

President Quayle?

White House aspirations of former vice president's return may spell 'Presidon't' for Republican Party

George W. going to run? How about Liddy Dole? Both run on the ticket?



DAVID LEE

These are the questions that giddy Republicans everywhere are pondering. Fresh off of President Clinton's Houdini-like escape from the clutches of removal from office last week, bitter Republicans on Capitol Hill are preparing a merciless onslaught on the Democrats in the 2000 presidential campaign. As the saying goes, payback is a pain. With the always charismatic Al Gore as the GOP's favorite among many political pundits, regardless of which candidate they endorse, neither Dole nor Bush have publicly declared their intent to run for a Republican nomination. What if neither decide to run? Who will the Republicans be left with? With Gore providing the only opposition candidate the Republicans are going to have an advantage. Of course, to everything there is an exception. In this case, the exception is Dan Quayle. Remember Dan? Of course, who could

forget the vice president who managed to alienate the entire single-parent population of America? Who could forget the man who was out-spelled at an elementary school spelling bee? As reported by CNN earlier this month, Quayle announced the formation of a presidential exploratory committee in order to analyze his chances for success in the upcoming election. If the public's initial reaction to his candidacy is any indication, the committee is sure to find Quayle is seriously lacking in the area of public support.

Unlike Vice President Gore and his tree-like persona, Quayle proved to be a source of comic relief during his term in office, accurately portrayed by the media as a dimwit. Notorious for making fun of his own intellect (or lack thereof), Quayle has inadvertently admitted his ignorance on many occasions. Esquire Magazine has been particularly fond of Quayle's exploits, often publishing many of his idiotic statements to the press. For example:

The Holocaust: "The Holocaust was an obscene period in our nation's history. I mean in this century's history. But we all lived in this century. I didn't live in this century."

Midwestern Floods of 1992: "They need help, and we have helped, and we are here to help. And we are helping, and we're going to continue to help."

Hawaii's role in the Union: "Hawaii

has always been a very pivotal role in the Pacific. It is in the Pacific. It is part of the United States that is an island that is right here."

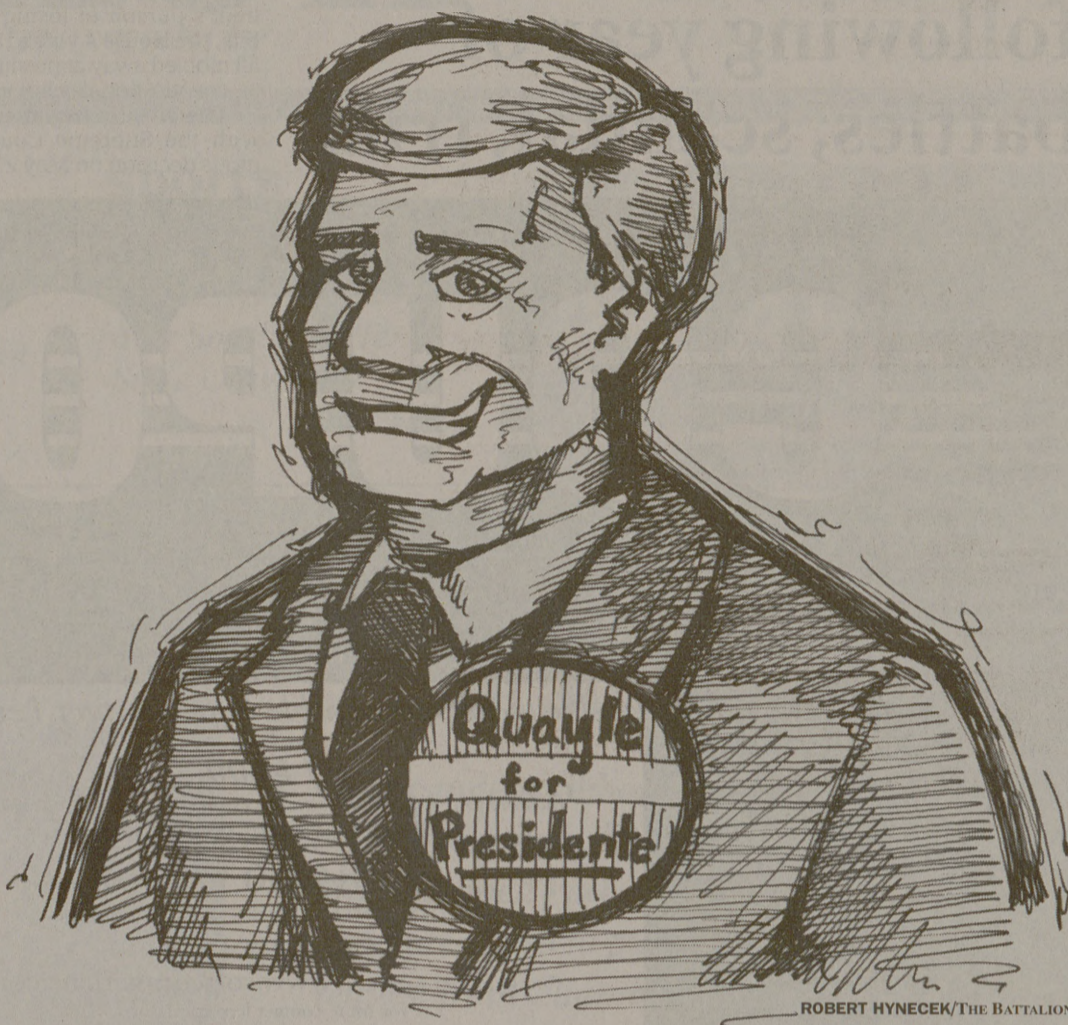
Quayle's agenda as a senator: "I know one committee I don't want: Judiciary. They are going to be dealing with those issues like abortion, bussing, voting rights, prayers. I'm not interested in those issues and I want to stay as far away from them as I can."

Reelection in 1992: "If we do not succeed, then we run the risk of failure."
America in space: "For NASA, space is still a high priority."

It is a relief to know the vice presidency is truly a dead-end job in light of these comments. One wonders what Quayle would have accomplished if he had any real power during his term.

This is probably why the Republican party refrained from jumping up and down with glee when Quayle expressed his interest in running for the nomination.

However, in the unlikely chance that neither Dole nor Bush decide to run, Quayle quickly becomes the front runner as no other noteworthy Republicans



ROBERT HYNCEK/THE BATTALION

have expressed an interest. Hopefully, the Republican party will have the wherewithal to nominate a no-name candidate rather than nominate Quayle. If he is somehow nominated, it would

be the equivalent of the GOP shooting itself in the foot.

David Lee is a sophomore general studies major.

Republican circus finally over, American audience already gone

Well, the circus finally came to an end. The big show has been packed down, rained out, and the audience is gone. The American people got sick of the show before it even got started.



MANISHA PAREKH

It was the same with the trained monkeys. They did the same routine over and over again, until the audience could predict the next move.

But what about the grand ringmaster? Why was he such a flop? Starr was ready for the performance, he seemed to know what the people wanted and he seemed ready to give it to them. But he failed.

All of his flowery and magnificent announcements could not make up for the mediocrity of the circus; worse, the circus did not even come close to Starr's announcements or predictions. The epic-length Referral to Congress — which can be likened to a circus program — provided no structure to the poorly framed circus.

But in the end, the circus failed

for one reason — it had no point. A real circus is meant to hold the interest of the audience; the impeachment and removal trial was meant to provide some solid facts or verdicts to the American people. Instead, the trial was a mockery that insulted the intelligence of a nation. Even now, the sore losers continue to pin the trial's failure on the public because they did not care enough.

Never mind the fact there may have been a good reason the public did not care. Never mind the fact Congress is elected to represent the will of the people. Never mind the fact impeachment and removal of the President is carried out by politicians because it is precisely that — a political process, not a judicial one.

Spoiled performers with little to no talent will generally blame their audience for their own failure. Of course performers — circus or otherwise — who have egos the size of some of the senators generally find themselves out of a job when the director has had enough; the nation will wait until the next election to make that call.

So, the show is over. Hopefully, the audience will not have to suffer through another one like it for a very long time.

And perhaps, in retrospect, it is wrong to compare the impeachment and removal trial to a circus. After all, the circus is usually worth the price of admission.

Manisha Parekh is a junior psychology and journalism major.

Trial failed because of American apathy, political ignorance of duty

It was business as usual on Capitol Hill, however, this time the double talk, spin control and inability to take a stand on an issue did not deal with policy making.



ZACH HALL

Instead, Congress was being asked to deal with a much more important issue: the impeachment and conviction of the President of the United States.

However, Congress did everything in its power to subvert that duty, and, in the end, succumbed to political and public pressure. Clinton, through his actions, spit on the Constitution, but Congress not only let him get away with this it walked all over the Constitution as well.

However, politicians were not the only ones who turned their backs on the Constitution. The American people have shown they have no clue about the ideals and values this country was founded on.

It was no secret President Clinton had been involved in scandal after scandal since even before his first days in office or that he had admitted to lying to the American people. Yet hundreds of politicians and millions of Americans seemed to think none of this mattered. Congress was protecting its own political future, and the public could not seem to understand that it is "not the economy, stupid."

For the Democrats, it was a game of "take the side that was not losing." They did not take a firm position on any issue relating to the President since day one. When the scandals first broke they took their more traditional "stick by the party at all costs" approach. Even when the Lewinsky scandal broke, they were trying hard to believe the President and "stand by their man." However, soon after the President ad-

mitted he lied to the country and his own colleagues, many Democrats were ready to jump from the President's slowly sinking ship and head for safer waters on their own.

But, along came the American people and the November elections. The poor results, and lost seats for the Republican majority seemed a "mandate by the American people in support of Clinton." Now many of those same Democrats were back on the President's boat helping him bail water. It seemed obvious many Democrats, who had conceded the President was immoral and did lie, were struggling between protecting a member of their own party and doing what they knew was the right thing to do: mutiny the captain.

However, the Republicans were not without fault in this bungled impeachment process. Unlike the Democrats, they had taken a fairly consistent attitude toward this president since the '92 primaries: he is a worthless liar and a ruthless political conniver. But, after finally catching the President in an act of wrongdoing, many Republicans lost their stomachs for a confrontation. Many conceded defeat on a conviction in the Senate. Instead of fighting for the constitutional ideals, they became more content with appeasing their constituents for the next election.

Here lies possibly a deeper injustice than the acts of the President. Republicans such as Sens. Trent Lott, Miss., Fred Thompson, Tenn. and Arlen Specter, Penn., usually staunch critics of the President, lied down in the final days of the trial, conceding defeat. Lott and his like need to leave Washington with their tails between their legs. The Constitution and America have no place for such gutless wonders.

What remained were the American citizens. Contrary to their popular opinion, they should have had no influence or decision making abilities in this impeachment process. The Con-

stitution is not interpreted through public opinion, nor is justice determined through Gallup polls.

Public reaction to the series of Clinton scandals and the impeachment process shows how much society's views of honor, integrity and the constitutional ideal have decayed since the days when the country was founded. More importantly, though, public response showed how self-interested American society has become.

While the politician's only concern was his political future, the American people had become blinded by their own economic security. Many claimed Clinton had done so much good for America, yet could not name two or three good things. Others said we should let Clinton get back to "doing the job of running the country;" yet he was getting a "job" while he should have been doing his job.

There was little doubt the President would be acquitted of perjury charges. The Democrats made it seem as if they were publicly reprimanding Clinton in order to keep from further damaging the party while not offending the public; hopefully they can still look themselves in the mirror.

The Republicans, some at least, fought to the bitter end; others, however, publicly reprimand the President, hoping not to offend the American people. Their cowardly actions are plainly obvious.

Finally, the American people, comforted by low interest rates, two cars in the driveway and a growing apathy toward politics and the constitutional ideal, have continued to support Clinton and will likely reelect most of the same politicians who did not step up to the challenge facing this country.

Business is as usual, in Washington and the rest of America.

Zach Hall is a senior philosophy major.



MIKE LUCKOVICH

Aggie student thanks Aggie thief

On the afternoon of Feb. 11, I became the victim of a true Aggie robbery.

I would like to thank the considerate Aggie who, after a failed attempt at relocating my bike from the bike rack on my car, was kind enough to gently lean my bike up against my car instead of throwing

MAIL CALL

it on the ground in frustration. I really appreciate the thoughtfulness of that action.

I also relish having a new Aggie joke to tell: How many Aggies does it take to steal a bike?

Some advice for the next time you try to relocate someone's bike: make sure it is not attached to the car!

Casey Wiefels
Class of '98

The Battalion encourages letters to the editor. Letters must be 300 words or less and include the author's name, class and phone number. The opinion editor reserves the right to edit letters for length, style, and accuracy. Letters may be submitted in person at 013 Reed McDonald with a valid student ID. Letters may also be mailed to:
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