

## Crime measures steal from budget

The increasing instance of violent crime in Oregon is leading to loud calls for tougher and longer sentences for criminals, and the public's fear of crime is reflected in two particular anti-crime measures on the Nov. 8 ballot. Measures 10 and 11 have the teeth to take a bite out of crime, but lack the necessary funding for their implementation and should be defeated.

Measure 11 metes out mandatory minimum prison sentences for 16 of the most violent crimes, ranging from murder and assault to rape and robbery. Convicts would receive no parole or reduction of sentence for good behavior while in prison. It also mandates that juveniles (ages 15-17) charged with violent felonies be tried as adults.

Acting as Measure 11's big brother, Measure 10 protects the mandatory sentences from legislative tampering. Measure 10 would require a two-thirds majority of both the House and Senate to reduce a voter-approved sentence.

Although getting tough on crime is a worthy cause, entering into such a proposition requires a strong financial commitment on the part of the state.

The measures do not identify funding sources for their implementation. Therefore, revenue would come from the already strained general fund, a bank account already \$870 million short of the amount needed to maintain current services. If passed, the measures would imperil other state programs such as public safety, schools and even corrections.

The immediate cost of Measure 11 would be in excess of \$80 million per year. Costs by the end of this century could total \$1 billion. The electorate has shown strong support for longer incarceration of violent offenders, but little financial stomach for the hefty price tag.

When voters see high-profile criminals like double murderer Russell Obremski receive parole, the myth of the catch-and-release criminal justice system is further intensified. But the liberal, reform-minded punishments of the 1970s are no more.

In 1989, the Legislature approved increased sentencing guidelines, effectively lengthening by 40 percent the average sentence served by violent felons.

Oregon's prison capacity has nearly doubled over the last eight years and is expected to grow by another 2,000 by 1998. If Measure 11 passes, an estimated additional 4,000 beds will be needed. Oregon simply cannot financially sustain such a whimsical and immediate increase in the correction's budget.

More significantly, the mandatory sentences take away any judicial discretion. Measure 11 decrees that violent offenders between the ages 15 and 17 must be tried as adults. Youthful offenders offer the greatest opportunity for rehabilitation, but under the proposed guidelines, they will be shipped off to prison. Such a decision should be left in the hands of a judge who can rule on the merits of each case, not a one-size-fits-all ballot measure.

Throwing unfunded measures on voters only increases the burden on an already ailing state budget. Vote no on Measures 10 and 11.



### COMMENTARY

## Race relations focus on blame

Kevin Washington

After witnessing (and participating occasionally) in the farcical, and at times, embarrassing so-called debates that occurred in this campus last year regarding issues of race, bigotry, multiculturalism, biased press coverage and so forth, I detected something significant: Much like the rest of the country, this campus has never had an honest discussion about race and race relations. Whether it was the issue of curriculum requirements or student representatives' resignations, these discussions often focused more on blame at the expense of understanding and/or acceptance. Because of personal experiences, addressing the black/white relationship is most comfortable for me. However, that is not to say that an examination of these historically connected groups can't lend insight into the entire race "picture" in the United States.

What whites need to recognize most about the descendants of the African slave is that they are in pain. This pain is the result of centuries of brutal, degrading, fractionalist policies based on nothing more than skin color and physical attributes.

Just because blacks have been emancipated from the obvious bonds of slavery, the psychological conditions that fostered such policies remain, permeating every sphere of culture from politics to economics to education. This pain manifests itself in the ambivalent and often contradictory perception that blacks have of themselves and their role in this country. Whites have never allowed us to quite fit in and at the same time we know no other cultures as well as the one we were born in and forced to adopt. Unlike other dejected and spurned ethnic/racial groups, blacks born in the United States have limited engagement with their true ancestral culture. Having had their African roots severed and nearly decimated in captivity, blacks in the Western

Hemisphere (particularly in the United States) had to reconstruct culture almost from scratch, a culture which is still alien to many non-blacks. It is this alienation that has perpetuated the ethnic/racial marginalization of this country. It is this alienation that is mostly responsible for the culturally maladjusted psychology of many black people.

Whites will never understand the mental anguish experienced when, for instance, Joe Louis, a black boxer, or Jesse Owens, a black track athlete defeated white opponents for a country that was hypocritically patriotic enough to cheer them on unabated, and yet would deny them lodging in their own country solely because of skin tone. They fail to understand how blacks, after all that has been sacrificed in the guise of social equality, could embrace a person such as Minister Louis Farrakhan who (in their opinion) preaches a steady diet of hate, bigotry and segregation, ignoring Mr. Farrakhan's plea for economic independence, educational excellence and cultural pride. Or how blacks (prior to and since the first trial of the Los Angeles police officers convicted of beating Rodney King) view the criminal justice system as just another instrument of oppression wielded heavily and disproportionately against alleged black assailants.

For their part, blacks should not expect or rely on the sympathy and compassion of whites for advancement. What blacks need to know is that most whites feel uncomfortable and often resent being confronted with the shameful legacy of slavery. It is extremely unsettling for whites to consider the duplicity of national "heroes" such as Thomas Jefferson, Franklin Roosevelt, Douglas MacArthur and Ronald Reagan who enunciated concepts of liberty, democracy and equality and nevertheless condoned (and often participated) in the repression of the ethnic/racial minority in this hemisphere. Besides, many would

argue that since the end of the Civil War (most notably in this century), white society has attempted in earnest to rectify these injustices using civil rights legislation, affirmative action programs and some of the most expansive entitlement programs in the history of this country.

Upon witnessing the startling successes of other repressed ethnic/racial groups (i.e. Asians and Jews), who claimed that the true problem rests within the "victimhood" psychology of blacks in the Americas, instead of attempting to refute this disposition and convince whites otherwise, it would be more pragmatic for blacks to examine their own behavior and either accept or ignore this sentiment that resides within many non-blacks.

Although the roots of racism and bigotry are (directly and indirectly) responsible for many of the ills that plague the black community, it's not white gang bangers gunning down black children as they innocently play in their own yards. It's not young white men fathering black children and abandoning their black mothers, leaving them with little chance of a legitimate opportunity. These and many others are issues that can be dealt with effectively and solely by the black communities. It is wishful thinking at best, and counterproductive at least, to expect white folk to resolve such matters. Blacks must expect no more than a *laissez faire* disposition among whites.

There is no immediate, all-encompassing solution to race issues on this or any other campus; however, this is not to say that there is nothing that can be done. What's needed is a genuine familiarity (not masqueraded as understanding) of how each affected ethnic/racial group perceives the situation. And this can only be accomplished if all are willing to listen.

Kevin Washington is a student at the University of Oregon.

## Oregon Daily Emerald

P.O. BOX 3159 EUGENE OREGON 97403

The Oregon Daily Emerald is published daily Monday through Friday during the school year and Tuesday and Thursday during the summer by the Oregon Daily Emerald Publishing Co., Inc., at the University of Oregon, Eugene, Oregon.

The Emerald operates independently of the University with offices at Suite 300 of the Erb Memorial Union and is a member of the Associated Press.

The Emerald is private property. The unlawful removal or use of papers is prosecutable by law.

<b>Managing Editor</b>	David Thorn	<b>Editor-in-Chief:</b> Kaly Soto	Rebecca Merritt
<b>Editorial Editor</b>	Joe Harwood	<b>News Editor</b>	Chris Metz
<b>Graphics Editor</b>	Jeff Paslay	<b>Sports Editor</b>	Michael Shindler
<b>Freelance Editor</b>	Alaina Baum	<b>Photo Editor</b>	Trista Noel
<b>In-Depth Editor</b>	Ed Klopfenstein	<b>Supplements Editor</b>	Rebecca Merritt
		<b>Night Editor</b>	

**Associate Editors:** Friederich von Carp, Student Government/Activities; Marcelene Edwards, Community; Tiffany Smith, Higher Education/Administration

**News Staff:** Lori Bettineski, Wilson Chan, Amy Columbo, Tasha Eichenseher, Abe Estimada, Primo Fontana, Gayle Forman, Christopher Fox, Matt Garton, Gary Grass, Sarah Henderson, Kris Henry, Trevor Kearney, Adam Kincher, Mark McTye, Ben Moebius, Anne Moser-Kornfeld, Sherry Rainey, Robbie Reeves, Lia Saliciccia, Paul Van Sickle, Kim Weiss, Daniel West, Brian Wornack

**General Manager:** Judy Riedl  
**Advertising Director:** Mark Walter  
**Production Manager:** Michele Ross

**Advertising:** Marco Ching, Tony Fox, Erin Hersher, Nicole Herzmark, Jeremy Mason, Michael Millette, Sarah Mitchell, Tom Mittelstaedt, Kelsey Wakell

**Classified:** Becky Merchant, Manager, Sim Tze Teck

**Distribution:** John Long, Ferenc Rakoczi, Regina Zsupnik

**Business:** Kathy Carbone, Supervisor, Judy Connolly

**Production:** Dehila McCobb, Production Coordinator, Shawna Abele, Greg Desmond, Tara Gaultney, Brad Joss, Jennifer Roland, Natt Thangvijit, Clayton Yee

**Newsroom:** 346-5511 **Display Advertising:** 346-3712

**Business Office:** 346-5512 **Classified Advertising:** 346-4343