

Editorial

Obie should debate DeFazio up front

Thursday, Eugene Mayor Brian Obie announced that he wouldn't debate Peter DeFazio, chairman of the Lane County Board of Commissioners, over the proposed .4 percent city income tax. DeFazio challenged the mayor to debate the issue last Monday.

Perhaps Obie meant that he wouldn't debate DeFazio formally. In our estimation, the two have been underhandedly debating for two weeks. We would like to see the two lay their slingshots down and meet face to face.

It all started when DeFazio, during a Demo Forum appearance with City Councilor Emily Schue Oct. 15, charged city officials with underestimating the amount of money the tax would raise by \$95 million. DeFazio estimated that the tax would raise \$195 million over the next 25 years, which is nearly double the figure cited by city officials. Only about \$70 million has been earmarked for specific projects, and DeFazio is concerned that a large amount of money would be raised unnecessarily.

So last Monday, Obie marched across the street from City Hall and held a news conference outside of DeFazio's office which is in the Public Service Building. He accused DeFazio of attempting to mislead the public at his Oct. 15 appearance.

It appears that Obie's plan went right according to schedule. After the conference, reporters whisked up to DeFazio's office for a response to Obie's charges. DeFazio held an unplanned news conference and turned the tables. He challenged Obie to a formal, public debate.

On Wednesday, city councilors pushed Obie to refuse. Councilor Jeff Miller read a letter at a City Council meeting suggesting that the debate would confuse the issue and erupt into a clash between personalities and politics. The letter also stated that DeFazio was deliberately distorting the facts and demeaning the City Council's character.

DeFazio charged the City Council with name-calling.

Thursday, Obie declined DeFazio's invitation to debate, citing that he didn't want to worsen the relationship between the city and the county.

In response, DeFazio urged citizens who wanted to see the debate to call Obie's office. The Register-Guard obligingly printed forms of the suggestion four times, including printing Obie's office phone number twice, in a front-page story Friday.

Saturday, the Register-Guard reported that 481 people had indeed called Obie's office by 5 p.m. Friday. Reportedly, only 12 of the callers did not want to see the debate.

DeFazio and Obie should debate. Rather than craftily set each other up and volley accusations back and forth at each other by way of the press, the two leaders should confront each other in a professional and diplomatic manner. If city/county relations are going to be further damaged, it will be through taking childish potshots at each other as Obie and DeFazio have been doing for the last two weeks.

And contrary to city councilors' claims that a debate would confuse the issue, a public debate could serve to clear up some of the confusion we suspect has sprung from the recent exchange of contradictions. If the two would meet in a public forum and explain how they arrived at their respective figures, the public would be able to assess their arguments themselves.

Obie's refusal casts a shadow of doubt on his assertions. If he has faith in the validity of his figures, he should have the courage to expose his projections to public scrutiny, and he should be anxious to face the man he has accused of deliberately misrepresenting facts.



Letters

No sensitivity

In your editorial (ODE, Oct. 14) you stated that "South African blacks were exploited" by their "so-called supporters" because at the rally other topics were also discussed. Well, there are several reasons why those other topics were brought up, but "exploitation" is not one of them.

For one thing, in order for those gathered around at the rally to fully understand racial discrimination and apartheid in South Africa several speakers were compelled to give understandable examples such as the ones given by Mr. Herndon, Ms. Carmen, Ms. Claeysens, Mr. Oliphant and Ms. Davis.

Apartheid in South Africa is related to racism, sexism and lack of human rights here on campus, in Oregon and elsewhere. Topics also included the Reagan administration because many of these issues have been exacerbated by that institution.

Your editorial falls into drudgery and delusion, and it shows apathy for issues that are intricately linked to the present situation in South Africa. Apartheid exists here at home as well whether you care to talk about it or not. Your arrogant platitudes about the rally only show your subjective narrow mind. You have a great tool to inform the public, you should use it in a positive way.

The only way in which the rally was marred was not the speakers nor the topics discuss-

ed, but your senseless and misinformed editorial which only served to prove once again that the Emerald lacks responsibility, commitment and sensitivity to racial and social issues.

German Gutierrez
Pre-engineering

CIA profs?

John Stockwell, an ex-CIA agent enlightened me Oct. 17. I felt sick listening to his many anecdotes of state-sanctioned CIA trained terrorism on Third World countries. I felt helpless contemplating the lack of checks and balances on this secret agency. And I was enraged when he shared the domestic propaganda programs done in the name of national security.

Having served 15 years for the CIA in three wars, the Congo, Vietnam, and Angola, as well as working with the National Security Council, he knows their tactics. He said that a common practice is to pay university professors to write books for them to be edited by the CIA before printing. The prof gets all the credit plus the proceeds along with a bonus, sometimes more than \$100,000, to propagate their lies.

How many of these persons lacking intellectual integrity are there teaching on this campus? I want to know.

I'm not interested in coercing anyone to my political views, but I want to know who's getting paid by whom. If someone is being paid by the KGB or the CIA to regurgitate their lies, then I should know so I can work to have them removed, even stripped, of their tenure for such dishonesty. If nothing else, I will be able to avoid their propagandized classes.

Does this upset anyone else? Does anyone else want to know? Then let's get together and expose these deceiving professors

of "truth." The information is out there — let's find it and do something about it.

Eric Johnson
Eugene

Get the answers

I would like to respond to the numerous comments I have received concerning Todd Saunders' and my letter (ODE, Oct. 22) to the editor. Whether positive, negative or even confused, the responses have provoked thought, and for that I am grateful.

I liked L.S. Leuthold's proposal (ODE, Oct. 23) to take the bus to Kansas, but I'd much rather stay at the University of Oregon. My intention, although misconstrued to be a slam, was to raise the issue of representation in student government. I do not believe the act of voting is a prerequisite for representation. If so, freshmen by their inability to participate in the election process in the previous spring, are excluded. My further intention was to promote constructive dialogue between the Emerald, ASUO and IFC leading to an equitable solution for all concerned. I have been heartened to hear in conversation with James Randall and Lynn Pinckney that following Todd's and my letter, the desire is there to resolve this issue.

Questioning the assumptions and actions of individuals like myself and organizations like the Emerald, ASUO and IFC will always promote thought and sometimes criticism. I encourage students to engage in the process of investigation. Seek information on what is happening around you — question it, examine it, and critique it if you feel so inclined. There are so many opportunities to grow and develop in a university like ours that you are only hurting yourself if you do not get involved in some way.

Kevin Lewis
Senior, Business

Letters Policy

The Emerald will attempt to print all letters containing fair comment on topics of interest to the University community.

Letters to the editor must be limited to 250 words, typed, signed and the identification of the writer must be verified when the letter is turned in. The Emerald reserves the right to edit any letter for length or style. Letters to the editor should be turned into the Emerald office, Suite 300, EMU.

Oregon Daily Emerald

The Oregon Daily Emerald is published Monday through Friday except during exam week and vacations by the Oregon Daily Emerald Publishing Co., at the University of Oregon, Eugene, Oregon, 97403.

The Emerald operates independently of the University with offices on the third floor of the Erb Memorial Union and is a member of the Associated Press.

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