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# COMMENTARY

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Monday, March 11, 2002

## The Steel Steal

If you've been keeping a close watch on the economy lately, then you've probably heard something about the steel industry. Since foreign steel is being sold at much cheaper prices, the debate has been whether or not to enforce tariffs. The United States' steel industry is losing money and has been asking — or should I say pleading — with the government to bail it out for quite some time. But, of course, steel consumers, who number 50 for every one steel worker, think they're getting quite a "steal" and don't want to pay higher prices for the same goods made in the United States.

Like most political situations, this was a sticky one for President Bush. How to please everyone? Quite simply, he couldn't. But at least he could have pleased the majority of people. Everyone thought Bush would take the middle ground and enforce a mix of quotas and light tariffs on certain products. Instead, Bush has decided to enforce a 30 percent tariff on all main products phased out over three years. He may be making senators from steel-producing states happy, but he's upsetting many of the very people who helped him get where he is, such as car manufacturing companies.

As a candidate in the 2000 elections,

Bush broadly pushed popular programs such as education and prescription drug benefits for seniors, and he promised to weed out needless defense spending. So much for those supposed "promises." They have been flushed down the con-



Peter Utsey Emerald

gressional toilet in the name of the "war on terrorism" and combating the proclaimed "recession." I suppose Americans ought to be understanding about the budget deficit issue, but this whole tariff thing has gone a little far.

Basically, other countries have been subsidizing their own wealth and "dumping" their products on us. True, it is hard on the steel industry, but it helps everyone else. Now we may save steel industry jobs, but it's more than likely

that other industries will have to lay off workers as they pay higher prices for steel. Not only this, but our relationships with foreign producers will be severely damaged, including our important allies in the war on terrorism such as Brazil, Argentina, Russia and Turkey. Now talk is brewing in Europe and Latin America of possible trade retaliations. Yet for some reason these problems seem to be overlooked. Like usual, the U.S. government is only thinking about the benefits for our nation.

What about struggling foreign economies? What if other countries start enforcing huge tariffs on our products? How are we going to feel then? This whole notion could seriously derail trade talks in the future.

Bush may be trying to gain support for fast-track legislation and increase his friends in steel-producing states, but he has forgotten the vast majority who enjoy cheap steel. If countries want to practically give us their products, why are we refusing? The benefits definitely exceed the costs. After all, the whole idea of capitalism is survival of the fittest, right? Tariffs subvert this power of the invisible hand to guide production and actually keep inefficient producers in business. We live in cruel times, but the steel industry just needs to face the facts — if you can't cut it, you get cut — and stop this crying-to-Daddy-Bush nonsense.

E-mail columnist Tara Debenham at taradebenham@dailyemerald.com. Her opinions do not necessarily reflect those of the Emerald.

## Concert catastrophe was not Cultural Forum's fault

I'm writing this in response to an editorial last Friday about the Nelly show ("Concertgoers get bum rap when artist pulls no-show," ODE, 02/28). I am a University alumnus and was a coordinator with the UO Cultural Forum for two years.

I was an event promoter in the Cultural Forum from 1999 to 2001 and worked with one of the largest concert promoters in the Northwest after graduation. I read the editorial in the Emerald last week, and while I found the editorial board's dissatisfaction with the show to be valid, it really should do its homework before making negative claims about something it really did not understand.

From time to time, the Cultural Fo-

rum is approached by an outside promoter to bring usually a large-name act to campus with no financial risk on behalf of the University. This is obviously an enticing situation when the CF is budgeted approximately \$70,000 per year and expected to bring entertainment to campus and the community, provide late-night programming and book/produce the Folk Festival and the Oregon Grind, and is often looked down upon when it doesn't bring large-name acts to the community.

The editorial board found the Cultural Forum guilty of a horribly run production, when in reality it had nothing to do with it. The CF was simply contracted out to provide on-campus coordination and

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acted as a liaison between the promoter, Advantage Mortgage, the University and security — which like the editorial board, I agree was there in abundance, but was required by the University administration.

On the matter of a performer not showing, it is my pseudo-professional opinion that this was a case of a promoter misleading an audience. Again, I stress this is only my opinion, but I strongly feel that when the show appeared that it was not selling, Advantage Mort-

gage, behind closed doors, made the decision to pull the plug on perusing the Ice-T option, but not tell the audience, because, hey, you saw how many people were there. They needed the money.

I want the editorial board to know that I am not writing to it to start an argument, but I believe that its negative feelings, although valid, were not directed at the appropriate people. The outside promoter for this event held the contracts with the acts, determined the ticket prices, withheld the info about Ice-T not coming and regulated the set times.

For decades now, the CF has brought literally thousands of successful acts to Eugene, and from

time to time, it gets misled. It happens often in the insecure, financially screwed-up music industry. You will see excellent big names with professional productions in the future, like you did in the past.

By the way, Dylan and Paul Simon did not play here in 1998. It was Dylan, Van Morrison, and Lucinda Williams. It was a great show indeed, but again with an outside promoter, Double-Tee of Portland, and the CF did what limited production was required, collected its money, then used it to bring other great acts to campus that year.

Ian Clayman, a 2001 graduate, was the performing arts coordinator for the UO Cultural Forum for two years.

### Poll Results:

Every week, the Emerald prints the results of our online poll and the poll question for next week. The poll can be accessed from the main page of our Web site, [www.dailyemerald.com](http://www.dailyemerald.com). We encourage you to send us feedback about the poll questions and results.

**Last week's poll question:** Who or what is this week's talk of the town?

**Results:** 87 total votes

- Men's basketball Pacific-10 championship — 56.3 percent, or 49 votes
- Alcohol sales on Sundays — 13.8 percent, or 12 votes
- David Horowitz's anti-reparations speech — 4.6 percent, or 4 votes
- Ralph Nader's environmental law keynote speech — 11.5 percent, or 10 votes
- Don't know — 3.4 percent, or 3 votes
- Don't care — 10.3 percent, or 9 votes

**This week's poll question:** How far will the Oregon men's basketball team go in the NCAA Tournament?

**The choices:**

- 1st Round
- 2nd Round
- Sweet 16
- Elite Eight
- Final Four
- Don't care

## Welcome to the land of forgotten purpose

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Tara Carleton

I know we, as citizens of the United States, have trouble defining our culture. What I did not realize is how many might have forgotten where our nation came from. Perhaps with public education the way it has to be today, some never learned the truth to begin with. This was never more apparent than when guest commentator Scott Britt decided to write the Emerald with his personal, and rather inaccurate, definition of American culture ("Bush's crusade is anti-American," ODE, 02/20).

To say I was upset when I read his misinformed attack on our president is an extreme understatement. The title of his article, "Bush's crusade is anti-American," still makes me shake my head in disbelief — it was Britt's backlash against the leader of our country that was anti-American. He says Bush and his party "want to change the culture into a more Christian" one. He needs to remember that our nation began with believers of the Bible, so our President is not initiating a change, but reflecting the influence of true American roots.

Yes, I realize some of you are reading this and asking, "But I thought our country was founded on freedom of religion, so

how can this person tell me it was Christianity that initiated the land of the free?" Please allow me to explain. Pilgrims and Puritans did not risk their lives to come to this land and later fight the Revolutionary War with their mother country Britain over some tea. Taxes were not really the point. Reformation was.

Christians fled to this new land to practice Christianity without fear of death for not believing what others told them to. To ensure that no one would feel the same threat that our forefathers did, they proclaimed that citizens of the United States would be free to practice any religion. The war we are fighting now is to preserve those same rights, not destroy them.

Right now, we have a president in office who is willing to stand up for what our forefathers believed in and isn't afraid to proclaim his beliefs. Unfortunately, those like Britt can't see the sense in having a Christian man be the leader of a nation

founded on the principles of Christian faith. Some people are happier defining our nation's culture as "American heathen culture," as Britt called it.

President Bush is not reinventing the wheel here. The Constitution we live by was signed by men who were Christian and those who were not still believed this nation should be founded on the same principles that the Bible sets forth. We have also had many, many Christian presidents. Many would be devastated today to see the attitudes of some of the nation's extreme anti-Americans ignoring the Bible and defending abortion and drug use.

George Washington said, "It is impossible to rightly govern the world without God and the Bible." He is supported by others, including John Adams, Thomas Jefferson, John Quincy Adams, Abraham Lincoln, Theodore Roosevelt, Woodrow Wilson and Dwight D. Eisenhower. Eisenhower said, "The recognition of the supreme being is the first, the most basic, expression of Americanism. Without God, there could be no American form of government, nor American way of life."

Tara Carleton is a senior architecture major.