

ON EDWARD SAID

"Earth, receive an honored guest," Auden once wrote of Yeats. Last week, the world laid Edward Said to rest. Said, who was born in Jerusalem and taught literature at Columbia University for four decades, died after a long battle with leukemia.

Progressive communities in Eugene and elsewhere owe a lasting debt to this man. First, in his book *Orientalism*, he developed a systematic critique of traditional Western knowledge and views about Asian societies. He showed that European scholars and officials presented the East (be it China, India, or the Arab world) as passive, exotic, and inferior. This Orientalist view enabled Western powers to justify the subjugation and colonization of the Orient. His scholarship unveiled the academic imperialism at our universities, which have not been the same since.

Said was also the most eloquent American spokesman for Palestinian statehood. When he began to lecture and write on behalf of the cause, many educated people denied that Palestinians even existed. He told the history and voiced the aspirations of the Palestinian people, whom he called "victims of the victims." No one, he believed, should be discriminated against based on his or her religion. Today, even George W. Bush recognizes the Palestinian right to self-determination.

Finally, he was an independent and a humanist. He advocated writing in alternative media. An outstanding musician, he taught music to a group of Israeli and Arab children with conductor Daniel Barenboim. He believed that no human being should be stripped of their land, national identity or culture, no matter what the cause. By the same token, he quoted Theodor Adorno's dictum that "it is part of morality not to be at home in one's home." I think many Eugene citizens

share that feeling about our country.

These are sad times. The war on Iraq, racial profiling of Middle Eastern students, and escalating hate-crimes against Muslims in America, are partly the result of Orientalists who spout racist "us against them" diatribes in government and the media. That some Oregonians receive a more tolerant view in their local paper, would have pleased him dearly.

Philip Huang
Eugene

DUCKING THE TRUTH

Alan Pittman's article "Conspiracy Theories" (9/11) was interesting, even if it did trail off into an incoherent conclusion. In his drive to be "objective," Mr. Pittman sums up his piece on the most explosive political issue of our time by posing lamely, "Forty years from now, will 9/11 questions have finally been put to rest?". Wow, think about it.

Good journalism does more than simply list arguments and counter-arguments. I found it striking how critics of 9/11 conspiracy theories — at least according to Pittman's reporting — simply denied the issue rather than engaging any of its substance. The entire counter-argument, it seems, is based on the authority of those making it. If Norman Solomon says there's nothing to it, well then there must not be anything to it — inconvenient facts be damned. Didn't the Pentagon call it "stupid"? Case closed.

It is Pittman's choice not to examine this peculiarity of the debate that dooms his article to end in a shambles of pronouncements over the general nature of conspiracy theories. Newsflash: There's absolutely no doubt that the events of 9/11 resulted of a conspiracy. The questions relate to who was involved, and to what extent. Nineteen men didn't spontaneously find themselves hijack-

TWO MUCH COFFEE MAN BY SHANNON WHEELER



ing four jetliners on the same morning. They, and others, conspired. While Pittman raises the issue of American involvement, he for some reason fails to actually engage it.

Pittman's pale didactic summation does nothing more than inform readers of the obvious. Of course some conspiracies are real and some are not. The question is not about the nature of conspiracy theories, but about whether the leadership of this country is in fact its greatest enemy. We should not get distracted by knowledge that elements of our own government are either orchestrating or

allowing domestic terrorism?

It's quite telling that *EW* devotes more resources every single week to *Ducks Illustrated* than it did to exploring the staggering possibility that the current administration is actually orchestrating mass murder and civil disaster to solidify its grasp on power.

Tim Shaw
Eugene

WHY BUILD IT?

Regarding the federal building ramp con-

Kumbaya Dammit BY DAN CAROL

Apollo's Appeal
A security strategy to feel good about.



EDITOR'S NOTE: In response to that constant question we're hearing — "What can I do to defeat George Bush?" — *EW* offers a new column aimed at November 2004. The author is Dan Carol, Eugenean who founded Carol/Trevelyan Strategy Group (www.ctsg.com), the left's leading laboratory for political engagement and experimentation. CTSG, with offices in Eugene and Washington, D.C., is a 10-year-old, 60-person political consultancy specializing in communications strategy, grassroots and the Internet. CTSG's clients and partners include Moveon.org, Amnesty International USA, Working Assets, SEIU, the Drug Policy Alliance, the Natural Resources Defense Council, and Rock the Vote. Carol started the firm after serving as research director for the Democratic National Committee during the '92 presidential cycle, where he directed staff work on the party's platform and worked in Little Rock on the Clinton debate team. As a pioneer of new generation politics and issues marketing, Carol built the first U.S. Senate website in 1994, led an independent effort to derail Ollie North's Senate ambitions, served as a "truth squad" leader at three GOP conventions, and was profiled by the *Wall Street Journal* in 2000. When he isn't annoying the Bushies with projects like *Misleader.org*, Carol has taught political science at UO, co-coached fourth grade hoop stars at Edison elementary school, and assisted school funding campaigns in Eugene. His full "Kumbaya Dammit" rap for progressive reform in *Nation* magazine can be read on www.kumbayadammit.com

Welcome to the progressive no-whining zone. A place you can visit, every two weeks or so, to connect to smart projects and new pathways to power.

The bottom line: We know 10 times over what's wrong with George Bush, weenie Democrats and all that jazz. So let's stop documenting the dilemmas — and instead begin pouring concrete on a new foundation to make it right.

This time: a national security strategy to feel good about.

Ready for regime change? I bet you are. But it's not going to happen if we can't make the majority of Americans feel safe.

Fortunately, there's a new project called The Apollo Alliance that's baking up a tasty new recipe for clean energy, national security and jobs, jobs, jobs.

Imagine spending serious money — like George Bush does for tax cut trillions and

Halliburton handouts — on an ambitious 10-year, \$300 billion effort for sustainable jobs, cleaner manufacturing, youth and urban apprenticeships and smarter transportation. The program pays for itself with jobs and greater energy independence in U.S. exports. Revitalizes the U.S. manufacturing base.

Creates three million jobs. Heals labor vs. environmental grouching over Arctic drilling. Fuels the hopeful, can-do spirit that put America on the moon. And maybe even inspires the right kind of patriotism.

So what's not to like? In polls, the Apollo initiative is testing off the charts with Joe Six-Pack voters — the voting block we need to win crucial Rust Belt states like Ohio, Pennsylvania and Michigan in 2004. On the campaign trail, Democratic presidential candidates are offering dueling Apollo-type policy plans. Across the country, high-tech and environmental leaders like the Sierra Club's Carl Pope are also joining 17 major unions in saying yes to the Apollo approach.

Slowly, but surely, the political wedge that George Bush drove between labor and environment is beginning to close. That's good news — because we need Turtles and Teamsters to march together in 2004 (like they did in Seattle in 1999).

Frankly it still amazes me that neither Bush nor the Democrats in Congress stepped forward with an ambitious crash effort like this before. It seemed like such a no-brainer in the wake of Sept. 11th.

Call me nostalgic, but I remember my grandfather sharing stories of how he saved aluminum foil in World War II. I am inspired by the images of Rosie the Riveter. I believe we must fight terrorism — but the fight begins when we come together around a shared vision of hope and optimism — not the fear that fuels the Bush policies.

Sappy I know, but I think the greatest generation is yet to come.

So check out www.apolloalliance.org — there's a top-flight, 10-point policy plan and a bottom-up, grassroots strategy for infusing these ideas into the presidential debate in key primary states like Iowa.

For you policy wonks, imagine big block grants to deficit-starved states, to seed regional strategies without a one-size-fits-all solution, tied to hard targets and caps on greenhouse gas emissions. But before the laws can change or the money can move, first we gotta win — and Apollo is the winning (not whiny!) message for Democrats in 2004.