

Although their opinion was delivered tongue-in-cheek, I have to agree with the writers: What's good for the goose is good for the gander. Or the lizard. We seem to be living in the Gordon Gecko "Greed is good!" moment. Is the contribution of any one individual worth 170 times any other? Apparently only if it is "Made in America."

*Benton Elliott
Eugene*

COMMON HUMANITY

It is true that satire is difficult to write. That's why there is only one Mark Twain. J.K. Larkin is no doubt a better doctor than he is writer. It is also true that many otherwise intelligent and well-educated people cannot comprehend satire. Anyone who writes it will be misunderstood by those who read literally, whether it is well-written or not.

What dismays me is the reaction of some letter writers who understood "Pesky Immigrants" (5/25) as an attempt at satire and nevertheless attacked the writer. Why such viciousness? Why are people so mean? It was nothing like "the most offensive screed since the Protocols of the Elders of Zion," and was obviously not intended to offend any minority.

These letters are merely one example of the vituperative language we read or hear every day. What is wrong with us? Are we becoming like fundamentalists, wanting to destroy those we disagree with, spiritually if not physically? With unwanted war in Iraq, an apparently criminal leadership in Washington, lying politicians, an economy

based on greed and our own inability to change any of it, many of us feel rage rising in ourselves. But attacking other people will only hasten our social disintegration. We need to discover our common humanity and issues we can unite around before we end up killing each other like the people of so many other broken nations.

*Ellen Spear
Eugene*

SCARY LISTENING

In 1973, we traveled to Kishinev, part of the Soviet Union. I remember how people in fear of being overheard and reported clustered together to whisper on the streets. When a stranger or foreigner passed by, the group would break apart, keeping their backs to the unknown person. Once the stranger went by, they would turn and huddle together again to talk.

Outdoor speakers repeatedly blared patriotic music. When we visited relatives, they turned up the radio and television volume, and we sat in a corner talking: "The walls have ears," they told us. If someone wanted to make a call that connected outside the city, they had to go to a special building, ask for permission, and, of course, were monitored. There was even a large head of Lenin on top of this telephone building. This was all done under the mantle of "patriotism" and "national security."

Is this what the Bush-Republican government has planned for America?

*Robert Rubinstein
Eugene*

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