

Editorial

Measure 15 insures clean-up of waste

Ballot Measure 15 would redefine and supercede the current definition of radioactive waste, specifically affecting Teledyne Wah Chang of Albany and its lime sludge ponds. We endorse this measure.

TWCA refines zircon sand into usable products and then siphons off the waste from this process to settling or sludge ponds. Radon gas and uranium traces are the principle toxic elements in these ponds.

Radon gas is a naturally occurring radioactive isotope; it is harmful when concentrated and is easily trapped within buildings. The radon of Wah Chang's ponds is 50 times higher than surrounding soils.

TWCA claims that its ponds do not pose a health threat, yet an independent group, Science Applications Inc., has concluded that the waste at TWCA is "likely to exceed the standard for radon."

Wah Chang, in conjunction with Battelle Northwest Laboratory, recently conducted radon-level tests at their ponds and, not surprisingly, found that the sites were safe.

But the tests were flawed in that their test structures — "hypothetical houses" — did not mirror real-life buildings. The floors of these hypothetical houses were too tightly sealed and the ventilation too open to accurately reflect real-life scenarios. Indeed, Lawrence Berkeley Laboratory, an independent expert on indoor radon, concluded that Battelle's study greatly underestimated the levels of radon present at TWCA.

Uranium is also present at TWCA, but no deep sample tests have been conducted to determine the extent of the toxicity. However, uranium is extremely soluble, and there is a very real threat that this toxin could reach the ground water table or the Willamette River.

TWCA maintains that its ponds are safe. However, in 1975-76 sludge was applied by Wah Chang to agriculture lands as a soil conditioner, and since then the Oregon State Health Division has restricted this land so that houses cannot be built on these fields.

Ballot Measure 15 would insure that Wah Chang's waste be removed at no cost to taxpayers. We suggest a yes vote on 15.

Oregon can only benefit from conversion measure

Ballot Measure 16 would require Oregon manufacturers of nuclear weapons and nuclear weapons parts to convert to consumer goods production by 1990 or face a civil penalty of up to \$5,000 a day.

Oregon has more to gain than it does to lose from passage of this measure, and we support it.

Of Oregon's roughly \$261 million in 1985 federal prime military contract awards, only 0.0018 percent was attributed to nuclear weapons production. Similarly, it is estimated Measure 16 will only affect 15 individual jobs.

Measure 16 provides a 30 percent tax credit for affected businesses, so the economic impact clearly will be minimal for the few contractors and subcontractors of nuclear weapons in Oregon.

Measure 16 addresses the economic reality that more jobs and greater revenues are created when goods are produced for the private sector rather than diverting those resources to the military.

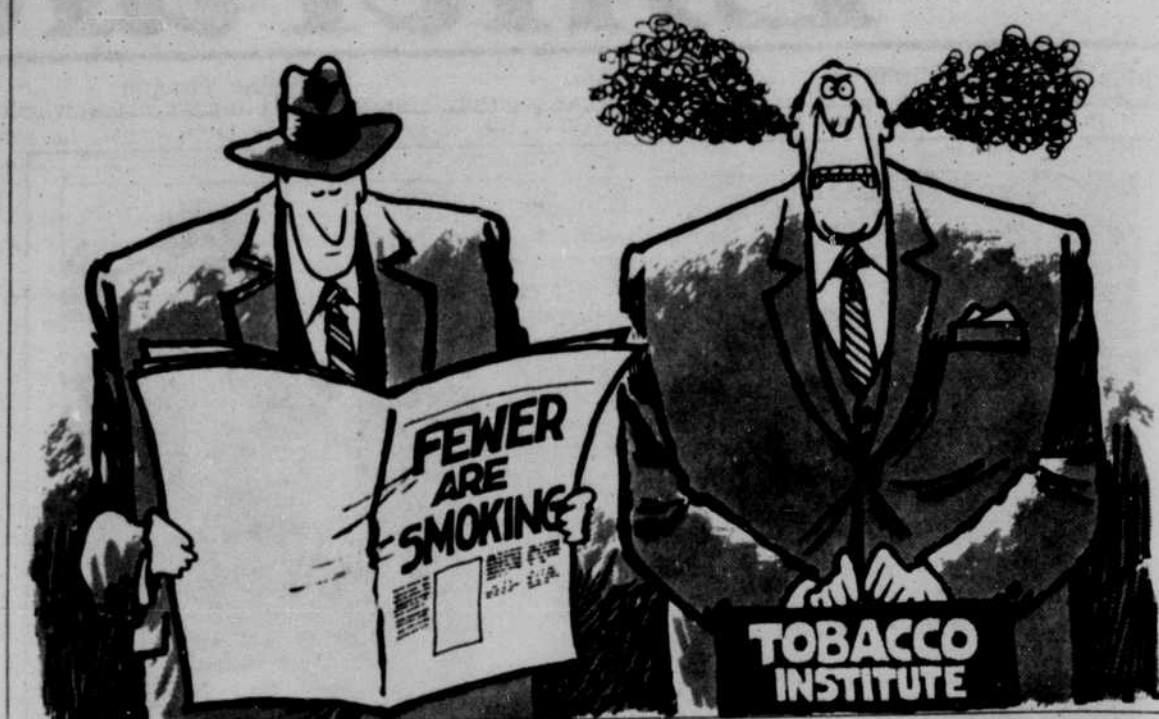
This point is reinforced by the American Electronics Association, which has stated, "We cannot siphon off a disproportionate share of our skills and technical resources to military applications and still stay ahead in commercial markets."

Moreover, there are few examples of military devices finding application in the civilian sector; the negative effects of military spending on technology outweigh the positive "spinoffs," and the military is generally not price sensitive. In addition, nuclear-weapons development has a relatively low job-creating capacity compared to civilian-related production markets.

Furthermore, Ballot Measure 16 would not affect the production of any vehicles that have the potential to carry nuclear weapons such as airplanes, tanks and other delivery vehicles. This measure would only affect missiles, their guidance or triggering systems and the materials used to manufacture nuclear weapons.

Measure 16 would send a moral and symbolic message throughout the United States that Oregonians are not committed to the nuclear arms race. It is an important message and one that we endorse.

SKELLY
WORKS AND DISCUSSION
COULD HAVE BEEN



Letters

Prize given

Before transferring to the University, I was raised in small rural towns, the inhabitants of which were classic rednecks. Notwithstanding this fact, I developed what I perceived to be a liberal outlook.

Indeed, because I had nothing against gays and believed Reagan was an escapee from "Dawn of the Dead," I was a dangerous radical to my fellow citizens at home.

Imagine my surprise when I arrived here and found that certain of my beliefs (that our system of limited free enterprise was superior to state collectivism; that we have no right to interfere with the internal politics of any nation, and Nicaragua, El Salvador and South Africa should be left entirely to their own devices — believe me, their governments will get whatever divine justice is theirs; that left-wing dictatorships are just as capable of human-rights violations as right-wing dictatorships; that "freedom fighters" who make war primarily on children and innocents are no more than cowardly barbarians, whatever their politics) made me a die-hard reactionary and possible

Ku Klux Klan sympathizer.

I am astounded to see that the Emerald, whose only crime is being monotonously moderate, is considered a Nazi propaganda sheet. I would be very much interested, then, to learn what the Commentator is considered.

By the way, Mr. Dawson ("Journalism," ODE, Oct. 22), the votes for empty rhetoric and senseless ranting are in. You've won. You may pick up your prize (a copy of the U.S. Constitution with the First Amendment tastefully removed) at the nearest totalitarian regime of your choice.

Tom Jeffries
Senior, journalism

Responsibility

Taxpayers for a Responsible Government asks the question, "Are we going to publicly fund private, individual choices?" Its answer is no; by prohibiting funding the state will make those "private individual" choices.

One argument then goes on to equate state funding of abortions with government-paid travel. That makes your right to your body equivalent to the

price of a plane ticket.

I happen to value my rights a great deal more than that, and as a responsible taxpayer I value the rights of the poor women in my community every bit as much.

Ballot Measure 6 is about discrimination. It's about upper- and middle-class women going to sanitary health clinics and indigent women going down the back alley, or doing it themselves.

If you think the days of backstreet amateur abortions are over, you are mistaken. There is nothing like the desperation of an unwanted pregnancy. And those women, along with the rape and incest victims that Measure 6 supporters discount so easily, will not be the ones who make the decisions about what happens to their bodies for the next nine months, or their lives for the next 18 years — Taxpayers for a Responsible Government will.

What kind of life can be promised to a child born into poverty to an unwilling mother? Alcoholism, child abuse and sexual abuse seem likely products. Just how responsible do we want to be?

Sarah Krick
Political Science

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