

SNUFFing out ignorance about nuclear weapons

By Pete Malliris
Of the Emerald

A group of University students opposing nuclear weapons wages its war against the arms race with only one weapon — knowledge.

Students for a Nuclear Free Future works to educate people about the nuclear arms race and its alternatives, and SNUFF member Sherri Schultz says student ignorance on the subject is shocking.

"People know almost nothing at all," she says.

And the blame for student ignorance about current government policies lies on the University's shoulders. "There aren't many courses on the issue," Schultz says. "The University needs to deal with that."

Group member Bill Hallmark says the main issue in the arms race today is what he calls "alarming rhetoric" coming from Washington.

Statements from people like Lawrence Beilenson, a personal friend of Pres. Ronald Reagan, are an example. Beilenson said the United States should overthrow all communist countries, and he

advocated preparing to fight and win a nuclear war.

This kind of rhetoric is dangerous because it comes from intelligent people who have power, Hallmark says.

Students need to know about this kind of rhetoric so they can get motivated to "change our society's mode of thinking" about the arms race, he says.

But there is more than just rhetoric involved in American foreign policy, Schultz says.

"We're planning to fight a nuclear war," she says. "College students need to be able to make informed decisions."

Fall term, SNUFF is fighting the lack of knowledge they see at the University through a class in the Search program called "Alternatives to the Nuclear Arms Race."

And on Nov. 1, Robert Scheer, author of "With Enough Shovels," will speak on campus about some presidential advisors' viewpoints on nuclear war. SNUFF is sponsoring the event.

Ten days later (on Veteran's Day) the group will participate in a nationwide convocation involving



Photo by Dave Kan

Students for a Nuclear Free Future (SNUFF), works to educate people about nuclear arms.

about 150 campuses. The convocation is SNUFF's main focus for the term and will feature their third annual "Die In."

The "Die In" is a simulation of a

nuclear holocaust and is designed to show what the aftereffects of nuclear war would be like.

Schultz says she thinks the group has been at least partially

successful in their efforts to educate people. "I know we've educated people who wouldn't have otherwise been educated," she says.

National women politicians schedule Nicaragua tour

Women working in state governments were contacted nationwide yesterday about touring Nicaragua from Nov. 5-14, says spokesperson Pat Wasp of the Eugene Council for Human Rights in Latin America, the organization sponsoring the tour.

The women's tour will be the second co-sponsored by ECHRLA and AMNLAE, a Nicaraguan womens group. The first tour-group, which consisted of educators, professionals and businesswomen, visited Nicaragua from Sept. 10-20.

ECHRLA had hoped to involve federal legislators in the November tour, but the current session of Congress doesn't end until Nov. 15.

ECHRLA has shifted gears from the federal to the state level, but is still aiming for a future tour for legislators working in Washington, D.C., Wasp says.

Plans to have Oregon state legislators participate in the first tour were dashed by the special session.

There is room for 14 women on the November tour, and ECHRLA plans to contact every woman state legislator in the U.S. about participating. The women who go to Nicaragua will meet in Miami, then fly to Managua, Nicaragua's capitol.

Oregon Senators Jeannette Hamby, R-Woodburn and Barbara Roberts, D-Portland, had already expressed interest as of yesterday afternoon, Wasp says, as has

Wyoming Secretary of State Cyra Thompson.

The November tour will differ slightly from September's tour. The itinerary, which Wasp says was very hectic for the September group, will be shaved a little. The November tour "will have more of a professional edge." The

Nicaraguans, she says, "want more people (involved) who make decisions."

Since the first tour, many people have contacted ECHRLA and expressed interest in participating in future tours, including "20 to 25 women doctors."

ECHRLA is one of the few

groups AMNLAE works with to set up tours, Wasp says.

Wasp stresses the non-partisan orientation of the Nicaragua tours.

"Our job is not to change people's minds," but rather to provide "a positive environment for people to learn."



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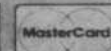
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