

COMMENTARY

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Fry-ing international relations

What is the shortest book in the world? "French War Heroes," or so goes the joke. Kidding aside, anti-French sentiment in the United States has seen a steady rise in the days since French President Jacques Chirac took a hard line against the war in Iraq.

Anti-French sentiment has a long and inglorious history in the United States, but in the year 2003, one would hope we could rise above it. House Reps. Walter Jones and Bob Ney, both Republicans, provided perhaps the silliest example of contemporary anti-French sentiment when Ney ordered his underlings to rename French toast and French fries "Freedom toast" and "Freedom fries" on restaurant menus in House office buildings.

"This action is a small but symbolic effort to show the strong displeasure of many on Capitol Hill with the actions of our so-called ally, France," Ney told the Cleveland Plain Dealer. Jones came up with the idea after the owner of a North Carolina diner pioneered the practice.

House Speaker Dennis Hastert, R-Ill., even went so far as to urge boycotts of French products such as champagne and Evian bottled water. This is a bad idea. Americans should allow France and other nations their prerogative to disagree with United States foreign policy without fear of economic reprisal. They deserve to voice their opinions without risking retaliation.

The French may have their eccentricities, but to label them as ungrateful or cowardly is both unfair and inaccurate. France could eas-

ily have played America's puppet and marched dutifully into war. Instead, they chose the tougher route. By standing up to the world's only superpower, France has taken an enormous risk.

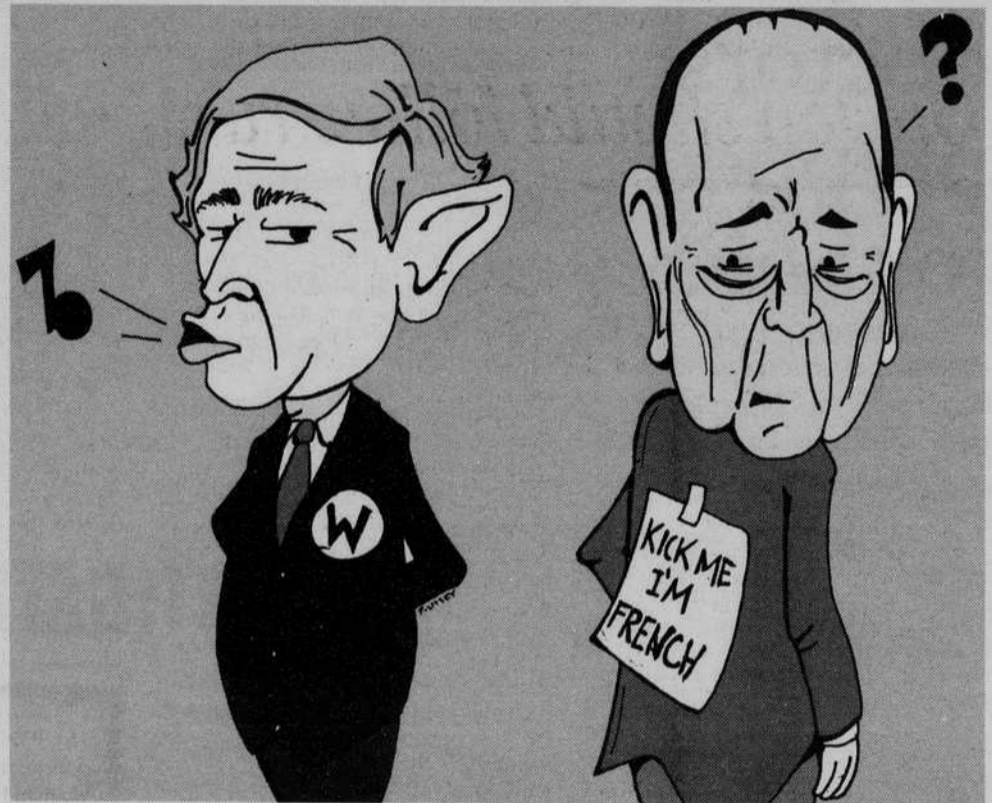
"Old Europe," as Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld referred to France and Germany, inadvertently proved its relevance by providing a counterbalance to potential American imperialism. The quagmire at the United Nations, created by the veto threats of France and others, forced President Bush to at least slow down and consider alternatives to war.

To be fair, France may have ulterior motives for opposing the war in Iraq beyond peace, love and understanding. France has always feared American cultural, political and economic imperialism. The French resent America's prominence in the world, given France's past glories, and they certainly want a piece of the post-war pie. Reconstructing Iraq will cost a lot of money, and France wants to make sure that its industries receive some of it.

Besides, it can't all go to the Halliburton Corporation, though Vice President Dick Cheney might try (his former employer has already received at least one contract for post-war rebuilding). Yet whatever France's motives, Americans should thank their lucky stars that France does not necessarily do everything President George W. Bush wants it to. Diversity in the world is a good thing.

Interestingly, Americans have focused a great deal of attention on French opposition to the war while largely ignoring opposition from Germany, China, Russia and others. I don't hear anybody urging boycotts of the Mercedes dealership.

Perhaps the most bothersome aspect of anti-French sentiment is that it reeks of American arrogance. It suggests that American foreign



Peter Utsey Emerald

policy is nearly always wise and that what is good for the United States must be good for every other nation on Earth. Other countries, understandably, see it differently. Need we piss off as many nations as possible?

Though we may sometimes wish otherwise, the United States does not exist in a cocoon. Having friends abroad may prove more

beneficial than the present administration can foresee. Let's just hope that the Bush administration doesn't damage foreign relations beyond repair.

Contact the columnist at chuckslothower@dailyemerald.com. His opinions do not necessarily represent those of the Emerald.

Online poll

Each week, the Emerald publishes the previous week's poll results and the coming week's poll question. Visit www.dailyemerald.com to vote.

Last week: How long do you think the war in Iraq will last?

Results: 68 total votes

Three months — 23.5 percent, or 16 votes

Six months — 23.5 percent, or 16 votes

Nine months — 8.8 percent, or 6 votes

One year — 7.4 percent, or 5 votes

Longer than a year — 26.5 percent, or 18 votes

Leave me alone! — 10.3 percent, or 7 votes

This week: Do you plan to vote in the ASUO elections?

Choices: Yes; No; What elections?

Letters to the editor

Emerald should treat 'wanted' articles with care

When I read of the tragedy of Eric Jones ("Wanted student found dead; possible suicide," ODE, March 31), I immediately thought back to the shocking "wanted" article regarding a student that the Emerald published before break. I remember thinking to myself, hey, no matter what the situation was, if I was on the cover of the Emerald with my student file photo and it was telling anybody that saw me to call the authorities, I would want to crawl under a rock and die, and surely not be seen on campus.

Well, as Ariana Schwartz remarked in the paper, "It seems to me that's exactly how he felt." It's especially unnerving that after all of the hype, when the details emerged, it sounded more like a provoked attack than a random, drunken beating.

I seriously urge the Emerald to more carefully consider publishing such "wanted" articles when it involves students or staff, especially with such sketchy details. Instead, why don't we see a picture on the front cover of a captured "campus wanker."

Aaron Reddick
 fourth-year undergraduate
 landscape architecture

Nookie deprivation may end war

All right, there's a plan to end the war. It's simple, and if we band together, we could inadvertently amplify the revenue of adult shops from Portland to Maine.

I'm thinking Lysistrata had it right. If she were here right now, she would advise Laura to cut off "access," and make Georgy think twice about sending 19-year-old kids to hunt some psycho who only allegedly has weapons of mass destruction. What if women everywhere crossed their legs and said, "No way honey! Not until you do something about impeaching the scary white guy who bought his way into office!"

I'm thinking our fake-it-till-ya-make-it-president is holding us hostage with a frightening amount of power, and drastic times call for drastic measures.

What do you say, ladies? This might be the only thing to save us from an insane egomaniac more worried about shaving seconds from his 5k time than about sending our loved ones into war. White male power has been uncontrolled for centuries. Their Achilles heel? A push-up bra and a lap dance. It sounds crude, but not as crude as the oil we're killing for.

Just imagine 150 million men calling George, "urging" him to end the war. What if men everywhere flew to D.C. and demanded G.W. quit playing "GI-Joe-goes-to-nuclear-war" with our loved ones? He sleeps well at Camp David. But how well would he sleep in a cold bed with no nookie?

Adrienne Stuart
 junior
 educational studies

Curtin brings experience, leadership skills to Senate Seat 15

One of the most qualified candidates running for ASUO Student Senate is Kevin Curtin, who is running for Social Science Seat 15. As a freshman, he was an ASUO in-

tern on the legislative team and worked on projects that benefited all students. Recently, he was elected as the Oregon Federation of College Democrats co-chairman, a position that represents his excellent leadership skills and dedication to public service.

Leadership skills are not his only noteworthy attributes. His brilliant public speaking skills will amplify the voice of the social science majors in senate sessions. But perhaps Kevin's best contribution to the representation of social science majors is his empathy for the underdog and determination for social justice.

I cannot think of a better person to best represent one of the most diverse constituency of majors on campus. So please vote for Kevin Curtin on April 9-11.

Steven Lockfield
 senior
 history and art history

Melton, Morales will work to empower students

This letter is in support of the "It's all about ME working 4 you!" ticket for ASUO Executive. I believe Maddy Melton and Eddy Morales are the most experienced candidates for this position because of their past involvement in the ASUO office and other student organizations.

If elected, Maddy and Eddy will work on student empowerment. Maddy and Eddy believe it is important to place students in decision-making boards and committees. They feel that more students need to be involved when the administration is making key decisions that will directly affect students.

Having witnessed Maddy and Eddy's performance in the ASUO of-

ice, I know that when they make a commitment, they always follow through. I have the utmost confidence in Maddy and Eddy's leadership skills and ability to carry out platform agendas.

Taraneh Foster
 junior
 journalism

Write in Lockfield for Senate Seat 12

Before you AAA majors find yourself sitting at your computer wondering whom on the ballot to vote for, I want you to consider another option.

I am writing this because I believe that a candidate who is not on the ballot is the best choice for ASUO Student Senate. His name is Steven Lockfield, and he is running for AAA Senate Seat 12. By working with Lockfield closely, I have noticed many qualities that would make him perfect for the position of senator.

I have seen Lockfield consistently go out of his way to communicate with people in order to find solutions for difficult problems. Lockfield has progressive ideas, yet understands the need for fairness in the senate. He will seek out the input of students, giving them a greater voice in our school's political decisions. More specifically, Lockfield plans to create a senate committee to study and fix the serious problem of voter apathy on campus.

I have no doubts that Lockfield is the person for this position. Please write in the name Steven Lockfield for AAA Senate Seat 12 on April 9-11!

Kevin Curtin
 sophomore
 political science

Letters to the editor and guest commentaries policy

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.