

Letters

Poor taste

As patrons who attend the Shakespearean festival at Ashland every summer, we are deeply offended by Jock Hatfield's feature in the July 13 issue of the Emerald in which he was unable to make a single positive statement about something most knowledgeable people consider superbly done.

We realize Mr. Hatfield was trying to be funny; however, he merely succeeded in revealing his abysmal ignorance and lack of appreciation for truly fine theater. His remarks regarding Shakespearean fans were not only totally without humor, but were insulting to Ashland theater patrons. Most of us have not only "made it past page one" of plays such as *Richard III*, but, unlike Hatfield, have understood what we read.

Also, we have never seen patrons in Lithia Park "offering peanuts to each other," but we certainly can see why one was offered to Hatfield.

Most of the article is such a mass of drivel it is senseless to waste time responding to it in detail. The Emerald should have more taste than to carry this article, much less give it front page coverage.

We're sure the lyrical poetry and delightful puns of Shakespeare will far outlive the tripe of Jock Hatfield.

In short, if you're too stupid to understand it, Hatfield, stay home. Neither Shakespeare nor Ashland theater needs you.

Lou Johnson
Les Kellow

Labor Education and Research Center

Nuke Risks

Oregon has one nuclear power plant, Trojan, located near Rainier, Ore, on the Columbia River.

Nuclear power is a very controversial issue right now. Arguments are heard, both pro and con, together with fact and emotion. And why not? Millions of dollars are involved and millions of lives are affected. But when all is said and done, when regulatory agencies have ruled and permits are approved — Why the controversy?

1. The government speaks: "We will solve the waste problem." When? After 30 years, there still is no solution in sight. Just recently, the U.S. Department of Energy said a solution will be found in 1988 — five years later than an earlier prediction of

1983. Can we realistically hope to store radioactive wastes away from everything alive for 250,000? Already over 450,000 gallons of highly radioactive sludge have leaked into the ground up at Hanford, Washington, making the Columbia River one of the most radioactive rivers in the world.

2. Terrorism. The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NCR) last year reported over 8,000 pounds of uranium "missing." It only takes 12 pounds to make a small atomic bomb! Someone with uranium or plutonium could blackmail entire cities, states or countries.

3. Economics. No, nuclear power is not cheap — witness soaring utility rates. Portland General Electric (owner of Trojan) has raised its rates over 120 percent in the last few years, and PP&L is not far behind. Lane Electric Cooperative's rates are going up too — they've bought into the proposed Pebble Springs nuclear reactors. Our taxes pay for insurance, research, and development for the benefit of private investors.

Personally, I'm fed up with the risks and the costs. Conservation and solar energy

are outstanding sources of power, just now being tapped.

In good conscience, I cannot sit passively by and allow this hazard to threaten my life and the lives of future generations in light of the recent studies on low-level radiation (like Trojan gives off) that have just been completed by Dr. Mancuso and Dr. R. Bertell.

I will be participating in the Trojan Decommissioning Alliance August 6 action at the Trojan plant where I will non-violently sit in front of the gates, asking that the plant be decommissioned immediately. I risk arrest, but this is a small price to pay now, given the suffering and cancer that will certainly be the result if action is not taken soon.

David Pollack
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Too grandiose?

I proposed to the current Student Body President at the ASUO that my research showed that never in collegiate history has

a national convention of student government ever been held. I therefore proposed that he consider holding a national convention of student body presidents. (Maybe 1,700)

My reasons for such proposal would be to offer an idea to the convention: A national newspaper edited and dedicated to student services, politics and activities. Along the lines of the Emerald.

Secondly to pass on information about the ASUO incidental fee and methods of implementation. Thirdly to garner support for ERA and its continued fight in the three remaining states.

Course I may be just off my whack but I believe something of this nature could be a big success and I've told the President I would invite my friend Jim Whittenbury if he believes it plausible. I have suggested maybe even Gerald Ford might be interested in attending if he were invited. Pretty Grandiose?

If the ASUO thinks the idea sucks, I'll try to sell it somewhere else.

Thomas Condon

America has lost its courage

Rarely has a speech by someone not in public office attracted as much comment and controversy as the commencement address at Harvard University by Alexander Solzhenitsyn. In that address, Solzhenitsyn accused the West, and America in particular, of having lost its courage, of selling out to materialism and of lacking spiritual stamina. His critics responded by accusing Solzhenitsyn of failing to understand the nature of a free society, of being more comfortable with totalitarian regimes than democratic governments and of being too isolated from the mainstream of American life to be a reliable commentator.

Most of the reactions to the speech suffer from a common mistake: confusing criticism of our society with criticism of our political system. This confusion is common because we too often equate government with society, the natural result of an ever-expanding concept of the legitimate scope of governmental power and authority.

Solzhenitsyn, on the other hand, makes no such mistake, for he is generally not concerned with politics. That is, he is not concerned with the forms and operations of government. His primary concern is morality. What interests Solzhenitsyn is not the free society, but the good society, and he does not regard the

two as necessarily synonymous. To him, it matters little that Richard Nixon was elected to office while Charlemagne was not.

In this regard, it is important to distinguish Solzhenitsyn from Andrei Sakharov, the Carter Administration's favorite Soviet dissident. Sakharov's complaint with his government is purely a matter of human rights. He continues to support Marxism in theory while denouncing the remnants of "Stalinism" which he sees in contemporary Soviet policies.

Solzhenitsyn's rejection of Marxism, on the contrary, is complete. He rejects it in theory at least as vigorously as in its practical application. To him, borrowing the phrase of the New Philosophes in France, the idea of a decent, democratic Marxism is the false dream of "Barbarism with a Human Face."

It is this moralistic tone that causes many Americans to feel uneasy about Solzhenitsyn. Just a few years ago, a young State Department functionary reportedly described Solzhenitsyn as "almost a Fascist." And this, remember, was the State Department of Henry Kissinger; one shudders to think what Andrew Young must call him.

To Solzhenitsyn, the issue of the day is not "Shall we be free?" Rather it is

"Once we are free, how shall we live up to the responsibilities of freedom?" His concern is not with the right to choose but with making the right choices.

It may be true that Solzhenitsyn is not altogether familiar with the workings of a free society. But one who was, Edmund Burke, expressed similar sentiments nearly two centuries ago, when he wrote:

"Men are qualified for civil liberty in exact proportion to their disposition to put moral chains upon their own appetites; in proportion as their love of justice is above their rapacity; in proportion as their soundness and sobriety of understanding is above their vanity and presumption; in proportion as they are disposed to listen to the counsels of the wise and good, in preference to the flattery of knaves. Society cannot exist unless a controlling power upon will and appetite be placed somewhere, and the less of it there is within, the more there must be without. It is ordained in the eternal constitution of things, that men of intemperate minds cannot be free. Their passions forge their fetters."

In other words, it is not sufficient to concern ourselves merely with constructing a free government. That may be the end of our political considerations, but then the greater challenge begins: translating that freedom into an

opportunity to do good rather than an excuse for doing harm, whether to ourselves or others.

"I have spent all my life under a Communist regime," Solzhenitsyn told the Harvard graduates, "and I will tell you that a society without an objective legal scale is a terrible one indeed. But a society with no other scale but the legal one is not quite worthy of man either."

We are so accustomed to assuming that a political solution exists for every problem that many assumed Solzhenitsyn, in criticizing American society, must have been implicitly advocating some political action be taken to redress these wrongs. In fact, he is saying not that government should require more of us, but that we should demand more of ourselves. He is suggesting that our responsibilities — to ourselves, our neighbors and to society at large — do not end with the fulfillment of our legal obligations. And foremost among those responsibilities is that of demonstrating to the world that a free and open society need not degenerate into a morally corrupt, self-indulgent, hedonistic society.

It is this issue that I wish the critics of Solzhenitsyn would address.

Jack Roberts
Third year Law