

COMMENTARY

Editor in Chief:
 Michael J. Kleckner
 Managing Editor:
 Jessica Richelderfer
 Editorial Editor:
 Pat Payne

Friday, January 31, 2003

Editorial

Buzbee's citation shows students how not to host responsible party

The University of Oregon. A fraternity member. A toga party. Angry neighbors. Does "Animal House" come to mind?

We have to admit, it did for us. When we heard the news that ASUO Vice President Ben Buzbee had thrown a toga party at his private residence that was busted by police after complaints from a neighbor — and that he and his roommates received citations for furnishing to minors — the opportunities for humor, cheap jokes and stereotyping were plenty.

Unfortunately, this isn't a funny situation. It isn't humorous to Buzbee, who will be in court today contesting the citation on the grounds that the police entered unlawfully. It surely isn't a joke to the minors at the party who were cited. It isn't funny to the police or the community, who have to deal with this situation much more often than they should have to.

On its face, this news story might not seem worthy. Sure, everyone has parties. Sure, minors drink, and they go to parties where people allow them to drink. It's just a natural part of college life. College kids will be college kids, after all. What's the big deal?

The big deal, in this case, is that Buzbee is elected to represent us. To students, to police and to the community, Buzbee is one of the faces of the University. Last term, in the wake of the riots in the West University neighborhood, the ASUO Executive — led by President Rachel Pilliod and Buzbee — headed an aggressive campuswide campaign to prevent both riots and police incidents at parties. This included town hall meetings, advertisements published in the Emerald and posters explaining how to throw a responsible party. All of these efforts included details such as avoiding loud noise, keeping partygoers inside and cooperating with neighbors.

So it is a big deal when an elected official representing students can't follow his own relatively simple instructions. Students don't need more tarnish on their reputation, and the relationship with the community doesn't need to be more strained.

Don't get us wrong — we understand the realities of college students and partying. Members of the editorial board have hosted parties where laws may or may not have been broken. We're not necessarily saying we agree with the drinking age, or with any other laws that pertain to partying.

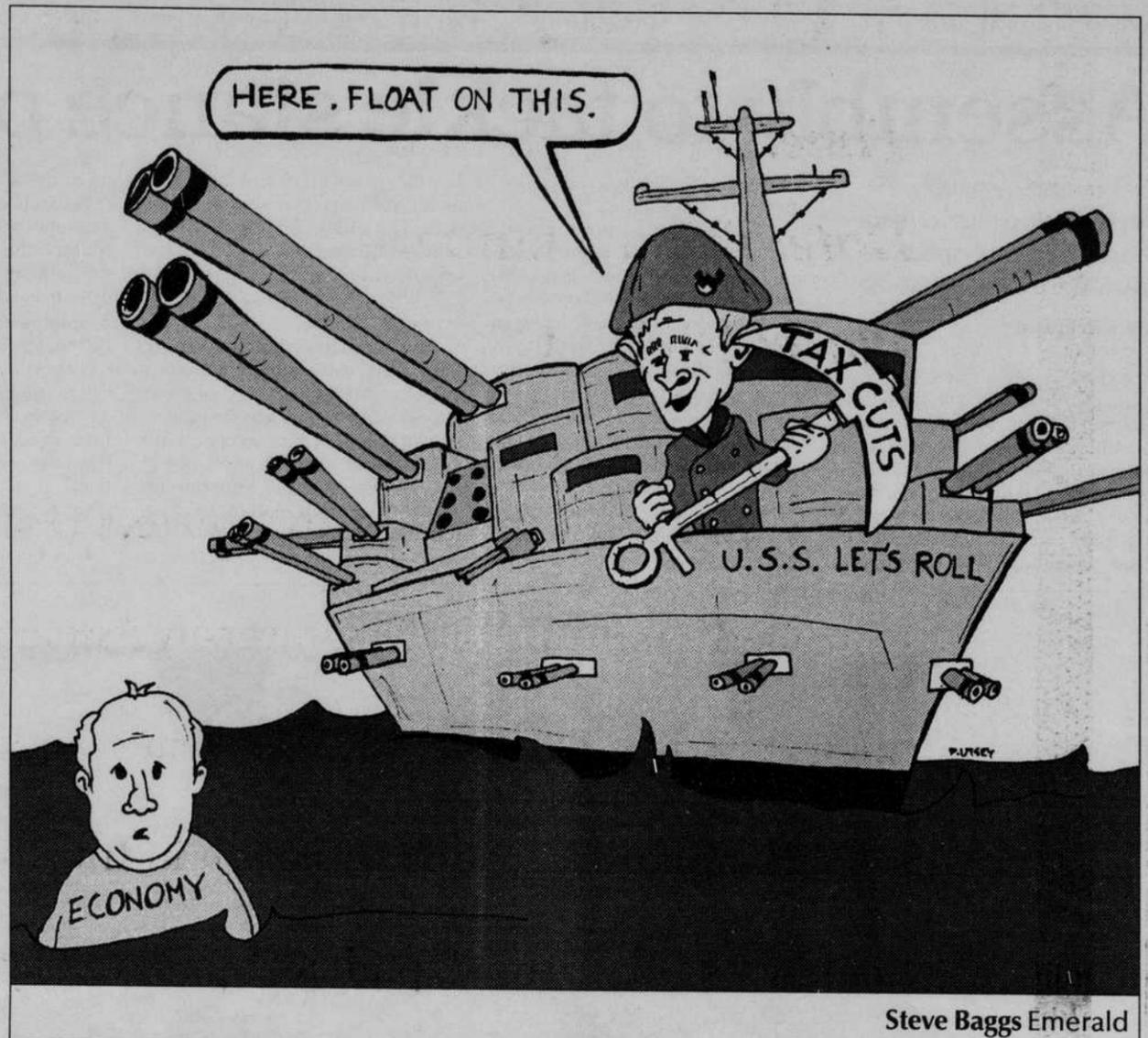
But we aren't elected officials, and we haven't been cited by police for furnishing. Mainstream politicians, who disagree with laws need to work to change them, not just break them. At the very least, keep the music down so you don't get busted.

So Buzbee will be in court today fighting the citation, and if the police didn't have the right to enter his house, we hope an appropriate judgment is made. But to date, he hasn't denied disturbing his neighbor or furnishing to minors.

We all deserve more than Buzbee's brief statement. If he didn't furnish to minors, he should say so. If he did break the law, however, he owes the community an apology — or his resignation.

Editorial policy

This editorial represents the opinion of the Emerald editorial board. Responses can be sent to letters@dailyemerald.com. Letters to the editor and guest commentaries are encouraged. Letters are limited to 250 words and guest commentaries to 550 words. Authors are limited to one submission per calendar month. Submission must include phone number and address for verification. The Emerald reserves the right to edit for space, grammar and style.



Steve Baggs Emerald

Letters to the editor

No room for weakness in anti-war resolution

I found Tuesday's forum on the impending war in Iraq and the University's role during wartime informative and interesting. I was impressed by the eloquence and knowledge of the speakers. However, the issue of a possible Faculty Senate resolution regarding the war requires clarification.

In response to a question regarding the possibility of the senate enacting an anti-war resolution, University President Dave Frohnmayer stated that he did not believe it is within the senate's purview to issue a resolution not directly relating to the University and its educational mission. That seems like a reasonable explanation to me.

However, one thing the senate president said concerned me. In response to a question about why OSU's faculty senate passed a resolution opposing the war and ours did not, he stated, in part, that we need to be "cognizant" of the "budget realities" of the state legislature and aware of the "political ramifications" such a resolution would cause. I took that to mean he was afraid an anti-war resolution would have negative political consequences for the University in the Republican-controlled legislature.

If the Faculty Senate truly felt motivated by a consciousness of role, that's one thing. But if it failed to act because they feared recourse from the legislature, it smacks of cowardice. This war debate is too important for weakness of will. OSU's faculty senate had the courage to condemn the Bush administration's march toward war. Why doesn't ours?

Chuck Slothower
 sophomore
 pre-journalism, political science

Meeting allows discussion of Iraq issues

At the request of the University Senate, University President Dave Frohnmayer has called a University Assembly meeting for Friday at 3 p.m. in 180 PLC. This meeting "may only undertake discussion; it will not have legislative power." The meeting is open to everyone.

It is an opportunity to speak and be heard. For example, those attending will seek answers to the following questions:

Since the Constitution declares that ratified treaties become the law of the land, would President Bush be in violation of the Constitution if he ordered an invasion of Iraq without either U.N. authorization or convincing evidence of immediate threat to our country?

Do the violations of our Constitution that have been threatened by the present administration represent a danger to free inquiry in universities?

Does the money spent on the military result in a perilous strain on funds available for education? Will invasion of Iraq exacerbate that strain?

According to The Washington Post on Jan. 25, federal authorities have begun enlisting campus police officers in the domestic war on terror. Thus, consequences of rampant militarism are, clearly, of immediate concern to American universities. Will the University community be informed when the Department of Public Safety starts working for the FBI? Will actions taken by officers be openly declared so that they may be examined for compatibility with University regulations and values?

It's important to attend — it's an opportunity to influence the University's stand on the impending invasion!

Franklin W. Stahl
 professor
 molecular biology

Racial quotas should not be used

I would like to applaud President Bush's stance against the University of Michigan's admissions system, which uses racial quotas to determine who will be accepted. It is simply wrong to use race at all as a factor when reviewing an application.

Let me say that as a white American, I am deeply ashamed of the way my country has treated blacks and other minorities in the past. However, we cannot fix the errors of our past by committing new injustices. My belief is that people of all ethnic backgrounds are equal. When a university uses racial quotas, even if for noble purposes, what happens is another instance of racism. Racism should not be tolerated anywhere, especially in our universities. What is happening at Michigan and other places is legalized racism.

If a white applicant is more qualified to attend a certain school than a black applicant, then there is absolutely no reason that the black applicant should be given preference over the white applicant. To do so is racist and unfair; plus, I think that the system is patronizing to African-Americans since they are being held to a different standard than whites.

When applying to college, people should not be judged by their skin color, but rather by their abilities and accomplishment. The University of Michigan needs to realize that by using racial quotas, they are simply perpetuating the racist forces which exist within America.

Zachary White
 sophomore
 history