

Auditorium bonds offers arts boon

Relief may be on the way for culturally starved aficionados of the performing arts who are tired of having to travel to Portland to see that special show.

Eugene voters will consider a ballot measure Tuesday that seeks approval of an \$18.5-million bond issue for a civic auditorium.

Such a facility contains rich potential — both for spectators and participants — heretofore lacking either on campus or in the Eugene area. The Emerald endorses the funding proposal and urges eligible students and staff to vote their support of an auditorium complex.

The heart of the new project would lie in a combined concert hall and legitimate theater seating about 2,500 and a multi-purpose community theater with room for approximately 500. Along with ancillary facilities — dressing rooms, exhibi-

tion space, underground parking — the complex would be opened just north of the downtown mall following a three-year construction phase. Completion of actual building plans, subject to public comment, awaits passage of a funding measure.

An arts center of this description would close an annoying gap in performance facilities for Eugene, which now include massive, basically sports-oriented structures such as Mac Court and Autzen Stadium on one side and the 400-seat University Theater and 500-seat Beall Hall on the other.

A medium-capacity auditorium complex could serve as a home for local theatrical, musical and dance groups as well as house visiting performers who previously have bypassed Eugene because it lacks a suitable site. Moreover, the downtown location would be convenient

for University folk and add to a physical cohesiveness in the city often lacking in contemporary urban development.

At present, civic-center directors plan to sell the bonds as construction funds are needed rather than in a single sale when the project begins. By this approach, they hope to avoid the high interest payments necessary for \$18.5 million. An addition to city residents' property-tax rate of 5 cents per \$1,000 true cash value is anticipated in the first year of construction, rising to a high of 69 cents per \$1,000 by the third year.

These tax receipts would be used only to service the bond-interest debt. Once in use, the civic auditorium becomes eligible for an estimated \$400,000 a year — in addition to rental receipts — to pay off the bonds and cover an operating

deficit expected the first few years, according to Dean Baumgartner, civic center director. These revenues derive from such sources as a ticket tax, motel/hotel tax and private contributions through the recently created Eugene Community Foundation.

Rents would be kept low to encourage use by local groups and the auditorium complex would never be expected to do much more than break even financially. But, as Baumgartner points out, in a public facility of this type — which would do for the performing arts what parks do for recreation — performance and not profits is the motive.

Unregistered fans of a civic auditorium may qualify to vote until 8 p.m. the day of the election by signing up at the Lane County voter registration office, 175 W. 8th Ave.

Letters

Christianity right?

In a recent letter, Douglas Groothuis sought to explain why pantheism, mysticism, and Taoism in particular are wrong, and why Christianity is right. There are several points in his letter with which I should like to take issue.

People who admit that there is validity to more than one religion Groothuis labels latitudinarians, as if latitudinarianism were a disease or a venial or mortal sin. Fortunately, not all Christians share this narrow-minded view, although it does seem to be the case that, in our society at least, Christianity attracts its share of narrow minded people.

On the other side, however, one may note such statements as that made by John A. Hutchison, a Christian scholar, in the preface to his *Paths of Faith* (McGraw-Hill, 2d ed. 1975, p. xiii), a study of the world's major religions: "The word path or any of its numerous translations is a recurring metaphor in the literature of the world's religions. China has its *tao*, and the Japanese have the analogous term *michi*. Buddhists speak of their faith as the path of the Buddha, and Muslims characterize Islam as the straight path. In both Old Testament and New Testament, this same metaphor is used extensively . . . The religions of mankind are so many paths of life."

Groothuis states that pantheism is wrong and that mysticism is not "the lowest common denominator between all religions." Christianity is, in his definition, neither pantheistic nor mystical; yet one of the most clearly pantheistic statements that I have ever read in any religious literature is the statement of the Apostle Paul in I Cor. 15:28 that, at the end of the divine scheme of things, God will be "all in all."

Paul's ardent Christianity did not hinder his thinking that God, in his divine wisdom and power, would be able finally to effect the reconciliation of the entire cosmos. It is this same Paul, furthermore, who has not infrequently been described as mystical.

A very famous study of his theology was entitled, *The Mysticism of Paul the Apostle* (Albert Schweitzer, Engl. trans. 1931.); and one cannot overlook Paul's frequent description of the Christ-

ian life as life "in Christ" or "in the Spirit," e.g., Gal. 3:26-28. In fact, the whole history of Christianity has included a considerable component of mysticism, and even Christians who think that mysticism is something oriental and strange and therefore sinful should look again at what they themselves think goes on when they pray.

and religions gathered from the world to plan for peace. One weekend, 15,000 people marched through the streets of New York and gathered at the UN Plaza.

There were 502 Japanese people who brought 20,000,000 signatures pleading for peace and an arms reduction. Gromyko, Russian leader, and the French spoke of the need for solutions. Gromyko

Defense budget bill coming to the floor.

At noon I had a chance to speak with Rep. John Rhoades (Rep.-Ariz.) and I said, "How come nobody in Washington knows about the U.N. Disarmament Conference?"

He replied, to the effect, "It isn't going to amount to anything. It is just the third world countries trying



It was particularly painful to read Groothuis's statement that Christ "claimed unique liberating power," since Groothuis took a class I offered last term on ancient Mediterranean religions, in which the other religions with which early Christianity competed and which often claimed "unique liberating power" were studied. People who hold strong religious convictions, alas, will often hold them in spite of all evidence.

Finally, I have to correct Groothuis on one of his opening statements, that visiting lecturer Michael Saso was from Harvard. That was the ultimate insult; Saso was from Yale.

J.T. Sanders, Professor
Religious Studies

No one knew

I just returned from the U.N. Disarmament Conference, which started May 23 and will continue for five weeks. People of all races

said "Russia will never make a neutron bomb unless the United States makes one first." The day ended with a "die-in." When the siren blew, "Nuclear Victims" slowly sank to the ground and lay for 20 minutes while the Buddhist beat their drums.

The tragedy is that people in Washington, D.C. did not know that the conference was taking place. I arrived in D.C. about five days before the opening day of May 23. On May 23, I still had not found anyone in D.C. who knew that there even was a conference. That day I went to the Congressional offices to see if they knew what was going on. Mark Hatfield had sent notices to the religious communities of Oregon about two months ago.

In the first four offices I visited, there was no one who knew about the Disarmament Conference. They knew that NATO was coming to town and that there was a

to make the United States look bad..." and many others things along the same line of thinking...which was later reflected in the *Washington Post*, and by the speech made by Vice-President Mondale to the United Nations.

During my stay in New York, on the second day of the Conference, I found that the newspaper contained 11 pages of sports but nothing on Disarmament.

I could find absolutely nothing about the U.N. Disarmament Conference. WHY?

Parade carried a story on May 21, that the U.S. should increase the Defense Budget by another 12 billion to keep up with the Russians in Civil Defense. It seems that they are worried. I wonder why?

Betty Luginbill
Campus minister
Wesley Center

Letters

Unsigned falsities

In response to the letter (June 5) of Mr. Anonymous, who is afraid to identify himself for fear of Israeli reprisal, let me make the following comments:

a) Arabs are not refused admission to Israeli colleges; the opposite is in fact true. They are often admitted in preference to other students who have higher grades and better preparation since the colleges want to encourage Arab students to get a higher education (I served for three years on the admissions committee at the University of Tel-Aviv, the largest in Israel).

b) The Israeli Arab is in the difficult position of being required to be loyal to the laws of a state in which he is in the minority and which is in confrontation with all its neighboring Arab states — his own brothers. During the 30 years of Israel's existence, most Israeli Arabs have been loyal citizens. Occasionally, however, a few have participated in some of the terrorist and sabotage activities, which we experience almost weekly. It is therefore understandable why some Israelis are reluctant to give jobs or rent apartments to Arabs, even to the innocent. In general, however, job opportunity for the Israeli Arab is the same as for any other citizen. The fact is that the average standard of living and education of the Arab citizen in Israel, a country with few economic resources, is higher than in any other Arab state. Can Mr. Anonymous deny that?

c) True, the Zionist ideology was and is to support a Jewish State in Israel, but not at the expense of Palestinians or anyone else. It is the faulty and misleading policy of the Arab leadership for the past 30 years which has made the Palestinian suffer. Only peace negotiations and mutual concessions will solve these problems.

d) In many respects I oppose the policy of the present Israeli government. I do not hesitate to say so and to sign my name. Anonymity and false facts in Mr. Anonymous' letter make it look like more of the sheer anti-Israeli propaganda so currently prevalent in the Emerald.

Ezra Yagil
Visiting Associate Professor,
Institute of Molecular Biology

Thursday, June 22, 1978