

Dependence on oil crippling country

The U.S. government is failing History 101. It should have learned its oil-dependence lesson long ago. It's time for a long-term energy plan.

In 1973, the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries decided to limit the amount of oil it sold to the United States. Prices went from 30 cents a gallon to 75 cents a gallon. People actually had to wait in lines at filling stations, and then according to license plate numbers.

It was evident at the time that the United States was a gasaholic. The country was a junkie that needed its oil fix. But instead of researching and producing a reliable energy plan which focused on alternative energy sources such as solar and geothermal, we licked OPEC's boots until it started selling the United States oil again. And then the U.S. citizens forgot it ever happened. Until now.

Prices are skyrocketing again, only this time the government is willing to send soldiers to die for "our" oil. We use 50 percent of the world's energy, while producing only six percent of it.

There are U.S. combat troops in the Middle East for one reason: we want our oil.

The United States is not concerned with the people of Saudi Arabia or Kuwait. The United States would leave the region tomorrow if it were guaranteed oil at reasonable prices. Unfortunately, it looks like it will take human sacrifice for the people in the United States to wake up. We have been selling arms to Iraq and Hussein for years because of our fear of Iran. If it wasn't for the oil the United States so desperately needs to feed its habit, it would not be so willing to put the lives of its soldiers on the line. The United States must quit its habit cold turkey.

But it won't. Not until there is an outcry from U.S. citizens to develop an energy policy that excludes oil except where necessary.

That won't be easy. Solar energy is not a logical alternative to the oil companies because they don't own the sun. Nor do they own the wind. Put a patent pending on the sun and the oil companies would start investing money immediately.

People must become energy conscience and reduce their dependence on oil wherever possible. Start walking and riding bikes. Tear up your gasoline credit cards. Demand an energy policy from the government that is comprehensive and looks to the future.



Mud flies in Congressional campaign

Following the precedent set during the 1988 presidential campaigns, two Oregon politicians have put to use the tools of misrepresentation and underhanded politics to wage mudslinging campaigns for Oregon's 5th District U.S. House of Representatives seat.

Incumbent Denny Smith and his challenger, Mike Kopetski, are ensnared in a campaign involving ethics complaints that never materialized and even a commercial featuring the voice of Adolf Hitler.

This is not the first time Smith and Kopetski have faced off against each other for the office. In 1988 Kopetski, a heavy underdog, came within 707 votes of unseating Smith. That race included a petition by Kopetski supporters for a recount.

This time around, Kopetski is the favorite. With Smith in trouble over his dealings with failed Savings and Loan thrifts, Kopetski has gained ground in the campaign by remaining low-key and hardly mention-

ing Smith's troubles. Of course, with the near daily newspaper stories and a recent formal ethics complaint filed against Smith by the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee, Kopetski does not need to say anything about it. So far he has sat back and let Smith's record and the media inflict most of the damage.

Perhaps the silliest and saddest episode in the campaign involved a Smith ad that condemned Kopetski's call for a mediated end to the Iraq/Kuwait crisis. The ad painted Kopetski as tolerant of Saddam Hussein while the voice of Adolf Hitler resounded in the background. The ads had a more negative effect on Smith's campaign than they did on Kopetski's and were pulled shortly after they were first broadcast. Smith denies he ever heard the ad before it was released.

Political campaigns seem to be guided by the principle that the end justifies the means. And with increased media access, it seems that this trend will not change.

LETTERS

In the Gulf

We are currently in the Gulf of Oman with the independence battle group on a guided missile destroyer in response to the Middle East crisis.

As you may imagine, days feel like weeks and mail is ever-precious in this barren wasteland. We are writing in hopes of establishing a fresh and interesting correspondence with some of you who may be far away from home like ourselves.

Between us, our interests vary greatly and our ages range from 20 to 24. All replies are welcome and will be responded to.

John Heikenen
John Sayers
Doug Gifford
Mike Guillama
John Miller
Sid Buller
USS Goldborough (DDG-20)
FPO San Francisco, CA
96666-1250
OI Division

Special project

Our third grade class is going

to spend this year learning about the United States. We would like your readers to send us letters or postcards telling us about your state. Thank you for helping us with this special project.

Mrs. Shield's third grade class
Clara Peterson School
580 East Franklin
Paxton, IL 60957

Small favors

Election time is here upon us once again. Working people would be well advised to consider the favors the folks in Salem have done for them recently.

Unemployment compensation changes were made to correct a problem which really didn't exist. Over five-hundred people were denied benefits in my area last Christmas by three unnecessary changes. Talk about bah humbug! The reinstatement which occurred six months later, while appreciated, does not compensate for the hardships caused by this callous disregard for your well being.

Another favor from the folks in Salem is the new workman's

compensation law that is more concerned with reducing program costs than treatment of injured workers.

These two laws are essential for your survival. They are the only things that stand between you and financial ruin in these days of economic uncertainty — plant closures, layoffs, slow-downs, etc. These changes were passed nearly unanimously by the legislature. This should be enough to convince you that you have very few friends in Salem. I propose that we must change that in November.

The present group does not deserve your vote. They have clearly demonstrated that they could care less about you. Promises now are not going to change that or their performance on your behalf.

Find a candidate who will look after your interests. It will rarely be one of the incumbents.

Robert C. Robertson
Eugene

Zoned

May I offer my solution to the problem of the dangerously de-

pleted ozone layer.

All chlorofluorocarbons internationally banned. Then, to repair the ozone layer, implement the following method:

First, manufacture liquid ozone. Then, load it aboard large military refueling tanker aircraft. These planes would then climb to the lower levels of the ozone layer at 40,000 feet. As they spray the liquid ozone the strong upper jet stream winds will carry the ozone even higher into the ozone layer.

The ozone layer could be maintained at its normal level after the initial restoration project by minimal number of annual flights. However, I estimate the initial ozone restoration will take from one to five years and cost between \$50

million and \$70 million. Since this is a global crisis, cost should be shared by the members of the United Nations.

The Reverend Jesse Jackson deserves everyone's support for his commitment to save the environment. Let's all get behind him.

I urge everyone to clip out this letter and send copies to scientists, environmental groups, the Environmental Protection Agency, UNESCO, congressmen and President Bush.

Anyone wishing to discuss this important issue with me may feel free to contact me.

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LETTERS POLICY

The Oregon Daily Emerald will attempt to print all letters containing comments on topics of interest to the University community. Comments must be factually accurate and refrain from personal attacks on the character of others.

Letters to the editor must be limited to no more than 250 words, legible, signed and the identification of the writer must be verified when the letter is submitted.