

editorial Health top priority

The real issue at stake when the Lane County Board of Commissioners listen to the debate Wednesday over herbicide use by the county's transportation department, is the safety of Lane County citizens should herbicide use continue.

The commissioners will hear arguments that the herbicides have been certified by the Environmental Protection Agency, that there are adequate state regulations and that the county is cautious in its application.

On the other hand, the county will hear complaints from county residents of dying cattle, deformed chickens, human health problems, and loss of agricultural crops as a result of the herbicide program.

In addition to the testimony presented, the county should consider the following facts. A former employee of the transportation department has disabilities which he feels are a result of the years he spent spraying for the county. Although he does not have the direct evidence required to make a disability claim, he is convinced that the spraying is responsible.

The commissioners should also consider heavily a report done for the National Cancer Institute on the effects of phenoxy herbicides. The six-year study by Bionetics Research Laboratories makes the following conclusions in its

third volume (on possible birth defects):

"Two compounds produced sufficiently prominent effects of seriously hazardous nature to lead us to categorize them as probably dangerous. These are PCNB and 2,4,5-T." The report also found 2,4-D to be potentially dangerous, but needing further study.

The commissioners might also consider recent events in Italy, where a chemical plant fire released 4.4 pounds of dioxins (TCDD) into the air on July 10. Dioxins are a by-product of the herbicide manufacturing process, and are contained in the 2,4-D and 2,4,5-T that the county uses.

As a result of the TCDD contamination, the town of Seveso has been evacuated, fenced off, and abandoned. Medical checks of area residents have turned up 500 of the 1,000 residents suffering from varying symptoms of TCDD poisoning—skin rashes, nausea, itching and liver and kidney pains. Nearly 100 of the victims have been hospitalized.

These facts coupled with the availability of alternate control methods like those used in Lincoln County, underscore the fact that 2,4,5-T and 2,4-D should be outlawed from the county until an independent agency can prove beyond a shadow of a doubt that the herbicides will not cause county residents unnecessary health problems.

MR. CARTER, APART FROM THAT ONE UNMENTIONABLE THING WHICH YOU SAY YOU NEVER WILL BRING UP IN YOUR CAMPAIGN, WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER MR. FORD'S GREATEST POLITICAL WEAKNESS TO BE?



YOU TELL 'EM, J.C.

Letters

Measure worth it?

In his recent article on the pros and cons of nuclear power (*Emerald*, July 20), Prof. Wolfe of Chemistry concludes that the uncertain benefits do not justify the certain dangers. Accordingly, he implicitly advises us to use Ballot Measure 9 in November to stop further nuclear power construction in Oregon.

It is difficult for a layman to judge, but Prof. Wolfe seems persuasive when he argues that the world would be a better place if all countries imposed an indefinite moratorium on the construction of nuclear power plants.

In November, however, we can only vote on whether such a moratorium should be imposed in this state. Regardless of how Bal-

lot Measure 9 is decided, however, the odds are that nuclear power generation will increase as projected in most of the other 49 states as well as in Canada, Western Europe, Eastern Europe, the U.S.S.R., Japan, China, India and South America.

If the rest of the world is going to inflict on us the risks described by Prof. Wolfe, is it helpful for us to impose a ban on local nuclear power? What is the use of patching one hole in a dike if it remains a sieve everywhere else? If Pandora's box is open, as Prof. Wolfe asserts, can Ballot Measure 9 do anything to close it?

Henry N. Goldstein
Economics

Professors thanked

We, the undersigned graduating seniors, would like to express our gratitude and appreciation to Willis R. Greer and Michael P. Sampson for excellence in teaching on a par far above the average at this or any University. Both are leaving at the end of this year and the accounting department will be hard pressed to fill their positions with men of their caliber.

Michael Stone
Randy Harrison
and eight others

Sexism underlined

I've become so hardened to subtle sexism in periodicals that it seldom raises any response other than my usual groan. However I have higher expectations for the *Emerald*, which has constantly asserted it has a nondiscriminatory policy.

The annoying articles were found in the July 27 edition. The first, a front page story headlined "Women's sport fund raises student fees", opened with a sentence stating, "Incidental fees will climb to \$28.50 this fall..." Had one not known what incidental fees were in the past, as I did not, the assumption might have been that this monstrous sum was entirely due to women's athletics. Not until the second column was it noted that this was an increase of \$1.25.

Women's Intercollegiate Athletics is having enough of a struggle to survive without prejudicing the student body against it in this manner.

The second article was encountered on page 3 and concerned the new members of the State Board of Higher Education. Each of the three appointees received a short biographical paragraph which for the two males consisted of listing various life credits and ended with a statement concern-

ing marital status and number of children. For example:

"Wyss is a director of the Oregon Museum of Science and Industry in Portland and is a commentator on economic subjects for radio station KXL in Portland. Wyss attended Harvard College and Harvard Business School. He and his wife, Judith, have four children."

The woman appointee in comparison was honored with a two and one half line statement giving her hometown and three and one half lines about her husband.

"Living in Molalla while attending OCE, Daniels claims La Grande as her hometown. Her husband is a graduate of Oregon State University and works for the State Department of Forestry."

I can only conclude that Daniels has no credentials for the position (in which case why was she appointed?) or that her success is due to her husband's work which is doubtful.

Jean Carroon

Editor's note: While dismissing the first charge in this letter as an overreaction, the *Emerald* stands justly charged and convicted of the second. Judging women by the success of their husbands is a practice we do not endorse, and in this case we are guilty of not adequately screening information supplied to us by another source.

Law students pay

I would like to correct an impression that one could easily draw from your front page story of July 7, 1976, on tuition vouchers. With reference to professional school fees one could easily conclude that undergraduate tuition is supporting the law school. In fact, undergraduates pay about 28 per cent of the cost of their education (*Emerald* quote of Ed Fadeley, April 23, 1976) while law students, through tuition, building fees, and special law school fees, pay about 64 per cent of the total law school and law library budget.

Yours sincerely,
Pete Wells

Letters policy

The *Emerald* will accept and try to print all letters containing fair comment on ideas and topics of concern or interest to the University community.

Letters should be typed in a 65-space line, triplicated, dated and signed with the person's major. Letters over 250 words may be edited because of space limitations.

Tuesday, August 3, 1976

opinion

Nuclear power not a safe proposition

Though perhaps the part played by investigative reporting in the exposure of the Watergate matter and in the political demise of Richard Milhous Nixon has been made too much of, the kind of journalism represented by Woodward and Bernstein is essential if the public is to see beyond the fabric of deceit woven by government and corporate bureaucracies. It is unfortunate, then, that the *Emerald* was not able to send a budding Woodward, Bernstein, or Seymour Hersh to the Trojan nuclear plant when it held open house for the press July 9.

Evidently impressed by money figures, the *Emerald's* reporter seems to have accepted the glib assurances of Portland General Electric (PGE) that \$100 million in safeguards make the Trojan plant virtually accident proof. Presumably other nuclear power plants also have expensive and sophisticated accident-prevention equipment. Yet in October 1973, an Atomic Energy Commission (AEC) task force reported that "Review of the operating history of 30 nuclear power reactors indicated that during the period 1-1-72 to 5-30-73 approximately 850 abnormal occurrences were reported to the AEC. Many of them were significant and of a generic nature... 40 per cent were traceable to some extent to design and/or fabrication related deficiencies. The remaining incidents were caused by operator error, improper

maintenance, inadequate erection control, administrative deficiencies, random failure, or combinations thereof."

In the light of such findings, PGE's claim that "Nuclear development has enough safeguards" can be attributed only to effrontery and attempts to deceive. If nuclear plants are as accident-proof as PGE would have us believe, why does the nuclear power industry insist on the limitations of the Price-Anderson Act which limits total and industry liability in the event of accident to \$560 million? And if the chance of a nuclear accident is so remote, why do insurance companies have exclusion clauses for damage to life and property caused by such accidents? (The Price-Anderson limitation is interesting in view of the AEC's 1965 estimate that a nuclear accident could result in billions of dollars of property damage, scores of thousands of deaths and at least 100,000 injuries).

The *Emerald* article fails to mention the problem of the disposal of radioactive wastes. This is an issue that PGE and other utility companies would rather avoid since it has been known for years that there is no acceptable method for such disposal. A report released only this month by a subcommittee of the U.S. House of Representatives Government Operations Committee confirms this, indicating, not only that all methods used at this time are unacceptable (i.e., they allow the release of

radioactivity and radioactive substances into the environment) but also that a safe method may never be found. *Register Guard*, July 11, 1976)

The nuclear power industry has no moral right to contaminate the environment of Oregon or that of any other place on earth with radioactive poisons leaving for countless future generations a painful legacy not only of cancer and other dread diseases, but also of the terrifying consequences of genetic mutation for the human race.

Although the *Emerald* reporter's recollection of some details regarding the fall of Troy is in error (a perusal of the *Aeneid* or of a handbook of Greek myth would have revealed that it was not Trojans who emerged from the wooden horse), there is material in the Troy story for an apt parallel with nuclear power industry's crusade in Oregon in which Oregonians are cast as Trojans, the nuclear power industry as Greeks and the Trojan plant represents the wooden horse, already, alas, inside the gates.

Action must be taken before night falls! Oregon's environment must be kept free of radioactive pollution for both ourselves and posterity. Vote yes on Measure 9 in November.

Guido Palandri
Assist. Head Cat. Dept.
Library