current members and will be holding a reception for this year's initiates in December.

Though in the past our group has not been widely known, I believe that the success of our first event points to a positive change in this trend. It is also interesting to note that the idea for "Pumpkins for Pediatrics" came from the accidentally e-mailed meeting minutes of the Golden Key chapter at Dartmouth. Therefore, not only does the success of this service project demonstrate people's willingness to help, but that cooperation between honor societies is both a must and a positive, and that utilizing new technologies can dramatically increase our outreach to others in need. Most importantly, it proves that the children's smiles made it all worth our efforts.

Sincerely and thanks to all of our participants from both groups.

Tiffany Helleson  
President, Oregon Golden Key Chapter