

Fake Debates

Beyond binary thinking

Either you are with us, or you are with the terrorists.
— George W. Bush

The Bush administration states that everyone on Earth must choose between supporting their policies or supporting Islamic terrorism, when nearly all of the world rejects both. A peaceful approach compatible with the survival of civilization cannot support either the War on Terror nor the Iraqi insurgency, neither the U.S. occupation of Afghan poppy fields nor the Taliban.

Establishment politics in the U.S. seek to confine discourse toward whether one supports the Republicans or the Democrats even though there is a much more diverse range of opinions. While the two parties differ on some social policies, they are nearly identical on the core issues of expansionist empire (even though the Republicans are usually worse).

Some in the Democratic Party imply that if you support a stronger role for women in politics you have to support Hillary Clinton even though many feminists (female and male) are repulsed by her shilling for corporate polluters and efforts to further shred the social safety net. Margaret Thatcher's terms as prime minister in England proved that gender does not determine policies.

The mainstream view of environmentalism suggests that those concerned about pollution changing the climate should embrace Al Gore's nonelectoral political campaign even though he helped make the climate crisis worse while vice president. And some far-right wing anti-environmental voices suggest that because Al Gore has some unpleasant politics, therefore climate change is a hoax – as if atmospheric chemistry were dependent upon a particular politician or political entity.

The loudest voices in support of the paradigm that the Bush administration was complicit in 9/11 argue for "no planes" (the plane crashes were faked, or substitute planes were used). The debunkers in the media accurately point out that these no-plane claims are nonsense but then claim that because this claim is false, therefore there was no official conspiracy to permit the attacks to happen. Few on either side mention the well-documented evidence that there was complete foreknowledge at the highest levels of the administration.

On Nov. 2, the Pacifica Forum is sponsoring a white supremacist neo-Nazi to speak at the UO on the topic of the Israel lobby. This is about as ridiculous as inviting KKK leader David Duke to talk about human rights abuses in Darfur or Zimbabwe. Zionists and extreme anti-Semites each tell their supporters that they can only support Israeli apartheid or Holocaust denial, and that the presence of the other is a reason to support them. However, within Israel there is a much broader range of opinions about the morality of Israeli policies than within American politics although most American Jews do not support the Likud (ultra-militarist) faction in Israel. We don't need neo-Nazis to tell us that Israel violates human rights. It is possible that some of the Holocaust deniers are provocateurs intended to give uncritical supporters of Israel an excuse to avoid examining human rights abuses against Palestinians, among other contemporary crimes.

Finally, the statewide Measure 49 campaign poses a false choice for voters concerned about rampant overdevelopment. The Yes on 49 campaign claims their measure would protect the qualities that make Oregon special. While pro-49 rhetoric campaign is laudable, the details are less impressive. Measure 49 would block some of the worst parts of Measure 37 (passed in 2004), but also cement into law the regulatory repeal of Measure 37 and set a horrible precedent for future environmental rollbacks.

The Yes on 49 groups are spending more energy on 49 than they exerted to stop Measure 37. The lead group for 49, 1000 Friends of Oregon, promotes timber industry representatives on their "Envision Oregon" website – Hal Salwasser (OSU Forestry dean) and the Oregon Forest Resources Institute. Every strip mall, freeway, subdivision, paper mill and toxic dump currently littering the countryside is in compliance with existing Oregon land use laws – a reason to strengthen protections, not negotiate them away to appear reasonable. Further details about Measures 37 and 49 are at www.greenwasheugene.com

Mark Robinowitz of Eugene is publisher of oilempire.us, which has a longer version of this article.

downtown dan

Advice for Uncertain Times

Dear Dan,

I hear you can see the downtown pits from outer space. True?

Citizen for a New Downtown



No, CAN DO. But you can probably hear us bickering.

A final thought for the undecided voter out there. The **Eugene 4-J District Board of Directors supports 20-134**. Dan finds it odd that opponents spent time and money "defending schools" from a **measure the district supports**.

What 20-134...

Doesn't Do:

- Restore Civic stadium
- Raise taxes
- Bring back the Grateful Dead
- Require us to use KWG
- Send the Ducks to the Rose Bowl
- Commit us to a specific design
- Improve service at McMEnamin's

Does:

- Create a new retail district
- Ensure we have a downtown before Springfield
- Create a new property tax base
- Give us something to tell 200,000 Trials visitors
- Create housing
- Solve global warming*

Craters are Depressing. Let's Get to Work.

YES on 20-134

Paid for by Eugene Can Do It PAC

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*results may not be typical

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