

While country waited, Bush assigned blame

Oh come on!

Tragedies are supposed to bring out the best and the worst in people. And when something as horrific as the Rodney King beating verdict and subsequent urban violence occurs, people look to their leaders for guidance.

This time, there wasn't any — just a blatant case of passing the buck to make up for one's own shortcomings.

To be specific, George Bush toured riot-stricken Los Angeles last week. People expected him to say something — anything — that might alleviate the pain of the moment. The entire country looked to Bush, in a time of endless campaigning, to prove his presidential timber.

He didn't.

Instead of offering solutions, Bush laid blame. Not on himself, to be sure, or his predecessor, Ronald Reagan. No, Bush had to go way back to the '60s, saying the riots were the offspring of civil rights-era social welfare programs.

Maybe George should check his own backyard before trying to blame others for the racial problems of this country. First of all, during the 12 years he has been a part of the Oval Office team, the country's poor have become poorer while his elite cohorts in business have seen their fortunes increase.

Then there was the racist Willie Horton campaign trick in 1988. And don't forget his political decision to try and snuff a civil rights bill, labelling it a quota measure and further dividing the country into racial camps.

Yes, the president did later speak about racial harmony, and he promised a whole slew of urban programs. But that was after he had seen the result of his and Reagan's inaction — 12 years of neglect and hoping the problem would just magically disappear.

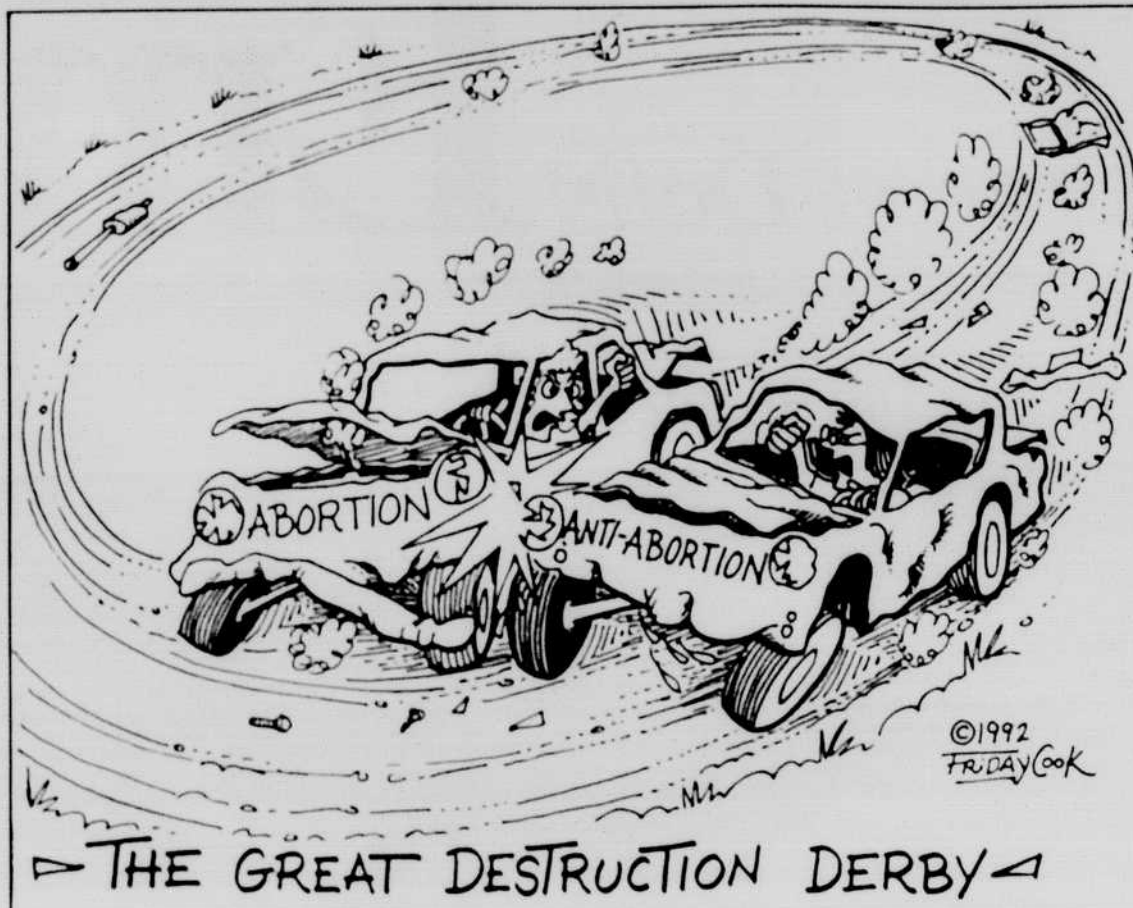
Sorry, Mr. Pres. That just isn't going to happen.

Words seem shallow in trying to describe Bush's "blame it on the Democrats" political philosophy. Once again, Bush and Co. have proved they are out of touch with the American public. Not only does the current Oval Office resident have no idea what people — urban or rural — want, he doesn't seem to much care.

Bush, in the heady vapors of the moment (and to salvage his re-election bid) will probably propose a new urban policy. Perhaps it will become the "War on Poverty" or get some other banal title. But if it follows the 12-year trend of Republican social programs, Bush's plan will be as effective as a geriatric, toothless tiger.

What is needed is a drastic change in priorities. If anything good can come out of the L.A. riots, it will be the enlightenment of the American public, which has been blinded to the country's ills for a long time. This administration and the last one dumped \$131 million into a Star Wars X-ray laser that doesn't work. Is it too much to ask to redirect those funds into urban programs?

Given Bush and Co.'s track record, it probably is.



LETTERS

Damage

I would like to extend my personal thanks to Brian Hoop for breaking windows at the Federal Building on April 30.

As an elected representative of the students of the University, I'm sure he did the right thing. It is comforting to know that my tax dollars will be spent, not on useless social programs, but on repairing the damage he and the mob caused.

Support violence for peace.

Jim Ward
History

Pride

We the people of the United States.

As a nation we have condemned other nations who do not subscribe to the values we hold dear.

We have killed innocents in the names of democracy and economic control.

We have oppressed with discrimination and imprudence, and we have ignored the rampant pain and suffering.

As a nation we are teaching our children to be proud Americans.

Americans who are proud to condemn, kill, oppress and ignore.

Darren Flugge
Eugene

More hip

Somebody remind me to get a measure in next year's elections that will put more hip statues on this campus. I'm tired of guys with muskets. Let's put Thelonius Monk on the pedestal and Charles Mingus where that ugly yellow thing is in the courtyard.

Jeffrey A. Hawkins
Student

They deliver

In regards to a letter that appeared in the *Emerald* slamming the post office because of its "disservice" of not offering the author the exact amount of change she wanted: Sue Bright needs to take into consideration

that the post office is not in the banking business, and have a little empathy for what they have to endure on a daily basis.

If the postal employees were to cater to everyone regarding the change they wanted, they'd be spending all their time running to the bank for change, thus having to close down one of the service windows, creating less service in that area.

Considering what they have to put up with, I feel they do a remarkable job with a positive attitude. They are cheerful, helpful and cooperative when extended the same courtesy. They shouldn't have to take verbal abuse from the public.

I feel they perform their duties faithfully, accurately and with more patience than most given the same circumstances.

Janet Vidito
Eugene

Fund

Dear fellow protesters:

A fund has been opened at U.S. Bank, 810 East 13th Ave., to collect money to help pay for the windows which we broke last week. I will keep the account, named "The Window Fund," open for 30 days, then pay everything in it to the glass repair contractor. The account number is 1040000380.

You can mail donations to the bank at P.O. Box 3347, Eugene, 97403. I can be contacted at Box 63013, University of Oregon.

Peggy Maddock
Eugene

Make right

To those who destroyed the banner:

Your cause is just and point well taken. Diversity and acceptance are important factors in our society. But to coin a phrase, kindly practice what you preach.

The banner was not about diversity. It was about the University summer program. If you'd read it, you'd have known that.

Certain faces, which were included in the summer session brochure, could not be printed

on the banner due to technical difficulties. If you'd asked, you'd have known that also.

I liked the banner. I liked it because among all the bickering around here, it said something positive. Those employed by the University to create it did not intend anything negative. By the University code, they could not have.

I would like to see the banner re-displayed as it is now so all may look and know what vast acceptance we have here. When another, more politically correct banner is produced, at the cost of you who destroyed the first one, it should be hung in the old one's place.

This incident reeks of closed-mindedness and censorship. Make right what you have done wrong.

John L. Poppin
English

No better

And justice for all unless you disagree with the verdict. Last week, the "self-appointed Oregon supreme court" went to the Federal Building and started smashing windows. This was done because they did not agree with the Rodney King verdict.

I was not at the trial, so I'm not going to try and convince you the verdict was the right one. But the mentality of Oregon's self-appointed supreme court taking the law into its own hands puts them equal to police officers that designate themselves judge, jury and executioner. You're no better than they are!

If the self-appointed supreme court is not charged with destruction of federal property, can I be equally hypocritical and smash their windows?

Where does the violence end? If we lived "an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth, we would all be blind and toothless" (Fiddler). This is why we have a court system. Stop being so damn hypocritical. The Rodney King "case" is not over. Truth and justice will prevail if we make it.

Mike Pritchard
Student

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