

Editorial

Iran-Contra report shows incompetence

In the past year the Reagan administration increasingly has become ineffective and incapable in the political arena.

The Iran-Contra affair destroyed the credibility of the administration. The Tower Commission report and subsequent congressional hearings portrayed a president asleep at the wheel and a staff out of control. Since then, the Reagan administration has deteriorated to a state just short of political disaster. Consider the following:

- In the wake of the death of Central Intelligence Agency Director William Casey, Washington Post journalist Bob Woodward disclosed that Casey knew about the diversion of profits from Iranian arms sales to the Contras, a U.S.-backed force fighting the Sandinista government in Nicaragua. Considering the close relationship between Casey and Reagan, if Casey knew about the diverted funds then the president probably did too.

- Casey's death is just one of many administrative personnel changes that have destabilized the administration. For example, Chief of Staff Donald Regan was forced to resign in the wake of the Iran-Contra affair. Secretary of Defense Casper Weinberger also recently resigned, possibly because of differences in defense policy with Reagan, who is trying to secure a nuclear missile treaty with the Soviet Union in order to end his tenure with an accomplishment.

Who will be the next to resign? U.S. Attorney General Edwin Meese has been under investigation for his involvement in the Wedtech scandal and the Iran-Contra affair. It does not lend credibility to the administration to have the highest ranking justice official in the nation under investigation for criminal activities.

- Then came the political embarrassment to Reagan resulting from the unsuccessful nomination of two judges to the Supreme Court: Robert Bork and Douglas Ginsburg. Furthermore, the fact that Reagan publically supported Ginsburg even after the disclosure that the judge had smoked marijuana severely damaged the integrity of Reagan's war on drugs.

- The stock market crashed in part because of an out-of-control budget deficit and a huge trade deficit. Until recently, the administration has been incapable of dealing with either the deficit or with congressional democrats attempting to develop a reasonable budget.

- The Reagan administration also has denied its legal obligation under the War Powers Act to report to Congress about the U.S. military presence in the Persian Gulf. This debate has raised questions about the coherence of U.S. foreign policy.

In the wake of these political disasters, what does the future hold for the Reagan administration?

If Assistant Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs Elliot Abrams has his way, the Central American peace plan will be prevented from achieving its objectives.

The Iran-contra report may reveal the incompetence of the administration; however, it probably will not deter the administration from blundering in the near future.

But the report may help assure President Reagan of his proper place in the history books as an ineffective and incapable president whose administration repeatedly has been linked to political corruption and economic negligence.



Letters

Reasons

With all the uproar over the threat of President Olum's early retirement, may I suggest some reasons behind the rumors and news coverage.

1) It seems evident that Chancellor Davis is eager for central control over higher education. Because Olum is the most outspoken of the eight presidents in the state for school autonomy and second in tenure only to Portland State University's Natale Sicuro, his replacement would leave the Board unchallenged. Davis's long-term interest may be to shift more power from Eugene and Corvallis to Portland.

2) Gov. Neil Goldschmidt may be indirectly disciplining Olum for opposing him in the recent Oregon Public Employee Union's strike in particular and for him regularly criticizing the Legislature for not appropriating more money for higher education and faculty salaries in general. In the Nov. 3 Oregonian, Goldschmidt said, "You can't have it both ways."

When the Legislature appropriated salary increases in a lump sum, the board let presidents use the money to

keep faculty members who were tempted to leave or to attract new ones. Some passed-over faculty members complained of favoritism, and hence the Legislature's uniform salary increase this session.

3) The Lane County Board of Commissioners concerns over "long-term destabilization" of the University if Olum retires early in 1989. A survey by a New Jersey marketing firm said Olum was not only a "good salesman" but a key player in any capital campaign.

4) Chancellor Davis's decision jeopardizes his own efforts in implementing the semester and unified course requirements in 1990 because Olum retires in 1989. The national search for a new provost discourages applicants for two reasons: first, a lame-duck president disrupts an acting provost; second, one can not expect a provost to come for only one year. This is precisely the lack of planning the recent accreditation review report cited.

If the University Assembly meeting of faculty, administrators and students can unanimously agree on a resolution to extend Olum's retirement date by a 290-0 margin, obviously Olum's leadership works.

Charles Carter
Student

False accusations

Recently I was accused by the Women's Resource and Referral Service, via the Interfraternity Council, of creating a poster calling for an end to "dyke facism" at the University.

It seems that my role in the creation of another poster found offensive coupled with my

membership in the band, The Guardian's of American Morality, has given it cause to accuse me of something I knew nothing about.

Neither I, nor anybody involved in the creation of the Guardian's poster to which it objected, had anything to do with this most recent poster. But by virtue of circumstance I have been falsely accused.

The Women's Resource and Referral Service has targeted The Guardians of American Morality as a band worthy of its attention. They have protested at our performances and initiated a boycott of Taylor's Tavern for hiring us to play. That did not work, so now they make false accusations against me personally. I find it difficult to believe that an organization so closely tied to human rights can be so casual about their violation.

Mark O. Howerton
Eugene

Similarities

After attending Friday Nov. 13's Board of Higher Education meeting, I saw the film, "Matewan."

A person cannot help but notice the striking resemblance between the company thugs and the board members who are working for the company owners, the Chancellor's office administrators.

The union bears a striking resemblance to the Olumni.

The kid whose throat the thugs slashed reminds one of Paul Olum.

Ariel Friesner
Eugene

Letters Policy

The Emerald will attempt to print all letters containing comments on topics of interest to the University community. Comments must be factually accurate and refrain from personal attacks on the character of others.

Letters to the editor must be limited to no more than 250 words, legible, signed and the identification of the writer must be verified when the letter is submitted.

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