

Editorial

Time capsule takes a trip into the future

When the time capsule is placed in the cornerstone of Villard hall, sealed for 100 years, where will it go?

Certainly it will stay in the same place; even minimal optimism suggests that the University still will be around in 2086, still indoctrinating innocent students into the world of academic thought.

But the world into which the contents of that capsule emerge will seem as if another world.

We don't know whether that world will be a dark one in which citizens scurry about, hiding their thoughts from the scrutiny of a dark, repressive government, or whether they will take comfort in the loftier pursuits of life, exploring academic wonders as philosopher-kings of a future era.

This is the mystery that compels us to launch the time-capsule into the future.

The students who wrote essays predicting the future took part in this mystery, hoping to describe the future of Oregon and the University in a page or two. This miserably brief space did not hamper the students' optimism for the future.

Likewise, the student and professional film crews who took time off to construct a portrait of modern life did so with full confidence that our complex lives could be portrayed in a few short minutes of videotape. The hope is that future Oregonians will be able to understand us as we build the foundations of the future that only the time capsule will go on to see.

Just as University residents revealed their personality to us with documents sealed in the cornerstone in 1886, we hope to explain ourselves to the residents of the University 100 years from now.

Thus, the time capsule represents our basic human urge to speak with other humans, even across the span of a century.

Registration effort helps students' voter turnout

Hopefully, one of the things history will remember us for is high voter turnout; all students should take advantage of the OSPIRG-ASUO voter-registration drive.

Our advice to students is: Get excited about the elections; be as partisan as possible; and go out and vote.

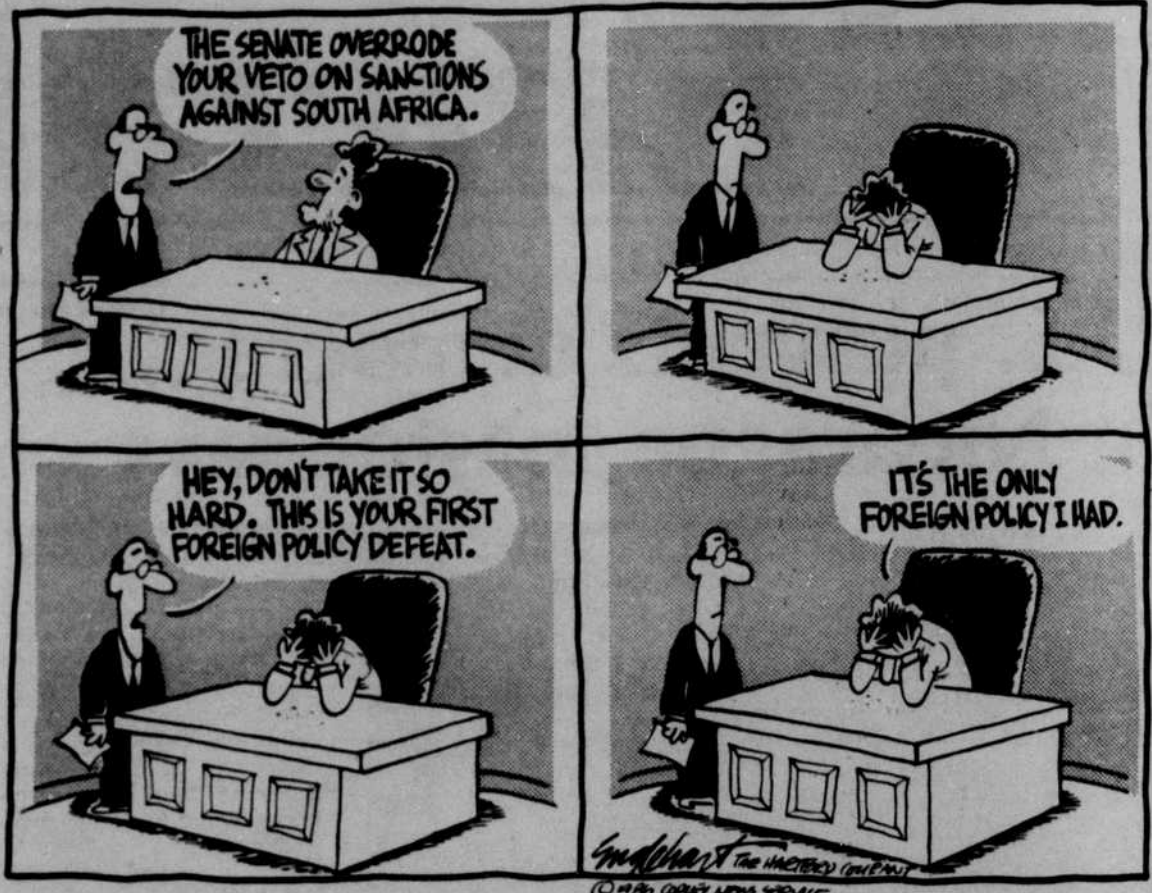
OSPIRG and the ASUO renew their registration drive this year, providing student governments around the state with information and organization to encourage students to be aware of the elections and to take a stand.

Voters have a variety of critical issues facing them on the November ballot, including radioactive waste at Teledyne Wah Chang, a sales tax, state funding of abortions, voting rights and Oregon production of components for nuclear arms.

There is also a political rainbow of candidates to vote for, both at the state and national levels.

Many students, new to the University at 18 years of age, face their first opportunity to vote, but classes and social activities often crowd out voting.

OSPIRG and the ASUO are correct in asserting the importance of this civil responsibility, and their efforts do increase student awareness of campaign issues and do make a difference in student turnout. The 1984 Oregon Student Campaign for Voter Registration boasted registration of 10,000 Oregon students.



Commentary

A recent series of quick events unmasks once-teflon president

Ronald Reagan's teflon coating is wearing thin, and his honeymoon with a wooing Congress has drawn to a close. Four recent incidents have brought the end of one era for the president and ushered in a new one — namely that of a quacking lame duck.

By Mike Drummond

The Senate's override of the president's South African veto two weeks ago was the first in a quick succession of events that have undermined the glossy veneer shrouding Ronald Reagan. The override was the first major foreign policy defeat dealt the charismatic president.

The Senate's presidential snub illustrated the separation between Reagan and the public regarding South African sanctions.

Soon to follow was the disclosure of a "disinformation" campaign orchestrated by the Reagan administration in an

attempt to "scare Ghadafi." Psychological warfare was the euphemism, but more accurately it was a campaign of lies.

No matter how congenial the president seems to the voting public, admitting that his administration occasionally will fib for "the common good" is a severe error. If the administration is inclined to "disinform" the press and public regarding a squabble with a minor Third World nation, it could just as easily handle a major incident in the same way.

Not long after this disclosure, a U.S. cargo plane was shot down over Nicaragua, killing three people — two of them Americans. Another American survived the crash, and the Nicaraguan government intends to bring him to trial.

The four were smuggling weapons to Reagan's "freedom fighters," the Contras, but the president has denied that the Americans were under U.S. authority and has said they were not connected with the U.S. military nor the CIA — ergo, he has claimed no responsibility for his countrymen nor their actions.

This can do nothing but hurt his not-so-covert war effort and his popularity. It seems that the congenial Ronald Reagan can place Americans in harm's way while smiling all the while.

The failure to come home without an arms agreement

with the Soviets from the summit held in Iceland is the latest in a string of blows to Reagan. Although not entirely his fault — this time — for failing to strike a bargain with the Soviets, his obstinance over the Strategic Defense Initiative, or "Star Wars" research, was the major stumbling block to an arms agreement. This incident has made the president appear uncommitted to stemming the arms race; an impression that casts Reagan as the bad guy.

Had they occurred singularly, these events would not have severely damaged Reagan's public support and his image as a nice man.

Indeed, Reagan has been on the political hot seat a number of times during his career. For example, when he stated that Trident nuclear missiles could be recalled, when he asserted that "approximately 80 percent of our air pollution stems from hydrocarbons released by vegetation," and when he joked about bombing the Soviet Union.

But happening in quick succession as these most recent four events did, not even the "great communicator" seems likely to recover.

Ronald Reagan is losing his appeal and with it his effectiveness as a persuasive president. The glitter is fading, revealing that the emperor has no clothes.

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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