

Newsroom: (541) 346-5511
 Room 300, Erb Memorial Union
 P.O. Box 3159, Eugene, OR 97403
 E-mail: editor@dailyemerald.com
 Online Edition:
 www.dailyemerald.com

COMMENTARY

Editor in Chief:
 Jessica Blanchard
 Managing Editor:
 Michael J. Kleckner
 Editorial Editor:
 Julie Lauderbaugh
 Assistant Editorial Editor:
 Jacquelyn Lewis

Friday, October 12, 2001

Letters to the editor

Registering to vote empowers students

Everybody plays, everybody wins. Is it pinball I'm talking about? Good guess, but try voter registration. Although it may sound like a stretch, it's the truth.

Through registering to vote, we empower and validate ourselves as students and citizens. Sometimes it may seem as though the student voice is all but sought after, but registering to vote forces those with political power to pay attention to the needs of students.

The mobilization of students across the state just last year is a great example of student power. Within the Oregon Legislature, student power has grown immensely. By registering over 27,000 students statewide and over 5,500 students just at the University of Oregon, we were the determining factor in several races last November, and as a voting group, we demanded attention.

In the upcoming election this November as well as the governor's race in the spring, we must turn out to vote in the same record numbers to prove the student vote is a consistent power and worth political attention. However, the only way students will be able to demand such attention is by registering to vote.

Sandra Newton
 sophomore
 political science

Yearning for a chance to vote

In my first two weeks as a freshman, I have learned two things; pillowcases can double as laundry bags and everyone has an opinion. The number of students not willing to vote surprised me.

Ever since my 18th birthday, I have been yearning for my chance to cast a vote in an election. When I vote, I imagine I will simultaneously preserve the aspects I treasure in my community and show distaste for what I do not. Failing to do so would undermine the most basic aspect of democracy, something I assumed was important to my fellow Ducks.

I have found many things to be relevant to the way I live my life as a citizen of this campus, ranging from tuition increases to war. I, for one, cannot wait to take advantage of voting as a venue to express my opinion.

Adam Petkun
 freshman
 political science

U.S. has double standard for terrorists

Now that President George W. Bush has declared a "war on terrorism," I know of some terrorists he won't be pursuing and who are a lot easier to catch than Osama bin Laden.

What about Emanuel Constant, the leader of the Haitian death squad known as FRAPH, who is now living in New York City and would be very easy to apprehend? Then there are right-wing Cuban ex-

iles Luis Posada Carriles and Orlando Bosch, who bombed a Cubana Airlines plane in 1976, killing all 73 people, including all of the Cuban fencing team.

How about Felix Rodriguez, a Cuban exile and CIA agent, who operated the Illopango air base in El Salvador where arms were smuggled to the Contras and drugs back to the United States?

If the United States didn't have a double standard on terrorists, why couldn't the Chilean intelligence agents and Cuban exiles who assassinated Orlando Letelier and Ronni Moffitt in Washington, D.C., be captured with little trouble?

It's obvious there are two kinds of terrorists — "ours" and "theirs." Those evil people called leftists, who want things like unions, better wages, universal health care, and land reform, can be killed in extremely large numbers with no retribution from the United States. The people who murder them will not even be called terrorists. However, anyone who attacks U.S. military or economic interests will be pursued to the ends of the Earth.

Gary Sudborough
 Bellflower, Calif.

Springfield portrayal was hateful

I was terribly startled and saddened to read the editorial ("Eugene healing needs to begin," ODE, 10/1) about Sacred Heart's new facility to be located in Springfield. The level of venom and reproach was shocking.

No one I know is concerned that their children will be born at a Springfield address. Nor does anyone I know think of Springfield as the redneck haven you have portrayed. My friends and colleagues are interested in our Eugene-Springfield community continuing to have a state-of-the-art medical center. My friends choose Sacred Heart as the place to have their children because of its Newborn Intensive Care Unit, not its address.

It is irresponsible of you to perpetuate the idea that ambulances originate from hospitals. Ambulance response time, as stated publicly by emergency services personnel, will not be affected by the hospital's location. Ambulances leave from neighborhood fire stations. The additional few minutes travel time (for some residents) to the Gateway site isn't a problem for the patient once in the EMT's care. Sacred Heart staff have also stated that a 24-hour urgent care facility will be at the downtown campus. At Eugene Mayor Jim Torrey's request, they are considering an emergency department. Downtown dwellers will not be left stranded.

You have done a disservice in alarming readers of the Emerald by printing misinformation. You owe your readers an apology. You also owe the citizens of Springfield an apology for your inaccurate and hateful portrayal of their community.

Elizabeth Walsh
 Eugene

To find the real enemy, we need to look in the mirror

GUEST COMMENTARY

George Beres

"I has seen the enemy — and they is us." That ungrammatical but insightful phrase may be familiar only to those old enough to rank as elders of the University faculty. They would remember its source, a long-gone syndicated comic strip, "Pogo." It — like the best of comics — gave us a clear view of ourselves, often about character flaws we choose to ignore. It came to mind in the aftermath of the terrible human loss suffered in the terrorist bombings of New York City and Washington, D.C.

A public statement of George Bush, the man seated in the president's chair, brought it into focus: "Freedom was attacked this morning by a faceless coward." He was right; but he didn't go far enough. All he, I and our sorrowing fellow Americans need do is look in the mirror, and we'll see a clear unexpected image of that "faceless coward."

One can't minimize the evil of those who used four of our jet planes to kill innocent passengers and end the lives of thousands whom those planes struck. The effort to uproot and punish them is understandable and right. But translating it into all-out war would compound the tragedy by killing many other innocents as we seek out the guilty ones.

Shooting from the hip has enabled us to destroy targets around the world because we keep them faceless, denying the truth that they possess the same flesh-and-blood humanity we try to protect among our children and ourselves. It is those actions by our government that create the ominous image in our mirror. The list is long, but some recent examples make the point:

- Bombing a Sudanese pharmaceutical firm and destroying the limited source of medical help for that Third World country
- Bombing of and sanctions against Iraq that result in the deaths of thousands of that nation's children

- The ongoing slaughter of Palestinian — some terrorists, but many more innocents — by U.S. aircraft and weapons used by the Israeli military
- The traumatizing of Central America by U.S. military policy in El Salvador, Nicaragua and elsewhere, where arbitrary policies of slaughter have a hidden agenda: protecting and maximizing profits of U.S. corporations.

Tally them up. It's a long list that helps one understand why Third World countries, seeing no other recourse for halting our corporate greed, become a breeding ground for terrorists who attack "the land of the free and the home of the brave." As the ultimate sacrifice of so many New York firefighters and police reminds us, there is selfless bravery still within us.

But we are not free — not so long as we allow our government to serve selfish overseas interests of craven corporations instead of seeking the health of our people and of all people. As I've commented before, this will persist for as long as we tolerate an undemocratic elections system that allows big donors to bribe candidates.

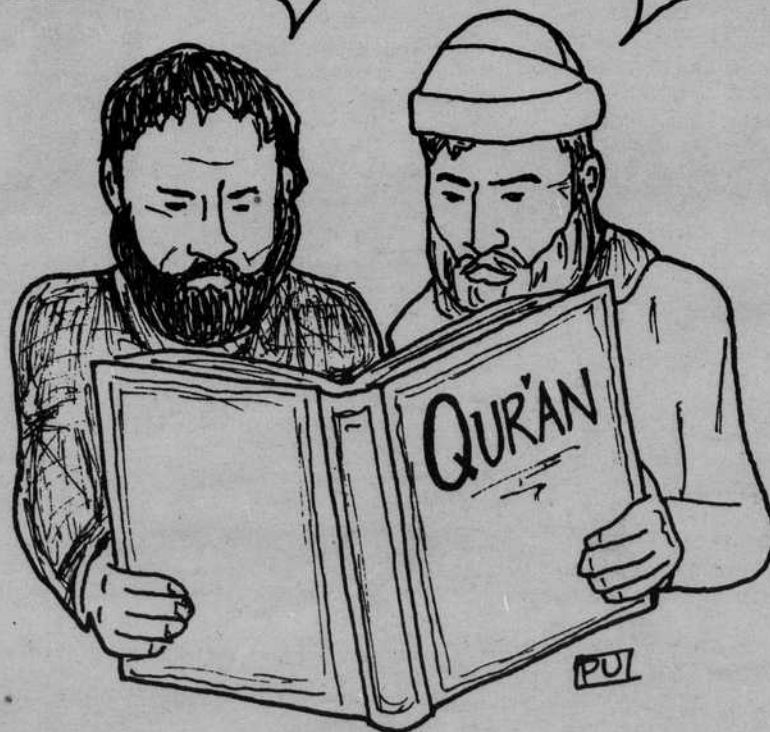
When the man in the Oval Office describes the battle to come as a "monumental struggle of good versus evil," he and we, who assume we are the "good," need to take a long look at that troubling image in the mirror before we jump off the edge into needless war.

George Beres is a former Oregon sports information director, former editor of the University of Oregon faculty newsletter and former manager of the University Speakers Bureau. Retired, he now writes on the history of college sports. He can be reached at gberes@oregon.uoregon.edu.

Peter Utsey Emerald

"THOU SHALL KILL ALL AMERICAN'S" ?!!

I SWEAR IT SAYS IT IN HERE SOMEWHERE.



Letters Policy

Letters to the editor and guest commentaries are encouraged. Letters are limited to 250 words and guest commentaries to 550 words. Please include contact information. The Emerald reserves the right to edit for space, grammar and style.