

New OCA initiative makes little sense

The Oregon Citizens Alliance announced Thursday it will begin filing anti-homosexual initiatives in 32 Oregon counties and cities for special elections this June. OCA leaders hope the new, softer initiatives, filed specifically in the regions that passed Ballot Measure 9 last November, will build support for another state-wide measure on the 1994 ballot.

It is not a surprise that the OCA followed through on its promise to propose a kinder, gentler Measure 9. If it had not been for Multnomah and Lane counties, Measure 9 would have passed easily. The OCA knows that omitting the descriptions of homosexuality as "abnormal and perverse" will ease citizens' concerns about the original measure.

What is surprising is how tame the new language is. It basically denies "minority status, affirmative action, quotas, special class status, or any similar concept based on homosexuality." At the same time, the language prohibits firing an employee based on sexual preference.

The OCA has raised a different question with this initiative — what is the point?

In other words, the language does what the OCA originally said Measure 9 did; it denies special rights for homosexuals. Measure 9, however, went much further by condemning almost every aspect of homosexual life, despite OCA claims to the contrary.

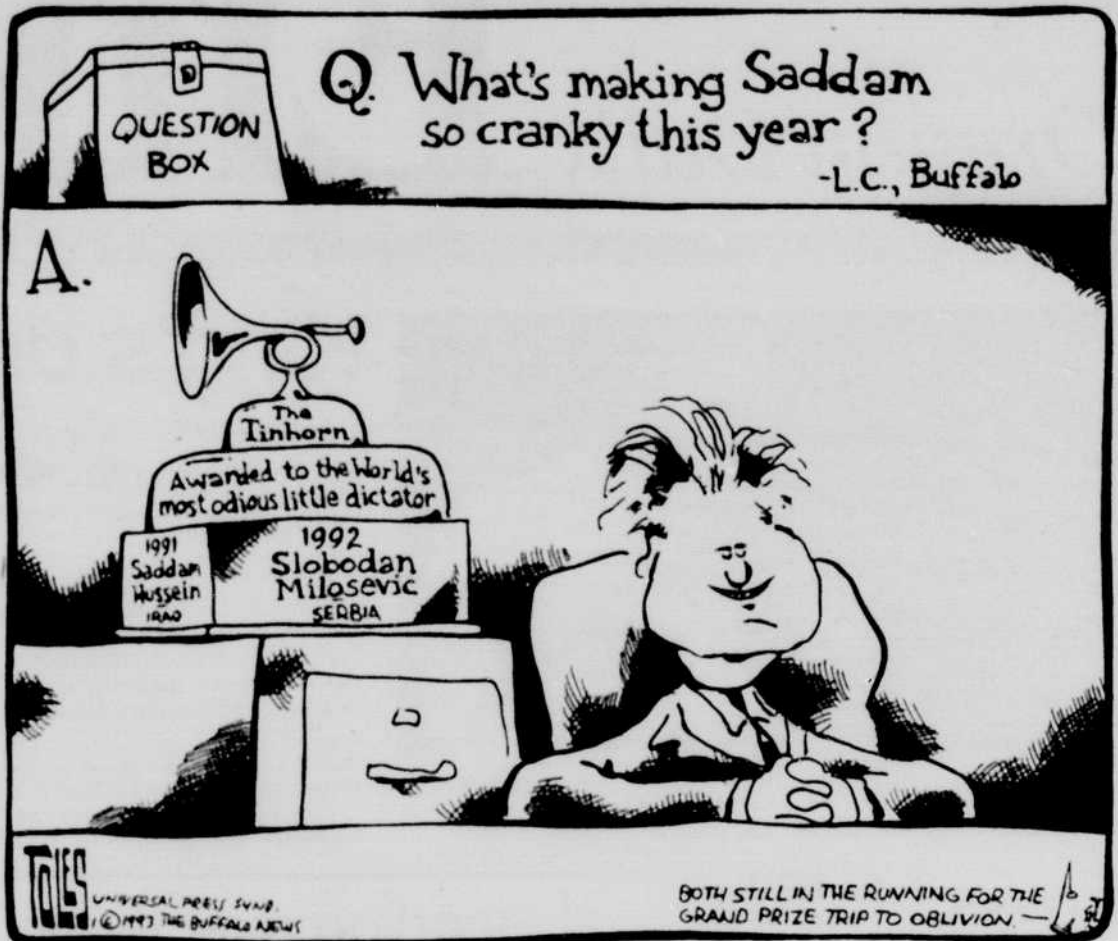
The OCA has raised a different question with this initiative — what is the point? The sole purpose of Measure 9, ridiculous as it was, was to define homosexuality as immoral. The OCA wanted to impose its own morality on Oregon based on a dislike for gay and lesbian citizens.

The new OCA initiative admits homosexuality is a private matter, and that nobody should be fired from a job based on sexual preference. However, the crux of the initiative, which was denying minority status to homosexuals, was never an issue in the first place.

Homosexuals have never wanted special rights within society. The famed "homosexual agenda" is to simply ensure that homosexuals are not denied the rights given to every person. In other words, sexual preference should not harm a person's ability to rent a house, apply for a loan or find a job.

The OCA claims gays want affirmative action, and that for every 10 job openings, several go to homosexuals. In actuality, gays want to make sure homosexuality has no bearing on hiring. Gay citizens are rightly concerned that they could be denied employment because of their sexuality.

The main concern for homosexuals is the new initiative, if it passes, will be open to broad interpretations. Citizens from the 32 counties should recognize the futility of the initiative, and its thinly-veiled discrimination, and turn it down in June.



LETTERS

Earth change

Stephanie Sisson's column, "Earth will adjust to catastrophes," (*ODE*, Jan. 11) displayed an amazing amount of ignorance.

I agree the Earth will survive regardless of the burdens we place on it. Our planet's ability to continue sustaining life, however, is truly threatened by environmental destruction. Life on Earth is made possible by the intricate and delicate balance of species and conditions.

Every species on the planet depends on another for survival. Without plants, we could not breathe; conversely, plants could not live without the carbon dioxide animals produce. Nothing could exist without the ozone layer to shield us from the sun's radiation.

Sisson's contention that statistics are "created to make Americans feel guilty about the harm we're doing to our planet" is truly ridiculous. These statistics accurately reflect the devastation occurring to our ecosystem on massive levels.

Even if the United States' level of pollution is indeed "the lowest of countries comparable to ours in economics, government and industry" (whatever that means), we have done more than shift the environmental burdens of our rampant consumption to developing nations like Mexico, where environmental restrictions are minimal or unenforced.

I strongly disagree that "the Earth must change with us." Unfortunately our planet, which has taken millions of years to evolve to its present state, will not change in a few short generations to meet our greedy demands. We need to change so our planet will continue to sustain life.

**Kevin Durant
Undeclared**

inauguration of President-elect Bill Clinton.

We can't forget that the honorable President Bush still has a few days to go. Think of all the possible historical events that can take place in that amount of time (another great war in the Middle East). Keep it up George! Bush will be placed among other greats of our wonderful government, like Richard Nixon (the best) and J. Edgar Hoover, when that sad day comes.

Stay true to the flag. Fight, fight, fight.

**Dennis Gubbins
Anthropology**

Insult

I found Stephanie Sisson's column "Earth will adjust to catastrophes" (*ODE*, Jan. 11) an insult to anyone who has a mere cursory knowledge of the current worldwide environmental crisis. She uses superficial facts and figures to make her argument that human-caused catastrophes are not to be worried about because Mother Nature will prevail.

In effect, her argument allows for the fact that man will render extinct a few thousand plant and animal species and a few hundred of his own cultures in the name of progress.

I would like to point out that her language of progress is based on the assumption that humans are separate from the natural world. Her statement that "mankind's existence demands progress" points to a eurocentric attitude that has been the basis for destroying other cultures, including those that existed before the arrival of Europeans to this country.

The idea that we are somehow moving forward into better lives through technology and progress is pure illusion. In fact, a technological society is pushing itself and the world closer toward doomsday all the time.

Progress, a purely Western idea, is disrupting life support systems worldwide. The statistics are not "created to make Americans feel bad"; they are a reflection on our overly

consumptive, wasteful society. Take a look at a reputable source like the Worldwatch Institute's publication *State of the World*.

It's clear that humans are destroying their foundations for survival. It is the imbedded attitude that we are somehow apart from Mother Nature we should fear most.

**Andrew Fischer
Environmental Studies**

PIRGs

Since the early 1960s, the battle for a cleaner environment has been fought in Congress and on a grass roots level. With the election of Bill Clinton, the environmental movement in the United States stands to have more influence than ever before. There are estimated to be as many as 10,000 environmental organizations in the country today. Despite their size and influence, environmental legislation is threatened by large corporations with their political action committees.

The Public Interest Research Groups, along with more than 70 national organizations including Common Cause, Public Citizen, and the League of Women Voters, are pushing for comprehensive reform of the congressional campaign system.

Before Clinton's election, he promised to support such legislation in order to stop special interests from buying our politicians' legislative powers. Without this legislation, the United States government will continue its disturbing legacy of ignoring legislation to protect the environment and consumers in favor of special interest lobbyists and corporate money.

Throughout this term, OSPIRG will organize a "Campaign for a Clean Congress" on campus. If you find this issue to be important, this is a perfect opportunity to get involved in a campaign that will channel political power where it belongs — in the hands of American citizens.

**Margaret J. Tibbetts
OSPIRG**

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