

## New education plan lacks needed input

On Thursday, President Bush will unveil the education plan he hopes will actually give merit to his claim of being the education president. The plan has both good and bad elements.

The good part of the plan is that it proposes a federal program of research and development to invent new kinds of public schools. Looking into ways to improve and completely rearrange schools is a good idea, and spending money in that area is long overdue.

The bad part of the plan calls for more nationwide testing of students and for basing financial support for schools on those test results.

Public schools should not have to compete for money to educate. It is fine to say the best schools — those doing the best job of educating children — should be rewarded. In theory, it should make schools work harder to educate their pupils.

But the policy of rewarding schools with the highest average test scores presents some possibilities that need to be looked into.

First of all, the incentive for administrations to fabricate test results, or focus their entire curriculum on improving test scores, would rise dramatically under the Bush plan.

Another potentially negative result of the Bush proposal could occur if schools try to cater to "brighter students" in order to bring up the test scores. Bush has proposed the implementation of a parent-choice school system where parents could choose where their children go to school.

Under this plan, parents would pick the "best" schools for their children, so schools with the best reputations would be in high demand and be able to pick and choose who they enrolled.

A system set up in this manner would put all the "bright" kids in the well-funded schools, while the "slower" kids would be dumped into poorly-funded programs.

In simple terms, the Bush proposal would allow a system that discriminates against the children of "less-educated" people to perpetuate itself. Laissez-faire, survival-of-the-fittest business practices have no place in public education.

Public education is for everyone, not just those who excel.

Bush's newly appointed education secretary, Lamar Alexander, has said education reform calls for an entirely new system and not just a rebuilding of the existing one. Therefore, Alexander wants to go directly to the people and bypass the education establishment. This is fine in principle. But Alexander should consider that while the "people" should get what they want, ignoring the input of people who have devoted their lives to educating the youth of this country is idiotic.

By ignoring the education establishment, the Bush plan also does not properly address problems that those in the education system have been complaining about for years.

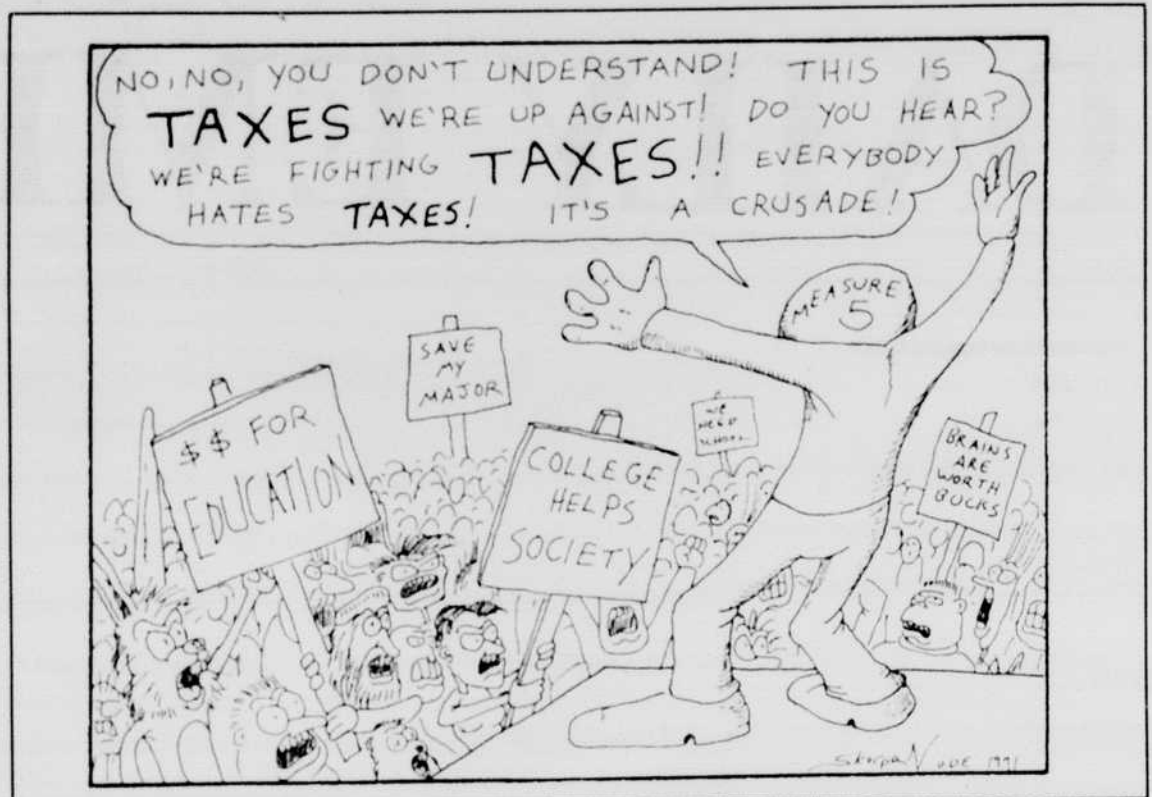
- Why not start out the reform movement by implementing a longer school day equal to those in other countries such as Japan?

- Instead of spending so much money to come up with new schools, why not put some of that money into existing, underfunded programs?

- People in public schools have been saying for years that education needs to get back to the fundamentals.

- Most importantly, why doesn't the education president propose to do something about reforming the system that grossly underpays the people who are educating its youth?

After all, you get what you pay for.



## LETTERS

### Whose truth?

Warning. Misreading this letter could be harmful to your health. Swallowing heavy metal can kill, or if you are bilingual, "un golpe se mata."

In the April issue of *Fidelity*, there is a feature article entitled "Hitler and the Occult: Nazism, Reincarnation and Rock Culture" by Suzanne M. Rini. She was apparently moved by signs of the rise in Satanism in the New Age Movement. Quoting from her article encapsulates a part of her reasoning:

"So, in combination, we see that in the U.S. today we have the frontal aspect of Satanism as represented by teenagers' increasing attraction to it, and we see the more subtle form emerging from out of the goddess regions of neo-pagan New Age.

"For both, the bottom line, whether one dresses it up in Jungian terminology, or scrawls a pentagram on an underpass in the suburbs, is the Satanic commandment to do whatever one wants, and to experience everything, extolling personal power and its final agent, the Devil, over submission to moral law.

"Refusing to consider oneself a sinner is the common ground of both. And both varieties, as witnessed by the suicide related above and Whitmont's colloquial and knowledgeable references to Nazism are no more or less than the current blossoming of the Nazi legacy, come home to roost in the good old U.S.A."

Fools say there is no God and the Grateful Dead say there is no evil. All of us want to be free and it is said, "You shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free."

Norman Evonuk  
Eugene

disguised form of censorship, the military successfully controlled virtually all the news coming from the Persian Gulf. Aside from a lawsuit brought forth by a handful of publications, media resistance to the restrictions was pathetic.

Perhaps just as frightening was the public's support of censorship. Polls showed most Americans were in favor of tightly controlled information, with many actually advocating even stricter government regulation.

Support was probably bolstered by Pentagon claims that manipulation was necessary to protect American lives. Unfortunately, their aims were not nearly so pure.

Many stories were censored to produce a more palatable version of the war. One reporter saw his piece altered to read "proud" where he had described returning pilots as "giddy." Another writer saw officials delete a section of his story detailing how many airmen watched pornographic films to prepare for bombing raids over Iraq.

Protection of lives was also used to justify censorship during the invasion of Panama. Evidence has surfaced indicating that the military holds footage from helicopter gunships showing civilians being gunned down as they ran panicked through the streets of Panama City.

This unsanitized version of the war will probably never be seen by the public, and likewise, we will probably never know what really happened in Desert Storm.

Censorship is un-American.

Eron Witzel  
Pre-journalism

### Unprofessional

The only option Mike Colson should have at this point is to withdraw from the ASUO presidential elections. Colson's actions are those of a pathological liar. He has consistently lied in public.

I would also like to mention Colson's slanderous ad in the *Emerald* (April 11). Even if

there is no rule against this in the elections rules, there ought to be. Not only was this an attempt to degrade his opponent, Jennifer Bills, it was also a blatant lie.

Whatever happened to his dedication to a clean campaign? What Colson has done and said to the University community is not only unprofessional, but morally wrong. I would strongly advise Colson to drop out of the race and also resign from his position as IFC chairman. A University should not harbor corrupt politicians such as Colson.

Tomorrow's senators are today's college student politicians.

Mike Colson: Experienced (in lying). Dedicated (to dirty play). Accessible and unprofessional.

Kelly Skudlarick  
Eugene

### Running down

Leadership is taking a stand. It seems someone recently wrote those words on these very pages and yet, in the midst of election races, I can see no one standing.

Four members of the IFC are currently trying to convince us of their leadership abilities; four people who want to take the reins of the ASUO Executive as our University faces drastic budget cuts as well as a variety of social issues.

The members of the IFC are refusing to clean their own house and deal with the note-tampering issue. They are failing the students as well as shirking their elected duty (budgeting for the coming year).

The EMU Board, another haven for executive candidates, has conveniently postponed making a decision on the smoking issue and the Affirmative Action recruitment issue until after the elections.

How can any of them claim the ability to take a stand? Maybe these candidates should try standing before running.

Joe Grube  
English/Philosophy

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