

Presidential Finesse

The Brits don't like us right now.

EDITOR'S NOTE: Eugene Democrat and writer Frank Schramm was in London for President Bush's visit Nov. 19.

Ronald Reagan was advised to remember one important rule before meeting with Queen Elizabeth II in London in 1982: Whatever else, don't ride your horse in front of the queen's horse. Duh. Even that senator who used to be on "The Love Boat" knows that. So of course, President Reagan not only trotted out ahead of the Queen's horse, but he did a fancy little pirouette thing and turned back to wait for the queen as she rode to catch-up.



FRANK SCHRAMM

American presidential finesse was continued last week when President Bush visited London. No horses this time, just fourteen thousand extra police to protect Mr. Bush from terrorists. Truer, the extra bobbies on horseback, snipers on rooftops and helicopters swooping down nose first over formidable crowds of protesters were strategically placed exactly where the Secret Service demanded they be placed, to protect Bush from the angry royal subjects of what he likes to refer to as "Old Europe."

Unfortunately, our long planned trip to England coincided with Rove's Doves and we paid the price for it. My favorite moment in London? Let's see, might have been when I was buying tickets to the Tower of London and was immediately pegged for American (could it have been the way I held out my handful of coins and asked "Is this enough?") and was roundly roughed up verbally by a beefeater at the gate. Mr. Beefeater was merely one of a number of old Europeans willing to point out how much money Bush's visit was costing the crown. We were advised to enter via the Traitor's Gate.

No, perhaps my most memorable moment was being pinned against a glass case full of gold bars at the British Bank Museum by a very opinionated docent who was not amused at my ungrateful attitude toward my president when I responded ashamedly to his question "How do you like being here at the same time as your president?" How was I to know he was the one and only British Bush fan?

Not to be a disappointed tourist though – I have my souvenirs. I still have the two \$25 tickets to the inside of Westminster Abbey we were unable to use. It was closed for the first time ever due to security reasons. And I have my photographs of the important London sites – Westminster Abbey, Tower Bridge, British Museum, St. Paul's, Tate Museum and the rest, each photograph perfectly framed by a width of chain link fencing and London police in their green and yellow reflective stripes and bullet-proof vests. And I have a bunch of coins that are still a mystery. The big ones are worth less than the small ones. Then there are the special memories: our cheeks red from the brisk London morning air as we stood at crosswalks watching the signs go by, "America Sucks," "Bush go home and take Tony Blair with you," and my favorite, "Bog off Ape Boy."

While packing for home, Janice and I watched the news on the tele'. As obsessed as Londoners are with Michael Jackson, it was a different clip they were repeating as if it were a memory test: that of the golden papier-mache statue of George Bush being felled a la Saddam Hussein into a ring of burning American flags. They don't like us right now – not at the restaurants; not at the Internet cafes; not at the castles and other monuments; not at the pubs; not on the tele'. We're just not appreciated at all. They don't like Tony Blair, either.

Press reports of 70,000 protesters were laughably low – double that at least. BBC reports a closer-to-the truth account of the motives behind our war with Iraq, the push of phony intelligence, the lack of post-war planning. America is perceived by the British as calling the shots, even though it was Tony Blair who was waving the worry about Hussein flag while Bush was still involved in the theft of electors from Florida. Blair is regarded as Bush's puppet. Save for the televised accounts and the well-timed attacks on the British consulate in Turkey, the news was all about how unwelcome Mr. Bush was. Vanessa Redgrave may have said it best on a Donohue-esque British TV panel. "It's not that the American presidency isn't welcome here. It's just that George Bush isn't welcome here because he is a liar."

If you go there now, you'll know that it doesn't take an account from Her Highness to grasp that His Heinous is unwelcome at Buckingham Palace, no matter what you hear from Downing Street.

as stepping up licensing enforcement.

Your cat will no longer be allowed outside unless it is spayed or neutered. Yes, the report limits this to "cats at large," but try explaining property lines to a cat.

In order to accomplish these things, the report calls for a huge new county workforce to track your compliance with all these new regulations.

Unless we all protest the adoption of this report as presented, we will feel its impact on our wallets forever.

Ann Jensen
Eugene

LAY OFF DEAN

Mean Mr. Dean. Is this what it has come to, Ms. Tattersall (12/11)? When you are unable to articulate a reasonable or a well-thought-out argument to as to why left-of-center, liberal Democrats such as myself should vote for Dennis Kucinich all you can come up with is name calling? In attempting to convince the Green Party/Ralph Nader voter that Mr. Kucinich is their candidate of choice, are mean-spirited half-truths and name-calling all you can bring to bear?

Let me tell you why I support Howard Dean. Howard Dean is honest. He speaks from his heart. He doesn't avoid answering difficult questions. He is educated. He connects to me on a simple emotional level without resorting to name calling. Yes, I know that Mr. Dean and I disagree on many subjects. Are our disagreements significant? Not in the larger context.

Millions of rank and file Democrats have intuitively grasped what is going on in America today. Bush is bent on repealing the "New Deal" liberalism with a simpleminded Corporate Nationalism. If you are not for him you must be against him. And he is against you. There is a chilling sort of mean spiritedness in his "bring 'em on" rhetoric.

As for my opinion of Mr. Kucinich, like many, I like much of what he says. But I remember his voting record. I understand that fundamentally he is not capable of winning the election. And I do not want another four years of George Bush.

Paul Ausems
Eugene

SINS OF OUR FATHERS

It is sickening to hear the mealy mouthed supposed opponents of the junta conform themselves to politically correct expressions that defend the ridiculous notion that the capture of Saddam Hussein is good news.

Does the U.S. invasion and occupation deserve credit for finally detaining the monster they created, informed, trained, funded, armed, and, at the behest of god bless fucking america, encouraged to commit the very crimes against humanity about which we now fulminate within a weak critique speculating upon the manner of his prosecution?

This capture is not closure, nor would be a show trial. This could be at best a necessary evil to deal with the sins of our fathers. However, since we are committing precisely the same sins in the process, not even that can be claimed.

This is a grievous culmination and confirmation of decade after decade after decade of moronic, atrocious, monstrous foreign policy. Further, this is a wonderfully explicit and yet still ignored lesson: If we want to stop war and terrorism, it might possibly be useful to avoid alliance with monsters.

Perhaps for these crimes in Iraq a trial in which Jimmy, Raygun, Shrub, Bubba, Dub and Saddam stand together in the docket as collaborators would manage a fleeting glimpse at the truth.

Harold Rogge
Eugene

BOUTIQUE THRONGS

Oh, the "power of the printed word." That was made abundantly clear when the *EW* covered our "Bust BuSh Boutique," a holiday fund-raiser promoting peace and a regime change for Amerika. The *EW* was the only media to cover this incredible event, and it was *made* incredible because of Aria Seligmann's skills in conveying the intent and essence of our project.

We made a point of asking many attendees how they heard about it, what prompted their attendance. Virtually every single response was, "I read it in *Eugene Weekly*."

The Peace Elves who hosted this event to raise funds for Eugene Peaceworks and their project, the Committee to Counter Military Recruiting, are deeply grateful to Aria and *EW* for being so very community-minded in this, and in countless other ways. We are grateful for this community who purchased our "Peace-L-Toe" and our regime change fashions and peacewear. Many hundreds of dollars were raised. (And of course the exquisite desserts donated by Sweet Life Patisserie were the "icing on the cake"! Thank you all for bringing in the throngs.

Carol Berg for
The Peace Elves

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