

ASUO is successful with political forum

It is not surprising that things have been hectic in the ASUO office lately. With the Nov. 6 elections just a few weeks away, ASUO Pres. Julie Davis and her staff have been working double-time to make sure that students have a chance to learn about the important issues in the 1984 elections.

The result of their labors is the creation of one of the best organized and most widely represented political forums to be held at the University in recent years.

The ASUO feels it is extremely important that students have a chance to learn about key political issues facing Oregon, the nation and the world and to take this knowledge to the voting booth. We agree.

Political analysts across the country have claimed that the 1984 elections will be the most polarized since 1968. Because of this, and because of the many diverse issues confronting voters, the ASUO has prepared a series of debates, forum discussions and key-note speakers that will cover a full range of topics.

On Monday, a four day symposium will begin that focuses on the themes of Justice, the Environment, the World and the State. The event promises to be both informative and exciting.

Although Walter Mondale, the Democratic candidate for President, has temporarily postponed his speaking engagement that was set for Monday in the EMU courtyard, there are other important events scheduled for next week.

Highlights will include appearances by consumer advocate Ralph Nader, nuclear disarmament advocate Dr. Helen Caldicott, Sen. Mark Hatfield, and Congressman Jim Weaver. Additional debates and panel discussions will cover topics ranging from the revolution in Nicaragua to the question of radioactive waste disposal in Oregon.

The ASUO has done an excellent job of creating an opportunity for students of all political backgrounds to learn about what's at stake in the 1984 elections. Students should take advantage of this opportunity, and make it count by voting on Nov. 6.

Vice Pres. debate good but lacked confrontation

The one and only 1984 vice presidential candidates' debate on Thursday left political analysts scrambling to determine its impact on the national election. Whether the debate will make a big difference on how people vote remains to be seen. Still, it offered a candid look at the candidates.

Vice Pres. George Bush's emotions were all over the place. In an effort to show the leadership and command that Reagan lacked while debating Mondale, Bush raised his voice and dramatized points at awkward moments. In contrast, Ferraro presented herself in a firm but calm manner.

The disrespect that Bush showed toward Ferraro was both rude and unnecessary. Not once during the debate did he refer to her as Congresswoman Ferraro. Instead she was "Mrs. Ferraro," even though she respectfully referred to him as Vice President Bush.

Despite the publicity surrounding the debate, neither candidate emerged with what could be called a clear victory. But Ferraro showed herself to be in command of her facts, while Bush often resorted to theatrics to get his message across.

In his attack on the the Nicaraguan government, Bush criticized the Sandinistas for exporting weapons to the rebels in El Salvador, and for not making moves towards democracy. It amounted to a lot of loud words with very little substance. He offered no facts to back up his statement about weapons exports to El Salvador, and ignored the fact that Nicaragua will hold open elections next month.

Americans watching the debate did not see the kind of confrontation they may have expected. But what they did see was a theatrical Bush speaking about glory days to come, and a firm Ferraro speaking about the realities of the present.

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letters

War glory

I cannot do otherwise than agree with Matthew Ruane's sarcastic letter on "poor taste" at a sorority (ODE Oct. 1). Yes Ruane, you are sanctimonious, as well as a supremacist. You try to ridicule by satire Miss Dahlin's honest dismay at the prospect of someone glorifying one of the most devastating wars the world has ever known.

The only piercing truth that your satire has uncovered is the callous attitude which you, and others, have displayed towards one of the darkest eras of our history. It never ceases to amaze me that people can accept, much less glorify, any ideas that war is anything other than utterly destructive, horrifying, and absolutely devastating to the most precious of all things - life.

I am sure the sorority that initially set up the tent and camouflage had no intention of the glorification of war; however it is obvious that they did — without much thought — choose poorly the theme of the 1940's era with an emphasis on militarism. They were using a theme for celebration that was more aptly suited for grave reflection on those events which lead to the deaths of millions, in atrocities perpetrated by the Nazi regime, and in the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

In the comfortable life style that we Americans are accustomed to, we often forget the horrible realities of war. I applaud Miss Dahlin's concern for a problem which she mildly termed "bad taste." To the

sorority, next time just try using the Andrews Sisters.

Bob Powell
CIS Major

Missing facts

It is sad to realize that one of the main sources of information about South Africa comes from editorial columns that present a totally pessimistic outlook, failing to mention a few important facts.

Nowhere is it mentioned that the recent riots in South Africa were mainly black tribal wars. The police were brought in only to stop the blacks killing each other. It isn't mentioned that 95% of the blacks are illiterate, and, if given the right to vote, by virtue of their majority, would take over the country and then have to learn to write their names.

The fact that they cannot read or write is a disgrace and should never have been allowed to happen. But it has, and the world, especially America, should realize that change cannot occur overnight. The American democratic system cannot work in every country and other countries and their systems should not be judged according to American ideals and values.

The action many Americans would like Reagan to take is divestment and boycotts. Yet few people realize that by withdrawing funds and loans, the first people to lose their jobs and starve are the blacks.

How many Americans realize that a large majority of blacks fear black rule? They fear the chaos, poverty, and violence evident in most other African countries.

It cannot be denied that the system is wrong and has to change. Yet changes are occurring and must be recognized, however gradual they may be. Demanding change tomorrow is as destructive as allowing the system to remain.

Helen Morrison
A South African

Warped logic?

With the hoopla of the coming election we are seeing a new amenity in the prison system. Prisoners are systematically being given the right to vote. In most states this enfranchisement is extended to those whose convictions are on appeal. The Oregon prisoners with final convictions can vote.

The Democrats are going full steam to register as many as 200,000 prisoners. This drive is organized by the Committee to Abolish Slavery (CAPS), a group claiming that imprisonment should fall under the same legal definition as slavery.

Let it always be understood that the instrument of law serves to rightfully punish those found guilty under its standards. To convert a prison cell into a voting booth will elicit a not so unexpected response; they will not bite the hand that feeds them.

It angers me to think of the warped logic that goes behind this political ploy. Votes are being obtained for the selfish aims of two former prosecutors, Mondale and Ferraro, who themselves have struggled with our enervated legal system. They have consistently shown

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