

Ballot measure would prohibit nuclear component production

By Scott McPetridge
Of the Emerald

Billions of dollars are poured into the testing and production of nuclear weapons in the United States each year, but in Oregon, only a few businesses manufacture components used in these weapons.

Oregon's limited financial investment in the production of nuclear hardware gives the state an excellent opportunity to phase out all production of nuclear weapons components, said Donald Skinner, one of the chief petitioners of the Oregon Economic Conversion Initiative. Skinner, who lives in Ashland, has organized Citizens for a Nuclear Free Oregon to gather the 62,500 signatures needed to get the initiative on the November ballot.

The Economic Conversion Initiative would call for a 30-percent tax credit to companies that convert from the production of nuclear weapon components to the manufacture of consumer products. The initiative also would create a Governor's Task Force to help companies make the conversion.

All production of nuclear weapon components would be illegal by 1990.

Skinner said he believes only four Oregon companies and no more than 100 workers would be directly affected by the initiative if approved by voters, which means the state could make a statement regarding nuclear weapons without severely harming the local economy.

"People see that Oregon has a unique opportunity," Skinner said. "People are tired of basing an economy on the production of nuclear weapons."

The measure would also contain a clause that would ban the production of raw materials used in nuclear weapons, whose byproducts are radioactive

wastes. This clause could force Teledyne Wah Chang, located in Albany, to phase out production of titanium, which is used in the construction of nuclear weapons, Skinner said.

Skinner admitted the measure might force some businesses into financial difficulties in the short run, but he said the tax credits would allow for a fairly smooth conversion to the production of another product.

"We want the companies to know that their input... is really essential," Skinner said. "I can't see that if these companies took this seriously, and they would have to, that they couldn't accomplish some kind of a conversion in that two years they're allowed."

But many people, including Oregon gubernatorial candidate Neil Goldschmidt, argue that the initiative would give out-of-state investors the wrong picture regarding the state's business climate. Skinner, however, believes passage of the initiative would send out a positive message to potential investors.

"There are businesses that would be very attracted to (a nuclear-free) economy," Skinner said.

State Rep. Wayne Fawbush, D-Hood River, agreed with Skinner and believes that because Oregon would be the only state in the country with a ban on the production of nuclear weapon components, people opposed to such production would be drawn to the state.

"How else are you going to get people focused on this issue, which people often don't even want to talk about?" Fawbush asked. "This is the first effective way in which people can have a practical effect on the nuclear arms issue."

In brief

Sister University meeting

Assisting the National University of El Salvador in its goal for freedom of education was the broad-based goal of the University Senate when it voted to establish a sister-university relationship with the Central American institution last October. Attaining that goal will be the subject of the second meeting of the Sister University Committee today at 3:30 p.m. in EMU 337, said Steve Nelson, student senator.

When the UES was occupied by the military in 1980, the campus was gutted and destroyed. Even though the constitution of El Salvador guarantees funding for UES, the operating budget was severely cut in 1985, and the financial outlook for 1986 does not look much better, Nelson said. Supplying the campus with much-needed books and supplies for classroom instruction is part of the committee's goal.

"We will be making appeals to University departments for materials and equipment they may not be using that could be donated," Nelson said. The committee will be conducting fund-raising events to promote awareness of the UES and its problems. The Sister University Committee will also make presentations to groups interested in the UES.

"We want a broad-based coalition as a strategy to make the problem visible," he said. "Freedom of education is the issue. Instead of us running down to City Hall and yelling, this is a constructive way to address a problem."

Following a two-month tour in the Pacific Northwest by two UES students, eight Northwest universities have adopted a sister university relationship with the UES, Nelson said. The tour culminated with the passage of a resolution in support of the funding for education at the UES by the United States Students of America, a Washington, D.C.-based student lobby.

"We're doing this because if enough universities in the U.S. show support for the UES, then maybe the El Salvadoran government will decide that education is important," Nelson said.

Argentine speaker and film

Susana Blaustein-Munoz, an Argentine filmmaker, will show her film "Las Madres" and speak about those who have disappeared in Argentina on Tuesday at 7 p.m. in the Latin American Cultural Center, 1236 Kincaid St.

The film is the story of the mothers of those who have disappeared at the hands of Argentine security forces. The event is part of the Third World women's project, which is sponsored by the Institute for Policy Studies in Washington, D.C., the Council for Human Rights in Latin America and the Center for the Study of Women in Society.

The event is free. For more information, call 484-5867.

Italian architecture talk

The famous Italian city of Naples offers some architectural lessons for American cities today, says Rosaria Hodgdon, a University architecture professor who will lecture tonight about "The Streets of Naples: Architecture and Tradition in Italy."

Color slides will be featured in the free public talk in the Eugene Conference Center adjacent to the Hilton Hotel. The lecture begins at 8 p.m. and is sponsored by the University Forum.

"Until about the 1960s, Naples enjoyed high repute as one of the great centers of European culture and as a base for visiting Pompeii and Vesuvius," says John Nicols, University Forum director. "An outbreak of cholera several years ago, industrialization and terrorism have unfortunately tarnished that image," he says.

Hodgdon, who grew up and was educated in Naples, agrees.

"My intention is to look beyond the chaotic modern seaport and regional industrial center and to focus on the magnificence of its setting and the sensuous contrast and harmony which characterize this city," Hodgdon says.

Hodgdon, a member of the architecture faculty since 1979, has served as a consultant to the City of Eugene and various other Oregon communities.

The University Forum downtown program is sponsored by the UO Henry Failing Lecture Fund, the National Endowment for the Humanities and the Hult Center for the Performing Arts.

'Brazil' satirizes the bureaucratic jungles of technological societies

"Brazil" is neither a time nor a place. It has nothing to do with the country. Its reference comes from a popular song of the '30s, but its place in the film refers more to a fantasy paradise in the dreams of its nominal hero Sam Lowry (Jonathon Pryce), his escape from the technological nightmare of "somewhere in the 20th century."

The setting of "Brazil" is a brilliantly imagined melange of '80s technology with '40s costumes and Victorian iconography. The computer terminals used by the government officials (Sam belongs to the Ministry of Information) are hooked up to ancient underwood typewriters and viewed through huge magnifying lenses.

Information is sent through a maze of pneumatic tubes that connect the endless, catacombed halls filled with employees that bustle about only when being checked upon. Otherwise, their terminals are tuned to the escapist Hollywood black-and-white movies.

Nothing can be done in this bureaucratic jungle without filling out 17,000 forms. The story that fatefully winds around our everyman hero begins when a dead fly falls from the blow of a rolled up newspaper and causes a mistype in the Ministry of Information Retrieval. An order is mistakenly sent to find one Mr. Buttler on the suspicion of espionage. Formalities are followed, his house is destroyed in the capture, his wife is given a receipt and they are ready to question the man at his own expense.

The real target was Mr. Tuttle, possibly one Harry Tuttle (Robert DeNiro), a free-lance repairman who infuriates the incompetent government servicemen who are unable to even keep up with the breakdowns in this fair land. Yet the mistake is discovered too late and the snafu causes the death of Buttler during questioning. Every department tries to throw the scandal off of them and onto someone else, creating an even bigger bureaucratic mess that finally pools at the bottom.

Lowry volunteers to help Information head Kurtzman (Ian Holm) cover himself, but finds himself pulled into the foray just as he spots the woman of his fantasies busily working to show the government its mistakes. Jill Layton (Kim Greist) is first on the Information Retrieval hit list and our meek Lancelot decides to find and protect her.

The Ministry of Information Retrieval bears more than a striking resemblance to George Orwell's bureaucracy in "1984." "Brazil" might be seen as an adaptation of the book as a black comedy. Monty Python alumni Terry Gilliam (who also solo directed "Time Bandits") is no stranger to satire, but in this film he outdoes himself.

Not since "Blade Runner" has a film been so carefully and so densely textured in every aspect so as



Courtesy photo
Mrs. Lowry (Katherine Helmond) visits her plastic surgeon Dr. Jaffe (Jim Broadbent) who demonstrates the next stage of surgery.

to create a unique, alien and totally believable world. And you have got to love Lowry — the everyman pushed by his plastic-surgery freak mother Ida (Katherine Helmond).

"Brazil" is ultimately the story of a doomed man, a human being crushed by the weight of a dehumanizing society. Lowry is the oddball who can't keep his emotions out of his work, the loose nut in a tight machine. As portrayed by Jonathon Pryce, Sam is a helpless, hopeless man simply not equipped to deal with a life so destructive to human nature.

"Brazil" is not for everybody, but its razor sharp satire will cheer those fed up with the glossy, Hollywood "everything is fine" movie.

From our point of view, Sam Lowry can be considered a sane man in an insane society, but in the nightmarish world of Brazil, Sam can only be considered insane. So much for happy endings, but this is the real world, kids.

Plays at Cinema World. Hurry, for it may not last long in Eugene.

By Sean Axmaker