

New Reagan budget lacks any surprises

President Reagan's proposed budget offers no new departures and many of the same old disappointments. His request for an excess of \$1 trillion dollars — literally an inconceivable amount — is the highest ever asked for by any president, and it contains some major flaws.

His budget calls for raising federal revenue, without raising taxes, along with the predictable calls for increased defense spending and cut backs in social, agricultural and environmental programs.

The president claims that the proposed budget will meet the 1988 deficit goal of \$108 billion required by the budget-balancing law, but most outside the administration, including many Republicans, don't see it that way.

Much of the budget places emphasis on increasing revenue as a means to meet the 1988 deficit ceiling. While adamant in his opposition of increasing taxes, the brunt of raising revenue will be placed on individuals in indirect ways.

User fees would play a major role in raising this revenue. The Coast Guard would impose fees on direct services to individuals by charging licensing and inspection fees.

Meat and poultry slaughterhouses and processing plants would be charged fees by the government for mandatory inspections. The administration claims that the consumer will not be affected. But this would hardly be the case, for any first-year economic student knows that as the costs of inputs rise so does the final cost of a good.

Similarly, fees for National Parks services would increase across the board, yet ironically the parks service would not benefit from the increased fees as the funds would be used to shoulder part of the national debt.

The government also would sell more of its federal land; sadly, some of it from National Parks.

The administration also would like to increase revenue by stepping up its tax enforcement. While a good idea on the surface, many correctly speculate that the increased cost to nab tax offenders will outweigh the net gain from forced compliance measures.

Under the president's budget some of the sharpest cuts would come from Medicare and Medicaid, the health program for the elderly and the poor, and financial aid for students. Civil Service retirement benefits also would fall under the budget axe, and farm aid would be slashed by more than half over the next five years.

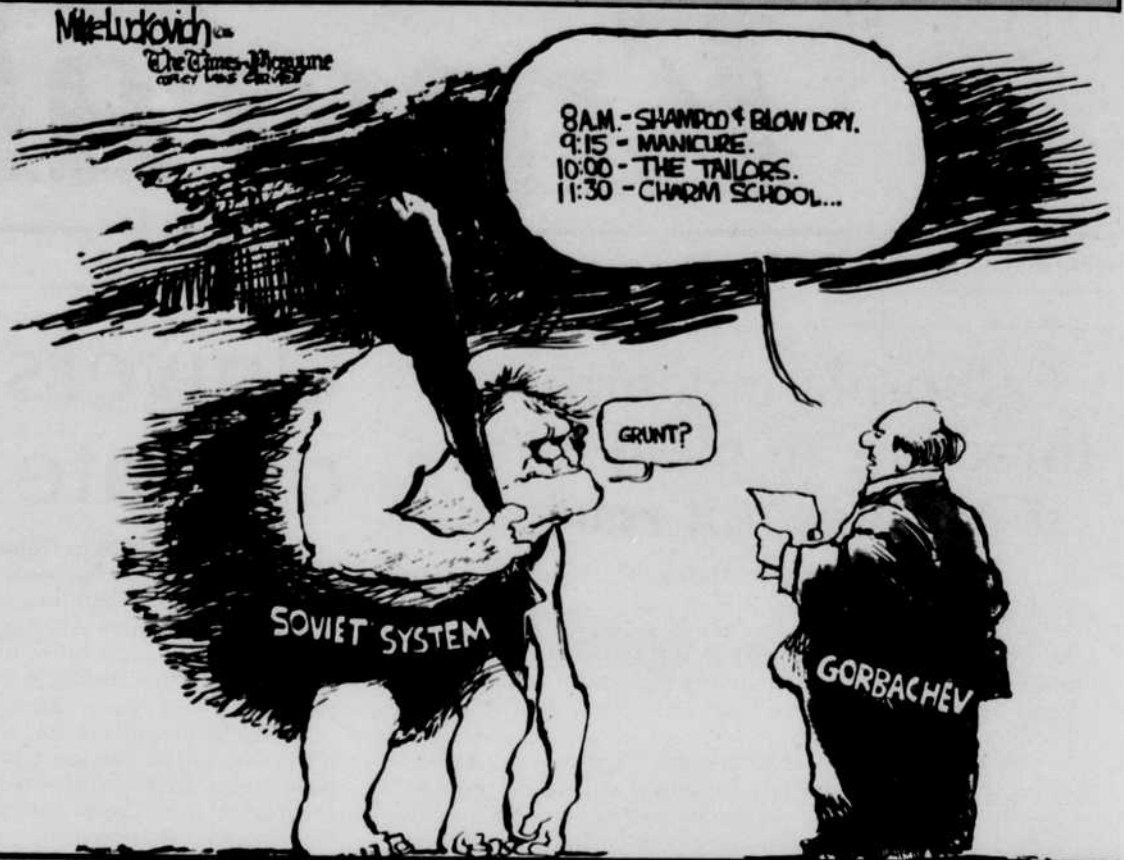
At the same time, defense spending would be increased by 3 percent. The president claims that he now is willing to be more flexible when it comes to military outlays, noting that this is his lowest requested outlay for the military since he took office. But he is not flexible enough.

He didn't get what he wanted last year, and he shouldn't get it this year.

His administration is willing to sacrifice valuable domestic programs in order to foster the sacrosanct defense establishment. With independent reports of wasteful spending by the military still being released, the Pentagon budget should be subject to cuts instead of increases.

Furthermore, he calls for \$105 million for the Contras and still insists on funding for his Strategic Defense Initiative. The success of these two programs are questionable at best, and they consume a disproportionate share of this nation's resources.

The Democrat-controlled Congress is certain to revise many aspects of the Reagan budget, and we hope it will emphasize human needs over defense wants.



Letters

Far-fetched

In response to Michael Cross' letter (Extinction, Jan. 7), I find myself wondering what to say about a letter written so illogically that I want to stick my head out the window and scream at the top of my lungs.

Mr. Cross referred to Darwinism as a means of warning the secular world of their doomed destiny because of their practice of abortion.

I guess he didn't consider nature's little sin with the march of the lemmings to the sea.

Of course anyone that would quote a "demographic expert" without a name from a "recent television interview" (I don't know why, but the 700 Club comes to mind) without naming the station or program, might be foolish enough to believe that our shrinking planet with over 5,000,000,000 people is in need of "higher birthrates."

In the summation of his bizarre warnings of the "extinction" of "western nations" due to their "secular" ways, he offers a way out of our "self-inflicted extinction" by telling us to reject the "me-first" secular philosophy.

The way I've always seen it is that Christian fundamentalists have always recruited and preached with an appeal to the

"me-first" attitude. After all, isn't the desire for ever-lasting life a desire for the self in the "me" of every Christian fundamentalist?

Patrick Clancy
Eugene

Equity

Now that most of the University's students have been registered and the quarter has started, clerks in all departments must rush to complete the thankless, detailed student-registration tasks that keep the University functioning.

These 700 women (and a few men) are its lowest paid workers because they hold traditionally "women's" jobs. On the national level, the phenomenon is termed the feminization of poverty.

In Eugene, recent comparable worth studies show that the city's largest employer, the University, reserves its lowest wages for 64 percent of its classified staff because they are female.

Single mothers with more than one child who work as University clerks receive so little money that they qualify for a welfare supplement while working 40 hours a week outside the home (Oregon welfare rules require a single mother to work or look for work after the youngest child is three; they may not "loaf" at home caring for children).

Research done by the employees' union has shown that jobs requiring intelligence, strength and skill equal to clerical jobs, but held by men, are paid more.

The union is sponsoring a program to correct these inequities; part of it is a rally to be held in Salem on Jan. 24. Anyone who supports pay equity between men and women as well as decent pay for all workers should meet at the state capitol in Salem to demonstrate for fairness in employment in Oregon.

Victoria Payton
Staff

Evolution

It seems that Brian Frary and Charlie Richards (ODE, Jan. 12)

are a bit confused about the theory of punctuated equilibrium.

The statement you made that Stephen Gould "has found no intermediate fossils between species and yet has proposed the punctuated equilibrium model of evolution" is meaningless and carries no weight in the argument against evolution.

This model evolution is not seen to exist as a smooth transition between species; rather, it's seen as a series of long periods of stasis punctuated by short, rapid periods of evolution.

It's these rapid periods of evolution that we sometimes see as gaps in the fossil record.

That Gould did not find any intermediates is an empty statement. The time period which then existed was relatively short so one would expect them to be harder to find than fossils of animals that were in stasis perhaps for millennia.

It should be remembered, however, that fossils do not even provide the main evidence for evolution and are just one of the many examples that prove evolution to exist.

I also found your \$400 offer most amusing and challenge you to put your money where your mouth is and show me the so-called "facts" of your religious faith.

I also suggest that you guys read the paper by Stephen Gould and Niles Eldredge titled "Punctuated equilibria: the tempo and mode of evolution reconsidered;" it might clear up your misunderstanding.

Frederick Leff
Eugene

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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.

Oregon Daily Emerald

The Oregon Daily Emerald is published Monday through Friday except during exam week and vacations by the Oregon Daily Emerald Publishing Co., at the University of Oregon, Eugene, Oregon, 97403.

The Emerald operates independently of the University with offices on the third floor of the Erb Memorial Union and is a member of the Associated Press.

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