

Bush is going home; the ordeal has ended

It's over. George Bush is on a plane to Houston and with him will go 12 years of basically bungled bureaucracy.

Looking back, we are left wondering what happened. The Bush administration will probably be best remembered for having done nothing, and even that was done in piecemeal fashion.

There was no progress in health care, education, deficit reduction, environmental protection or civil rights. At best, a shaky and misguided status quo was maintained.

Both Bush and Ronald Reagan are responsible for the looting of the national treasury to pay for the savings and loan crises they presided over. Both are responsible for creating an environment of deregulation that has led to unethical business practices, including the loss of American jobs to foreign competitors. The list goes on and on.

There have been some positive aspects to the Bush administration. Huge reductions in the world's nuclear arsenals have been achieved. Arab nations are at least talking to Israel and relations between the United States and Russia are improving daily.

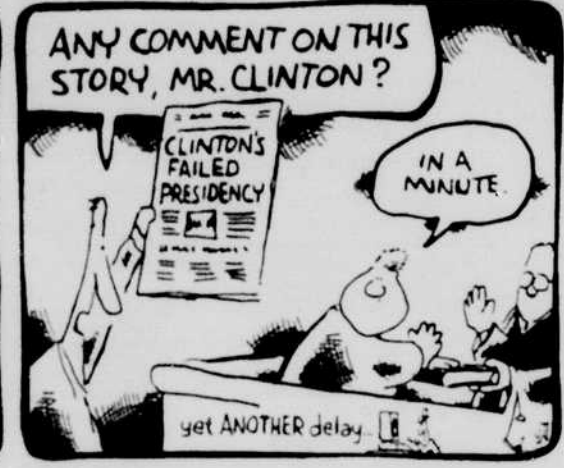
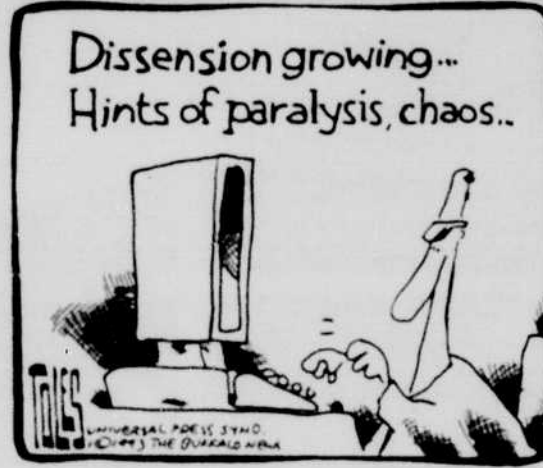
Perhaps Bush's greatest flaw is his loss of communication with the American people. He has failed to come to grips with the potpourri that is American society, and it has cost him dearly.

But in the end, it should be remembered that Bush devoted his life to the service of his country, and, for better or worse, it's more than most of his critics will ever be able to say.

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Top 10 reasons to miss George Bush

- 10.
- 9.
- 8.
- 7.
- 6.
- 5.
- 4.
- 3.
- 2.
1. No more impressions by Dana Carvey.



COMMENTARY

Cartoon gives buses bad image

By Chuck Fisher

Well, I guess the fears about tuition increases making the University an elitist institution were well founded. Clearly, Rick Ball's "Off Line" cartoon in the Jan. 8 *Emerald* is both elitist and in extremely poor taste.

I guess Ball "just didn't get it." I have to wonder the last time he rode the bus. Bus patronage crosses all economic and social strata. I know that for the two years I have been riding LTD buses, I've experienced nothing but courtesy from passengers and drivers alike. I have had passengers make a special effort to return something of value I dropped or left behind.

LTD bus drivers are the most courteous of any transit system I've ever ridden on. One time a driver, noticing I had a very heavy load of groceries, put the brake on and assisted me.

On another occasion, I needed to transfer to the bus directly in front of us. The driver called the station and asked for that bus to wait at the next stop. Finally, have you ever noticed how people say "thank you" to the drivers when getting off the bus? You may think that hokey, but I find it refreshing.

Perhaps Ball's parents bought him that icon of American success — an automobile — for managing to graduate from high school. And probably the insurance, gasoline, maintenance and parking permit to go with it. I choose not to own a car, yet through my taxes I must subsidize his extravagance.

Lane County drivers pay only about \$676 in taxes per person per year to operate their cars. Yet hidden costs — including highway construction, maintenance and services; "free parking"; congestion; military security; and motor vehicle accidents — amount to between \$2,356 to \$3,116 per person per year. Even with these subsidies, operating an automobile costs car owners, on average, more

than \$4,100 a year. Given the current fiscal climate, such subsidies are becoming increasingly difficult to justify.

I'll bet if I asked Ball, he would admit to being at least sympathetic to environmental causes (this is, after all, the University.) Does he realize that driving causes more of Oregon's — and the world's — pollution than any other single activity?

For every 25 miles driven, a pound of pollution is spewed into the air. That's twice as much pollution as slash burning and six times as much industry. Our dependence on diminishing fossil fuels — with 5 percent of the world's population, the United States uses 26 percent of the world's oil — contributes to the need for oil tankers to deliver their precious commodity in all kinds of weather, as the recent grounding in the Shetland Islands demonstrates.

But most of all, it is simply inefficient to continue using our cars as the primary mode of transportation, and therefore allows a broader spectrum of the population modal equity.

Since the 1950s, cities have been designed and transformed to accommodate the use of the automobile. There is a large body of evidence that correlates the loss of community with the increased dependence on the automobile. Suburbs grew popular because of the mobility afforded by the car. We were free! We no longer had to communicate with others when performing our daily chores.

In fact, today we no longer have to go outside but merely walk into the garage, start the engine and drive to the garage at work under our office tower. Cities grew, spread out and were not serviceable from a transit perspective. This sprawl also inhibits walking and bicycling.

When fewer people use the streets, the ratio of bad people vs. good becomes skewed, thereby encouraging even fewer

The activity and people using the bus, including the radio and bus driver, often make riding the bus a much safer choice than returning to one's car in a darkened parking lot.

people to use the streets. The streets then truly become dangerous for all concerned. The activity and people using the bus, including the radio and bus driver, often make riding the bus a much safer choice than returning to one's car in a darkened parking lot.

Since the inception of the bus pass in the 1988-89 academic year, bus ridership by students has more than tripled. Moreover, the LTD bus pass affords University students many more choices on places to work and live while attending school.

In fact, the large numbers of commuting bus riders and bicyclists saved the University from building a parking garage near the School of Music. And, as many who regularly drive or bicycle found out last weekend, the bus runs during inclement weather. The bus was packed on Monday morning, with people greeting one another and catching up on each other's weekend.

I'm not proposing we give up our cars, or even that we all ride the bus every day. However, if we rode the bus just one day a week, it would make a tremendous difference and go a long way toward keeping Eugene-Springfield a great place to live.

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