

COMMENTARY

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Yesteryear's Editorial

Reagan shouldn't veto long-awaited trade bill

In August 1988, Congress passed and President Ronald Reagan signed the Omnibus Trade and Competitiveness Act of 1988 into law. The act is a successor to the bill mentioned in this editorial, which was vetoed by the president only two months before the act was signed

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into law. However, the provision involving plant closings and large-scale layoffs was removed from the trade law and passed separately.

It was three years in the making and cleared both the House and Senate, but the new federal trade bill will likely face a presidential veto.

Last week's 63-36 vote in the Senate failed to muster the two-thirds majority vote needed to override a veto, and now Senate Democrats are scrambling for a substitute plan that would be favored by Reagan.

Unfortunately, the scrambling is unnecessary.

The bill empowers the president to halt any acquisition, merger or takeover of an American firm by a foreign company if that action would jeopardize national security.

These highlights would serve to give the president more power. Yet, Reagan is expected to veto the bill on the premise of one provision that would require all but the smallest business to give employees a 60-day notice of plant closings and large-scale layoffs.

Obviously, Reagan's long years in office have left him either pompous or senseless — perhaps both.

Not only do employees deserve a 60-day notice of plant closings or large-scale layoffs, but the trade bill's other provisions would toughen U.S. retaliation against unfair trading practices of other countries.

The bill, long in the making and long overdue, would cut deeply into America's enormous trade deficit.

It would be fortunate if Reagan were capable of overlooking his personal differences with the 60-day provision and make a small concession on a bill that actually gives the president a lot of power.

This editorial was taken from the May 3, 1988, 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.

Israel desires peace, negotiation

GUEST COMMENTARY

Matthew Peltz

It seems that much of the population is unfamiliar with the history of the Israeli-Arab conflict, as is evident by Matthew Nelson's letter to the editor ("Backing Israel is backing oppression," ODE, April 4). Nelson refers to Israel as "oppressors" who "overtake Palestinian land" and "terrorize innocent civilians." Let's take a closer look at these accusations.

The territories under dispute were captured by Israel in the Six-Day War of 1967. In this defensive war, the Jewish State effectively fought off the surrounding Arab States, who were led by former Egyptian President Gamal Nasser's call for Arabs to "throw the Jews into the sea." Ever since the Six-Day War, Israel has been willing to return the land captured in exchange for peace; in fact, Israel returned 91 percent of that land (the entire Sinai Peninsula) to Egypt in 1979 in exchange for peace. Israel also dismantled all of the settlements in the Sinai as part of that agreement.

During the past 35 years, Israel has made numerous attempts to fashion similar peace treaties with Syria regarding the Golan Heights and the Palestinians regarding the

West Bank and Gaza. The Oslo Accords in 1993 were an attempt to begin this process with the Palestinians. As part of this plan, Palestinian Chairman Yasser Arafat was supposed to denounce terrorism and begin the establishment of a Palestinian State. Instead of using this opportunity to teach peace and change the attitude of his people, Arafat used the money and arms he received to continue promoting terrorism, anti-Semitism and the "rewards" of suicide bombing.

Nevertheless, Israel attempted to finalize this plan in the summer of 2000 at Camp David II and again at Taba in 2001, which would have given the Palestinians a state side-by-side with Israel. The proposed state included 97 percent of the West Bank and all of Gaza, an almost identical offer to the one floated by Saudi Arabian Prince Abdullah at the recent Arab League Summit. Arafat refused this offer without presenting

a counter-offer and then effectively ended the talks by insisting on the "right of return" of 4 million-plus Palestinians to Israel proper, which would destroy the national identity of the Jewish state. Upon his return to Israel, he launched a campaign of terror against the people of Israel which continues to this day.

Israel, on the other hand, does not target innocent civilians; rather, they try to protect innocent civilians from Arafat's suicide bombers. I'd hardly call this "oppression" or "terrorism." Israel has stated clearly many times that it is willing to accept a ceasefire, enter negotiations and ultimately try to reach an equitable agreement with the Palestinians, yet every time they attempt to do so, they are met with more terror attacks.

It is a shame for the Palestinians who want peace that their leader's politics are based on terrorism rather than negotiation. When Arafat's own government-controlled TV station calls for Palestinians to "slaughter the Jews," it is tough to agree with Nelson's depiction of the Israelis as terrorists.

Matthew Peltz is a junior sociology major.

Steve Sack U-Wire



Letter to the editor

Abercrombie shirts found insulting, offensive

Recently, I was informed about a new line of T-shirt designs that Abercrombie & Fitch created for this season. They featured images of Asian cartoon characters and sayings such as "eat in or wok out," or "two wongs make it white."

As a white student here and as Abercrombie & Fitch's target market, I am completely outraged that these designs were not only considered, but actually chosen and marketed. These T-shirts depict Asian Americans

in a stereotypical, racist way. The characters come from a time in American history when anti-Asian sentiment was at an obscene high.

Images like these were used to create hysteria and propaganda about an "Asian" invasion and the threat of "yellow peril." This hysteria placed many people and communities in danger, barred them from obtaining jobs, housing and equal protection under the law. This is an important and shameful part of America's past, and for Abercrombie & Fitch to find it a clever way to sell shirts or market their company is insulting and offensive.

I cannot and will not support a company that finds racist images a cool thing to put on shirts. Abercrombie & Fitch should be ashamed of utilizing their T-shirts as a forum to incite racist, bigoted attitudes just to make a buck.

These images do not belong on T-shirts; they are meant to be a part of history classes and discussions, so that we may learn from our racist past, to avoid those same choices in the future.

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