

Merry-gay-round

Members of the Gay Awareness and/or Gay People's Alliance have quietly said this fall that they hope last semester's controversy and open anti-gay sentiments will not carry over into this school year.

During a presentation on campus Tuesday evening by Sen. Henry Jackson, D—Wash., two of these members indicated they not only wanted controversy but would seek it. They showed they would seek controversy regardless of whether it would help or hinder their now unclear cause.

Jackson does not visit this campus often. One of his earlier presentations was met by students hurling marshmallows.

Regardless of the attitudes students have toward Jackson's political positions, the man has a right to speak without being heckled.

Fresh from the Jimmy Carter campaign, Jackson resisted presenting a canned behind-the-rostrum, pro-Carter, anti-Republican speech. Despite past WSU experiences, Scoop opened it up to questions after some introductory remarks.

He spoke in front of the rostrum, without notes.

All progressed well and it appeared there was hope for WSU until a Gay Awareness member, seated directly in front of Jackson asked his "questions." He asked Jackson his view on a gay rights bill in Congress, referring to it by number.

Jackson was obviously unfamiliar with the bill, especially by number, and appeared to be embarrassed by the fact that the subject was even called to his attention. Yet, he carefully began a response to the question.

But Jackson's remarks were quickly interrupted by a barrage of questions from at least two gay organizational leaders. The questions turned to heckling.

Jackson was understandably flustered. Trying to rise above the heckling, he said, "Wait a minute, wait a minute." After settling the crowd, a question came from the balcony pertaining to dishonorable military discharges for gays. Jackson retaliated: "Let me put it this way, I wouldn't want any son of mine aboard a ship that was overwhelmingly made up of homosexuals." The crowd applauded briskly.

Choosing to change the subject, Jackson began fielding other questions from students. But the hecklers chose to raise the gay issue on several other occasions, interrupting Jackson's comments on non-gay issues.

Still defensive, Jackson later told the hecklers, "I will defend your right to free speech, including your right to be a damned fool."

Jackson certainly is not to be commended for his statements. He is a U.S. Senator, a former presidential candidate, and he should be expected to act responsibly even under such pressure. An apparent bias to gays surfaced—he showed a cold lack of empathy and compassion.

However, Jackson was unnecessarily and outrageously pressured. Responsibility should also be a characteristic of students, especially leaders of student organizations. Jackson was not the loser of the exchange, the entire Gay movement was.

Jackson is legally responsible to his constituents. His constituents do not favor gay rights. They do not favor acknowledging the existence of the gay community. They applaud bias to gays. And so Jackson reflects his constituency. If he supported Gay rights, he would not be in office long enough to vote for the legislation.

His anti-gay comments were applauded by an overwhelming majority of those students listening to his presentation.

The gay campaign must provide information to the masses. Sabotaging the rights of men and women to address students will accomplish nothing.

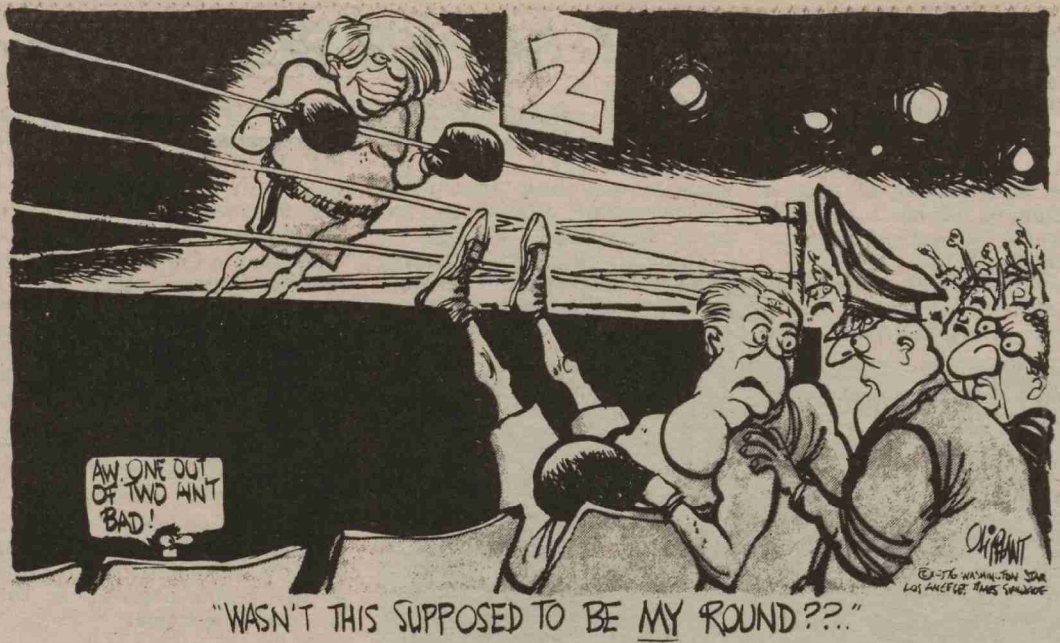
Whether or not these individuals officially represented one of the gay organizations is irrelevant. Both persons have been leaders in such organizations and the gay movement. In the minds of those who listened in Bryan Auditorium they were representing Gay Awareness and/or Gay People's Alliance.

If these individuals continue their follies and if their attitudes are shared by other gays, any chance of equal rights for homosexuals is at least 10,000 years away.

Tuesday evening, the hecklers alienated many people undecided on the gay issue. Some of us who have supported their right to publicize this cause through campus organizations may be alienated as well.

Gay organizations on or near campus must quickly denounce such actions or return to the closet.

—Larry Ganders



Mayaguez: Ford's OK Corral

To the Editor:

I found it at the same time amusing, perplexing and frightening to hear one of Mr. Ford's television spots in which he cites the "Mayaguez Incident" as a major success of his Presidency. The report of the General Accounting Office last week only confirms what I learned some time ago—Mr. Ford shot from the hip in a senseless sword-rattling maneuver.

On May 12, 1975, the Mayaguez was seized 60 miles off the coast of mainland Cambodia (12 miles from Koh Tang Island) by a small gunboat. The evidence suggests that many in the Administration actually welcomed a show of force in the wake of the then-recent Vietnam withdrawal. Defense Secretary Schlesinger said, "This represents a much needed and timely reaffirmation of freedom of the seas."

This fails to recognize that:

1. Other ships had been warned to steer clear of these disputed waters, to the full knowledge of the Mayaguez crew.
2. The ship looked like it was carrying heavy arms. It was only natural for the Cambodians to be suspicious.
3. The ship's crew knew they were inside waters claimed by Cambodia.
4. The U.S. had been spying on Cambodia, and they had every reason to suspect this ship as well.
5. It is probable the local commander acted without his government's knowledge.

It is also abundantly clear that the Ford Administration did not adequately pursue diplomatic channels for release of the crew. Troops were sent to the area within 24 hours and within 35 hours Americans had begun to sink Cambodian gunboats. Further, there is evidence that even these efforts were merely cosmetic, interim attempts. One State Department official commented, "We know what we have to do. We just have to wait until the means to do it (ships) have arrived on the scene."

It appears the use of force was really not necessary. Not only did the assaults come after the Cambodians had agreed to release the men, but they were directed to destroy ships and planes which the Pentagon admits could not have interfered with U.S. "rescue efforts."

What, then, did Mr. Ford hope to accomplish? Consider the following sequence of events:

- 8:15—Washington learned of offer to release crew
- 9:15—Washington demanded release of the crew
- 10:53—Destroyer Wilson (U.S.) reports approach of a boat
- 10:57—Planes bombed Reames airport
- 11:14—Ford learned the crew was safe in U.S. hands.
- 11:50—American planes bombed an oil refinery on the mainland.

Why—if our purpose had indeed been to protect American lives and property—did U.S. planes bomb civilian targets three hours and 45 minutes after the Cambodians had offered to release the crew, and fully 36 minutes after Ford knew the men were safe? The answer can only be incompetence, vengeance, or a combination of the two.

Thus, the President who now claims this as a major diplomatic coup sacrificed the lives of 50 Americans and injured 50 others at a cost of

millions of dollars. He violated both the spirit and the letter of the War Powers Act. And he did it all for no justifiable reason.

Do we really want a President of this type? Can we afford to have a leader who shoots from the hip in sword-rattling displays of American "power" in a nuclear age? Must we elect a President who never had the sense or the guts to criticize U.S. Vietnam policy from the beginning to end, except to chastise President Johnson for not using enough force?

There is a viable alternative. Jimmy Carter welcomes your support.

Sincerely,
Dirk A. Marler
Eastern Washington V.P.
Young Democrats of Washington

Anti-Dixy Demo clarifies reasons

Dear Editor:

I'm writing this in response to the Evergreen story concerning the formation of Democrats and Independents for Spellman. I'm very much aware of the problems faced by any reporter when he or she must condense a 20-minute interview into a news story of modest size.

In the case of the recent Evergreen story, I believe my personal criticism of Dixy Lee Ray was overemphasized because it was not presented in the framework of the total interview. While the overemphasis concerns only a matter of degree, there are several facts that need clarification.

First of all, Democrats and Independents for Spellman is, and shall remain, completely independent from any Republican party organization. As a group we represent a broad coalition of individuals concerned with the gubernatorial race and its impact upon the people of the state.

While we realize that no candidate can satisfactorily address and act upon the interests of all individuals and groups, we do believe that a balance should be maintained. In short, Dixy Lee Ray's narrow perspectives have hindered her ability to deal fairly with some very complex issues.

The second area in need of clarification involves my personal assessment of John Spellman's political views. I was quoted as saying I agree with his positions on nuclear energy development, school funding, tax reform and a number of other issues. In reality, the list of issues was compiled in response to concerns expressed by individuals in the Pullman area.

As both gubernatorial candidates make more comprehensive statements regarding these issues their views will be presented in a comparative framework for those people interested in getting a better indication of where the candidates stand.

No, I don't agree with John Spellman's positions on every issue but I am convinced he is open-minded, responsible and genuinely concerned with the quality of life in the state of Washington.

Dave Barta
NE 645½ Maple

Daily Evergreen

Published by the AWSU Student Publications Board for the students of Washington State University each Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, except during the scheduled vacation and examination weeks of the regular university year. Charlie Rohr, Chairman and W.D. Calvert, secretary and general manager.

Office: Room 113 Murrow Communications Center, P.O. Box 2008, CS, WSU, Pullman, Washington 99163. Printed by the Pullman Herald. Second class postage at Pullman, Washington. Mail Subscriptions \$14.00 per year or \$7.50 per semester.

Advertising material presented herein does not necessarily imply endorsement by this paper.

Editor
Jeff Wright

Business Manager
R. Blue Rediske

Managing Editor
Constance Lewis

Editorial Assistants
Larry Ganders
Mark Hendricks

News Editors
Paul Nickell
Dan Wheat

Assistant News Editor
Dan Mills

Sports Editor
Jim Carberry

Assistant Sports Editor
Mark McGoun

Night News Editor
Kris Andersen

Senior Staff Writers
Jack Arends

Jeff Burnside
Lynne Thomas

Staff Writers
Stave Ahlin
Rick Duval

Leslie Seaton
Ann Sims

Patti Tellefsen
Lenel Williams

Steve Woodruff
Mary Lynn Zimmerman

Sports Writers
John Leggett
Jim Moore

Al Wasser
Copyreaders
Linda Ellingsen

Karen Raines
Mike Stratton
Graphic Artist
Bob Walker