

University should refuse SHIC plan

It was with considerable alarm that we received the news about the Student Health Insurance Committee's plan for mandatory ASUO health coverage for all students.

On a 4-1 vote, SHIC made a recommendation to the University that all students be required to carry ASUO (read Prudential) health insurance. All students, with no exceptions. Even if they had health insurance with another company, they would still be forced to purchase a policy from ASUO.

ASUO executives Andy Clark and Scott Wyckoff are backing the plan. In fact, they want to scrap Prudential altogether, and use the money from the premiums to create a student-run health insurance carrier.

Backers of the proposal have given a variety of reasons for their support. Volunteer health insurance coverage is not working. Prudential has lost money on the account for the last two years. With 17,600 students pitching in \$300 apiece (Clark's numbers), health insurance will be cheaper for all.

Regardless of the reasons given, the plan stinks.

We don't argue ASUO health insurance has serious problems. People who have the policy face huge increases in premiums. Prudential has hinted several times it is about ready to drop the University account.

But forcing students to buy from a single company is not the answer. The plan, which would go into effect next year, would hand the insurance carrier a virtual monopoly. Freedom of choice would get trampled by a group of people who mistakenly think they're doing the right thing.

At a time when tuition costs are going through the roof, it strikes us as a little stupid to make students pay another, in some cases, unnecessary, \$300 a year. If administrators are worried about students bolting because of tuition increases, they should be extremely wary of the SHIC plan.

There is currently no federal, state, county or city law that requires people to have health insurance, so why does SHIC want everybody to have it? It should not be a University requirement, and, frankly, it's none of SHIC's damn business whether a student has health insurance or not.

The ASUO program was created to give students another option for health insurance, not to make sure everybody had a policy. SHIC says the program isn't working. We agree, but their proposal creates more problems than it solves. Given a choice, we'd rather have the entire student health insurance program disbanded before we see SHIC's proposal go through.

University administrators should categorically and undeniably reject the SHIC plan.



Strict nuclear free zone is better choice

As reported last Friday in the *Emerald*, Eugene's status as a nuclear free zone remains up in the air — despite the passage of three years.

In 1986, the city's voters approved a strict NFZ prohibiting the use, storage and manufacture of nuclear weapons within the city limits. The zone was part of a nationwide grass roots campaign.

The first NFZ was problematic though, in that it may have been unconstitutional. And the ensuing split over how to revise the law has touched off a controversy that has lasted all this time.

The original proponents of the NFZ drafted a minimally revised version that supporters felt would meet constitutional tests and still be the tough ordinance the voters (in overwhelming numbers, it's worth noting) wanted. Because the revised version has yet to be enacted, supporters are looking to go to the ballot with an amendment to the city charter next May.

Their opponents are the city council members who have pushed for an NFZ far different from the minimally revised ver-

sion. They're willing to ignore what their constituents want — they want an NFZ in name and symbolism only, one where the signs on your way into town say "Eugene is a nuclear free zone." Any real controls on nuclear-related activity would send a message that Eugene is anti-business, these folks say.

It's stretching a bit to say a tough NFZ is anti-business when the kind of things the NFZ would prohibit (the production and storage of any component intended for use in a nuclear weapons system) do not go on in Eugene. And with the country's defense industry reeling from the end of the Cold War, it's unlikely that Eugene is about to lure any weapon research dollars to the Valley anyway.

The only good NFZ is the tough one. Politics for show (such as flag-burning amendments and wars on drugs) may be a new vogue, but empty gestures are easily recognizable. The whole notion of the original NFZ was that it was possible to enact local solutions to global problems, and city fussbudgets and nay-sayers will not stand in the way.

Letters

Recycle

We at BRING Recycling have noticed recently that the plastics industry is marketing "degradable" plastic items, and implying that their use is environmentally sound. We believe this is not the case.

While evidence suggests that this generation of "degradable" plastic may not truly break down into "harmless elements," this is of only secondary importance to solid waste management. Any item — no matter what it is made of or how fast it decomposes — that it is designed to be used one time and thrown away is an example of the type of thinking that created the garbage problem.

Most recyclers and solid waste managers advocate reducing the amount of non-recyclable material we bring home, reusing items before we pass them on, and recycling rather than disposing of things we don't need.

We can make a difference in the garbage crisis by moving beyond a "throw away" men-

talities, by refusing those items that are used only once before disposal, and by choosing items and containers that will be used again and recycled.

Mike Hamblen
Education Coordinator
BRING Recycling

Rolled over

On Nov. 13, the state's lawyers, James J. Casby Jr. and Melinda W. Grier, writing on behalf of Attorney General Dave Frohnmayer, instructed University President Myles Brand to allow CIA recruitment on campus, despite the fact that the CIA has "policies" which would discriminate on the basis of sexual orientation.

The state's lawyers maintained that because the CIA is a federal agency, its "policies" of discrimination supersede Oregon Administration Rulings.

The lawyers rolled over to a federal policy that does not exist. Does the CIA discriminate against lesbians and gays? Yes. Does this make discrimination

a federal policy? No.

The CIA has never put its practice of discrimination into a formal policy statement. Furthermore, the grievance filed against Career Planning and Placement does not ask the CIA to change federal policy. It merely requests that University administrators enforce Oregon Administrative Rules.

Actions at Princeton present examples of true stands against discrimination. These schools demand that all prospective employers sign an "equal opportunity statement," saying they do not discriminate on the basis of race, creed, gender, or sexual orientation before they may participate in the recruiting sessions organized by their Career Service offices.

According to the *Princeton Alumni Weekly* (Nov. 8), the CIA has not been given the privilege to recruit at Princeton, because the CIA will not return a signed copy of the "equal opportunity statement."

If the University administration is truly committed to the principle of not discriminating, it will learn from the "agres-

sive acts" of one of the finest institutions of higher education in the nation, and enforce Oregon Administrative Rules.

Shannon Oliver
Co-director, Student Campaign
for Disarmament

Hot springs

In recent weeks, there have been a multitude of rumors concerning Terwilliger Hot Springs at Cougar Reservoir. The friends of the Spring Trust would like to put these rumors to rest:

1) Our signs are down for repairs and renovation and will be replaced before spring.

2) We are in the process of re-designing our Caretaker program, and will be announcing our new plans during late winter 1990.

3) The Forest Service has decided on restricted winter hours (to be announced soon); we support this policy as we are currently unable to provide

on-site caretakers.

4) There are no plans to change current policies concerning either commercialization, fees or our clothing-optional privilege.

The Friends of the Spring Trust is a user group of volunteers who manage and maintain Terwilliger in cooperation with the Blue River District of the U.S. Forest Service. We have noon work parties at the spring the first Saturday of every month (weather permitting) and quarterly public meetings in the Eugene-Springfield area.

Our next meeting will be Monday, Dec. 11 at 7 p.m. in the Community Room at the Eugene Public Library.

The Friends have a new board of trustees, committed to maintaining the spring as a quality recreational experience for all visitors. We urge you to be aware of the dangers of alcohol consumption while either soaking or driving. Be safe, and enjoy your visit.

Karen Harmony
Presiding officer
Friends of the Spring Trust
Tuesday, December 5, 1989