

ValuJet forces people to question regulations

OUR OPINION: Plane crash could have been avoided

The word that is the most apparent in the headlines about the crash of Flight 592 is "ValuJet." All 109 passengers who died on the flight probably selected this airline, created in Atlanta by President Lewis Jordan in October of 1993, for the connotation of this very word. ValuJet. It sounds just too good to be true.

But it was not the name of the company that aroused suspicion in the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), but the six bizarre incidents that have occurred in the last two years of the airline's existence.

On June 8, 1995, a ValuJet DC-9's engines caught fire in Atlanta. All of the passengers were evacuated, and the plane was destroyed. According to the National Transportation Safety Board, corrosion in this particular engine had not been repaired at a Turkish repair company and instead had been covered over.

The next incident did not occur until Jan. 12, 1996, when another DC-9 slid into a snowbank at Dulles Airport in Washington, D.C. At this point, the FAA still had not begun an investigation of the rapidly growing airline.

Surprisingly enough, the third incident, occurring only 14 days after the Dulles incident, was ignored by the FAA as well.

Though the public may be persuaded to believe that these incidents were not a result of FAA negligence, there is no way the public

can accept that an airplane skidding off of an Atlanta runway is a regular occurrence.

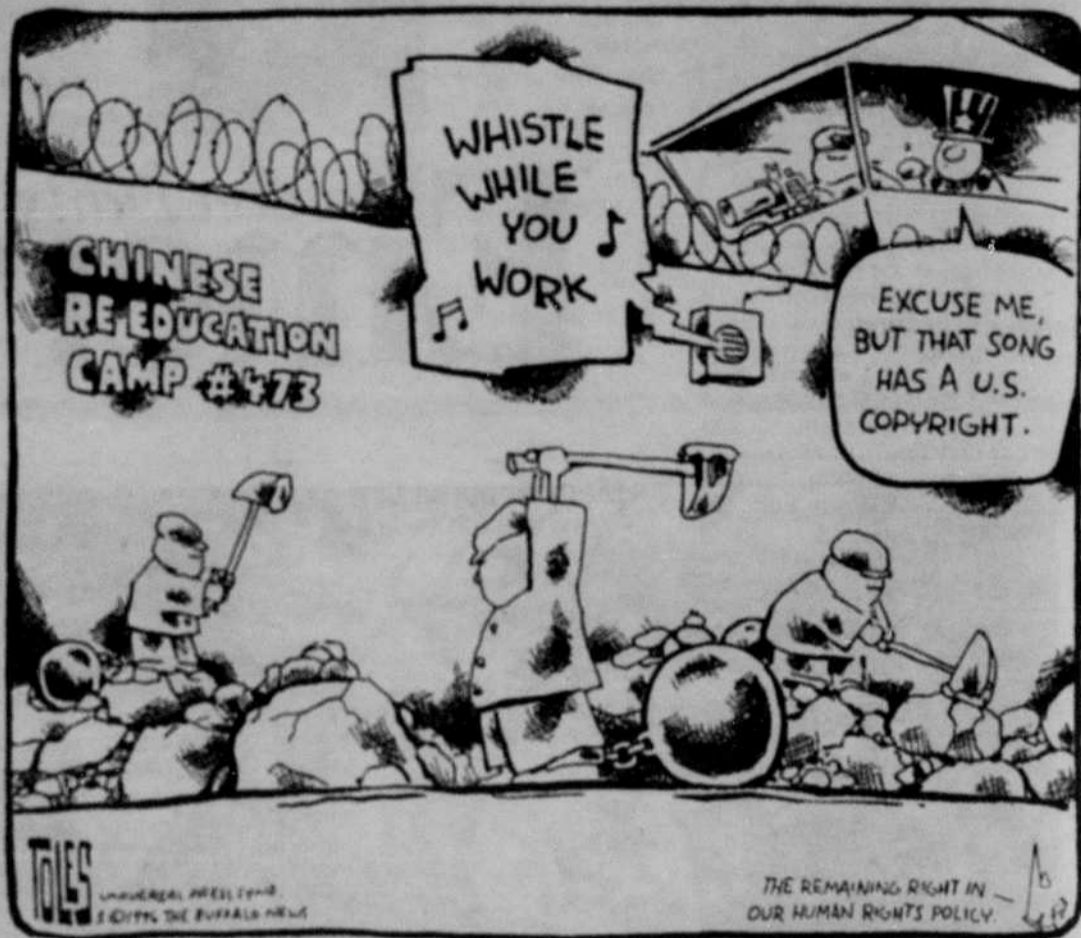
Finally, after the Feb. 1, 1996, incident in which a DC-9's tire burst upon landing in Nashville, Tenn., the FAA showed some concern.

ValuJet Airlines was confronted with two inspections: a seven-day inspection and a 120-day "special emphasis inspection" that was still underway when the latest plane crashed into the Florida Everglades last Saturday.

Despite the investigation, the sixth incident, involving a DC-9 rolling off of a Savannah, Ga., runway on Feb. 28, still took place. Unless ValuJet specializes in providing inexperienced pilots, one is led to believe the planes are at fault for these disturbing events.

The McDonnell-Douglas DC-9 has been flying since 1963. ValuJet is the last airline to continue purchasing these outdated flying contraptions. Most of the engines of these particular DC-9s were purchased from a Turkish airline, most likely to lessen costs.

With all of this knowledge, it is incredibly easy to wonder if the families of 109 people would now be mourning if the FAA had taken action earlier. Possibly, if the administration had stopped ValuJet's increasing services instead of idly standing by and watching this company double its fleet in April, rescuers would not be describing a gruesome scene in a Florida swamp where bodies are being pulled from the waters in bits and pieces.



LETTERS

Lee has integrity

I met Bobby Lee in 1993, a year after his term as ASUO president.

Having become well acquainted with Bobby, I feel very confident in supporting his candidacy for City Council, Ward 3. Through thick and thin, Bobby's vision has remained clear; protecting our natural resources is one of the most important duties we have as human beings.

Bobby Lee has the integrity and commitment to improve the quality of Eugene. Good city and environmental planning takes steady work and creative solutions. Exercise your right to vote on May 21.

Frank E. Connor
Eugene

Not pleasant

Just wanted to drop the *Emerald* this note to let you know I thought Kelly Andersson's opinion piece (*ODE*, May 1) was right about the panhandlers.

Walking down to Coffee People on an evening is not pleasant, even for a guy.

What gets me the most is that if these people truly wanted to get their act together, there are organizations and places willing to help. In Portland there is a wonderful operation called Union Gospel Mission, but they won't help unless participants are committed and stay off drugs and crime.

No one needs to go hungry or begging — the money they ask for in most cases goes exactly where Andersson pointed to.

Mikael Sterner
Political Science

Autzen dangerous

The Transportation Review Committee is currently working toward solutions to help alleviate the pressure on the current parking situation on campus.

One of the proposed alternatives currently under review is to ban overnight parking in the Bean parking lot. This measure will prevent residence hall students from keeping their vehicles on campus. The committee has proposed that all overnight

parking be relegated to the Autzen Stadium parking lot. This action is not acceptable.

By placing all overnight parking at Autzen Stadium, there are great security risks to be considered. Not only will 24-hour security have to be implemented to insure the safety of students' vehicles, but the safety of students who travel between the residence halls and the parking lot will be compromised.

It is widely known that most residence hall students utilize their vehicles during nighttime hours and weekends.

The walking and cycling path through Alton Baker Park and over the Autzen footbridge is fairly long, and potentially very dangerous at night. Operating a shuttle service between Autzen and campus has been proposed as a stopgap measure. However, 24-hour, seven-days-a-week service will be costly, and likely infrequent during off-peak hours and weekends. That is the very time when residents are more likely to need to access their vehicles.

It is obvious that this cannot be an absolute solution. There are alternatives that we must explore. There are ways that we can solve these problems so that we do not have to force any student to be unnecessarily placed in an unsafe situation. Let's work together toward an acceptable solution.

Bill Holmstrom
Undeclared
and co-signers:
Sean Williams, Naomi Tan,
Brad Talley, Carl Yeh,
Brice Lafrance,
Residence Hall Governance
Committee

Spring sarcasm

Did I miss the point or did you miss the point by editing my letter in response to Keith Cunningham's "Everybody get naked — it's springtime" column (*ODE*, May 1)? I thought that by signing my name to the letter it would be printed in its original form, but I guess that was hopeful thinking.

Did I miss the point of Keith's article? How so? Didn't he make

the decision to put pregnant women and cotton dresses in his little piece? Why?

Does he feel that since it's spring he now has license to grope women and ask them personal questions about their pregnancies?

Now that it's spring it's OK to ogle women in cotton dresses that breathe "better than wine?" Maybe we could combine those two things and that would really make spring joyous, wouldn't it?

What was the point? If those things weren't points trying to be made then why were they mentioned? Keith should check his writing and make his points concise and clear. Maybe then, we wouldn't question his intentions and we could just take his opinions for what they're worth.

Robert L. Wasson III
English

EDITORS NOTE: As is often the case with columnists, Cunningham's piece on "spring" was pure sarcasm. As far as editing goes, the *Emerald* reserves the right to edit any letter for length and style.

Copy cats?

I read the "Term limits might remove weak-minded politicians" editorial (*ODE*, May 8). I also read an article entitled "Strom Thurmond: Home on the Hill — or Over It?" in the May 6 issue of *Newsweek*. It is very obvious that the *Emerald* article is "based" on the *Newsweek* article, to put it kindly.

The two articles have the same structure, use the same examples, and in many cases the same phrases, to voice the same opinion. This is grade school paraphrasing at its best.

I would not expect a deficit of opinion at a university newspaper. I now find myself wondering how many of the *Emerald* editorials I have read were original thinking, and how many would have been redundant if I were a more thorough reader of *Time* or *U.S. News and World Report*.

Please come up with your own opinions!

Jon Kirshbaum
Eugene

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