

editorial

Tax simplification is a positive move

We all pay taxes, and we all dread the bite of the tax collector, but it is virtually impossible for the average American taxpayer to comprehend the effects of President Ronald Reagan's proposed tax-simplification plan.

The present tax system is bulky and full of loopholes. Many believe it only benefits the wealthy or those who are clever enough to take advantage of the system. Many hard-working men and women who earn middle-class wages pay more in annual income taxes than business executives and large corporations.

Most Americans find the process unfair, unnecessarily tedious and full of long hours of burdensome paperwork. The Reagan tax plan is intended to change much of this.

Under Reagan's plan (according to Monday's Washington Post):

- Taxpayers who earn more than \$200,000 annually would pay 18.7 percent of their income in federal taxes, which would be a decrease of 2.3 percent from what they currently pay.

- Taxpayers who earn between \$30,000 and \$50,000 annually would pay 7.3 percent, which would be a decrease of .5 percent.

- Taxpayers who earn between \$10,000 and \$20,000 annually would pay 2.5 percent, which would be a decrease of .7 percent.

- Taxpayers who earn less than \$10,000 annually would pay 0.9 percent, which would be a decrease of .5 percent.

- Overall, individuals would pay 5.2 percent less in federal taxes than they do now, while corporations would pay 22.5 percent more.

The plan also would:

- Increase from 40 percent to 50 percent the amount of capital gains subject to taxation.

- Allow for the taxation of unemployment and black-lung benefits, employer-provided death benefits, as well as all workers' compensation benefits.

- Let corporations deduct 10 percent of the value of dividends they pay stockholders.

We support the concept behind the Reagan plan. It is high time that the federal government simplifies our nation's tax code. Currently there are 14 tax brackets. With loopholes and bracket creep, taxpayers rarely know in which bracket they belong.

In addition, the present tax form is so complex that it can take a trained accountant days to sift through an individual's tax return. White House aides say that Reagan's tax schedule is so simple that the Internal Revenue Service could annually calculate the amount of taxes most individuals would owe the IRS. The IRS could then send the bill to the taxpayer.

But despite our support for the plan we are concerned with specific aspects of Reagan's proposal.

Like Reagan, Sen. Bill Bradley, D-N.J., and Rep. Richard Gephardt, D-Mo., have worked for a number of years for the simplification of our tax system. (Reagan's staff consulted with the two throughout the development of Reagan's tax plan.) Bradley and Gephardt have introduced congressional legislation calling for similar tax simplification.

Their plan, like the Reagan plan, would limit the total number of tax brackets to three while closing many loopholes. But unlike the President's plan the Bradley-Gephardt bill would close a greater number of business loopholes.

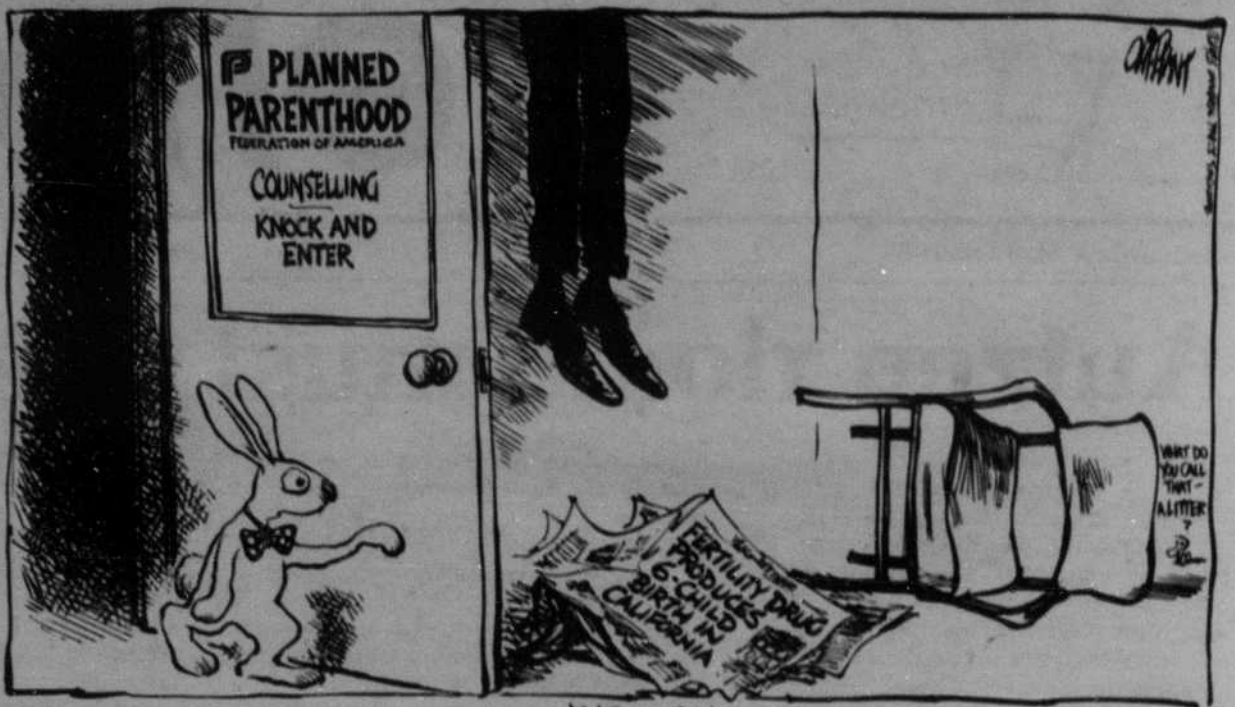
Sen. Bradley is concerned that Reagan's plan is too generous to oil and gas companies, doesn't boost the capital-gains tax enough and hasn't adequately estimated the revenues resulting from the Reagan bill.

We have similar concerns.

Past actions have shown that the President is firmly entrenched in the pocket of big business. Whether it is through earlier Reagan tax plans or by the actions of his subordinates, Reagan has shown that in the heat of most any controversy he will side with America's corporations.

Certainly, businesses need incentives for growth. Tax cuts and loopholes have their place in any creative fiscal policy. But Reagan must ensure that we all share the burden of paying for federal services. He has not done so in the past.

The concept of the Reagan plan is good; it does have many positive aspects. We just hope that it will not prove to be another windfall for big business. Instead our elected officials must sift through the complexity of the plan and ensure that it is truly fair and equitable.



letters

Lip service

We find in the British Medical Journal, "It is alarming that some male homosexuals still donate blood, and it is vital that all possible measures are taken to discourage this." (March, 1985)

Unfortunately, the new blood screening test won't protect all the blood supply from AIDS either. A study in the December 22, 1984 issue of The Lancet points out that not all people harboring the AIDS virus produce antibodies. So the test may show up negative (no antibodies to HTLV-3) even though a blood donor is an infected carrier of AIDS.

Our legislators should stop worrying about the objections of the small homosexual "rights" movement and put the public's safety first. Because most Americans even oppose the concept of "gay rights," obviously the vast majority of people wouldn't object to penalties for homosexuals caught donating blood. I'll even bet many liberals would have no misgivings over such legislation.

Too many homosexuals carry the HTLV-3 virus to risk allowing them to donate blood. The Constitution allows for quarantining people with leprosy and T.B., so making it illegal for homosexuals to give blood isn't at all unconstitutional. Remember the Typhoid Mary case?

Who cares if supporters of the "right" of homosexuals to give blood might object? So what? After all, to prove their commitment they could stipulate that if they ever need blood they would prefer only homosexual donors. However, I'm sure these people's convictions don't extend any further than lip service.

Michael Cross
History/Political Science

Late Summer

When my bloom was faded,
my color soft from too much sun,
The dew my only shine,
I looked up anxious and tried to please
As I had done before, and I was plucked.
But what was this?
Not only cast aside, but fed to sheep.
Am I no more than that?
I was not picked, but gathered.
Fodder to munch.
My bloom had turned to fruit,
And then to food and then to flesh.
Over and over I tell myself
As I am being chewed,
This is my purpose, this was my aim.
I was made for this.
The pain of being plucked
Was worth the satisfaction of the touch...
But being mauled, and chewed,
and swallowed,
To be some creature's dung.
This was my purpose?
For this I bloomed?

Lisa Stimple
Eugene

Prove it

Recently, A.K. Stanton wrote in to take a few shots at Dan Martin and Dan Goulet, and then at the Bible. Stanton called it "the greatest book of contradictions," and then proceeded to quote from it — of course using verses out of context.

Time to back up your careless pot-shot with some proof, Stanton. I hereby issue a challenge to you or anyone else who thinks the Bible is full of contradictions, or even has one, for that matter. Brian Frary and I will give \$100 cash to the first person who can prove a theological contradiction within the Bible.

Do your homework, Stanton, and the word of God just may surprise you.

If you want to give it a shot, call 484-5668.

Charlie Richards
Eugene

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

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