

# opinion

## New nuclear policy 'a kamikaze act'

Last week Pres. Ronald Reagan issued his long-awaited nuclear policy statement. In that statement Reagan lifted Jimmy Carter's ban on commercial recycling of spent nuclear reactor fuel and aggressively called for breeder reactor development. The policy statement also called for speedier power reactor licensing and swift federal action — along with states and nuclear industry — to prove the feasibility of high-level atomic waste disposal.

The Reagan announcement must be viewed with nothing short of horror. William Winpisinger, president of the International Association of Machinists called Reagan's nuclear policy "a kamikaze act."

That's an apt analogy for a nuclear policy that contains a reckless disregard for the real dangers to human life and has the potential to proliferate nuclear weaponry worldwide.

The timing of Reagan's nuclear policy is suspect in the wake of the Diablo Canyon protests. Why is the Reagan administration purposely ignoring the anti-nuclear sentiments of the country?

Winpisinger went on to say — "In terms of economics, nuclear power is the most expensive, most inefficient and most government-subsidized way to boil water ever designed by man . . . In terms of the nation's health, each nuclear power plant . . . is a communal cause of cancer."

If one were to gather the data on nuclear plant constructions around the country the evidence of cost overruns, unsafe structural designs, inadequate safeguards, to mention only a few of the frequent problems, would overwhelmingly signal nuclear power should be approached with extreme caution. If it should be approached at all.

Consumer advocate Ralph Nader said Reagan's policy will "create an artificial market for plutonium" that would "exacerbate the proliferation of nuclear weapons world wide."

## OURS

Jimmy Carter banned commercial reprocessing in 1977 for the certain possibility that the technology would permit plutonium being diverted for weapons programs. Such a source of plutonium was used by India in its clandestine development of nuclear weapons.

Reagan's policy all but destroys present international safeguards against the spread of weapons made from materials diverted from civilian power programs.

Rep. Edward Markey, D-Mass, called the Reagan policy "creeping nuclear socialism . . . a program of nuclear boosterism and government intervention to aid the sagging nuclear industry."

The policy is a strange departure from the Reagan administration's chant of less government intervention. The nuclear industry is totally inefficient and impractical in costs. The Reagan administration is providing what amounts to government "welfare" for an industry the majority of people in this country believe is unsafe.

Markey viewed the Reagan policy as "urging less safety regulation, less public scrutiny of the atomic program, but more taxpayer dollars thrown into the nuclear corporate pot."

But what's more frightening, and all too probable, is Markey's contention that unregulated production of tons of lethal plutonium will provide the raw materials for nuclear bombs — even by unsophisticated terrorists.

Reagan's nuclear policy is full of more dangers than benefits for the country. To allow this policy to pass unchallenged spells disaster for the country's future.

## letters policy

The Emerald will accept and attempt to print all letters containing fair comment on issues, ideas and topics of interest to the University community.

The letters **must** be limited to 250 words, signed, and the identification of the writer must be verified when the letter is turned in to The Emerald offices, EMU 300.

The Emerald reserves the right to edit any letter for length, style or content. Publication is dependent upon the space available.

## theirs



## YOURS

### Athletic ticket

Your editorial Thursday on the new student athletic ticket plan raised some good points and correctly analyzed the situation: the burden of supporting UO athletics still is on student shoulders.

Unfortunately, however, your comments stopped short of suggesting a better way to deal with the athletic subsidy issue. Editors must be more than Monday-morning quarterbacks if they expect to help their readers understand difficult public problems.

Last year's ASUO President Dave Eaton and Incidental Fee Committee certainly would have preferred to cut student support of the athletic program, rather than just shift from a full direct subsidy to an indirect ticket sale program. But that wasn't possible. Pres. Olum was firm that students had to come up with \$766,571 for athletics one way or another. The ticket program cut \$222,505 from the direct subsidy, a reduction of \$5 per term for students, on the assumption that a ticket program is fairer to students who don't attend any events. Admitted, students who attend all games and meets will pay more than they would have under the full subsidy, but that's life. Even at the UO, there's no free lunch.

The Emerald editor isn't alone in objecting to higher fees and bigger taxes. Nor is he making any earth-shattering statements. All of us would prefer lower taxes and more services. Income taxes, property taxes, cigarette taxes, liquor taxes, gasoline taxes, incidental fees . . . the American system of taxation is a vexing alternative to the days of the Boston Tea Party.

So what was gained by the new ticket program, which are pointed out to be "in theory, sound, but in reality, shaky?" The only answer may be time. The success or failure of the ticket sales will provide hard statistics about student interest in University athletics. That sort of information will help the ASUO executive, IFC, Pres. Olum, and, hopefully, the State Board of Higher Education to assess the fairness of direct vs.

indirect student subsidy of athletics.

You were wrong when you said ASUO President Rich Wilkins and myself refuse to comment publicly on who will absorb the debt at the end of the University's two-year budget if ticket sales fall short. We have said over and over that the burden of athletic support is still the same as two years ago, on students. But we agree with you that the posture of student involvement in athletic subsidy negotiations remains a no-win situation. Until the state Legislature changes the law on allocation of incidental fees, students have at best a weak voice in the discussion of campus finances.

The Emerald, the ASUO, and every student at this University should speak out on the athletic subsidy issue. It wasn't settled by the new ticket-sale program. At most, it just was delayed until a better system could be developed.

And in the card game of life, a stall and pass may be infinitely more productive than folding with your aces still in the hole.

Jim Edmunson  
ASUO Vice President

### Supposition

In its opinion (Monday, Oct. 5) concerning the Revolutionary Communist Youth Brigade, The Emerald made the supposition that the United States is a democracy. To this assertion, I would like to pose a couple questions.

Firstly, how is The Emerald defining democracy? The American Heritage Dictionary defines it as "Government by the people, exercised either directly, or through elected representatives."

Secondly, based on the actions of America's central government in the last five years, can it claim to fit this description? Since 1976, and in spite of massive opposition to nuclear proliferation, it has continued. In spite of opposition

Popular opinion, of course, is a sticky issue when there are three major commercial television networks, and their audience on any given night is

greater than that of all the books published in the United States in any given year. One might question how autonomous the American people are in formulating their own opinions and views in light of this unprecedented concentration of power. That the average American is convinced that his or her country is a democracy is not surprising. That he or she condemns socialist countries as repressive dictatorships is not surprising. That he or she is not familiar with America's relations to popular massacres in El Salvador, Guatemala, Indonesia and Angola is not surprising. That he or she have never been told of workers' control of factories and farms in Cuba, Mozambique, the Soviet Union or East Germany is not surprising. That our university newspaper falls into the same groove, however, is upsetting.

As students, I feel it is our job to question everything. And as a student newspaper, I feel it is The Emerald's job to help us.

Christian Gunther  
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### Rebels

So the "self-proclaimed rebels with a cause," Young Americans for Freedom, have returned to campus. As an ex-YAFer, I think that they are patently absurd. I'm, in fact, forced to ask "Freedom for whom?" To see this point let's examine some of their "freedom oriented" policies from the early 1970's, most of which were espoused by their own publication, New Guard:

1. They opposed the renomination of Richard Nixon in 1972, not because they had the foresight to know that he was a crook, but because he was too liberal.

2. They produced buttons, and probably expressed the view elsewhere that we should "Nuke Hanoi."

Ultimately, of course, the "freedom" that they wish to advocate isn't freedom at all, but a renewal of "McCarthyism."

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