

Clinton rally fiasco doesn't help cause

Let no one accuse the organizers of Bill Clinton's visit to the University yesterday of being too well prepared. To the contrary, no one was prepared for the mob scene that took place outside McArthur Court, particularly the University Office of Public Safety and the Eugene Police Department.

OPS Officer Otis Scarborough's comments illustrated the lack of planning that went into the event, when he said only around 5,000 people were expected to attend. The probable next president of the United States makes one stop in Oregon weeks before the election, and officials only expect 5,000 people to attend?

At the time the doors to Mac Court were closed, the line to get in stretched down University Street and turned down 15th Avenue (cleverly renamed Clinton Avenue) to Hayward Field. When those in line received word that the doors were closed, they quickly congregated on University Street, catching authorities off guard.

With more than 48 hours notice, crowd control measures could have easily been implemented. Driving police cars down University Street in an effort to clear the crowd was clearly a spur of the moment reaction and not part of an organized, well-thought-out plan.

However, OPS and EPD are victims of even worse planning by event coordinators. Rally organizers should have learned their lessons four years ago when Jesse Jackson spoke at Mac Court. At that event, an estimated 5,000 people were left outside. Why was that lesson not applied this time?

Obviously, the best location would have been Autzen Stadium. Why that was not obvious to event organizers can only be guessed at, but any excuse will be unsatisfactory. Security was certainly not a deciding factor. Those fortunate enough to get inside were not searched for weapons of any kind.

One of the loudest complaints being voiced by people outside had to do with the enormous number of area school children who had been bussed in from around town. The purpose of a political rally is to gain the support of registered voters, not to provide a civics lesson for children.

Many in the mob outside would have been happy just to have caught a glimpse of Clinton, but in this case, "Slick Willie" lived up to the name as he slipped in and out of Mac Court without so much as wave to the crowd outside. Organizers would have scored points simply by setting up speakers outside, allowing the crowd to at least listen to Clinton.

Instead, nearly 10,000 voters were given the impression that they didn't count and left the scene feeling dejected. Many Clinton supporters were overheard questioning their allegiance to the Democratic candidate. Now all we can do is hope the organizers of this rally in no way represent the ability of the Clinton administration to organize the country.



LETTERS

Best wishes

So, being a good student of political science, I naturally went to McArthur Court to see Bill Clinton speak. Being a good citizen, I took my proper place at the end of the line that stretched all the way around the corner, past Hayward Field and nearly to Agate Street. I, along with many other people, waited for 20 or 30 minutes for the line to start moving.

It eventually did, much to our collective cheer. Imagine our surprise when we reached University Street and met up with a stream of people blithely walking right up to the line and cutting in. Judging from how close I got to the entrance of the building, I, along with the other people who were naive enough to assume respect on the part of our fellow Americans, would have gotten in if not for these line-cutters.

So, to all of you who were apparently raised in a barn: Screw you! May you and yours contract an extremely painful, debilitating and socially embarrassing disease.

Andrew Haldane
Political Science

Mad as hell

I would like to voice my admiration for those brave souls who point out the inherent political power in not voting. Hats off to those of you whose non-votes will shine so much brighter than the non-votes of the merely apathetic. If Measure 9 makes it impossible for me to teach Alice Walker, I will think back on you and your brave struggle.

Let's not forget those ever-vigilant bike riders who bravely oppose the "bike Nazis." The path of least resistance would be to stop riding your bikes on pedestrian walkways, but you continue to fight the good fight. If Measure 9 passes I will rejoice, knowing that you were all busy protecting my right to cycle on the sidewalk so that I can get to class on time and teach my students that homosexuality is perverse.

Finally, thanks to the freedom fighters who helped the bookstore keep *Penthouse* and *Playboy* on its shelves. You fought because having to walk down to 7-eleven to indulge in your perversion of choice would be an extreme abridgement of your rights. Your road may be the most difficult, as Measure 9

would eliminate any magazine containing those delicious lesbian seduction pictorials. Still, your *Penthouses* will be in good company, sharing a locked storage room with *Moby Dick*. You all must be proud to have taken on an underdog cause. And don't worry. When the OCA targets anarchists, scofflaws and masturbators, the opponents of Measure 9 will be right there fighting with you.

Steve Close
English

Clinton's cattle

I have just returned home from the Bill Clinton rally at McArthur Court. Before now, I was a staunch Clinton supporter; now I have my doubts.

Any political rally these days is bound to be a slick media free-for-fall. I think we can take this for granted. But "for the people" Clinton seems to be for one group of people only — those directly surrounding himself and Al Gore.

Those of us, the people (peons), who did not work directly on the Clinton/Gore campaign were herded upstairs, more like cattle than human beings. Some of us waited for two or three hours to get in the door. "Special guests" were the only people allowed to come remotely close to Gov. Clinton; even after the rally, the remaining people (rabble) were herded back out the front doors, blockaded from Mac Court's floor and from Clinton.

I have to wonder: Is Bill Clinton for anything other than a quick photo-op and picking up a few more votes? If today's rally is any example, it doesn't appear that he's for the people. It looks like the only person he's really for is himself.

Kate Thompson
Theater

Owning Bob

Bob Packwood is running for re-election again. He has been in the U.S. Senate for 24 years. After all these years, he is now advocating term limits while campaigning for a fifth term. Let's limit the professional po-

litical career of this most cunning of politicians.

He has lost his innocence, has become elitist, and has feathered his bank account and real estate holdings. He is a servant to special interest groups from the timber lobby to the Israeli lobby. They own Packwood's mind, body and soul. His conscience, along with his voice, slept through scandal after scandal — savings and loans, housing, insider trading, Neil Bush and Silverado, the Environmental Protection Agency, and last but not least, the shameful and monumental growth of the federal deficit during his tenure.

In 24 years, Packwood has packed his assets and campaign treasures with stained money. Now it is the people's turn to send him packing and to restore the integrity and independence to a Senate seat that he has turned into a throne.

Oregon does not need a shah, but rather a decent, PAC-free servant for Oregonians.

M. Reza Behnam
Eugene

Ban triples

Your editorial on triple-trailers in Oregon (*ODE*, Oct. 21) was narrow-minded and not up to *Emerald* standards. Why bash the AAA as if it were made up solely of rich, doddering old drivers who should not be on the highway. Leave that up to the DMV and quit being so condescending and elitist. Have you too been paid off by the powerful truck lobby?

Maybe you don't drive in the rain and have your vision obliterated by three trailers (I know: they are supposed to be off the road in bad weather, but drivers won't be "chicken" in their macho world, and greed rules the owners.) Or maybe you don't drive on Oregon's two-lane highways with a monster trying to pass you. Yes, they do pass others and, yes, the rear does swing out. The driving is not only on straight-of-ways, but they also have to negotiate on-ramps and curves. "Truck-trains" are OK in the Australian outback, but not Oregon roads.

Hiide K. Cherry
Eugene

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