

New book displays Bush's flaws

Forget the nonsensical back-and-forth rhetoric being reported out of Washington this week regarding Richard Clarke's book "Against All Enemies." After actually reading it cover to cover, the following facts are apparent.

First, the George W. Bush administration inserted an enormous layer of bureaucracy between themselves, Clarke and other terrorism experts, making communication between them very difficult. Clarke met with the Bill Clinton administration almost daily, but was not allowed to actually talk to Bush until Sept. 4, 2001.

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Second, though Republicans have roundly criticized the Clinton administration for its lack of terrorist planning, the Clinton team was actually very pro-active. The administration did this by not only making Clarke and his staff of experts regulars in the White House, but by authorizing military strikes, rooting growing al Qaida cells out of Bosnia and Europe and avenging the assassination attempt on George H.W. Bush with military action against Iraq — all of this in opposition to the wishes of the 1990s Republican-held Congress.

For the past three years, Americans have been used, fearmongered and lied to, in order to achieve this administration's right-wing political

agenda, including a bait and switch, bogus attack on Iraq. This move, the biggest foreign policy blunder since the trumped-up Spanish-American War in 1898, has not only cost the United States billions of dollars, hundreds of lives and thousands of maimed soldiers, but it has created a new generation of terrorists, now even more outraged by America. Iraq is now the vortex of that mistake, furiously sucking budding Arab terrorists toward Baghdad.

Donald Rumsfeld said the other day that, as he predicted, indeed we have found terrorists in Iraq. No kidding. He invited them.

Jim Bottorff, a 1996 University graduate, lives in Chicago.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Larson proves his weakness

Lars Larson's recent refusal to participate with other invited talk-radio hosts at Southern Oregon University's First Amendment Forum is revealing.

He said that he would not attend the forum if he was not allowed to carry a concealed weapon onto the campus. Oregon administrative rules prohibit concealed weapons on state campuses. SOU administrators refused to give in to Larson's demand and violate Oregon law, thus, no Larson showing.

Larson went on to gratuitously compare his boycott activism to the actions of historical civil-rights giant Rosa Parks. Nice try, but a more accurate comparison might be "Chicken Little." We know personal safety is not the

issue because Larson was offered the services of an armed security guard, which he refused. Perhaps Larson's blustery boycott is a convenient distraction, masking his fear of having to debate ideas in an environment where he can't bully, ride the volume fader, break to commercial or simply hang up on callers whose views differ from his. Outside the domain of his own radio show he would be ceding the dynamic of wielding absolute control.

Mr. Larson would have had a wonderful opportunity to discuss and debate his concerns about concealed weapons and public access issues relating to weapons if he would have simply participated in the forum. I frankly don't believe he had the guts to do so outside the fortress of his right-wing broadcasting studio.

**Gerry Rempel
Eugene**

Editorial Board doesn't understand concept of racism

The Emerald recently corrected an error surrounding the 4J Chavez rally ("Chavez editorial misconstrues important point," ODE, March 11). But it is important to look at the main argument of the original article, in addition to its

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mistake, because this is the most recent example of the Emerald missing the point and not understanding the deeper underpinnings of racism.

Brad Schmidt said, "The Emerald Editorial Board does not talk to every individual involved in a discussion." While not talking with activists, the Emerald has used such heated rhetoric as "some of the worst rhetoric to

date, and one of the worst plays of the race card the Editorial Board has seen in recent memory" ("4J Chavez campaign must look beyond race," ODE, March 10).

In its "Vagina Monologues" editorial, the board dismissed a protest as "a bizarre display that seethes with a distinctly Eugenean brand of irony" ("Protesters undermined the diversity they sought," ODE, Feb. 17), and said, "The protesters' arguments ... are riddled with fallacies that detract from their message of fairness, tolerance and diversity," saying "The protesters' arguments are ultimately divisive, not diversifying." This same argument was used in "4J Chavez campaign must look beyond race," claiming that it "constitutes a more racially divisive policy, harmfully dividing a community instead of unifying it."

This tendency to blame protesters for being "divisive" when they confront racism, rather than analyze the racism, is disturbing. I don't have the space to debate the racism that the protests surrounded, but when a person of color perceives a group to be racist, unifying with them is not usually the first thing on that person's mind. The Emerald's accusations come down to the argument that it is "divisive" to claim someone is being racist. While examining these claims may be distressing, they are important claims that should be discussed, not set aside for the sake of unity.

The Emerald's arguments also completely ignore the claims of institutional racism, seeing such conflicts only as personal disputes. While "Vagina

Monologue" protesters claimed that a racist environment created a hostile space for performers of color that forced them out, the editorial board said "Some of those who complained that the play's cast did not represent them didn't try out for the play, and some of those who did dropped out." When protesters complained that no outreach was done to minority populations, the Editorial Board said "It would be wholly inappropriate for the producers to ask each auditioner what her sexual orientation or gender identity was, and worse yet, cast parts based on her answer."

When people pointed out that each Eugene school was named after a white man, the Editorial Board said "Picking a namesake for the school on the basis of race reduces

the recognition of legacy to tokenism." When they pointed out that the lack of representation of people of color, and Latinos specifically, shows that Eugene is still influenced by racism, the editorial board was upset by its interpretation that "One of the common arguments for naming Southside after Chavez is a simple matter of demographics."

I've come to love and depend on the Emerald for coverage of campus activities and activism. But instead of attacking anyone who claims something is racist, I would appreciate it if the Editorial Board would at least begin by analyzing the alleged racism.

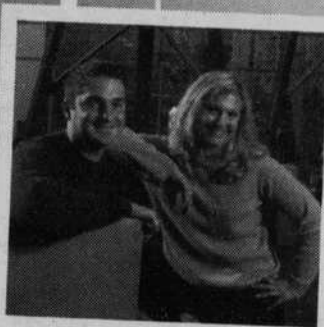
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