

Can we evade lying grades?

In a world where governments lie, the scales lie, and people lie, another cat has been let out of the bag: grades.

The present situation of grade inflation shows that many teachers and administrators are being influenced to give students grades higher than they deserve.

This is a form of disillusionment, no matter what the reason. Sending a student out in the world who has a higher grade point average than he deserves is a cruel way of introducing a person to the world.

Grades should be used as an indicator of how well the student has grasped the subject matter. They shouldn't be used as a bribe, motivator, or an excuse. Students have a right to know the truth, just as a cancer patient has a right to know if he is dying. A student, too, has a right to know if his academic career is dying.

Teachers say that most students, when they get a low grade, usually drop the class. Well, let them drop it. It's better than lying to them. Some students won't take a class if they know that the teacher "grades hard." Well, at least the students who are there will be willing to learn.

Perhaps the adoption of a plus-minus grade system is the answer. That way, the student can better gauge abilities and see exactly how he is doing.

The most important thing, however, is that teachers should give the student the grade he or she deserves.



commentary

By Mike Koller
Of The Print

While all the world's eyes have been turned to the Iranian crisis, our old "friend" the Soviet Union has quickly and effectively added another piece of property to its ever-growing collection.

This new real estate addition goes by the name of Afghanistan and the average American could care less about where and what it is. But at a time when the United States and Soviet Union are supposedly trying for some type of mutual agreement or understanding, the central Asian country of Afghanistan will soon be remembered as another slap in America's already tender face.

The United States, as always, has condemned the Soviets' actions. We also "condemned" their invasion of Hungary in 1956, Czechoslovakia in 1968 and even more recently their little ventures into Angola and Ethiopia with the help of their Cuban sidekicks, but today all of these countries are still puppets of the Soviet Union.

State Department officials were recently quoted as saying, "We've seen things in the past that dissatisfied us, in Southeast Asia, with the Cubans, but the Soviets crossed a new threshold in Afghanistan and we have entered a new threshold in our actions which amount to a real bite on the leadership and people.

Sure, the government was

"dissatisfied," but what did they do about it? A few verbal threats, and that was it.

This time around, President Carter has taken some action against the Soviets, but the long-range effects are very questionable. In his recent televised speech to the nation, Carter said that the Soviet Union would be allowed to receive only eight million of the 25 million metric tons of grain previously promised the Russians for the year ending Sept. 30. It sounds like a great idea, everyone knows how much the Soviets depend on grain from the United States, but the minute that was announced thousands of Midwest farmers shouted in protest. As one farmer put it, "That means the grain I'm holding won't be worth as much this week as it was last week. At a time when our storage and interests costs are skyrocketing, lower prices will mean I'll have less income," he said.

The government has promised financial aid to make up for any losses, but it does not seem like much of a punishment to the Soviets when we end up having to alter our own system in the process.

After all, history tells us that the Russians survived Napoleon and Hitler, so it's very doubtful they're going to fall apart with a little less grain.

The grain embargo may or may not work, but it is at least an attempt—which is better than a few feeble words which have been the standard

procedure in our government's past scuffles with the Soviets. There have also been hints that the United States may send military aid to the Moslem rebels, who are desperately fighting Soviet troops in the rugged northern mountains of Afghanistan. Military aid is a nice gesture, but it's going for a losing cause as reports indicate that the rebels have their backs against the wall already.

But if a grain embargo of military aid isn't the answer, what is? The latest world fashion appears to be to kick the United States around as we have seen with the still-continuing Iranian crisis and now the Soviets' invasion of Afghanistan. The government does not appear capable of stopping this trend as the fear of another war haunts everyone's minds. Obviously, the Soviets aren't too worried or else they are just so stupid they want World War III to begin. So, the frustration continues to mount in the United States as the people question the government's apparent inefficiencies. Stronger action is needed to restore some pride in this country, and government higher-ups are going to have to put their heads together to come up with some solutions short of World War III. It's obviously a tough challenge, but it's going to have to be met or else I can see the headlines now: "Soviet Union invades Alaska because they want it back." It may sound absurd, but then, so does "America held hostage by Iran."

the print

19600 S. Molalla Avenue, Oregon City, Oregon 97045

Office: Trailer B; telephone, 656-2631, ext. 309

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