opinion

Oregon, in Atiyeh's hands, is failing

Now we are in the throes of more budget reductions and more cuts to state agencies, while Atiyeh has still not dropped the property tax relief program nor increased taxes, or done much else except up the price 7 cents per pack of cigarettes.

The state agencies that are suffering are higher education, human resources, and state police. It is arguable that these agencies are essential and should be augmented rather than reduced.

The people of Oregon are becoming more and more disenchanted with Atiyeh and his political tightrope act. They aren't being fooled, and won't vote for Atiyeh because he promised to keep taxes low. Oregonians are concerned by all the state agencies being cut and are willing to pay a larger share of taxes and forego property tax relief.

This latest round of budget cuts to higher education and other state agencies imposed by Gov. Vic Atiyeh raises more than just doubts concerning the future of higher education. These revenue deficits and subsequent budget reductions raise serious questions regarding the leadership of Atiyeh. A recall notwithstanding, the people of Oregon are deserving of better leadership and should consider another governor in the 1982 gubernatorial election.

Atiyeh did adhere to his campaign promise of not increasing taxes and continuing the popular property tax relief program. But, at the time Atiyeh took office, Oregon was sitting quite contentedly on a budget surplus in the hundreds of million of dollars. Promises not to raise taxes and to continue tax rebate programs are easy to mouth when the state budget is solidly in the black.

That was a couple of years ago, before the tide and time of inflation and recession eroded the Oregon economy to its present demise.

Atiyeh must have had some economic forecasts to alert him to the dwindling surplus in the state coffers. Why didn't he heed the national economic forecasts and translate them to Oregon? By careful preventative measures the state could have avoided its present situation.

Actions speak much louder than campaign promises and Atiyeh's actions in office have been fairly mute. The first special session of the Legislature called to deal with a budget deficit should have been met with strong countermeasures. Instead, Atiyeh did next to nothing to stem the Revenue deficit. This all but ensured another special session to deal with further deficits.

The problem can be traced to unrealized revenues partly from declining housing starts affecting the timber industry, and partly from the increasing interest rates for borrowers. Any cautious analysis would have advised diversification of the revenue base for Oregon knowing the national economy would continue the downward trend for the immediate future.

Still Atiyeh, more as a politican than as a foresighted leader seeking solutions to the revenue crisis, stolidly stood by his unrealistic campaign promises not to increase taxes and maintain the property tax relief program.

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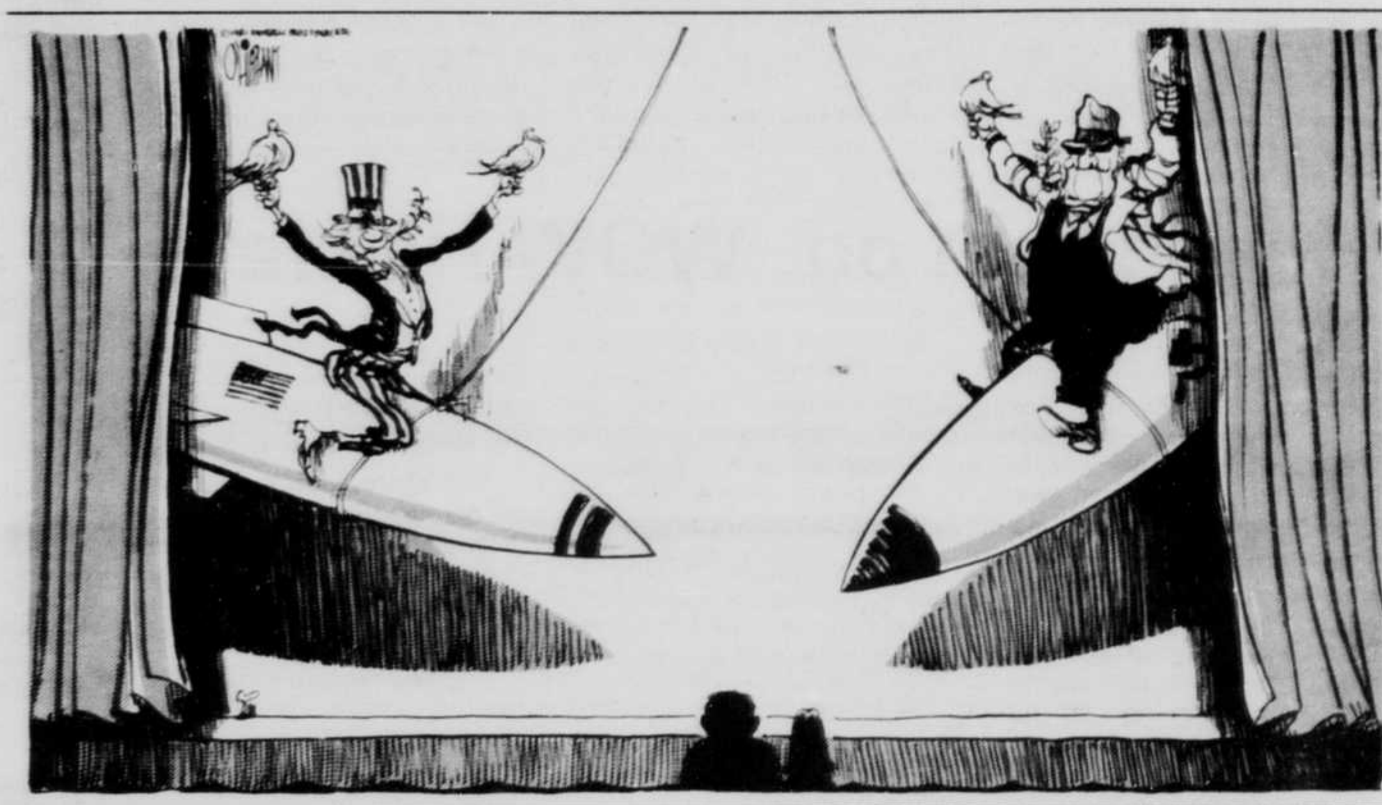
Atiyeh during his governorship has failed to maintain the quality of essential state agencies which is part of his responsibility as governor. With Atiyeh this state has declined and will continue to do so until farsighted leadership is elected.



letters

Dusty old depression blues

What with Reaganomics bringing back all the best of those old Depression Blues, it seems to me we're going to have to change our styles of music. I mean, Punk's fine for rich people, but Devo's hardly the thing for standing in bread lines.

The time's right for removing "that dusty old dust" from your Woodie Guthrie records, especially the ones concerning "Going Down That Road Feeling Bad," "Hard Traveling," and "The Oregon Trail."

While Reagan does all he can to restore hard times, we can listen to "Hey, Brother, Can You Spare a Dime?" while we watch unemployment go up, interest rates soar, and Exxon's taxes vanish.

By this time next year, you'd better have your Model T or Hudson Super-Six ready for the road. Tie your bedding to the sides, load the chickens on top, and head West - too bad we can't go much farther than Florence.

But let's be optimistic! What with Reagan's foreign policy, maybe we won't be around long enough to suffer from his economics! Between B-1 and the draft, I'm following Bob Dylan's advice to "head for those Northern skies" or be Born Again.

With good old Bonzo's ex-bed partner's finger on the hair trigger of an MX, there's another Woody Guthrie favorite which is appropriate: "So Long, It's Been Good to Know Ya."

Kevin Patterson
Architecture

Neutrality gyrations

I have been following with some amusement the gyrations of Pres. Olum on the questions of "university neutrality." First we heard that lumberman Aaron Jones' threat not to give a quarter of a million dollars to the University unless the Environmental Law Clinic was thrown off campus, was not the reason it was thrown off (but rather the University's principle commitment to neutrality.) Then we heard that ROTC unlike the ELC was neutral, because the university could reject any given instructor the army provided. But, now poor professor Bates' small scale personal consulting business is about to be thrown off campus. Let us stop the silliness about "neutrality" Olum and face the facts. This university from head to toe is integrally tied into both wealthy business interests and the U.S. military industrial complex. It is about as neutral as a horse to a sugar cube (and for the same reason.)

Besides ROTC's blatant commitment to the U.S. military (and aganist, for example Iran, Cuba, El Salvador, Vietnam), the business school represents the top of the corporate iceberg. It is geared totally to serve the corporations that run the U.S. economy (and against the interests of the working people of the state.) In a recent brochure they labeled the University as businesses' "secret weapon." They openly advertise to the corporations their "willingness to relate to" the needs of business through a wide diversity of programs. It has a "Business Advisory Council" whose purpose is "to provide the College with a fresh perspective of the needs of the business community;" a Small Business Institute in wich "companies identify a need, initiate a request for assistance through the College... and permit selected students to address their live problems;" a Forest Industries Management Center which runs a "senior management seminar which has been specifically tailored to management issues facing the forest products corporations," as well as "faculty internships with the corporations designed to "increase the administrative and managerial effectiveness of corporations" and a set of "Oregon Business Seminars" which provide a range of services to business. Let us stop the hypocrisy about "neutrality" and face up the facts about what universities are really about.

Albert Szymanski
Associate Professor of Sociology

Who scrapped SALT?

Maybe before we take Christian Gunther and his letter (Dec. 3) very seriously, perhaps we should look at some basic facts. Like who "scrapped" SALT II. SALT II was signed by then Pres. Carter. However, the agreement was not ratified by Congress, both houses of which were controlled by its own party leader. One of the main reasons Congress did not ratify the agreement was its concern about the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. Therefore, it was not Pres. Reagan who "scrapped" SALT II, but the United States Congress.

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