

Critics blast MX, say impact ignored

Study group targets system

By HARRY ESTEAVE
Of the Emerald

The MX Missile System is again the target of public criticism following the release of the project's environmental impact statement (EIS).

Opponents of the Air Force's proposed multibillion-dollar defense project call the 10-volume document inconclusive and misleading, while members of the staff that prepared the EIS have labeled it a "whitewash."

Locally, Barbara Powell of the University's Survival Center has formed a student group to study the EIS.

Powell says the Air Force did not spend enough time on the EIS to make an adequate analysis. Her six-student group will analyze the EIS and other government documents.

The group plans to submit its findings to the Environmental Protection Agency.

The MX missile project "is not just a whim," Powell warns.

"It's a very serious matter that's going to cost billions of dollars. Just because it's not in Oregon doesn't mean it's not going to have a negative effect."

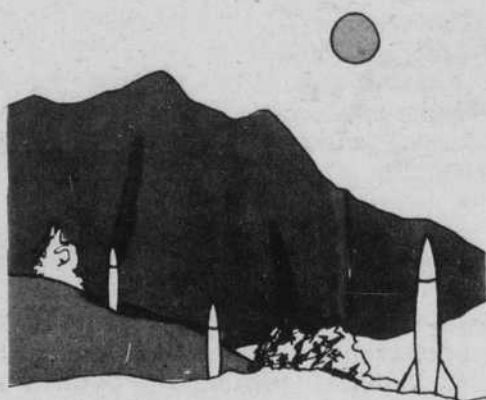
One EIS staff member was quoted as saying the document was prepared "simply to make the Air Force's preferred deployment plan look good."

A staff scientist also claimed his reports were "changed by the management to eliminate specific reference to adverse impacts."

Air Force officials declined to comment on these charges.

An EIS is required for any government project that may significantly alter its natural surroundings. The MX project involves a massive area in Utah and Nevada about the size of Pennsylvania.

Plans for the giant defense system, which the Air Force proudly bills as "the largest construction project ever undertaken by man," call for 200 moveable MX missiles and 4,600



Emerald graphic

separate underground launching sites. A network of underground railroad tracks would connect the launching sites, enabling the Air Force to change a missile's position at will.

Because of the shell-game set-up, Air Force planners say only a fraction of the MX missiles would be destroyed by Soviet attack, thus justifying the project's enormous expense.

But Powell says the MX system wouldn't be a "defense against nuclear war. That notion is absurd."

While the Air Force puts the cost of the MX project at \$33 billion, outside estimates differ. Predictions from congressional sources range from \$56 billion to \$100 billion.

Apart from the tremendous dollar costs, citizens living around the proposed construction site and environmentalists from across the country are alarmed by the potential damage the project could cause. They fear the massive construction would consume the area's fragile resources, especially water.

Citizens who reside in the small, tight-knit communities of Utah's Great Basin area say their present lifestyle would be ruined by the sudden overwhelming population increase that is sure to accompany the MX project.

Council ponders buying art for new city buildings

Eugene artists could find their work decorating new public buildings and a little extra money lining their pockets if the City Council approves an art-purchasing plan now under consideration.

Councilor Emily Schue asked the council Wednesday to approve a resolution that would set aside a percentage of the construction costs of some new city buildings to purchase art works for their decoration.

The council will decide the proposal's language at a future meeting.

Although the councilors quickly voiced support for Schue's proposal, they were undecided on what percentage of construction costs should be set aside or how the money should be allocated.

"I was slightly embarrassed to learn that we didn't have an ordinance like that already," said Mayor Gus Keller.

During a public hearing on the issue, Eugene photographer David Bayles told the council dedicating part of building construction funds for art would create

jobs in Eugene.

"The kinds of jobs art brings are very desirable jobs," Bayles said. "The net effect is seen in the quality of life."

In other business, the council unanimously approved an ordinance adopting a supplemental budget for the current fiscal year.

The supplemental budget will not require levying any new taxes and will be funded from previously uncommitted funds.

In addition, a Lane Transit District representative asked the council to approve a resolution encouraging citizens to attend a series of neighborhood meetings on possible LTD route changes.

LTD is reviewing its Eugene-area service before redesigning its existing routes. LTD has predicted additional service reductions for fiscal 1981.

Although the council declined to pass a resolution for LTD, Keller said the council would send LTD a letter of support.

Community-service club holds organizational meeting tonight

Three University students are having a rough time establishing a chapter of a community service club on campus.

In fact, only one student attended an organizational meeting last week for Circle K International.

Another meeting will be held tonight at 7:30 p.m. in the EMU Forum. A membership of at least 15 students is required to establish a student club.

"It could be disinterest with community service or anti-institutionalism. I don't know," says club organizer Robert Flagg of the poor response.

"In some cases, the University is still politically active, but it's a sideline-type political activism."

Circle K's activities include outings with handicapped children and senior citizens and fundraisers for charity organizations. Members make a commitment of about two hours per month.

Flagg says he got involved with the Kiwanis-sponsored club during high school.

One of Flagg's Circle K activities was taking the patients of a local nursing home bowling. Although the patients were confined to wheelchairs, specially designed ramps enabled some of them to bowl 260, he says.

"That really freaked me out," Flagg says. "I'm lucky to bowl 110."

In addition to student members, the club is also looking for two or three faculty advisors. For more information call Gary Peiss at 485-1032.

No-smoking rule hits Mac Court starting tonight

Smoking is no longer allowed in MacArthur Court, starting with tonight's Oregon-USC basketball game.

Formerly, fans needing a drag were allowed the hallways, but the new Eugene smoking ordinance and existing University policy forbids that, according to the athletic department.

And smokers who step outside may find themselves locked out — the athletic department does not allow people to leave the building during games and then return.

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