

At Harris Hall forum

Officials rap Reagan plan

By JOHN MILLS
Of the Emerald

Pres. Ronald Reagan's 1982 budget was castigated at a forum Saturday in Harris Hall.

Local politicians and others said the budget is the work of an incompetent, is an assault on the working people and is economically and morally wrong.

Sen. Ted Kulongoski, D-Eugene, said the Reagan administration is more concerned about "institutions like big business, the government and the arms industry" than people.

Reagan is "asking the poor, unemployed, elderly, and young to suffer the sacrifice in times of difficulty," Kulongoski said.

Conservative voters who thought Reagan would balance the budget "are in for a rude shock," said Rep. Margie Hendriksen, D-Eugene. Reagan's budget has a larger deficit than former Pres. Carter's 1982 budget, Hendriksen said.

Although 75 percent of the federal budget was not touched by the cuts, Reagan singled out human resources and education programs for political reasons, she said.

"Single parents and women in particular are going to be very hard hit," Hendriksen predicted.

Retired Admiral John Lee said the increase in military spending will amount to \$1.5 trillion by 1986, raising the proportion of the federal budget going to the Pentagon from 23 percent in 1980 to 38 percent in 1986.

Scrapping the MX missile system would save about \$100 billion that "we badly need," Lee said. The MX will not improve America's defense system, Lee said.

Hendriksen blasts Reagan cuts at EMU constituent brunch

A quiet brunch in the EMU turned into a political tirade Saturday, with Rep. Margie Hendriksen, D-Eugene, lambasting inconsistent budget cuts.

"We're going to go through a period of violence because people aren't going to be gently willing to starve to death in the wake of the Reagan budget," Hendriksen said at the brunch, one regularly held for constituents.

"The most disastrous thing about the Reagan budget is that it will not control inflation," Hendriksen said. "The Reagan budget is based on a premise that the inflation rate will be less than 7 percent and the interest rate less than 9 percent."

Hendriksen said she is a fiscal conservative and could accept Reagan's budget cuts if they were consistent. Three-fourths of the budget was left untouched, she said.

"Besides the money, there will be resources, brains and skills going in a completely unproductive direction," he said.

Local social service leaders outlined how federal budget cuts would affect Lane County residents in the areas of housing, health, food programs, jobs, welfare, legal services and education.

Peggy Mahoney, director of the Lane County Housing Authority, said the 2,500 people — including 600 elderly people — who now wait as long as two years for subsidized housing — face a 33 percent cut.

Steve Ickes, director of the county employment and training department, said 700 jobs will be lost "right off the top." Most of these will be jobs for youth, Ickes said.

Lane County legal aid will be eliminated entirely, said legal services director Rick Hart. Legal aid often helps women with child support and violence problems and serves 1,500-3,000 county residents, Hart said.

Kathy White of the Eugene Education Association said \$752,000 will be cut from school lunch programs in Eugene and Springfield.

Hart said the forum was designed to educate county residents about the effects of the Reagan budget and to encourage them to organize. Reagan is pushing his proposal through quickly to prevent public debate, Hart said.

The forum was sponsored by the Action for a Fair Budget Committee, a local and national coalition of more than 100 citizens' groups. Forums like Eugene's took place across the country Saturday.

"Only the human services programs were cut, and these to pay for the massive increases in defense expenditures."

Hendriksen said she also found inconsistencies in the state Judiciary Committee's approach to overcrowded prisons. She said the committee is suggesting a bond measure to pay for the construction of two new prisons.

She urged voters to realize prisons alone do not constitute a prison system. Building new prisons would mean cutting the social programs dealing with offenders, Hendriksen added.

Most offenders return to the community where there may not be enough social programs to prevent their return to crime, she said. Many prisoners now

are on work releases due to crowded prisons, she said, but many are released without "gate money" to help them get started. Often they are forced back into crime just to survive, she said.

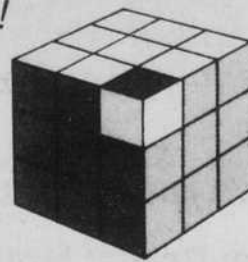
Hendriksen also said she is opposed to the state chancellor of higher education's proposal to cut faculty salaries by 5 percent in the state's seven colleges and universities. She said she would prefer fewer but stronger programs, rather than see a dilution of present programs until they become worthless.

"We may have to face up to the fact that a population the size of Oregon's cannot afford seven schools of higher education," Hendriksen said.

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