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COMMENTARY

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Friday, March 1, 2002

Yesteryear's Editorial

Red scare returns in U.S. politics

A new kind of red scare is taking place in the United States and the implications are serious. The declared enemy is Nicaragua and the propaganda target is the American people. The purpose of this red scare is to raise the level of paranoia and fear in the American public sufficiently enough to win support for President Ronald Reagan's as-yet-undeclared war against the Sandinista government.

How is this red scare manifesting itself? Both Reagan and Secretary of State George Shultz have dramatically escalated their anti-Sandinista rhetoric in recent months. In foreign policy speeches, the Sandinistas are referred to as "drug pushers," "godless," "cruel," "evil" and as "exporters of revolution"

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whose ultimate aim is to destabilize the United States. Reagan has warned the American people that unless the Sandinistas are stopped now, we might be fighting communism on our own borders.

In conjunction with this fear-mongering, the Reagan administration has also increased FBI surveillance of Central American support groups and harassment of individuals that question the official government position on Nicaragua. FBI infiltration of church sanctuary groups in Arizona, Texas and Washington has led to fear of trust among church sanctuary members throughout the country. Journalists have also been harassed, such as Edward Hasse, a freelancer from Kansas City. Hasse was interrogated at length by the FBI on January 16, after returning from a trip to Nicaragua. His personal diary, written works and address book were confiscated and are still in the hands of the FBI.

A dangerous trend is now being set in this country, fueled by Reagan's desperate desire to win support for his Central American policy. Inflammatory rhetoric and FBI-sponsored harassment appear to be gaining headway over responsible discussion and debate on an important issue: Should the United States be supporting the overthrow of the Sandinista government? Americans must resist this latest attempt at drumming up a red scare by both Reagan and Shultz, and instead opt for a responsible presentation of the issues on Central America from the different points of view. If the current trend of fear-mongering continues, we may find that the cherished freedoms of this nation may be threatened more by Reagan's red-baiting policies at home than by a perceived communist threat from abroad.

This editorial was taken from the March 1, 1985 edition of the Oregon Daily Emerald.

Letters to the Editor and Guest Commentaries Policy

Letters to the editor and guest commentaries are encouraged. Letters are limited to 250 words and guest commentaries to 550 words. Please include contact information. The Emerald reserves the right to edit for space, grammar and style.

CORRECTION

The subhead on Wednesday's story about male trespassers in Spiller Hall ("EPD says trespassers weren't charged with attempted rape," ODE, Feb. 27) should have stated that police said the female resident did not feel threatened. Wednesday's story about the GTFF rally ("GTFFs rally for fair contract," ODE, Feb. 27) should have stated that negotiations hit a snag Feb. 19. The Emerald regrets the errors.

CLARIFICATION

Also in the rally story, the subhead should have stated that the GTFF was seeking language in its contract that protects against discrimination based on gender status. The Emerald used the term "gender status" to refer to discrimination against transgender and transsexual individuals.

Letters to the editor

GTFF rally more than 'Faith'

As a Journalism and Communication GTF and a participant in the GTFF rally on Feb. 26, I am very outraged by Steve Baggs' illustration on the rally Feb. 27. Along with (Leon) Tovey's full-of-inaccurate-information "GTFFs rally for fair contract" piece (ODE, 2/27), I cannot see how the Emerald is able to provide its readers a full context to understand the issue at hand. Rather than seeing GTF contracts as a stand-alone issue, we should try to understand why it is related to the quality of undergraduate and graduate education, state budget cuts in higher education and university ranking in the nation. GTFFs contribute to 30 percent of the teaching load, University-wide; most of us help faculty on their research, which is a focal point of a research university. A cut in the state education budget means some people have to bear the cost — unfortunately, it is the GTFFs who probably have the weakest bargaining power.

I feel very disappointed that not only did the Emerald fail to give its readers a much more holistic and critical perspective in framing education issues that are pertinent to them, it also trivialized a serious issue by characterizing participants of rally as a bunch of brats who are asking for more than they should. The readers do not need to know why the rally started with "Faith," the readers have to know the good cause behind the rally and why it, in every way, is relevant to their education.

Micky Lee

Ph.D. student and GTF
School of Journalism and Communication

ASUO election well-run

We are very impressed with how the ASUO primary election was run. We're glad our expenditure form got published in the Emerald. It is a status symbol.

We felt that the elections coordinators did their jobs as well as they could, which narrowed down two identifiable candidates. What it all boils down to is leadership ability in a time of radical change.

Our voice definitely got out to the people we wanted to get it out to: smart guys like us and pretty girls.

We really enjoyed the experience we had and hope that the University we go to is represented in a manner unique to any other school in the country.

John Ely

junior
history, folklore
Hayes Hurwitz
junior
economics, Spanish

Dreier needs to get a clue

This letter is in response to Timothy Dreier's reply on my letter dealing with his interview ("Edwards is a commie sympathizer," ODE, 02/22).

First of all, in response to Dreier's comment on my ability to recognize satire: For something to be effective and recognizable as satire, it must be clearly identified as satire, and it must be clear what is being satirized. I don't see Dreier doing either one of these until after the fact.

Most students don't care about campus politics; I am one of them. These students don't get their information anywhere but the Emerald and the occasional flier handed to them. How did Dreier expect people who had never heard of him and what he was running for to instantly recognize his tasteless satire of other candidates, who they also know little or nothing about? Not a good way to get people to care about student elections.

And second, it's pretty clear Dreier has

no conception of what it is like in a culture where people are legally discriminated against for their political views. He has obviously never lived in a country where people could be, as he so casually jokes about, "black-listed" and their and their families' entire lives ruined because of it.

Dreier should think about what he treats so lightly.

Nathan Edwards
junior
English

Cultural Forum needs to learn job

I'm not surprised there was no review for the Feb. 24 horribly-run Ice-T/Nelly concert. I've seen roughly three-dozen large venue concerts since 1994, and have never seen such a poorly executed, overpriced production. After the UO Cultural Forum's horrible hosting and production of the Ice-T/Nelly concert, it's apparent that the Cultural Forum needs to learn how to host a show, and the community will be lucky to be able to host any big name concerts in the near future because of this recent failure.

Feb. 20 the Emerald said Ice-T canceled, then Feb. 21 the Emerald said it was a mistake, and that Ice-T would be performing after all. So what actually happens? Ice-T doesn't show and there is no announcement. I don't blame the performers, but rather disinformation, the total lack of enough speakers and the negative feeling the crowd felt by an overabundance of DPS officers outside and security inside on the floor.

The University could have done a better job; they did before, putting on Bob Dylan and Paul Simon in '98!

Aaron Reddick
junior
landscape architecture

Sin may be 'in,' but sexism certainly is not

It is with great disappointment that I write in regard to an advertisement in the Emerald's Feb. 26 "Sin is In" edition. The advertisement, for High Priestess Piercing (page 7B), reads: "give in to temptation" and pictures a nearly nude woman in a sexually suggestive position.

This advertisement demeans and reduces women to mere sexual objects and reinforces stereotypes against women. Sexist attitudes and comments are not new to the Emerald. In October of 2000, readers of this publication were subjected to similar material (the Yahoo! campaign).

Once again, Becky Merchant and the Emerald staff have failed to make proper advertising decisions. Making money off the objectification of women is offensive to many individuals, and seems fully inconsistent with the vision of a University environment free of sexism in any form.

Page 8B contains an ad which promotes positive body image. How can this advertisement be in the same issue as one which encourages discrimination against women — sexual discrimination which could possibly lead to sexual assault?

Organizations like the Emerald must realize ads like these contribute to the lack of safety on campus as much as poor campus lighting. As a student-run newspaper, the Emerald should be wary of alienating and objectifying half the student body, in addition to many other constituents of our community.

It must be said, that once again, it is time that the Emerald reflect and see the decision to run this ad as a sign of irresponsible journalism.

Emily Katina May
senior
general science

Peter Utsey Emerald

