

Ignoring Cuba—no solution

Sen. John J. Sparkman of Alabama, chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee, best summed up the U.S. policy toward Cuba during the last 15 years when he said, "Our policy of isolating Cuba has been a failure."

Beginning with a partial embargo of Cuba in October 1960, the U.S. seemed determined to restrain any attempts by Castro to export revolution, and, in doing so, to convince the Cubans that the Western Hemisphere is no place for a Communist party.

Diplomatic relations were broken off on Jan. 3, 1961. A total U.S. embargo began on Feb. 3, 1962, and two years later the Organization of American States (OAS) agreed to participate.

Now, 15 years later, it appears that normal relations with Cuba may be established on the heels of detente with the Soviet Union and recognition of the People's Republic of China.

Such a rapprochement was signaled by Secretary of State Henry Kissinger in Houston early this month when he said, "We see no virtue in perpetual antagonism between the U.S. and Cuba." Shortly before, the U.S. announced it would give Cuban officials at the United Nations a 250-mile radius of movement instead of limiting travel to within 25 miles of the U.S.

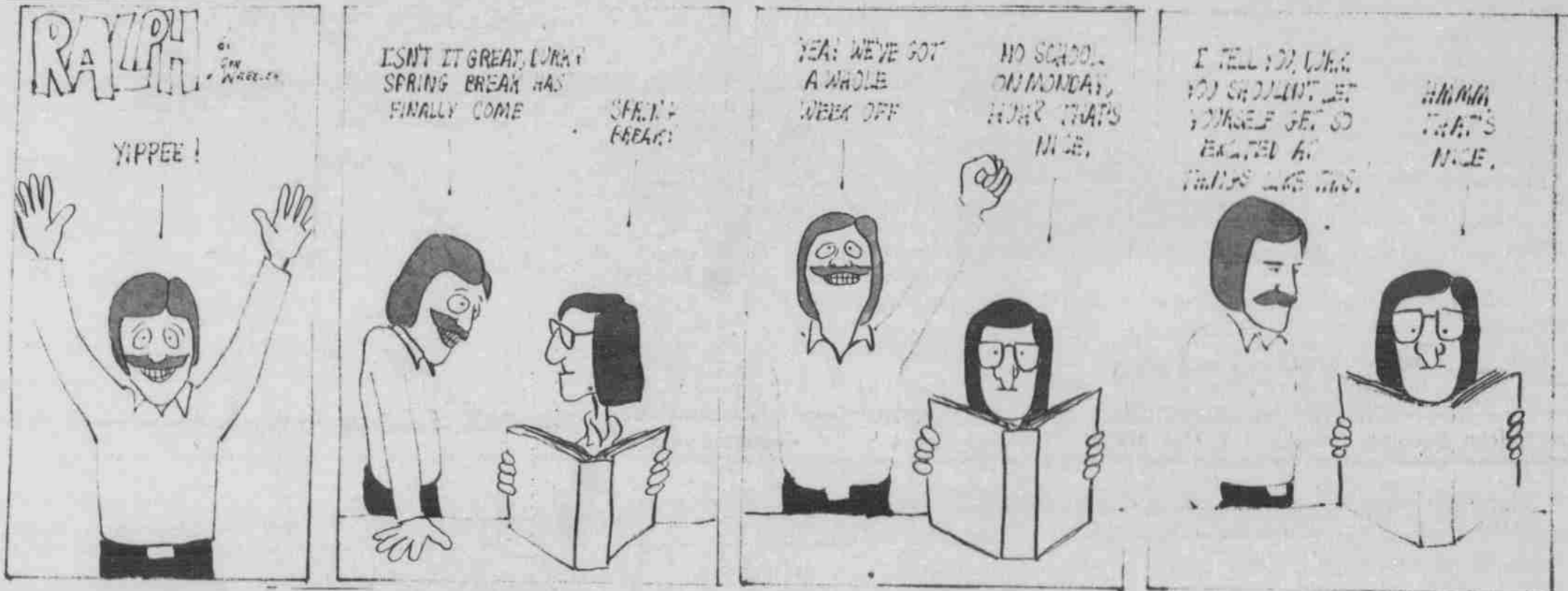
The Cubans themselves have taken some encouraging actions. They recently allowed two U.S. senators to travel within Cuba and have also released several American prisoners.

Perhaps the big break came when Cuba ratified and began enforcing the international anti-hijacking convention. This had been a major U.S. condition for improved relations, sparked by the tendency in the early '70s for U.S. commercial aircraft to make unplanned flights to Havana, where hijackers were welcomed with open arms and put to work in the sugar cane fields.

The first concrete action toward improved relations probably will come next year when the U.S. drops its neutral stance toward a lifting of the boycott in favor of whatever "generally acceptable solution" the OAS nations are able to agree on.

And with that action, if nothing occurs between then and now to make it infeasible, the United States will be dropping yet another vestige of the Cold War policies of containment and confrontation. Disagreements with Cuba will best be solved by talking them out, not by pretending that Cuba isn't there.

Wes Albers



to the editor

Dear editor:

For those of you interested in contributing to a campaign taking place in the "real" world, I would like to recommend two candidates for city offices whose election would be a major plus for this community.

They are Steve Tiwald, who is running for City Council, and Helen Boosalis, who is running for mayor.

Steve Tiwald is young, knowledgeable and progressive. He will be open to the needs of this campus and the public at large. He is a past ASUN president although, in his case, there is no reason to hold that against him. On the contrary, he was extremely effective

as ASUN president.

Helen Boosalis has been an accessible, hard-working, visible member of the City Council for a number of years. I do believe that if she is elected mayor we will know she is still in town, which is more than I can say about what's his name. Anyway, she deserves a promotion.

I truly believe it is in our best interest to support candidates of this quality. The primary election is April 8 and the general election is May 6. This is a bad time for students, but just a minimum of your help could make a significant difference for us all.

Don Wesely

