

opinion

Constitution Court finds for OSPIRG

The ASUO Constitution Court's findings in the Richard Burr v. OSPIRG case show the court to be a fair and judicious body with a depth of understanding regarding the particulars of this case.

The court heard three questions by Burr asking an interpretation of the ASUO Constitution in reference to OSPIRG. The questions concerned funding methods, whether OSPIRG violated policies regarding political activities and access to lobbying.

The court found in favor of Burr on the question of funding and for OSPIRG on the other two counts. The opinion of the court, delivered by Alan Contreras, was concisely written and certain in its arguments.

Burr's question on the biennial budgeting by initiative for OSPIRG was successful. However, the question did not succeed in dissolving OSPIRG's funding as was Burr's intention.

The court clarified that the State Board of Higher Education has never granted the student body the power to recommend budgeting for more than a year.

This means that OSPIRG must use the annual initiative or a referendum to obtain funding. This has been the standard procedure for OSPIRG up until last year.

On the question of political activities the court deferred to the State Board due to the board's "exhaustive involvement" in issues associated with OSPIRG. So the court declined to "exercise jurisdiction" and suggested the board is the proper place to resolve the issue.

Concerning the lobbying efforts of OSPIRG and the alleged "left-liberal" bias of the group, the court concluded that the Constitution statute Burr cited as being in violation was not intended to insure all viewpoints were funded — or all views espoused.

The Emerald's editorial position opposed to Burr's PIRG-busting antics has been published before. We endorse the findings of the Constitution Court and compliment them on the way they handling this "hot" topic.

Nuclear free zones: signs of the times

This has to go under the heading of "Noble Efforts."

Sunday the 41 residents of Southeast Brooklyn Street in Portland declared their neighborhood a nuclear free zone. They even put up signs and a paper banner that read "Give Peace a Chance." The banner and sign were presumably to detour incoming missiles or bombers.

The 41 residents even declared their neighborhood off-limits to the transport of nuclear weapons or as a repository for nuclear weapons.

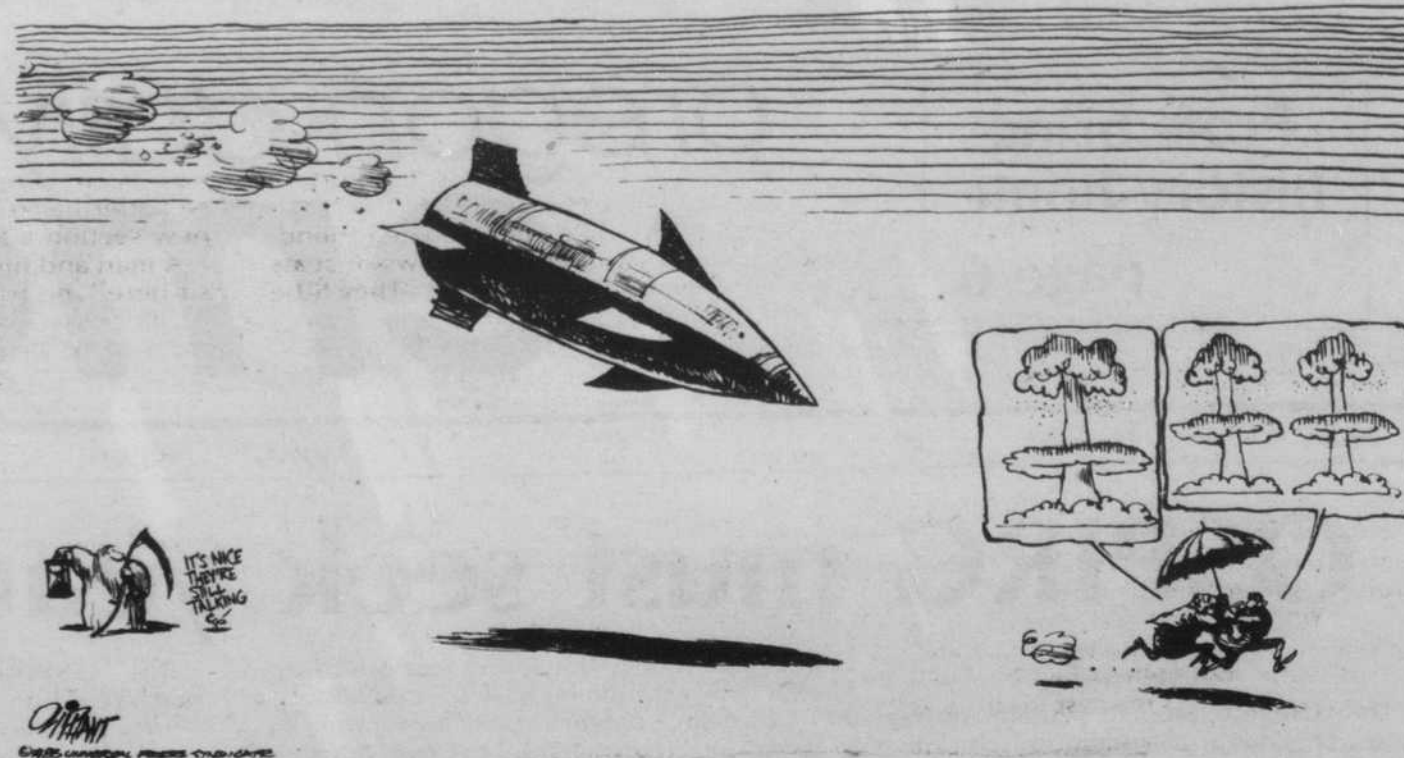
The United States government hasn't announced any intention of using Southeast Brooklyn Street for such purposes.

The gesture was symbolic, and part of a growing movement across the country. The citizens of Chico, Calif. recently declared their city a nuclear free zone. Voters in Ashland, Ore. overwhelmingly showed their support last year for setting aside their town as a nuclear free zone.

A ballot question given to University students during the spring campus wide elections, showed their support of the idea of the University being declared a nuclear free zone.

As a result of the student poll ASUO Pres. Mary Hotchkiss and officials of Students for a Nuclear Free Future drafted a letter to Soviet Pres. Yuri Andropov asking that the Soviets remove the University from any target lists. A copy of the same letter was sent to Pres. Ronald Reagan — not because the government may have the University on any of its target lists.

We appreciate the sentiments of the Southeast Brooklyn residents and all those who are striving to make towns and cities nuclear free zones. Yet, we remain skeptical about its effectiveness. Although, we respect the gesture of opposition to the nuclear proliferation dilemma.



SEARCH director responds to article

As the current director of SEARCH, I was surprised and disappointed that Emerald reporter, Melissa Martin, did not interview me prior to the publication of your article on our program (Oct. 6) as I had expected her to do. I would like to correct some of the errors in your story.

To begin with, there are not "Fewer SEARCH classes this fall..." Last fall term SEARCH offered 10 credit classes and 10 non-credit workshops, for a total of 20 classes. This fall we are offering 11 credit classes and nine workshops, for the same total. There are usually more classes offered during winter and spring terms, when instructors are on campus to prepare and obtain approval for their courses.

comments steve myers

The distinction between credit classes and non-credit workshops is crucial to an understanding of the program. Credit classes are sponsored by a faculty member and approved by the department head or curriculum committee. Non-credit workshops are not so approved, and are explicitly described in our catalogue as "...not endorsed, sponsored, or approved by the university administration."

It is untrue that the SEARCH program "...is responsible for exercising control over the actual content in SEARCH classes..." as your article attributed the Vice Provost Paul Holbo. A well-known memo circulated throughout the University in 1970 and referred to frequently since that time states unequivocally:

- 1) The participating academic department shall have full jurisdiction over the SEARCH courses that it offers.
- 2) Faculty sponsors shall be most immediately responsible to their departments for the manner in which the courses they sponsor are conducted.
- 3) SEARCH will continue to function as a) a clearing house for student-initiated courses and curricular reform ideas, b) a liaison between students, faculty members and departments, and c) an advocate of student participation in educational decision-making.

The absence of formal responsibility does not mean that the SEARCH program is uninterested in either the quality or content of the courses it offers. Academic departments are uniquely competent to make these judgments. One of our primary goals is improving the communication between SEARCH instructors and their sponsoring faculties.

letters

Philosophical

A few misquotes and misstatements about the article

on my SEARCH class, "Twilight of Western Thought: A Christian Response," (Emerald, Oct. 6) need correction.

The article makes it appear that the class concerns only Christianity. This is not true. It addresses the philosophical issues raised by Christianity, naturalism (secular humanism), and nihilism and their impact historically, psychologically, and sociologically. Christianity is presented as a unified and all-encompassing world view (philosophy of life) that challenges other rival perspectives.

Although a Christian perspective is given, other beliefs are discussed on their own terms. The class is not a bunch of Christians talking to themselves about only Christianity. We grapple with issues such as faith and reason, science and religion, arguments for atheism, the effect of pluralism

on one's world view, and others. Thinkers such as Freud, Feuerbach, Nietzsche, Peter Berger, and C.S. Lewis are encountered and critiqued.

Our general approach is similar to Mortimer Alder's book and television series "Six Great Ideas" in that pivotal presuppositions — for our class being: the existence and nature of God, the identity of humanity, the basis for ethics, the meaning of history, and the interpretation of death — are approached from various angles.

I want my students — Christian or non-Christian — to think about these great ideas and their consequences for the whole of life. I want my students to hold their own world view in a well informed and intellectually authentic manner.

Doug Groothuis
graduate, philosophy
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