

## Republic stagnates under Republicans

Rev. Sam Krause

The Clackamas Print

Reports of ABC journalists' phones being tapped, warrantless wire-tapping of international calls to domestic citizens and other clandestine activity by the Bush administration have created a general contempt and mistrust amongst a wide political array of eligible voters towards the entire government.

One of the worst aspects of the Bush administration, Congress and the Supreme Court is the blatant abuse of a representative government by the majority. I believe that the Constitution was written to protect the minority from, as Alexander Hamilton put it, "the tyranny of the majority." The Great Compromise, which basically defined our Republic's congress as we know it, encompasses Hamilton's approach to the constitution. Hamilton's view should be carried over into today's politics: a respect for the minority.

Another repercussion of one-party rule is a lack of accountability. Why should the Senate subpoena a member of the House of Representatives or Bush administration and grill them on the stand when infighting and negative press coverage just reflects poorly on the political party that is in control of government? That would be political suicide and strategically unwise. I believe that's

why various leaks of classified information have not been held responsible - it would look bad on the Republicans.

The answer to a stagnant republic is an interested and informed public. Congress is still the strongest branch of government, no matter how much the Bush administration undermines congress and the consti-

tion. Every two years, all eligible voters have the opportunity to influence the federal government in a peaceful and lawful manner. It is in the House that impeachments begin and the Senate is where they end. Come November, it is possible to replace the House of Representatives and one third of the Senate.



John Hughes Contributing artist

## Net neutrality needed

The Internet came close to being gutted by greedy corporations

Laura Cameron

Commentary Editor

Who here can tell me what the best thing is about the Internet? No, not porn. Anyone else? Ah yes, up there, the prat in the back!

"The wealth of knowledge and information available to us instantly!"

That's absolutely correct, Timmy! The Internet, if used correctly, can provide the eager student with all the information they need for lab reports, term papers and the like. Tell the average college student to write a research paper without using the Internet and watch them spontaneously combust!

Now imagine being denied access to useful sites like Google or lii.org. How much more difficult has that term paper suddenly become?

This is the future that may await us if we lose something known as network neutrality. For those with a life beyond the Internet, here are

the bare bones of the matter: currently, any user can access any website through any ISP. Due to lobbying from the big telecommunication firms, however, there is now a bill before Congress that would allow ISPs to restrict or deny access to websites of their choosing (read: any site that doesn't pay them).

Passage of this bill would mean a lot of money for the telecoms that own the ISPs. It would also destroy the essence of the Internet.

Let's look at this from the point of view of a fictional Clackamas student named Bob. Bob has been assigned to write a 10-page report on the genetics of black leopards. Whistling merrily, Bob sits down at his computer, pulls up his browser and directs it to Google. Oh no! Bob uses NetZero and Google doesn't pay them, so they won't let Bob access that site. Grumbling, Bob closes the browser and goes nextdoor to use his friend's computer.

Success! Bob's friend Bill has AOL, whom Google has paid. Bob can use Google Scholar to do research for his paper. He searches for "genetics of black leopards" and gets a link to an article on just that topic that was printed

in the journal *Nature*. Bob is happy - this should get him some wonderful information for his paper!

Oh, not so fast, Bob - *Nature* doesn't pay AOL. The article is just out of his grasp, on the other side of the block set up by the greedy ISP.

Bob is angry now and decides to ask his Internet friends for help. So he enters the address for his favorite discussion forum and discovers that it, too, is blocked by AOL. Enraged, Bob slides out of the chair, drops to his knees and, raising clenched fists toward the uncaring heavens, screams "KHAN!"

Well, OK, maybe that last bit is a little unlikely, but the rest of our hypothetical situation is entirely possible. The fact that it actually is possible worries me.

Limiting access to information should never be done lightly. The idea of allowing others to limit access to information for monetary gain is downright abhorrent and should be scornfully rejected.

Let's not allow America, Land of the Free, to become America, Land of the Bought.

## Open primaries: good in theory, bad in practice

Ben Maras

Editor-in-Chief

Last week I was accosted right here on campus while enroute to my WR 123 class. The overzealous orator shoved a clipboard in my face and attempted to get me to sign a petition to put an open primary bill on the November ballot.

Judging by the look on his face when explaining that I didn't support them, I could have sworn he misheard me saying that I eat infants (which I do - I consider it my duty as a good little Commie - but that's beside the point). If only he had listened to my point.

Here in Oregon we have what is known as a closed primary system, where a voter may only vote in the primary of the party which they are registered for (Democrats for Democrats, Republicans for Republicans, Greens for Greens, etc). This has recently come under attack lately, because it completely leaves non-affiliated voters off the electoral process.

This is a huge percentage of Oregonians. About one in five voters here are registered as independent - about 400,000. This is often used as justification by the open primary supporters for their cause - what they don't explain is why opening the primaries would undermine what Oregon is famous for.

Closed primaries are an intricate part of maintaining a mixed and balanced government in Oregon. If primaries were opened, it would allow another window for tyranny of the majority.

For example, if a state contains a high number of registered Democrats and a

lesser number of registered Republicans, an open primary would allow a large subset of Democrats to vote in the Republican primary, and sway it in the direction of a favorable or weak candidate. Here the Republicans are being suppressed within their own party.

Furthermore, a major party could easily use this power to manipulate the pivotal points of debate in an election. For example, the G.O.P. could use voters to sway the Democratic election in favor of a candidate who would be softer on issues on which they are vulnerable (corporate welfare, national debt, big oil, Iraq, Iran, Afghanistan, NSA wiretapping, President-sponsored raids on Democratic Senators' offices, Karl Rove, Social Security, and CIA leaks ... to name a few).

Even more vulnerable though, is the many third parties which reside in Oregon. The number of party members for these groups is much smaller than either of the two dominating parties - and this makes them much more vulnerable to an oppressive movement by a majority party to sway their own elections.

This would develop into another variant method used by both the Republicans and the Democrats to sway elections - invest money and time into a third party candidate which will draw votes away from the other.

Lest we forget, political parties are private organizations and should be treated such. Meddling with people's ability to hold an election within their own organization constitutes government abuse, and as they say, it rolls downhill (back onto the people). So forgive me for signing my name to it.

## Letter to the editor

### Immigration face-off missing one point

I found both sides of the very complex issue of illegal immigration to be well-written. However, I would like to point out that our ancestors were the first illegal immigrants: they were native peoples here before we arrived.

Diane Averill  
English Instructor

The Clackamas Print encourages reader response. Submissions must be received by 1 p.m. Friday in order to be printed in the following week's issue. All submissions must be accompanied by the writer's full name and contact information; requests to remain anonymous will be considered. Please limit letters to approximately 200 words, essays and guest columns to approximately 550 words. Submissions may be edited for space and clarity, not for content. Please send submissions to [chiefed@clackamas.edu](mailto:chiefed@clackamas.edu), or drop them off on disk in RR 135.

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