

PERSPECTIVES

May the best woman win



In spite of current political disillusionment, the time is right for presidential bids by Elizabeth Dole or Hillary Clinton for the 2000 election

As the impeachment trial of President Clinton gets underway in the Senate and the nation seeps ever deeper into the morass created by the likes of Clinton, Lewinsky, Livingston and Larry Flynt, one would think that the last thing the American public would want to talk about would be who's going to be the next president of the United States.

Since Elizabeth Dole resigned as director of the Red Cross last week, cryptically stating that there might just be "a better way" for her to serve the country, papers and pundits across the country have been chattering about the possibility that she might be considering a presidential candidacy in 2000.

For the past year, people have been asking why Hillary Clinton would

stay with her husband.

Perhaps Hillary has some plans of her own. The buzz in Washington is that Ms. Clinton is considering running for a seat in the U.S. Senate. Another rumor, less likely but still viable, has her entering the 2000 presidential campaign. Whatever she decides to do, this, ironically enough, is the time to do it. In the current climate of crisis and scandal, Hillary stands to be the only one who will come out better off than she went in.

Consider this: When the scandal began, public perception of Hillary Rodham Clinton was less than stellar.

Over the past year, however, her husband's indiscretions have allowed Ms. Clinton to remake herself several times over. First, she was the tireless crusader for justice, appearing on nationally broadcast talk shows to defend her innocent husband against partisan attacks on his character.

When it became clear that the allegations against Bill were not purely works of Republican fiction, and the graphic details were laid out for the

public to pick through, she became the understanding wife, willing to forgive the weaknesses of her husband to hold her family together.

Now that the president has been impeached and is facing trial, the first lady is seen as a long suffering martyr whose approval rating has shot up to 70 percent.

Not bad for a woman who was once viewed as an overbearing harpy capable of everything from fraud to murder.

Elizabeth Dole occupies a similarly favorable place in the public opinion. As the former president of the Red Cross, Dole has taken on the identity of the consummate humanitarian. She one ups even Hillary in that not even a hint of scandal has touched her.

One factor that could work against presidential bids by either Clinton or Dole is the lack of political experience, such as governorship, that traditionally serve as a springboard for presidential candidates.

But even outside of several years as political wives, both women, Dole especially, boast impressive resumes.

In addition to her seven years with the Red Cross, Dole has had six presidential appointments and two cabinet positions — Secretary of Transportation and Secretary of Labor.

Furthermore, recent polls by CNN and TIME show that potential 2000 voters give Dole the slight edge in a matchup against Vice President Al Gore.

Besides, maybe a break with tradition is exactly what America needs. It has become painfully obvious to anyone who has been paying attention that the status quo isn't working.

Whether Hillary Clinton or Elizabeth Dole move their candidacies out of the realm of the hypothetical remains to be seen, but it is to their credit as people and our credit as a nation that we can finally challenge the conventions of gender and power and take a serious look at who might be the best woman for the job.

This editorial represents the opinion of the Emerald editorial board. Responses may be sent to ode@oregon.uoregon.edu

Letters to the Editor

Hall unnecessary

I am concerned about the attempt to create gay, lesbian, bisexual special interest housing at the University of Oregon. I attend the State University of New York at Albany, and we have a large LGBA group on campus. I understand that one of the reasons being cited for the desire to set up housing in this manner is to prevent discrimination. I do not understand, however, how isolating a group of students more will lessen discrimination and make the mentality of the school more inclusive.

The fight to end discrimination has always been about ending a

group's social isolation and separate but equal, it has been determined, is not a vehicle to help end misconceptions or discrimination.

In addition, creating separate housing for lesbian and gay students allows discrimination not only to be directed at a lifestyle choice but at a building, at a special privilege, and that seems to be facilitating hatred and discrimination, not helping to curtail it. In terms of allowing overnight guests, I believe that the policy has to be extended to all students, regardless of special interest housing, dependent, of course, on the comfort level of the roommate.

Roommate problems are consistent nationwide, however, respecting a roommate's comfort level does not denote the need for special interest housing. The only way to curtail uneasiness and discrimination in regard to sexual identity and lifestyle is through educational programming.

Special interest housing for gays, lesbians and bisexuals is not a form of dealing with the problem. It is a form of running away from the problem and thus condoning the discrimination.

Sean Carroll
Sunny Albany

CORRECTION

The Jan. 8 story "Goddess' bedevils commuters" should have read, "I know people get upset about parking tickets, but there's a certain amount of responsibility that comes with driving a 2,000 pound vehicle," Sanders said.

The Jan. 6 story "Testing centers provide standardized exam training" should have said, the Academic Learning Services is a place where students

can go to prepare for graduate and professional exams. The article also should have said the UO Testing Center is located in the Student Counseling Center. Further, the article should have said, students could retake test preparation programs at ALS for free until they are satisfied with the result and ALS uses full-length tests in its test preparation programs.

The Emerald regrets the errors.

SAID & DONE

"If Windows really were a monopoly, as the government alleges, it should be able to charge much more than 5 percent of the cost of a typical new PC."

—Microsoft, refuting government claims of unfair business practices.

"If you measure our conduct the way people in this city do business, it's no different. You support your friends and their causes, and that's what we tried to do. But as far as trying to buy somebody, no way."

—Tom Welch on allegations that he used bribery to secure Salt Lake City's 2002 Olympic bid.

"We have some winning back of fans to do, and we're going to do it."

—NBA Commissioner David Stern on the post-lockout blues.

"Can you imagine a future president, faced with possible impeachment, pointing to the perjurers, lies, obstructions and tampering with witnesses by the current occupant of the office as not rising to the level of high crimes and misdemeanors? If this is not enough, what is?"

—excerpt from 105 page House of Representatives filing advocating conviction of the President.

"This is a strange process."
—Rep. Henry Hyde on impeachment.