

Measure 3 will help to protect consumer

Proponents of Ballot Measure 3 know that they are up against a tough fight with Northwest utility companies. The reason is simple. Passage of Measure 3 would create a Citizens Utility Board (CUB) sanctioned under Oregon law to represent consumers and act as a watchdog on utility company rate hikes.

A CUB would be a citizens' action group designed to represent residential ratepayers in hearings before the Oregon Public Utilities Commissioner and other legislative bodies. The main purpose of CUB is to protect Oregonians from unnecessary rate increases by utility companies seeking higher profits at the expense of the consumer.

Threatened by the idea of a CUB, utility companies in Oregon have already poured over \$500,000 into campaigns to defeat Measure 3. Among the most financially active in trying to stop passage of Measure 3 are Pacific Northwest Bell and Portland General Electric.

Establishing a CUB in Oregon, according to Measure 3, would mean the creation of a statewide, non-profit organization with an elected board of 15 members coming from each of the state's congressional districts. Citizens interested in joining the CUB would be asked to voluntarily contribute a \$5 membership fee which would help fund the group's activities. The board would be elected by CUB members, and would decide the organization's policies towards representing public interest before the Public Utility Commissioner.

Oregon consumers should have a CUB to represent them. Currently the Public Utility Commissioner has the job of representing both consumer and utility companies at rate increase hearings. One person (the Commissioner) has the final say on whether a rate increase will take place or not. How can the Commissioner work effectively as both advocate and defendant at the same time? Someone is bound to lose out, and in the past it has often been the consumer.

For example, early this year the Public Utilities Commissioner gave Portland General Electric and Pacific Power and Light over \$85 million in rate increases to pay for the new Colstrip Power Plant in Montana. These rate hikes were given without a single public hearing on the subject. In Montana the result was different. After a series of public hearings, a major rate increase was rejected by the Montana Public Utilities Commissioner. Oregonians have been left paying more for a power plant in Montana than Montana itself.

Opponents of Measure 3 say that Oregonians are well-represented by the Public Utility Commissioner and his staff. If this was the case, then at least one public hearing would have been held on the decision to increase utility rates in Oregon to fund the building of the Colstrip Power Plant in Montana.

Oregonians need protection from big business and the one-man, one-decision role given to Oregon's Public Utility Commissioner. Without CUB, Oregonians will remain victims of the utility companies and their financial power. Vote Yes on Measure 3.

Reagan's words stand in contrast to his policies

Everyone was sure of the winner in Sunday's final presidential debate. It was simple. If you were a Republican, the winner was President Reagan, and if you were a Democrat, then the winner was Walter Mondale.

As far as facts go, Mondale appeared to be in better form. Reagan, looking more lively than during the first debate, relied less on facts and more on emotion to make his points. Regarding his "Star Wars" proposal, Reagan talked a lot about themes of human rights and peace, but couldn't say how the system would be launched. Considering that he is putting millions of tax dollars into this idea, he ought to at least understand how it works.

Americans must look at the deed rather than the word when it comes to evaluating Reagan's politics. He talks of stopping the arms race, but has launched the biggest military build-up in peacetime history. He talks of ending terrorism to overthrow the government of Nicaragua. Now Reagan tells us that sending weapons into space will be an act of human rights. Yet here on earth, poverty and hunger run rampant as America's greatest technologists are sought by the government to create new weapons systems.

With Reagan, nuclear missiles are called "peace-keepers" and terrorists in Nicaragua are praised as "freedom fighters." With Reagan, talk of justice has meant acts of injustice. Mondale, at least, offers hope. Will America listen?



Letters

Sports anger

I don't know exactly what sort of reputation "sports-writer" Allan Lazo is trying to build for himself while covering Duck football this season, but clearly he has discredited himself as a reliable source of information; in the process, Lazo has displayed an embarrassing lack of knowledge concerning Pac-10 football.

Three weeks ago, Lazo rested full blame on Chris Millers' 4th quarter interception toss for the Duck's disheartening loss to Arizona. Remember Mr. Lazo, one play does not a game make, and your telescopic reporting of that Miller miscue was an outrageous abhorrence of forthright journalistic tenets.

Elsewhere, one can witness Lazo's haphazard "Pac-10 predictions" as a preposterous absence of insight into the entire realm of college football.

In his re-cap of the USC game, the ever gullible Lazo seems taken in by the overblown media-hype of USC linebacker Jack Del-Rio. Lazo paints an All-American picture of Del-Rio, using one-sided machismo quotes from the Trojan Star, completely ignoring the fact that Steve Jensen's inspired play neutralized Del-Rio for most of the game. Sadly, Lazo's story appears to have been based more upon the USC press guide than on the game itself.

It is indeed a sad state of affairs that Lazo is allowed to use a University-funded publication as a personal mouthpiece for biased discourses in his own self interest, ridiculing himself,

as well as the Emerald as a whole.

Robert Thompson
Eugene

Beta Pictoris

The star-gazer that I am, I feel compelled to point out a couple of discrepancies in the recent article written by Michael Doke on the discovery of a new solar system.

He states that the Beta Pictoris star is "50 billion light years away" and that scientists "have been studying another star 2000 billion light years away." Now either geology Professor Gordon Goles misled him, or Doke took the facts down wrong.

Beta Pictoris is, in fact, only 50 light years away or 293 trillion miles from earth. As for a star 2000 billion light years away? It simply is not possible. To put this in perspective, cosmologists estimate that the universe itself is less than 300 billion light years old. Thus, for a person to observe a star 2000 billion light years away, it would mean observing light from before time began — as far as we know, this is impossible.

I enjoyed the article, but felt these points should be corrected. Space is old and big enough as it is.

Nick Beres
Astrological Physics

Distortions

Normally when an informed Republican disagrees with an article or letter to a publication,

that individual attempts to refute its assertions with contradictory evidence or better reasoning. This is not the case with the feeble response to my recent letter which exposed Reagan's do-nothing record on crime.

Ms. Parkman apparently debates those who disagree with her by calling their opinions "distortions." Unable to refute my claims, she praised Reagan's record by citing the meaningless symbolic gestures that the Republicans have made concerning crime. I was not impressed, and I doubt that anyone else was.

The Reagan record on crime remains a failure — a miserable failure. And as the old saying goes, "A circus blanket on a jackass does not a showhorse make." The facts I cited did not come from campaign brochures. They came from congressional committee research reports.

It can't be denied that violent crime hits 1 out of every 10 American households each year. It cannot be denied that 21,000 Americans were murdered in 1983. It cannot be denied that there are more than 500,000 heroin addicts in America — more than ever before.

Stop kidding yourself Lori. Read the newspapers. Crime is rampant. Victims are more victimized than ever before. And all that Reagan has done both as governor of California for eight years, and as President for four years, is talk about it. Talk, talk, talk. It's time for a change.

Kenneth Hacker
Speech

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