

PERSPECTIVES

PEACE at a price

NATO's humanitarian
stance on Kosovo is
betrayed by its actions

It's wartime again in this once peaceful world of ours. While high school kids continue dynamiting their classmates at home, Washington goes on with its bombing campaign overseas. Killings in the backyard, killings across the water.

That's right. Attacks by NATO (which means the U.S.) against Yugoslavia may have lost a little bit of space in our hype-obsessed media in the wake of the bloodshed at Columbine High, but the fact is that the massacre overseas goes on, at full throttle, having produced more than 500 deaths so far.

Yeah, people are dying, and few seem to notice or even comment about it. The hapless Yugoslav who happens to be in the way of a cruise missile, civilian or not, is a mere war casualty, or collateral damage, as they euphemistically put it on TV.

But the deadly attacks against those wicked eastern Europeans are in the name of a good, generous, philanthropic cause. It is war in the name of peace, as the government's absurd doublespeak generally goes. The humanitarian bombs that have been raining down on the heads of millions of people in Belgrade, Novi Sad and all over Kosovo serve, according to the government, peaceful purposes.

According to the rhetoric, the United States is engaged in a humanitarian, altruistic and lifesaving mission to protect innocent civilians from the rage of an insane, psychotic president who refuses to listen to reason.

The country is sending thousands of troops all the way to the Balkans with the sole objective of defending those pure and virginal Kosovars from the bloodthirsty hands of tyrant Milosevic. And so the political discourse goes.

Well, a tyrant he may be, and most Kosovars are as innocent as a newborn infant. Right. However, none of the arguments listed above reflect the reality of why the United States is actually interested in blowing up Yugoslav factories, railways, bridges, buildings, TV stations and people. They don't.

As the sharp reader should probably know, the Western World has never lifted a finger to protect anyone anywhere, let alone in Commie-land East Europe, unless its interests were at stake. And what's happening in Kosovo today is no different.

The United States has been leading this campaign, which servile British Prime Minister Tony Blair has gleefully joined because Milosevic has become as stubborn as

a rebel teen-ager who defies orders.

That's right, the man has become too arrogant and hasn't been following the prescriptions from the West. He hasn't been conquering the Kosovars as he was supposed to, and started a wave of massacres that became all too obvious to be ignored.

Besides, the once dutiful and docile Milosevic has been promoting a savage ethnic clash that is taking place right in the middle of the Balkans, challenging the stability of the region — a region where U.S. economic and political interests are as high as they are in Iraq.

In addition, this is a spectacular opportunity for the United States to go about in its Lord-given task of policing the world. It shows the rest of the planet, including the United Nations, which has been virtually ignored in this conflict, who is in charge. It shows all other countries the force of an imperial power that will stop at nothing and will bomb, if necessary, to assert its dominance.

Plus, the whole cruise missile humanitarian campaign can be used to test new altruistic bombs, experiment the latest technology in worldwide law enforcement and justify lifesaving spending with the military.

So, the attacks in the Balkans are not in the name of humanitarian interests. Because if they were, recent humanitarian catastrophes that killed many more people than in Kosovo would have generated a strong outrage from the compassionate and kindhearted West. But they didn't.

Examples abound: in Algeria, 80,000 dead; in Rwanda,



820,000; in Sudan, 1.5 million and not one single humanitarian cruise missile. Also, U.S. ally and always-very-obedient Turkey has been killing Kurds as if they were flies, and not a finger has been lifted to stop such atrocities. There are several other cases, but the point has been made: The intervention is not humanitarian.

If it were, the solution would not come through lethal explosives invisibly dropped from the night skies over Yu-

goslavia.

It would come through more dialogue, as weary as it may be. Through more negotiation, as fruitless as it may seem. Through more diplomacy, because diplomacy is never at an end and generally it saves a lot more lives, be they Serbian or Kosovar Albanian.

Vince Medeiros is a columnist for the Emerald. His views do not necessarily represent those of the newspaper.

Letters to the Editor

Neon less prevalent

Thank you. You have improved our campus by making it a less toxic place. There are fewer neon, goldenrod and heavily dyed fliers strewn about than ever before. This is good.

You chose not to use neon, goldenrod or heavily dyed paper during campus elections. Instead, you cleverly used type and other graphic elements to catch our eye. A year ago, neon, goldenrod and heavily dyed paper would have been all over screaming at us to vote for so and so. Thank you.

You chose to change your practices and select softer-colored papers.

You have learned that the bleaching process used to create neon, goldenrod and heavily dyed paper produces cancer-causing dioxin. You have learned that the ink in neon, goldenrod and heavily dyed paper leaches harmful chemicals into the environment. And you have learned that neon, goldenrod and heavily dyed paper belongs in the low-grade recycling bin.

You know neon, goldenrod and heavily dyed papers kill.

Thank you.

Karl Schroeder
Journalism

Student voices heard

Our power as student voters is felt by

University administration and Gardenburger officials. The issues that we voice do make a difference. The students of the University voted on April 21 and 22 to remove Gardenburgers from our campus. At the same time, the University of Wisconsin at Madison was preparing to discontinue all Gardenburger products from its campus. The next day, Gardenburger decided to sever its financial ties to NORPAC.

Congratulations, students, you have made a positive and influential impact in support of thousands of farmworkers in their struggle to be treated fairly and humanely. However, the struggle is not yet over. University Housing presently serves NORPAC products, such as Flav-R-Pac. We students should recognize the power we have and use it to demand that University Housing support the continuing boycott of all NORPAC products.

As customers at the University, we have the right to decide how and from where we get our services and products. It is your right to decide how your money is spent, who it supports and what kind of practices and injustices you don't want it to support.

University Vice President Dan Williams said, "These are the kinds of choices students ought to make, not the administration." Students made that choice clearly when we voted 1,339 to 885 in favor of discontinuing Gardenburger products. Let's continue to make the choice to support

farmworkers and pressure the administration to act on the choices we make

Huy Ong
Multicultural Center

Pipe ban ridiculous

Twice a year, the ASUO Street Faire allows community members to come to the University to sell their crafts and food. Citizen and student groups set up tables to facilitate communication and spread the word about their events. Taking the stance that the Street Faire needs to be more "professional," the ASUO has banned the sale of the perfectly legal blown-glass pipes that have been a perennially sold craft. We as students and community members don't need the ASUO bowing to pressure from the administration and treating us like children. We are all adults and can make responsible decisions about our conduct. An arbitrary decision to ban the sale of pipes to curb the consumption of marijuana is futile and ridiculous. Pipes are popular with collectors, and blowing glass is a respected art form.

University Vice President Dan Williams said, "The pipes are indicative of a substance abuse problem." What kind of irrational statement is that? Pipes are indicative of substance abuse just as much as beer mugs are. Should the ASUO ban the sale of all mugs and drinking glasses that might be used for drinking beer?

Within the first three hours of the Street Faire, the ASUO and administration continued their moral attack on marijuana by sending the Eugene Police Department to the Cannabis Liberation Society Table to search for marijuana and check IDs of group members. All of this was done because a sign was posted that said "Free Marijuana."

The Street Faire should be a celebration of community and open thoughts and ideas, not a stifling moral witch hunt.

Willie Thompson
Sociology/History

LETTERS POLICY

The Oregon Daily Emerald will attempt to print all letters containing comments on topics of interest to the University community. Letters must be limited to 250 words. The Emerald reserves the right to edit any letter for length, clarity, grammar, style and libel. Letters may be dropped off at EMU Suite 300.

CORRECTION

In the April 27 article, "Boycott over burgers ends" Flav-R-Pac was misspelled. In the April 28 schedule, "Asian Pacific Heritage Month," the hip-hop dance at The Buzz from 9:30 p.m. to 1:30 a.m. should have been listed as happening on Friday, April 30. The Emerald regrets the errors.