

Who's it for?

Saturday marks the fourth consecutive year that Veteran's day celebrations find America without active involvement in a war.

But that hardly means the effects of the last war go unfelt or our country's long-term romance with militarism has lapsed. In fact, the group that probably benefits last from our national duty-dance with the military is composed of non-career veterans, of whom more than 700 are attending the University.

These ex-soldiers—for whom service in the armed forces represented more obligation than opportunity—face dwindling educational benefits, delayed stress reaction syndromw (after-shocks from the horrors of war), bureaucratic stultification in the Veteran's Administration and U.S. population all too willing to bury the puzzling shame of Vietnam.

But the American military animus continues unabated.

Budgets for the U.S. Department of Defense maintain their healthy annual growth. Career Military retirees take lucrative pensions with them that are not reduced with receipt of other income from jobs or investments, unlike more penurious, civilian compensations such as Social Security, disability payments or private pensions. In fact, pension payments for drop-outs from the top-heavy military establishment rival expenditures on major weapons systems.

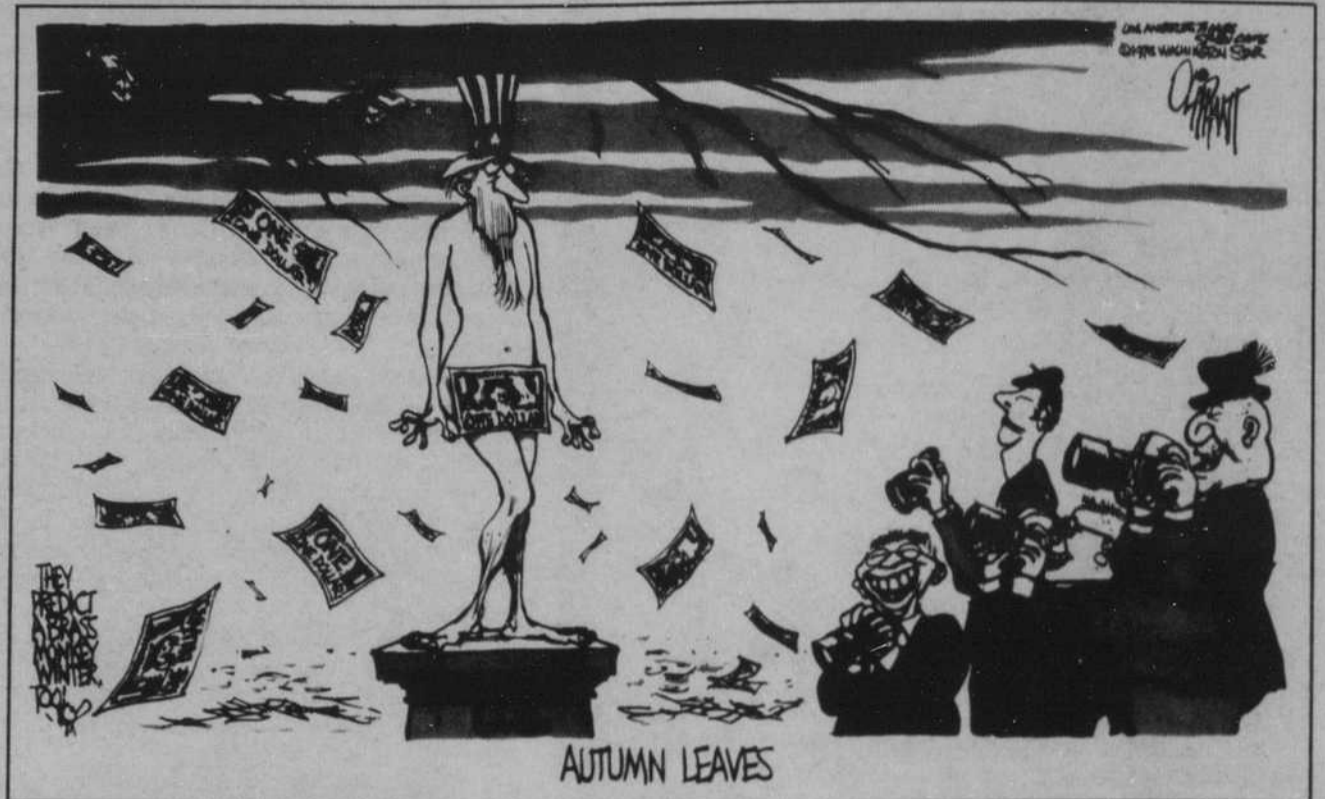
We don't mean to suggest, of course, that the latter expenses bear any great nobility. Arms and military equipment manufacturers continue to fatten at the public trough despite unabated examples of waste in cost overruns and dubious projects such as the B-1 bomber and the neutron bomb.

But the immunity of corporations like Texas' North American Rockwell or Washington's Boeing are guaranteed by patrons such as senators Henry Jackson (D-Wash.) and John Tower (R-Texas), whose hawkish views transcend the frail artifice of party politics.

These advocates have learned—via the generous reciprocity of campaign donations—that war makes for good politics as well as good business. War, however, has recently made for decidedly bad economics, since the inflation ignited by deficit spending during the Vietnam era consumes us yet.

Undoubtedly, in this imperfect world, the need for defense will not decline until nations realize their common interests outweigh the parochial interests of ideology and geography. But the seeds of militarism planted in each of us lie waiting the next sly cultivation by the glorifiers and beneficiaries of war—or the constant threat of war.

Perhaps we would serve ourselves better if Saturday's commemorations focused on the virtues of peace and the inadequate treatment of war's victims than on the inglorious human failings that provided a reason for Veteran's Day.



YOURS

Lawsuit move

The concluding sentence of John Thomas' Emerald article on Nov. 1, 1978, about litigation filed last July by the University's Director of Affirmative Action may have misled your readers inadvertently. It states: "The University has not yet officially denied the charges."

Federal court litigation is complicated; the University's lack of official denial to date should in no way be construed as an "admission by silence" of the charges or as an unusual circumstance. The University's Answer to the complaint will be filed after legal preliminaries are concluded.

Further, as is typical in such cases, University officials have been advised by legal counsel not to comment except within the appropriate court procedure.

Let me assure your readers that when an Answer is filed, it will deny the allegations against the University, the State Board of

Higher Education and the individuals named. The Office of the Attorney General will contest the case vigorously.

Edward Branchfield
Assistant Attorney General and Counsel

What a mess!

Why is the Lawrence Hall Courtyard an undeniable shambles? Sitting here, amongst perhaps 70 bicycles, I notice several old copies of the Emerald strewn about. A copy of the Register-Guard sports section, wrinkled and yellowing, is dated Oct. 18.

Paperbags, advertisements fallen from bulletin boards and cardboard boxes litter the area. Leaves threaten pedestrian traffic through the courtyard.

There is a garbage can that has

been overflowing for two weeks which is finally producing the odor of rotten pumpkin meat, a remnant of the Oct. 30 pumpkin-carving contest sponsored by the Landscape Architecture Department, a resident of Lawrence Hall.

Also present are several pumpkins, again, left over from the contest, lying wrinkled, rotten and molding in the fountain, itself half-empty and filled with debris.

The rest of the campus is kept immaculate or, at least, presentable. Why has the Lawrence Courtyard gone neglected?

Isn't it ironic that the Landscape Architecture Department is presumably involved in the training of persons to design the landscapes that surround buildings but seemingly couldn't care less about their maintenance?

Russell Kaiser
senior, elementary education

