

## Energy report contradicts doomsayers

Oregonians received some good news and a much-needed perspective on their electrical energy future this week.

As sort of an inadvertent farewell gift from the Straub administration, a report by the State Department of Energy (DOE) indicates that the Northwest's present power-generating facilities should be sufficient to forestall electricity shortages through 1990, by which time new energy technologies are expected to make major contributions.

This encouraging report comes as welcome relief from the doomsday prophecies of the Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) and many private utilities. Predictions of energy shortages by these latter groups have supported their arguments for construction of controversial new facilities, especially those using ecologically inferior thermal (oil, gas and coal) or nuclear technologies.

But the energy department's report — drawn up over several months and still awaiting a final draft — indicates that surpluses, not deficits, will compose the energy picture.

The report's authors came to this optimistic conclusion by using a formula that, we feel, more accurately re-

flects future probabilities than the conservative figures of BPA and the utilities.

A report from this state agency seems to us more reliable and less self-interested than those provided by the other groups.

The BPA now is caught up in legislation proposed by Sen. Henry Jackson, (D.-Wash.), that would enormously

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expand the power of the BPA chief — currently Jackson's former administrative assistant Sterling Munro — in approving new construction and establishing the directions of regional energy planning.

Private utilities remain in the profitable business of selling electricity, despite their latter-day, "born-again" conservatism.

And the dollar figure involved in energy estimates remains gigantic. Plant construction and its impact on taxes and energy rates are intimately caught up in competing forecasts of the next decade's energy needs.

Predicted growth in demand for electricity represents an important difference between the DOE's report and others. The state's researchers argue that an annual increase of 2.7 percent

reflects future needs more accurately than the 4 to 5½ percent growth rate forecast by BPA and the utilities.

In the past utilities have helped turn their predictions of higher rates of growth into self-fulfilling prophecy by stimulating demand for electricity.

The dynamics of this rationale becomes hopelessly circular: Higher predictions of energy demands lead to construction of new power plants, which produce energy that must be sold to justify — economically and ideologically — their construction.

With such attitudes, the BPA and utility companies' well-publicized "commitment" to conservation appear like just so much feeble lip-service. The DOE predictions, on the other hand, help set the style of planning and growth by placing a real priority on conservation.

Another divergence from BPA's questionably conservative forecasting approach lies in the state report's disdain of the minimal-flow factor used in projecting river-generated hydroelectric energy.

BPA and the utilities use water-flow figures based on a hypothetical 42-month drought — a 300-to-1 unlikelihood. The DOE incorporated a more reasonable flow factor such as occurred during the Northwest's 1977

dry spell.

Caution in ensuring a satisfactory production of energy is, of course, laudable. But planning on the basis of a once-in-three-centuries possibility seems extreme.

The DOE report also goes a long way toward dispelling the self-interested gloom spread by BPA and the utilities when it considers emergency energy resources excluded from the latter's calculations.

These include the interruptible load — energy sold to major industrial customers like the aluminum companies — that can be diverted in a crisis, voluntary curtailments, combustion turbines at several Northwest utilities and emergency purchases outside the region.

The state legislature, Oregon's Congressional delegation and the Public Utility Commission should give considerable weight to the DOE's perceptive report as they consider energy legislation, rate change proposals and construction requests in the near future.

Less waste, lower rates and fewer expenditures of tax dollars should result if the state's researchers have constructed a truer version of Oregon's energy future.

We believe they have.

### yours

### 'Leave Africa alone'

On Friday, Nov. 3, Mr. Thompson of the political science department had his opinion written about Africa separating Cuba and U.S. reconciliation. It had been several months since an African student, Mr. Anukam, wrote something in this paper when the State Board of Higher Education was "tossing" African issues around.

We regard Mr. Thompson's article as beating around the bush. I don't know what Cuban or U.S. officials he talked to in Cuba to give him that idea or whether it is just his opinion.

When the U.S. and Cuba started having their problems decades ago, Africa was still regarded as the "Dark Continent." Because there are some Cuban troops there at the invitation of different governments does not mean that the U.S. and Cuba can't have peace.

As a political science teacher, you know exactly what your problems with Cuba are. Don't tangle Africa in it. After all, when the Bay of Pigs invasion took place, your Central Intelligence Agency was heavily planning how to assassinate Patrice Lumumba and put your man Mobutu in power.

Leave Africa alone. We have our problems trying to liberate Azania and Zimbabwe and stopping Idi Amin from having a boxing contest with Nyerere.

When you want to visit the continent, I will advise you to stay away from Kinshasha, Nairobi and Cairo because all the news you collect will be Associated Press. Go to the countries where people will rap straight to you: Nigeria, Ghana, Libya, Sudan, etc.

I wonder what is wrong with a government inviting some troops from another country. Zaire had French and Belgian paratroops litter the whole place — maybe because they weren't Cubans.

Please, Mr. Professor, don't talk like your fellow instructor Bill Dellinger who does not like Kenyan athletes. I wonder what he will do when AP closes their East African headquarters if Rono gets upset. Africa does not divide Cuba, unless you have a special map printed in New Jersey which is distributed to white grade schools in South Africa.

Archie Ituh  
fifth year, undeclared  
Organization of African Students

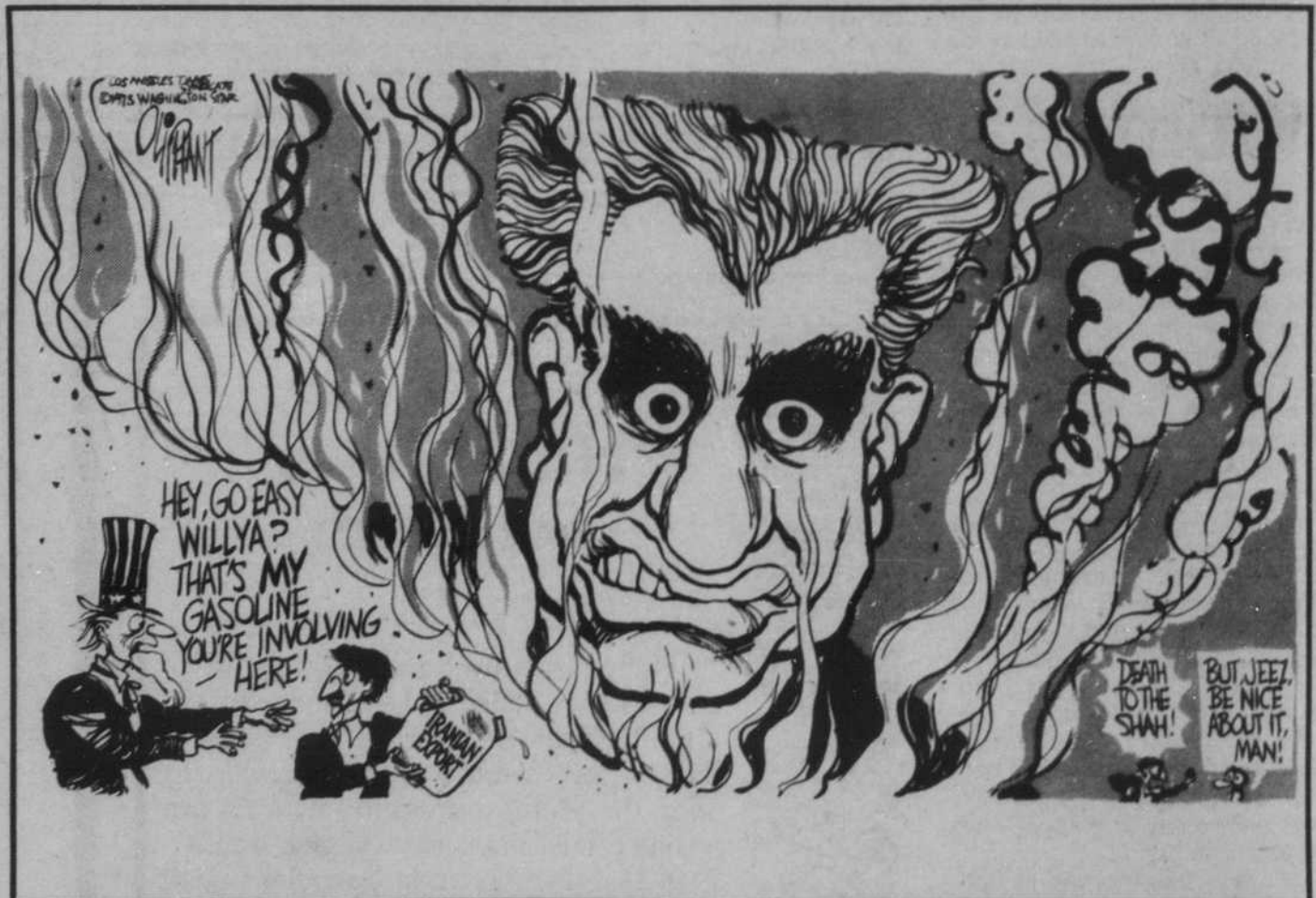
### JSU calls for support

The Jewish Student Union Steering Committee joins with other student groups on campus for Southern African Solidarity Day.

Consistent with our long standing policy of denouncing

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racism in any of its forms, we speak out against the apartheid system in South Africa. We again call on the University to divest itself of South African stock, as we did a year ago.

We advise people to support the U.N. sponsored elections in Namibia. We urge U.S. students to mobilize to pressure the U.S. government to work for majority rule in Rhodesia, and not for the cosmetic internal settlement which is currently being promoted.

Philip Mannheim  
faculty advisor, Jewish Student Union

Jerry Forse, Sharon Gitelson  
and Keith Berne  
JSU Steering Committee members

### Thinks coverage slanted

It has long been apparent to me that the ODE writers wear their opinions "on their sleeves" both on and off the editorial page.

However, the article "Archie's lawyer plots lawsuit" in the Friday, Nov. 10 Emerald, particularly irked me. Although I do not agree with the political views of Commissioner Weinstein, it seems to me that referring to an elected official by his first name, whether this is popular usage or not, is flippant and bad journalism.

Worse, to term a proposed legal action a "plot" simply because said actions happen to be against a group the ODE writers like, is the epitome of yellow journalism.

Dealing briefly with the article itself, it was one-sided in style and construction, and, although fully one-third of the content was devoted to Jan Newton's opinionated "analysis" of Mr. Weinstein's future impact on land use planning, there was no indication that Mr. Harden had attempted to contact Mr. Weinstein for his views of the subject.

Please, grow up, and keep the editorials on the editorial page.

Lars Kristopher Larson  
second year, telecommunications-political science  
Wednesday, November 15, 1978