

## Davidian's question more than murder

Four alcohol, tobacco and firearm agents were killed Feb. 28, 1993. The people responsible for their deaths were charged with manslaughter rather than murder, and some were acquitted.

When 80 federal agents convened on the Branch Davidian compound in Waco, Texas, in an effort to apprehend their leader David Koresh, the outcome was disaster. It was a disaster for the federal agencies involved, and it was a disaster for the Branch Davidians. The recent outcome of the jury trial complements the observation that the entire operation was a disaster.

**Justice seems to have been compromised and buried in the aftermath of the disaster.**

U.S. Attorney General, Janet Reno, said, "It is clear that the jury recognized by its verdict that the killing of the four ATF agents were not justified. The finding that these deaths were not justified makes clear that the government had a responsibility to act. The shooting of law enforcement officers doing their duty can never be tolerated... I think justice has been had."

The shooting of law enforcement officers doing their job is being tolerated. The ATF agents were carrying out their actions and doing so whether they wanted to or not - it was their job. The crimes that were on trial were not the proceedings of the federal agents because they acted within their means. The crimes that were on trial were murder.

The Branch Davidians knew something was bound to happen prior to the raid. The federal agents, tanks, guns, lights and loud music that camped for 51 days outside the compound told the Davidians, more or less, that action would be taken. When action was taken the Davidians responded. But, did they respond to action taken upon them or was the action taken in response to the ATF agents? Who shot first?

This is a volatile question that one would expect to find as a key turning point in the trial. The prosecution said before the trial and during the trial that they would provide evidence showing the first shots were fired by the Davidians. The evidence was never shown. Either it was presumed, by the prosecution, that it wasn't needed once the trial began, or it was simply a bluff that never worked.

Justice seems to have been compromised and buried in the aftermath of the disaster. This case in particular sends a sad message to the people called on to serve and protect. The message is saying that simply doing your duty can become the irrational desire promoted by the highest offices in the country and can be carried out with equal importance.

Friends of one juror, who knew he was on the jury, were already asking after the trial, "What'd you let those people off so easy for?" The juror remained confidential in fear of being excoriated by the rest of the public.



## OPINION

### IFC: Give 'em all they ask for

It's all just so simple. Everyone goes before the Incidental Fee Committee to ask for money. Everyone states that their group is more deserving of the funds because of some sort of birthright. Not many get all the money that they are looking for. Few groups really come out of the process totally satisfied.

It's quite sad to see so many student groups at the University going without all the money they would have liked. Funny enough, I think I've seen many of these groups more in the past two months of budget requests than in all the other months of the year combined.

It's also upsetting to see groups sharing cramped rooms in the EMU, and that growing groups are unable to get more space when they need it.

So, I came up with an idea. Actually, it's got two parts.

First, we raise the incidental fee by about \$1,000.

Hold on. Do you think that I am kidding? Of course not. If we gave every student group what they were asking for in terms of funding, the University would have to knock off a couple of local bank branches to come up with the cash. With my proposal, the University would have the money to satisfy everyone, and all of the banks would stay solvent.

The University would be able to dispense with the IFC thing entirely. Anyone would be able to get money for anything. The United States Student Association wants to send 100 members to Tahiti next summer for a lobbying conference? Great! Here's a check. The *Insurgent* wants to give its editors a well-deserved raise? Consider it done! Just think of the advantages.

The other part of the problem is the lack of space in the EMU. Some groups, such as the *Oregon Commentator*, have recently expressed the desire to move into larger facilities so they could work more efficiently. It suggested a room it would like, and, predictably, at least one group



ROBBIE REEVES

that currently occupies that room became quite huffy at the notion.

Everyone will probably admit it isn't quite right for groups to have to operate out of rooms that tend to be as small as a jail cell (not that I have any inside knowledge about incarceration).

So, part two would involve a renovation and expansion of the current EMU. This would involve expanding the EMU approximately four city blocks.

I know, many of you think I must be joking at this point. Quite the contrary. If everyone wanted their own office (a spacious one, mind you, with office space, a lounge or two, lots of comfy furniture, etc.), the University has the responsibility to give it to them.

Four blocks would do the trick. This would involve a minor adjustment to the physical layout of the University. Some buildings would need to be leveled, including Earl, Carson and Walton Complexes, Straub Hall and the park-like areas to the south and east of the current EMU. I know it sounds extreme, but we all must sacrifice if we want to accommodate every group's request for space. Maybe we could even preserve the truly odd (I mean different - nothing is odd in Eugene) architect-

tural design of the EMU by constructing some sort of hallway over to, say, Villard Hall.

Some of you may very well be saying something like, "Yeah, Robbie, I totally agree. Everyone should get everything they ask for. But how would you justify the increase of the incidental fee (remember, an increase of \$1,000) to students. After all, that is a hefty amount of money."

Granted, that is a valid concern, but remember, this is the University of Oregon. This is a place where the USSA went several hundred dollars over budget on its phone bill. If your phone bill happened to be several hundred bucks more than you happened to have, wouldn't you want the same courtesy extended to you? I thought so.

The newfound size of the EMU would require some sort of renaming for the building. The EMU would be more than a "union" at this point. Instead, I propose calling it something like "Erbtown". After all, with the number of people that would occupy an enlarged EMU, it would certainly have a bigger population than other nearby towns, such as Springfield or Junction City.

All in all, I think increasing the incidental fee and expanding the EMU would contribute to harmony on campus and happiness in general.

Maybe we could put this on the ballot for the upcoming ASUO elections. Construction could begin over the summer.

Any takers?

Robbie Reeves is a columnist for the Emerald.

## Oregon Daily Emerald

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