

COMMENTARY

Editor in Chief:
 Michael J. Kleckner
 Managing Editor:
 Jessica Richelderfer
 Editorial Page Assistant:
 Salena De La Cruz

Friday, April 11, 2003

Violent 'peace' protesters hurt movement

Guest commentary

Perennial angry-at-society-guy Craig Rosebraugh (who apparently has never met a news camera he wouldn't strike a pose for) recently challenged Portland Mercury readers to ask themselves, "Has there been a successful social or political movement in this country where violence did not indeed play at least some crucial part?"

Let's look at Martin Luther King Jr.'s civil rights movement of the 1960s. Certainly this country has a long way to go in addressing socioeconomic inequality that African Americans continue to face in staggering numbers. But it's ludicrous to argue that blacks, especially those in the south, are not better off now than before King's effort.

Although King's nonviolent methods of civil disobedience played the major role in swaying public opinion, acts of violence were indeed crucial to this change.

Rosebraugh says militia groups like the Black Panthers forced The Man to deal with King's nonviolent crowd. Funny that Rosebraugh should invoke Malcolm X in his attempts to market violence, because he fails to mention that Malcolm X's trip to Africa and Mecca deeply changed the religious man. He started to tone down the violent rhetoric and adopt methods that would incorporate more diverse groups to the cause. If you like conspiracy theories, The Man killed Malcolm after his message softened and actually became more dangerous.

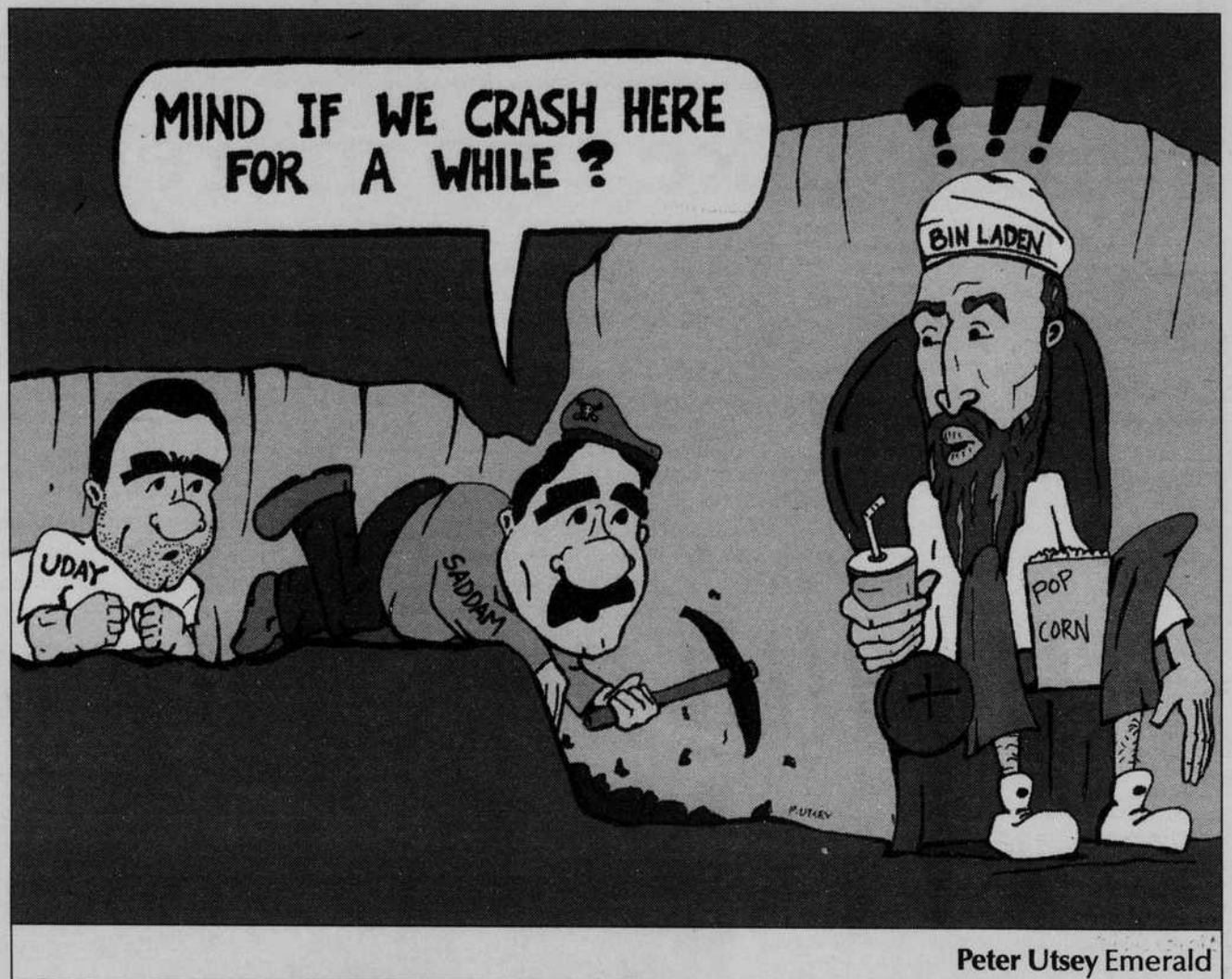
No, Malcolm X wasn't the significant violent element of the civil rights movement. Racist whites were.

When white KKK members resorted to fire-bombing to intimidate southern black church-goers and ended up killing young girls in Sunday school, public opinion began to change. When crazy white racists resorted to violence and killed three civil rights workers, public opinion began to change. When rabid white police resorted to violence and began beating peaceful marchers, unleashing the dogs on them and spraying them with water cannons, public opinion began to change. In fact, JFK made a federal case out of it.

And when the anti-war anarchists, ELF or any other violence-spouting groups finally accidentally injure or kill someone, they, too, will have dramatically shifted public opinion against themselves and their cause.

But perhaps more important and dangerous for the rest of us: People prone to violence provide even more justification for the current trend in this country to ignore civil liberties and stifle dissent. They may feel good for a few moments, but violent and destructive acts are not the most wise path to a better world.

Pat Malach lives in Hillsboro.



Peter Utsey Emerald

Use manners when voicing viewpoints

Guest commentary

I was really pleased to see Salena De La Cruz's column, "Majority Support" (ODE, Mar. 31). After having participated in the "Support Our Troops" rally the previous Saturday, I was very curious as to what type of coverage would be in the Emerald.

Marching down the streets of Eugene was not something I had previously done, and I looked forward to it with excitement and a bit of fear; excitement because I was supporting something I really believed in, and fear because I didn't want any ugly confrontations with those opposite my views. (Call me a wimp, but I like everyone to get along and just agree to disagree in a respectful and kind manner).

I didn't personally have any confrontations, but I did observe a couple of instances that could have turned into

confrontations had anyone decided to choose that path. The first was shortly after we started marching, a young woman on the sidewalk began shouting obscenities at us and proclaiming in a loud and angry voice, "You're all a bunch of (expletive) terrorists!" The venom and bitterness she lashed out with was shocking and so unexpected.

Most of us who heard her just laughed and commented how sad we were for her. One mom to the side of my husband and me retorted back with "My son would give his life for you!" She was carrying an 8x10 picture of him in his military uniform. I don't remember the young woman responding to the comment; she was too angry to hear it, I suppose.

The second incident was at the Federal Building by a young man who was greatly offended by the singing of the "Star Spangled Banner." He, too, used the same lan-

guage as the young woman, letting us all know he didn't have to listen to that "(expletive) song." (Is there a required class at the University to learn special "peace" protesters language?) He ran through the throng of people and nearly knocked over a man standing not far from my husband and me. He probably didn't notice; he was too angry to see, I suppose.

I haven't been 20-something for a long time, so I may be totally out of touch with what goes on in the heads of that age group, but I don't think so. I tend to want to believe the best about people and give them the benefit of the doubt.

Because of those beliefs, I'll assume the two young protesters were just having a bad day and momentarily forgot the manners they were taught: to speak respectfully and courteously to people when they disagree.

Jacqueline McDonald lives in Eugene.

Letters to the editor

Troop support does not extend to hostilities

I am told to "Support our Troops" now that war has begun. I say, it all depends on what you mean. I want our troops out of harm's way. I support them in their right to choose the military, their feeling that they are doing their patriotic duty and in their thinking that they are doing good. But I don't support them for what, at the president's orders, they are doing in Iraq.

I oppose their hostile entering of a country without international support. I don't support them in their killing of Iraqis, both soldiers and innocent civilians. And I oppose them in their inevitable destroying of at least some infrastructure and resources that will lead to miseries in the future. Please don't look at me strangely if I can't unequivocally agree that "But, of course, all citizens can and should support our troops." Or at least that's what any regular person would say.

Neil Wollman
 senior fellow
 Peace Studies Institute

Jones death coverage sensitive, compassionate

I am very moved by the Emerald's follow-up stories about the events surrounding the tragic death of Eric Dylan Jones. It is important that we reflect and learn from our actions to avoid unnecessary harm against others. The Emerald's coverage shows a profound sensitivity, maturity and compassion in being able to evaluate oneself in a critical and constructive manner, as hard as it may be. I truly hope that Mike Bellotti and the Eugene Police Department have the courage to accept the same challenge.

Bryan Moore
 Spanish instructor

Women deserve accurate abortion information

Tuesday's Emerald supplied an advertising supplement funded by an anti-choice faction. This 12-page insert attempted to sway women in rejecting the possibility of abortion through false statistics and scare tactics.

According to one article in the supplement, abortion leads to breast cancer. How-

ever, the National Cancer Institute stated in their 2003 report that "the strongest statistical evidence shows no link between abortion and breast cancer." Additionally, a 2000 study published in *Epidemiology* affirmed that there is no risk of breast cancer among women who have chosen abortion, nor does cancer risk increase with a larger number of reported induced abortions.

I strongly believe that information should be provided to females about the strengths and weaknesses of abortion techniques. However, I feel that it is unjust to provide falsified material to women in order to sway their opinions.

Sarah A. Koski
 sophomore

political science and international studies

HLA Pro Life should help with childcare, housing costs

On April 2, a group called HLA Pro Life added a 'special' advertising section to the Emerald in an openly biased, subversively religious manner.

While it is true that abortion has touched

many lives, it has helped many people who would not have otherwise been able to properly care for a child. Many of these same people would seek alternative venues to have abortions, possibly to the detriment of the mother as well as the child. Why doesn't HLA Pro Life spend money helping single parents so that they can afford to have these children instead of aborting them? What a novel idea for the religious right! Or, if targeting students anyway, help subsidize childcare and housing for student-parents?

Maybe more students would consider having children instead of aborting them, and HLA can provide positive reinforcement for making what they believe is a 'right' decision. Instead, I am saddened for those that have to encounter this belittling, shame inducing rhetoric of fear and rekindle the pain of their decision.

By chastising those would-be mothers with worthless propaganda, HLA only succeeds in injuring everyone's spirit. I, for one, say shame on HLA.

Andrew Ettinger
 senior
 computer sciences