

editorial

Reagan's priority is not with higher ed.

It didn't take long. Less than two weeks into his second term in office, President Ronald Reagan has renewed his efforts to cut back on government financial aid programs designed to help low-income students meet the rising costs of higher education in the United States.

On February 4, Reagan will send his new budget recommendations to Congress, outlining, among other things, his desire to cut federally funded student financial aid programs. Reagan is requesting that Guaranteed Student Loans be denied to all college students with family incomes above \$32,000. He is also requesting that students be limited to \$4,000 a year in the amount of total federal aid, including loans and grants, that they are able to receive. Reagan also recommends that student eligibility for Pell Grants be limited to those whose families make \$25,000 or less.

If passed by Congress, the results of these cuts will be devastating. Last year, more than 5 million college students depended on some form of federal aid to help them meet the costs of their education. According to Patricia A. Smith, director of legislative analysis for the American Council on Education, approximately 500,000 students will lose their eligibility for the GSL program. She also estimates that about 150,000 students will lose their eligibility to receive Pell Grants. Graduate students who rely on the current \$5,000 federal aid available to them will suffer a \$1,000 per year loss.

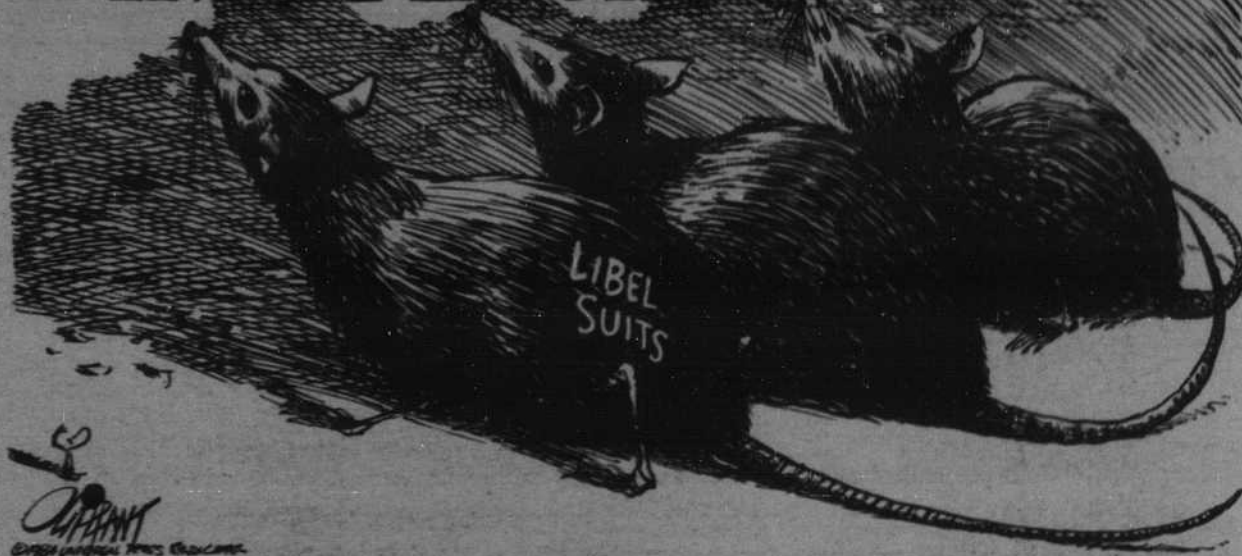
The Reagan administration has tried to meet criticism of its planned cut-backs on student financial aid by declaring that those barred from receiving GSL's will be eligible for a new auxiliary loan program. If a student is unable to get a GSL, his or her parents will be able to borrow money through the auxiliary loan program. But the parents won't get such a good deal. Auxiliary loans will have a 12 percent interest rate (three percent higher than the GSL rate) and repayments will begin immediately. In short, the proposed auxiliary loan program answers financial need with an offer of more debt and higher interest rates for those parents already unable to meet the educational costs of their children.

Is this the Reagan plan for building the better America that we so often heard about during his campaign speeches? Is this how a government with a crippling national deficit paves the way towards a "brighter future" for the younger generation? Certainly not. It is another attempt to put the burden of the national deficit onto the backs of low-income groups who are least able to bear the added financial pressure.

Perhaps those students who are being asked to sacrifice their education would feel better about it if they knew that \$12 million dollars of needed government money was not spent to entertain Reagan and his friends during the recent Inaugural celebrations in Washington D.C. Perhaps those families who make just over \$32,000 a year, and are likely to face a choice over which of their children will be able to go to college, would feel better if they knew that the government's proposed 1986 Pentagon budget was not 16 times higher than the proposed 1986 education budget.

What kind of a government is it that seeks to cut back on the miniscule \$17.9 billion currently allocated to the Department of Education, while fighting to maintain a \$286 billion Pentagon budget, the largest peace-time military budget in the nation's history? It is a government that offers full-tuition scholarships to those who promise to serve the military industry (ROTC), and cuts back on scholarships and financial aid to those who don't. It seems military growth ranks higher than a college education in Reagan's view.

First Amendment



letters

Fight it

Brian Moore's letter (ODE Jan. 21) raises a number of specious issues which I would fain refute.

1) The notion of free speech which Mr. Moore raises. The First Amendment to the constitution (presumably the source of Mr. Moore's notion) contains only injunctions of governmental restrictions. Nowhere does it proscribe the private violations of such speech (which occur quite frequently at shopping malls all over America). Ironically, the First Amendment contains a provision which protects the right of the people to peaceably assemble, and to petition the government for a redress of grievances, which was, given the clearly articulated statement read by the blockaders, the ostensible purpose of the protest.

2) Mr. Moore's moral fables may serve well for training children: they have never proven effective in international relations. Was the European resistance to fascism just another wrong to be dismissed by a child's morality tale?

3) Mr. Moore's final concern reveals his basic approach to issues — divide and conquer. To question the reading of the Emerald by non-students is to assume the University's separation from the community at large, and the isolation of students such as Mr. Moore and real people such as James Phillips. Perhaps this accounts

for the smug, solipsistic tone of Mr. Moore's logic. As President Olum's recent appearance on Donahue attests, the University is a vital part of the community, and vice versa. Don't deny real repression, Brian, fight it.

Robert Taylor
English

Mundane

Thank you for the editorial "Bookstores priority must be educational material." Our bookstore is so poorly stocked with so little variety in subject matter that I've often found I need to drive to the bookstore at OSU in Corvallis, or to PSU or Powells in Portland. Often very common titles are not available, and it takes weeks to order them.

The latest bestsellers, the average calendar, and the mediocre cookbooks offered for sale at the University bookstore are also available at most bookstores in the city. Rather than competing for sales with the bookstore down the street by featuring "nickle and dime" discounts to obtain minimal profits, perhaps an attempt to become a well-stocked, unique bookstore featuring a variety of titles would attract the needed customers. The success of Powells in Portland should be enough to convince anyone of this sales strategy. After all, Eugene is the second largest city in Oregon, featuring two fine campuses, LCC and UO, and it has very little variety in bookstores to serve that community. The bookstore may have claimed to have "a new look" for fall, but its glossy new cover is only a cheap facade for a very mundane product.

Bjorn Ohou
Landscape Architecture

Real threat

The purpose of this letter is to warn unwary bicycle riders of a hazardous condition which exists on campus. Ironically, I went skiing for the first time this weekend, but the falls I took on the mountain were nothing compared to the one I suffered when I returned to campus on Sunday night.

I was riding my bicycle on the barricaded portion of 13th Ave., heading toward the EMU at about 30 miles per hour. From out of nowhere, with no signs to warn of its existence, a curb appeared directly in my path. This eight-inch concrete barrier extends perpendicular to 13th Ave., running about a third of the distance across the street and is virtually invisible at night because the dark concrete is the same color as the street.

When I hit this barrier I shouted a four-letter expletive as I went sailing into the air, doing a complete flip in the middle of 13th Ave. The only injuries I sustained were minor bruises on my hand and elbow. My bike, on the other hand, was wasted.

This unpainted concrete barrier stands as a monument to bureaucratic waste, just down the street from Johnson Hall. Originally it had been erected as an enclosure for motorcycles. But the day after its completion, construction workers tore down one of the walls leaving only the barrier which extends perpendicular into the street. As such, it stands as a very real threat to the lives and limbs of unwary students.

Steven Richkind
Law

letters policy

The Emerald will attempt to print all letters containing fair comment on topics of interest to the University community.

Letters to the editor must be limited to 250 words, typed, signed and the identification of the writer must be verified when the letter is turned in. The Emerald reserves the right to edit any letter for length, style or content.

Letters to the editor should be turned into the Emerald office, Suite 300, EMU.

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