

Auditorium : yes--Site: Baker Park

Two of the five ballots for this Thursday's special election will deal with Eugene's proposed auditorium. Measure 52 requests a \$5.5 million bond issue for the auditorium. Measure 53 asks voters to choose between two proposed sites — the original downtown location and one in Alton Baker Park.

Voters rejected the auditorium ballot in the November election, and surveys taken since then say that the measure was defeated largely because of the downtown location. Evidently, people were convinced that an auditorium placed in the heart of the city would result in traffic congestion and parking problems.

The newly-drawn plans for the auditorium have been scaled down some since the November defeat. The original estimate for taxes was 83 cents per thousand assessed property value, while the new figure is 74 cents. The nine-cent difference, according to the City Recorder, is based on the projected increase in the 1974-75 valuation of property in the city.

The total amount for the auditorium has been lowered from November's \$8.5 million to a new figure of \$7.5 million. In

addition to a large donor program, the Lane County Auditorium Association had planned on receiving a \$1.25 million grant from the federal Economic Development Agency (EDA). Now the federal funds for EDA have been cut off by President Nixon.

The Emerald believes that Eugene needs an auditorium center. Hopefully, Thursday's voters will agree with this point of view. Beyond deciding yes or no on the auditorium, however, the voters will be given their choice on the center's location.

We believe that Alton Baker Park offers the best site. This location has the advantage of utilizing the existing parking space at Autzen Stadium and avoids one of the chief concerns people have raised about the downtown site — that of traffic congestion.

Although both sites will be of similar cost and size, the Alton Baker location would utilize a sprawling (5.63 acres) area while the downtown site would be contained within two square blocks between Sixth and Seventh avenues and Oak and Olive streets.

Some people feel that the proposed 2800 seat capacity of the auditorium is too small. However, if compared with other cities of equal size to Eugene, or even larger, 2800 seats seem to be a good number. Many bookings can be made for two performances a day if necessary. Also, this seating range is considered ideal by many people who feel that a larger size ruins visibility and acoustics.

Another concern, especially among University students, is whether the proposed auditorium will be able to book rock concerts. On this concern, specifically, the Auditorium Association has promised to be fair and equitable in allocating space requests.

The auditorium measures may face tough sledding because of competition with three other ballot measures dealing with the city budget and pay for the mayor and city council. The past track record for bond issues, including the one in November, is full of voter rejections. For this election, however, a rejection won't be because of the location, but whether the voters want an auditorium.

Africa Day--'In fair conscience'

By Nkonge Mantu

On Friday, May 25th, we the African students at the University will be celebrating Africa Day in commemoration of the tenth anniversary of the creation of OAU — Organization for African Unity. In doing this we will be re-asserting our commitment to the African course which is the eventual but total eradication of all foreign and allied local elements that today foster and perpetuate insidious enslavement and economic exploitation of the African peoples through surreptitiously camouflaged neo-colonialism.

It is a day that reminds us of the fact that logically the black people the world over have a duty to perform both individually and in concert for the well being of their kind despite what any body else thinks.

It is a day when we are going to honor and remember our fallen heroes who have fallen victims of this political and economic malady never forgetting that in their falling, we continue to derive strength and courage to trace their footsteps — Dr. Kwame Nkrumah, Dr. Eduardo Modlane, Malcolm X, Amilcar Cabral, et al.

It is a day to avow our commitment to what is African as opposed to what has been forcibly and clandestinely injected

into Africa. This begs for some sifting but while we are at it, I do not see how in fair conscience we cannot recognize that for example there is something inherently good in Uganda's Amin's administrative overtures or for that matter Zaire's Mobutu's declaration that all Zairis should discard the perpetual shame enmeshed in the christian names they bear. I honestly wonder what is so christian about a stupid Belgium, French, or British name that makes the western press scream so loudly against Mobutu's move. Of course the colonialists are to lose one of their infinite and very subtle holds on us. Small wonder they scream so much.

Nkrumah once said, "The Imperialists came to Africa and told us to first seek the kingdom of heaven and the rest would be given unto us. All the while, they were making suckers of us by taking over our earthly kingdoms." How naive can we be to crowd such an issue with what I have heard often, to my consternation, described as the good brought to Africa by missionary imperialists? This is the day we remind ourselves that too much has been said about us, most of which is wrong, by too many people. Funny as it may sound, our gullibility shines here when we consider how much of this garbage we have come to believe. I say that time

better be now when these loudmouths have to shut up and listen to us for a change. Attempting to project an international 'good boy' profile before we clean our house is a shift from sublime to ridiculous. It is the day we have to acknowledge shame on us for not having done and not doing our part and consequently plot our strategies for the future.

Yes, it is the day we will have to ask ourselves how in fair conscience we can consider ourselves free while all indications point towards the fact that our propensities are towards benign neglect of the plight of our brothers and sisters in Mozambique, South Africa, Angola, Zimbabwe and Guinea Bissau.

In any case, it is freedom rather than life that is equited with death in the axiom 'give me freedom or death'. What I am attempting to say here is that in regard to the extant plight of the Africans in the imperialist controlled states, we will have to smoke out the damned apartheid perpetrators, their allies and emulators regardless of whether we will die in the process or not. I say this because I believe that in fair conscience we cannot afford to look at the situation otherwise since a different course of action would be an outright betrayal of all black people.

It is that day we will have to

acknowledge the fact that in this world there has to be a place where every black man has to feel privileged for being black. Europe or the U.S. are definitely not such places nor do they have the potential for being so. Africa conspicuously qualifies and it is towards making this possible that we should direct our undivided efforts.

At the risk of provoking my passive African friends, I will say that if by going to school here we learn to think differently from what I have stipulated above, we are nothing more than a bunch of stinking idiots in the eyes of our parents and catalysts to our future generations' doom.

The pacifists amongst us, whose concept of Pan-Africanism is both infinitesimal and ridiculously illusionary, might deem me a war monger. Without an iota of apology, I will say that rather than advocating war, I am simply promulgating the situation as it stands and that if a war arises I stand ready to fight because in fair conscience I cannot conceive taking a different stance. After all Ben Bella said, "Africa must die a little for Africa to live." I believe him and will take the former if it will efficaciously contribute towards achieving the latter.

Note: Mr. Mantu is a senior in business from Kenya — East Africa.

Commentary

Auditorium deserves 'yes' vote

By SCOTT BARKHURST

This Thursday, voters will decide whether or not Eugene will have an auditorium—and the student vote (or lack of it) may well decide the issue.

In its second and final go-around, the Lane County Auditorium Association (LCAA) is offering a revised proposal over the one offered last November — including a choice of site (Alton Baker Park vs. downtown) and elimination of the convention hall. Both these revisions were enacted as a result of voter surveys taken after the November election.

For those who questioned the downtown site, the park site offers a clear alternative, with ample parking and little urban congestion. Auditorium architects have specifically stated that the auditorium facility

would become much more of a "community-recreation center" if it were built on the park site.

Why only 2800 seats? For the same reason the Portland Auditorium seats 3000 and Memorial Coliseum seats 10,000. A coliseum and an auditorium are two different buildings; one is built primarily for sports, the other is built primarily for cultural events, with acoustics, visibility and seating that coliseums cannot offer.

In Washington, D.C., the new JFK Performing Arts Center has three halls—none of which exceeds 2800 seats. Yet they book rock concerts, jazz groups and symphonies all year round.

In short, a 2800-seat auditorium will not exclude rock concerts; extra performances can and will be scheduled. Booking agents in Eugene

and Seattle have confirmed this with the LCAA.

There is only one problem with Eugene's proposed auditorium: it has a \$7.5 million price tag, \$5.5 million of which is to come from the local bond issue. The remaining \$2 million would come from a donor campaign — and donor campaigns historically draw from businesses, middle- and upper-income brackets, a fact that opponents continually overlook in their charge that the so-called wealthy would "not be paying their share" of construction costs.

\$5.5 million is a lot of money. No one has said it isn't. But auditoriums that are designed to be flexible, functional and long-lasting for their communities are not built on shoestring budgets. And unless some rich dude waltzes in the door with a couple million bucks he

wants to give away, there is simply no reasonable alternative to the financing of a public-owned auditorium. That is a reality that voters must recognize.

In simple language, the defeat of the auditorium proposal means students and Eugene residents will continue to hear Les McCann in the EMU Ballroom and Van Cliburn in McArthur Court. Or, as one lady wrote in Sunday's Register-Guard:

"I want to help buy something to lift up our sad and tired spirits. I want a little beauty . . . I want to sit in comfort and listen to good music where the acoustics are as good as the musicians. I want to see plays where I can hear the actors and not perish from the heat . . . in short, I want to spend some of my tax money for an auditorium for all of us. . ."

That's what it's all about, folks.