

Reagan hits the trail as the movie closes

Try as we might to resist the comparison of the departure of Ronald Reagan to the end of some sappy Western movie, we defy anyone to imagine a more appropriate metaphor for the occasion. After all, even in his most successful endeavors, Reagan was always less a president than a movie star.

Reagan rode into town and sobered up the citizenry. He organized a posse. He stood them up in the street and taught them how to shoot. And like any good sheriff, he blamed all the town's woes in part on the townsfolk themselves, but mostly on the fellow he painted as the jackass who was sheriff before him.

And in the best John Wayne tradition, Reagan knew when to take the law into his own hands and take a sock at the bad guys. He deputized little Ollie North and sent him out to deal with the hostiles via a wily weapons swap. Further, Reagan dressed up his mild-mannered sidekick, George, and turned him into a patriotic hellion who the town learned to like tolerably well.

As Reagan himself might put it, he restored a sense of dignity to our town, and made the streets safe for God-fearing Christians.

Maybe Reagan spent too many years in Hollywood.

No doubt he set straight a lost America that had gotten its wagon wheels stuck in the road ruts of the sloppy Jimmy Carter, the confused Gerald Ford and the crooked Richard Nixon presidencies. He restored America's direction, its pride, and we can thank him for that. That is his legacy in the minds of the slim majority, and no doubt, in the minds of most historians.

However, we cannot best judge the qualities of this Reagan western extravaganza by viewing the movie itself. We have to step into the editing room, and look over the clippings that wound up on the cutting room floor.

There we find the overlooked scenes, the downtrodden characters that never made it into the final version, the gems that were lost because of a threat to national security, and the goofs and gaffes of presidential filmmaking.

In this discarded collection of low-lights, Sheriff Reagan kicks the homeless folks in the seat of their pants for their lack of self-respect, and for dirtying up the streets. (President Reagan said that the homeless chose to live on the streets and could find shelter if they so desired.)

In one scene, Reagan rides in on his white horse and denounces black civil rights leaders as self-promoting. In another, he empties the town vault to fund a grandiose network of defense that he says will spot any bad guy on the horizon. In the final scene, townsfolk are still grumbling about that last one: "Hey, there ain't no money in here! The Sheriff done stripped us dry." Also, there's a heck of a lot of footage of the old guy with his schnoz on the desk, snoring away through cabinet meetings and the like.

Editors of the sequel — the one in which George Bush plays the part of Ronald Reagan, and Dan Quayle gives new meaning to the term "sidekick" — have promised even-handed equality of screen time for the movie extras and minor actors — the drifters and miscreants and dadburn liberals — who put in eight years in the making of the movie, as they say in Hollywood, "pouring their guts out," just to wind up underfoot in the editing room, altogether left out of the box office triumph claimed by the movie's star.

But we can't blame Reagan for all of his bad scenes and his generally clumsy lines. A movie, a play or a presidency is, after all, a conglomeration of efforts of a whole cast of artists, or knuckleheads, as the case may be. But, as one Academy Award-winning actress said in 1980, "Well, he was a lousy actor, and I think he'll be a lousy president." A fair assumption. Maybe she was sharing an astrologer with the First Lady.

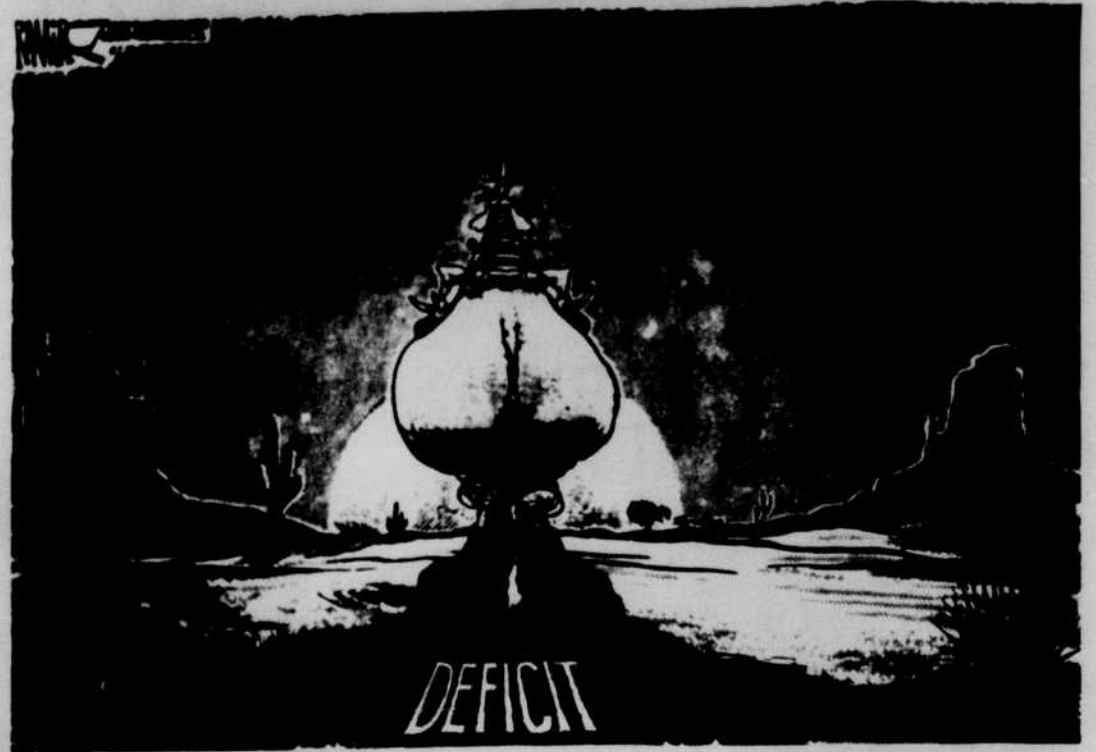
In any case: As Sheriff Reagan rides off into the sunset, let us join in a refrain of "Happy Trails."

One side note: we noticed a wire service story of a cat named Clem who the other day showed up at his home in Bancroft, Wis. after an eight-year absence. Said Kurt Helminiak, the happy owner, "He walked into the house, checked it out for a few minutes, then he purred and jumped up onto his favorite chair like he had never been gone." Coincidence? Purrrhaps.

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.



Letters

Other side

When Professor David Schuman was hired as a permanent faculty member last spring, I was disappointed. I believed that the School of Law sorely needed at least one minority professor, and should have also hired a professor that specializes in environmental law. As minorities are conspicuously absent from the faculty, and a distinguished natural resources professor had recently left the school, these were obvious voids. Professor Schuman is not a minority, and does not specialize in environmental law.

Nonetheless, the hiring of Schuman is now a hotly contested issue whose significance has long since passed. The cover story on 16 January 1989 ("Racial unrest lingers at University law school") succeeded in trashing the school's hiring practices, and quotes a disgruntled (former) professor who believed the hired candidate, Schuman, was less qualified than other candidates.

Your article failed to address the only current issue immediately surrounding the hiring of Schuman: What do the students think of him as a professor? An informal survey would have shown that we think he's an outstanding law professor. He has a reputation as an excellent lecturer and a fair grader. While his hiring did not fill one of the voids listed above, he is qualified to teach at least six courses (Two Constitutional law courses, Criminal Procedure, Legislative and Administrative Processes, Advanced Appellate Advocacy, and presumably Legal Research and Writing, since he holds a Ph.D. in English in addition to his J.D.) The School of Law could use more professors of his caliber and breadth, whether the color of their skin is black, yellow, tan, red, white, blue or green.

I still believe the law school needs minority professors and another environmental law professor. Perhaps this year's applicants will include individuals meeting these requirements. As students, we can only hope that the incoming professors can teach as well as Professor Schuman does. On one point, however, I am certain: The Ap-

pointments Committee would have remembered last year's events without the University's budding journalists reopening old wounds.

Philip M. Ferester
Law student

Elitism

It has recently come to the attention of the Native American Student Union that MBAA has been allocated \$760 by the IFC. We also understand that prior to approval of these monies the MBAA was asked how they serve the minority population on campus. Sad to say, the MBAA representatives were quick to point to the number of Asians in the program. The Native American Student Union is not impressed.

We, at NASU, would like to know how many American Indians, American Blacks and Mexican-Americans are currently enrolled in the MBA Program. Better yet, how many of them have graduated from the College of Business? In the last year, the last two years, the last five years, the last ten years?

How often has either program come down to the Native American Student Union to even try and recruit any Native Americans, or American Blacks, or Mexican-Americans? Has either program ever come to any of these offices?

Although we at NASU cannot speak for other student unions, we think it's safe to say that actions speak louder than words, and we can read the MBAA's loud and clear.

It is because of this blatant lack of inclusion that NASU cannot support the IFC's decision to give a single cent to such an elitist, self-serving organization.

Myrna J. Bobb
Director, NASU
Warm Springs Indian

Reassess

There seems to be a trend in America that stigmatizes each decade with a label. As we enter the last year of the decade, we wonder if there is anything original about the 1980s that can be categorized. Yet, one label does seem to fit the 1980s quite accurately. We would like

to re-affirm our support for those who label the 1980's as the Re-decade:

Replay, rewind, record, re-run, review, remote, report, re-tell, re-release, remake, remember, repetitive, revenue, retail, rebate, regulate, redevelop, recession, relax, relapse, recess, recall, revoke, repress, regress, react, Reagan, re-elect, republican.

Remember, this is only a social review. But, if you find, in reflection, that any of these words engender remorse, we encourage you to enter the 1990's with — shall we say — revision!

Ben Jacobson
Biology

Paul Petrequin
History

Eye for eye

I would like to propose a question to all the conscientious students of the University.

How would you like it if all students of color armed themselves, and some unsuspecting Anglo student surprised a very scared, itchy-fingered person, and got blown away? The arming seems to be the trend that is starting around campus. The cause? Racial jeers from passing cars, skinheads and the down-home rednecks. Students of color are beginning to take matters into their own hands, because the EPD and campus security aren't really interested in what's happening.

If these skinheads were Black Panthers or some other racial faction, they would be systematically destroyed. But these bald-headed punks get free roam of the campus, and of course the city. The reason for this is because most Oregonians hold the same ideologies as these white supremacist groups. Why punish someone who conveys your sentiments for you?

I certainly am for arming ourselves and an eye for an eye, as the old saying goes.

Jaymes E. Terry
Student of Color
Thursday, January 19, 1989