

Atiyeh treads on separate powers

Gov. Victor "L'etat c'est moi" Atiyeh seems to be having some problems with history lessons lately, specifically: the separation of political powers.

The first case in point was his aborted attempt to foist long-time GE employee and nuclear-power advocate Kelly Woods off on Oregonians as the "temporary" head of the state's Department of Energy.

When it appeared Oregon senators might not buy his candidate, Atiyeh argued that his nominees could be rejected only on such narrow grounds as mental disability or legal ineligibility. Atiyeh raised that argument despite Oregonian's elector reaffirmation last November of the Senate's power to accept or reject a gubernatorial nominee as it saw fit.

After the Senate rejected Woods, the governor claimed — with the acerbic haughtiness of miffed Louis

XIV — that "temporary" appointees need not be confirmed by the Senate.

Hardly anyone, least of all Attorney General Jim Redden, accepted that ploy; so, Atiyeh completed the farce and named himself to the post.

Then last week, while the Legislature chewed on — with an apparently growing distaste — Atiyeh's warmed-over version of tax reform, the governor declared his intention to start an initiative movement and

The idea of governors or any other prominent, public official leading initiative movements strikes us as an undesirable precedent.

Oregon's initiative procedure allows the people of the state to place a proposal on the ballot, if they can gain a sufficient number of signatures on petitions. Its approval in an election turns the proposal into law.

Introduced into Oregon about the turn of the century, the right of initiative remains a useful legacy of the "progressive" movement that sought to ensure adequate mechanisms for popular participation in law-making. It provides an ultimate weapon against despotic whim and legislative inertia.

Atiyeh's threatened usurpation of the initiative process would turn an instrument designed for protection against government into an instrument designed for protection of government. That would be a grave

disservice to Oregonians and the state's political system.

Name familiarity and the inherent political power of an elective statewide office provides an initiative movement led by such an official to have an enormous advantage over truly "popular" initiatives championed by individuals and citizen organizations. Repeated use of this bastardized initiative could soon discredit the process entirely.

These two moves by Atiyeh violate the spirit of separated governmental powers (executive, judicial, legislative and, by implication, popular). They make us wonder if Atiyeh is the moderate conservative he claims to be or just another autocratic politico intoxicated by the headful of newly gained power.

Conservatives, after all, frequently claim an appreciation of history, it is the success of Oregon's political history that the governor seems to be repudiating.

ours

place his proposal on a special-election ballot.

He gave legislators until mid-May to approve his "responsible" and "cleaned-up version" of last November's defeated Ballot Measure 6 before he left to fire up the populace.

yours

Peru, Chile 'impressions'

Your coverage (Feb. 27, ODE) of my visit and poetry reading is much appreciated. However, some of my statements about the political situation in Peru were inadvertently reversed and I wish to correct them so they will not be misconstrued. The interview was given in English which may be the reason for the confusion of dates and information.

The fact is, the Peruvian government since the nationalist reformism of Velasco Alvarado (1968-1975) to the present administration of Morales Bermudez has moved considerably to the right. This is due in great part to the pressure of the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank for the government to impose extreme conditions of economic austerity and repression on the Peruvian people.

The results obtained by the Popular Unity in the Chilean election of 1971 and the results of the recent Constitutional Assembly election in Peru were topics I commented on only in passing. Without the proper context and compared as they were in the article they may have given an impression which I absolutely did not intend.

The progressive popular movements in both countries are strong and well organized and should not be thought of as competing in any way.

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Draft, war to end all wars

It was with interest that I read Huibert Paul's letter in the Emerald on Feb. 26. I have to respect his experience in Holland under Nazi occupation and I share his desire for the preservation of human rights and the pursuit of happiness. However, I strongly disagree with his position regarding the draft.

In understanding the push by our nation's leaders to reinstitute the draft it seems that the key factor is indeed, as Prof. Paul states, the desire to preserve "our way of life in the U.S." What constitutes that "way of life" is our nation, which contains roughly 6 percent of the world's population, using almost 50 percent of the world's resources.

An article in the same issue reported that the "U.S. is prepared to use military force if necessary to protect oil sources and vital interests in the Mideast." Our "vital interests," it seems, are a way of life in which our wasteful consumerism and militarism demands that we "use military force" to maintain it.

The U.S. already itself produces about 16 percent of the world's oil — so it seems to me that we have no moral right to the resources of other nations, and no moral right to build up our military in order to secure those resources.

Prof. Paul mentions that we shouldn't "stick our heads in the sand" regarding the need to build up the military. It seems to me that the people with their "heads in the sand" are those who think we can continue to pour our financial and human resources down the rat hole of military spending. Military spending is, without a doubt, a major, if not the major, cause of inflation and our economy will remain in shambles until that issue is addressed.

Prof. Paul also refers to history in saying that we need to "be prepared militarily" to avoid a situation similar to



Nazi occupation.

But if we look further back to the root cause of the Nazis' rise to power, we can't avoid the conclusion that World War I was a major cause. And if there is one striking similarity between today's world and the world immediately preceding World War I, it's that the major powers, while saying they want peace, are continuing to prepare for war. The big difference, though, is that World War III, given our current capability to destroy the whole world, most assuredly, will be the "war to end all wars."

Ted Grimsrod
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Ticket-aid decrease just

In regard to Harold McClean's statement that the SUAB supports the 20 percent athletic subsidy (T. Swenson, "IFC stalls subsidy ruling," Oregon Daily Emerald, Feb. 27), I think a clarification as to how the SUAB came to support this position is in order.

During the Feb. 21 SUAB meeting, McClean introduced the proposal that the 20 percent subsidy be supported. After explaining his reasons for presenting the proposal, a vote was taken and the proposal passed 8 to 1.

It should be noted that no opposing arguments were presented, for there were no proponents of the subsidy decrease at the meeting who were willing to defend their position. Had there been, it is quite likely that they would have gotten at least one more vote — mine — for after I heard arguments supporting the decrease (two days after the meeting), I realized that is is just. One needs only to imagine the alienation that could occur among students should such programs as the GPA, the BSU, the UVA,

Women's Referral, etc., be cut back or eliminated.

I could expand on this, but I think the point is obvious — ASUO programs generally cannot support themselves financially, while the Athletic Department can. Therefore, IFC monies should be appropriated so that these "poorer," but no less needed, programs may be maintained. As for the Athletic Department, decrease its subsidy to 15 percent, or eliminate the subsidy altogether, and I will bet my athletic pass that students will still "pack the Pit."

Jess Barton
Junior, CSPA

'Swamp of prima donnas'

Judging from the Emerald editorials, it seems to be Gang-up-on-the-library month. The Feb. 28 editorial does additionally complain about the "voiceless relationship" between students and the library.

As one who has spent only three years away from this campus since 1955, may I remind you that the major student forum for expression of student opinion on all issues was the ASUO Senate. That Senate was abolished by a student vote after years of disgust by students at the petty, juvenile and exhibitionistic behavior of the "Senators."

The Senate was a real swamp of prima donnas although it was broad-based. Students got rid of their own sounding board because they realized that their own elected "officials" were incapable of handling themselves in the spotlight.

Walter Slocum
administrative assistant, library

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