

Exxon's countersuit insulting to Alaska

They must be joking. Nobody could have that much nerve, that much gall, be that stupid.

How can the Exxon Corp. really justify suing the state of Alaska over the Valdez accident March 24?

No, they're not kidding.

Exxon is charging the state with hindering the oil cleanup, because state officials would not immediately let the company use oil-dispersing chemicals. The Coast Guard eventually authorized the chemical on the night of March 26, but the suit alleges by that time it was too late. It says the oil had spread to far out, and the ecological damage was magnified by the state's foot-dragging.

Who the hell does Exxon think it's fooling?

Trying to push the blame for your actions onto someone else is not only cowardly, but disgusting. Alaska has its own suit against the company, which contends Exxon and the Alyeska Pipeline Service Co. are completely at fault for the spill, and should be forced to pay retribution.

We wholeheartedly agree. Somewhere deep within Exxon's legal recesses an attorney came up with this idea as a way to fight the Alaska suit. By issuing a counterclaim, Exxon officials probably hope they can delay the suit for years and eventually tire their opponents out.

There is no way of possibly knowing how much damage the 11 million gallons of crude oil have wreaked on the Alaskan coastline. Fishing and tourism will suffer for years, and may never recover to the level they were at before the spill.

The overall economical impact will be somewhere in the billions, not millions. Not secondary to the economic side of the issue is the ecological one. The Prince William Sound ecosystem has been changed forever.

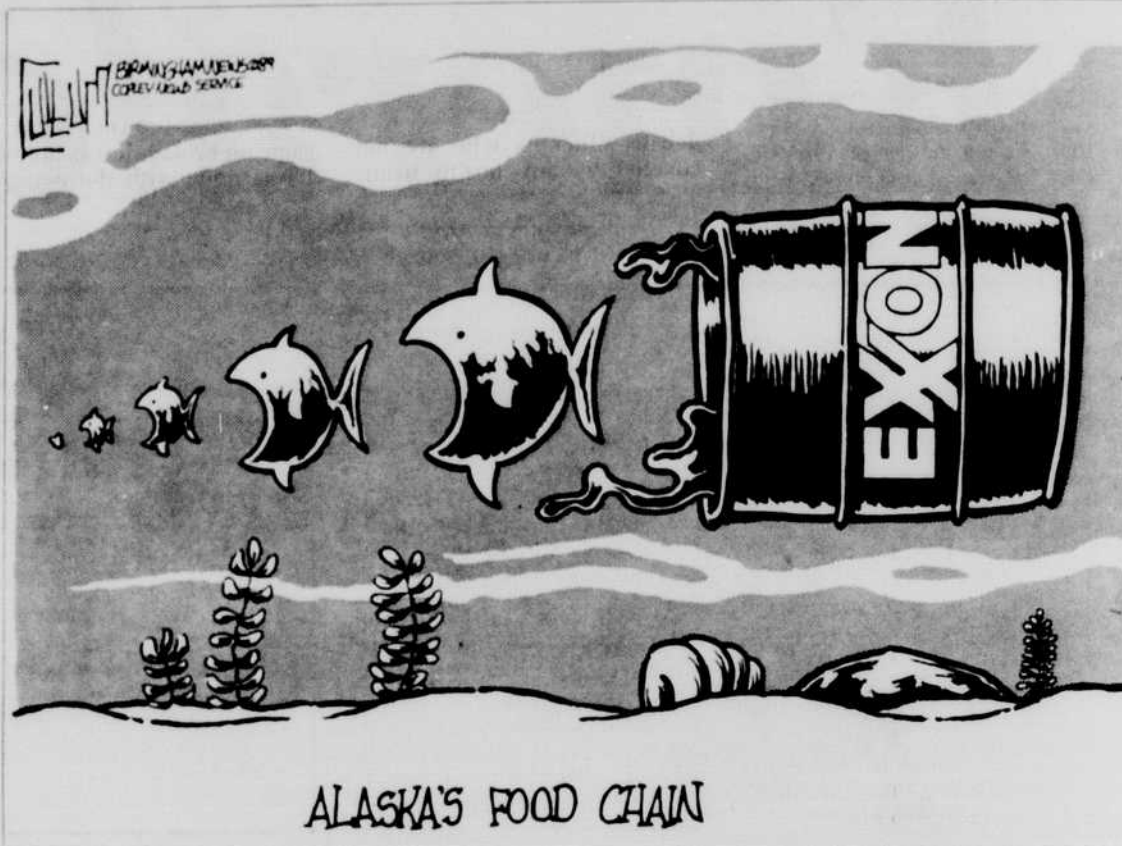
Hasn't Exxon realized it has already done enough to screw up the state? Doesn't it know how much negative publicity will be generated by launching this counterclaim? Doesn't it know how stupid it looks to the eyes of the well-informed public?

Its actions indicate it probably does not.

It is high time Exxon started paying the piper. The corporation's administrators should take responsibility for the Valdez incident, and cooperate fully with Alaskan officials. Reparations should start immediately. Wishful thinking perhaps, but necessary nevertheless.

The Bush Administration seems reluctant to impose a clean-up fee on Exxon. We think the Congress should consider levying a fine. Exxon should pay for its mistakes.

By helping out with the spill as much as possible, Exxon could have salvaged a thread of self-respect. Now it just looks like another money-hungry, robber-baron corporation.



After quake, World Series must continue

After being postponed for more than a week due to the tragic San Francisco earthquake, the World Series resumes tonight at Candlestick Park between the San Francisco Giants and Oakland Athletics.

The third game of the fall classic, which was scheduled to begin just after the earthquake shook the Bay Area last Tuesday, will now be played as Bay Area residents try and piece their lives back together.

The World Series was scheduled to resume this Tuesday, but Baseball Commissioner Fay Vincent and San Francisco Mayor Art Agnos decided the city was not yet ready to handle the extra traffic and extra security, and needed the time to make sure Candlestick was safe.

Vincent, Agnos and Oakland mayor Lionel Wilson have been class acts throughout the entire ordeal, placing the World Series much as a sidebar, as it should be treated. Life must go on though, and so should the World Series, a decision we stand by.

While many might disagree, the World Series is something that must go on, not because it's a sporting event, but because it's a part of everyday life.

The people in the Bay Area are trying to get back to their normal, everyday routine, and if so, the World Series should go on too.

For the baseball players and media, baseball is just like surgery for a doctor and laying a building's foundation for a construction worker.

It's their job and to get on with their lives, they need to return to work, just as the school teachers and lawyers have done.

Other sporting events had already started up before the decision to resume the Series came. California played its home football game with Washington as scheduled. The San Francisco 49ers didn't play at Candlestick, but their game with the New England Patriots went ahead as scheduled at Stanford Stadium in Palo Alto.

Not only is it important to have the Series resume so that people can get on with their lives, it is important to the financial well-being of the Bay Area.

Granted, the Series might not sell as many tickets and might not be viewed by as many fans on television. But the series will bring in millions of dollars to the Bay Area's motels, restaurants and novelty shops. After a terrible disaster like the earthquake, the Bay Area could use the needed financial shot in the arm the Series can provide.

Oakland manager Tony LaRussa said right after the earthquake that it will be hard to celebrate winning a World Series in the wake of what happened. He's right — it is hard to celebrate when 59 died and so many more lost their homes and businesses.

But for the people to rebound from that disaster, life must go on, and so must the World Series.

Letters

Not the norm

Your editorial informs us that you are in favor of people with various causes disrupting ceremonies to get their messages across. I await your judgment on whether it is all right for interest groups to similarly disrupt classes on campus, public lectures, rock concerts or other events.

While pondering this issue, you should also consider whether groups or individuals who disagree with you have the moral right to mutilate copies of the *Emerald* in order to prevent the public from reading them.

The protesters at the dedication of the new science buildings are also busy justifying their boorish behavior. Indeed, their actions were downright stupid. By spoiling the ceremony, they left our visitors with a

highly negative opinion of the University and its students. Equally important, they also hurt their own causes.

I sincerely hope that the behavior exhibited by the protesters is not to become a norm at the University. Exchange of ideas in a civil environment is essential for the functioning of the academic enterprise. Students and faculty should not be expected to put up with uncivil behaviors, and we should send that message to those who engage them.

Barry Siegal
Economics Professor

Overlooked

Your recent articles on GTF benefits and faculty salaries fail to recognize one group that is vital to this community; that also, perhaps more than any, suffers from inadequate wages.

There are teaching faculty who hold the rank of instructor with credential that include Ph.D., with teaching reputations that rank among the highest at the University, who earn as low as \$15,000.

Please! Somebody, somewhere consider the plight of overworked, underpaid and overlooked instructors.

Robert Foster
English

Applause

The heckling at the science buildings' dedication did not infringe on free speech. The First Amendment protects individuals' speech from suppression by the government — not the other way around.

In fact, the First Amendment protects the rights of individuals to assemble and criticize the government.

Further, the U.S. Supreme Court gives ordinary citizens greater protection than public officials who "usually enjoy significantly greater access to the channels of effective communication."

Hatfield and Goldschmidt are public servants. They have a duty to listen to the public.

Some suggest the heckling was rude. All heckling is rude. Yet it is an important mode of political expression.

If Hitler were advocating annihilation of the Jews, would we politely wait until he finished to raise our hands and hope for the opportunity to express our comments? Hatfield and Goldschmidt's political

compromising contributes to the annihilation of species.

Their "speech" was not a discourse. It was a publicity stunt. Without the heckling, this "discourse" would have been entirely one-sided.

We face unprecedented destruction of the natural world. We can escape this reality through drugs, or by becoming workaholics. Or, we can abandon our passive acceptance, and start making changes.

Some may apologize for the hecklers. Personally, I applaud those who have the courage to speak out.

Rebecca Hiers
Law

Commentary Policy

The *Oregon Daily Emerald* welcomes commentaries from the public concerning topics of interest to the University community.