

## COMMENTARY

# Voters need to stop oppressing politicians

GUEST COMMENTARY

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There is something seriously wrong with politicians. They don't act like real people. If they are unhappy, they are not allowed to frown or cry. They can't even say what is really on their minds. They are one of the most marginalized classes of people in this country. They are fully at the behest of the oppressive voters.

For example, in this state we have a "budget crisis." In real terms that means there are not enough taxes to pay for the government services we currently have. If a politician could be honest, he or she would tell us that we will either have to raise taxes, cut services or both.

In their oppressed world however, they are not allowed to say that. If a politician were to say that directly, their job would be threatened, because the demanding voters expect to get everything for nothing. So, politicians have to dress up taxes and cuts in order to trick the voters. Instead of raising income taxes in our state, they are trying to cut the state tax exemption for federal tax payments. That's confusing isn't it? In the end though, it's still just an income tax increase.

If politicians want to cut a specific government service, they must disguise it to sound like nothing will happen. They say they want to "reorganize" or "restructure" or "increase efficiency." All it means is that they will cut funding. There was a big "welfare reform" program a few years ago that cut costs significantly. To do that the government stopped sending to unemployed people the checks that would buy them food and clothing.

My favorite buzzwords for cutting services are increasing "efficiency" and reducing "waste." If there really were blatant inefficiencies and waste in government, the politician would just come out and say specifically what they think should be cut. If they use the above-mentioned buzzwords it means they are just cutting the budget and there will be fewer government services. There is no state bureau of waste and inefficiency that we can simply eliminate every election to balance the budget.

Politicians are not free to admit to any mistakes. For example, if candidates have used drugs, even

20 years ago, they can't just say it. Instead they have to be like the last two presidents. Either he "didn't inhale," or he has no comment.

Politicians are not allowed to get divorced, because that would indicate a lack of family values.

In general politicians can't dislike anything. If they visit the ultra-conservative Bob Jones University one day, they must be in favor of the kind of family values that forbid racial mixing and homosexuality. Then if they meet the log cabin liberals the next day, they must be in favor of diversity and understanding of different lifestyles.

Every politician has to simultaneously love industry and the environment, teachers unions and accountability in education, farmers subsidies and the free market. They have to pretend that contradictions don't exist. They have to tell us they can clean the environment and reduce greenhouse gases at no cost. They have to pretend that oil will last forever and stay cheap.

Sometimes they just have to speak without saying anything at all. They have to profess to have values that are in reality totally meaningless. A politician must promise to provide leadership. He or she has to be in favor of families. They all must claim to be patriotic. A politician has to promise to restore fiscal discipline, support education, and build partnerships while avoiding partisanship. And above all they have to be "for the people." If I was forced to babble senselessly as much as the average politician I would kill myself.

That is why they are oppressed. The politicians are the most marginalized people in America. Their First Amendment rights to have real opinions and state them are being taken away by the threat of losing their jobs.

The voters of America have to stop being oppressors. They have to learn that politicians are people. The voters must allow the politicians to be honest, to have opinions and tell us about them. We have many bad things to say about politicians, but they are not to blame. The overlords, the ones truly in charge, the voters, must take responsibility for the character and behavior of people they put in charge.

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## Letter to the editor

### Emerald makes people ignorant

I'm a reader of your magazine (sic), mostly out of boredom at the bus stop, but a reader nonetheless. I'm routinely amazed at your inability to print things that actually matter.

Let me point to your April 22 edition to explain my point. This was the pinnacle of useless reporting. Eighty percent of the front page was taken up by an article on the school cafeteria ("Rub a dub grub"). We're not in a news vacuum, and the reporting on the cafeteria was one more example of why the public is so ignorant.

On Page 6, the Emerald covered Michael Moore's visit to the University ("Political satirist pokes fun

at some 'stupid white men'"). Moore is a person whose political views parallel those of many University students and, furthermore, is working to expose political wastes, government cover-ups and corruption. In his book, "Stupid White Men," he has a chapter on how stupid Americans are. Yet, the Emerald put him on Page 6, next to pizza coupons, classified ads and crossword solutions.

The Emerald is contributing to the ignorance of America by not reporting on news that is important.

I'm not saying students don't eat, but in our society, where most of our time is spent watching sitcoms and mind-numbing television for hours on end, can the Emerald report on something important for us to read while we wait for the bus?

Landon Tucker  
Eugene

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