

COMMENTARY

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Editorial

Faculty opposed to war should join others to strike against Iraq war

On Friday, the University Assembly failed in its attempt to pass an official anti-war resolution, as the 1,069 voting members necessary for a quorum never materialized.

We wonder why the turnout for the meeting was so low. Could it be that the great majority of assembly members agreed with University President Dave Frohnmayer's assessment that the University had no place in opining on such an issue? Or has someone in Johnson Hall brought subtle pressure to bear on the faculty by stating that belts across the state are tightening and that "playing ball" may be the best way to secure funding for departments and projects?

Perhaps 538 attending members was indeed a success, as supporters claimed. After all, it was a Friday afternoon, and the meeting was neither a sporting event nor an entertainment performance.

We have a suggestion for those professors opposed to this war who want to make a personal statement that isn't speaking for the University as a whole: Join the nationwide movement calling for a general strike on Wednesday. It's somewhat baffling that at the University, which has a reputation for being progressive, there hasn't been any general chorus to join the strike. OSU students are calling for a strike, and the OSU faculty already passed an anti-war resolution.

Corvallis may be ahead of us on this front, but professors, if you're against the war, cancel classes and call in "sick of war" on Wednesday.

Legislators should consider poor when installing 'sin tax'

Once again, Oregon is responding to fallout from the budget meltdown and the failure of Measure 28, this time in a form that's sure to hit some Eugenians right in the mouth — almost literally.

The Legislature is right now debating whether to substantially increase the taxes on wine and beer. Beer taxes would rise more than seven times from less than a penny to seven cents a bottle, while wine would be taxed at more than a quarter per bottle. The revenues — proponents claim it would raise \$100 million — would be earmarked for health services in danger of being slashed.

We're against this tax, and not just because college students have a propensity to tiddle.

We certainly can't fault the Legislature for trying to save worthwhile services like mental health treatment, drug addiction treatment and the Medically Needy program. But did the legislators behind this idea (including Springfield Sen. Bill Morrisette) stop to consider that it's yet another regressive tax that will fall most heavily on the people who can least afford to pay?

The paycheck of a poor worker cannot as readily absorb a 7.5 cent tax on beer as the wallet of a better-off person can afford the 28.4 cents on wine. Helping the medically needy on the backs of the economically needy isn't wise public policy.

Rather than install another regressive "sin tax" to dig Oregon out of the economic hole, we have a few other ideas, and although we've said them before, they could still help the situation. Try a gross receipts tax, try increasing business taxes, try a two-tiered sales tax (low rate for inexpensive products, higher rate for expensive products).

Raising taxes isn't politically pretty, no matter what segment of the population is being hit. But Oregon needs to swallow hard and follow the lead of other states, such as Tennessee last summer, in making structural change. Regressive patchwork funding will not fix the state's tax mess — we need a comprehensive solution.

Pay one group, pay all

I demand what belongs to me! I demand the land the U.S. Government took from Mexico all those years ago! I demand reparations for my ancestors! In short, I demand what does not belong to me.

I find it grievous that black people are demanding reparations for acts that were not committed against them, but their ancestors. I have no problem whatsoever for the government paying reparations to the actual victims. But I've got a big problem giving reparations to their great, great, great (you get my point) grandchildren.

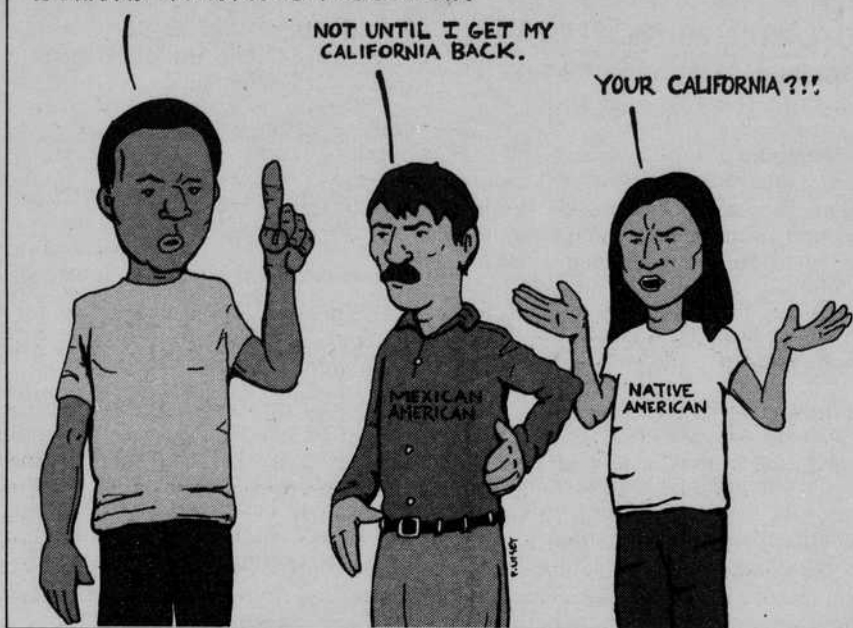
If the government is going to give reparations to them, why not every other race that has been victimized over the years? Yes, they may have been promised "a mule and forty acres" to begin their lives as "free men," but it wasn't really them. It was their ancestors. Ancestors long dead. Granted, some may be as recent as 100 years ago, but they're gone nonetheless.

When David Horowitz tried to place an ad called "Ten Reasons Why Reparations for Slavery is a Bad Idea — and Racist Too" in 52 college newspapers, only 27 ran the ad. The newspapers that did were criticized because the ad was said to be racist. Though I may not agree with a lot of what Horowitz has to say, I tend to agree with his reasoning behind this ad. I am in no way racist, but his justifications make sense.

According to Horowitz's ad, there is no single group clearly responsible for the crime of slavery. Black Africans and Arabs were in part responsible for enslaving the ancestors of today's black Americans. There were 3,000 black slave owners in the antebellum United States. Why are the ancestors of these people are not paying reparations? I didn't own a slave nor did my family. Then why should I have to pay a fine for something I had no part in?

Horowitz's second point is that there is no one group that benefited exclusively

I DEMAND REPARATIONS FOR SLAVERY!



Peter Utsey Emerald

from its fruits. I agree — several races benefited from using slave labor, and that includes black Americans. Doesn't that mean they should be paying as well?

What about the Union soldiers who died during the Civil War trying to free these slaves? Do the descendants of these people deserve reparations?

The reparations payments made to Jewish survivors of the Holocaust, Japanese Americans and victims of syphilis experiments in Tuskegee were to the direct victims of the injury, or their immediate families. The United States should not have to pay reparations to people who are not immediate family or victims themselves of slavery.

When President Bill Clinton was in office, he apologized to Hawaiians for the overthrow of Queen Liliuokalani. Is there going to be a prerequisite for all presidents to apologize for some act done to some culture or race long dead?

Here's a thought: Why doesn't our current president just apologize in one big hoorah? He could say, "I apologize for any wrongdoings that may have been done to persons or their races during the

interim from the time the world began to now." I mean, geez, we might as well get it all out of the way.

Slavery was hideous, yes, but there were and are many other people wronged throughout the world. In many African countries, clitoral castration is still practiced. What about during World War I and World War II? What about the people killed?

Do you see what I am saying? If we make reparations for one group what's to stop, ummm, let's say, Mexicans from requesting their part of Mexico annexed into the United States in 1848? Stop and think: When will the past remain in the past, and people instead will look to the future?

We need to make things better now and not continuously reopen yesterday's wounds. But most importantly, people need to stop demanding money for atrocities that didn't happen directly to them. It doesn't belong to you.

Contact the columnist at salenadelacruz@dailyemerald.com. Her views do not necessarily represent those of the Emerald.



Salena DeLaCruz
 Say it loud

Letter to the editor

Bush rhetoric hides oily motivations

It has been reported that former President Dwight Eisenhower was shocked to learn that half of all Americans are of below average intelligence. In those days, presidents expected to engage the public in rational discourse. Today, presidents lie quite freely, hoping that the law of averages will keep enough people in the dark.

President George W. Bush is a case in point. His coming war against Iraq is

neither about terrorism nor about weapons of mass destruction. It is about oil, and it was planned long before Sept. 11, 2001. In an astonishingly effective campaign, Bush has managed to mislead and confuse a great many Americans about this simple fact.

It is interesting to compare the penning of war supporters, for example Salena De La Cruz's comments in the Emerald ("Time for action against Iraq," ODE, Feb. 17), or Sean Walston's letter ("Column sheds light on Iraq threat," ODE, Feb. 21). Such statements are usually quite emotional and invariably express faith in the Bush administration.

Supporters rarely doubt the validity of the administration's evidence, such as that presented by Colin Powell during his pathetic performance before the United Nations, nor do they wonder why most. Informed people in the world now think that Bush, rather than Saddam Hussein, is the more serious problem.

Saddam Hussein is indeed an evil man, but there are much worse, and he was once even our "friend." His worst mistake was underestimating our lust for his oil. What will we do when Iraqi oil runs out?

Jim Remington
 professor physics

Online poll

Each week, the Emerald publishes the previous week's poll results and the coming week's poll question. Visit www.dailyemerald.com to vote.

Last week: How will you pay for the tuition surcharge?

Results: 59 total votes

- Pick up a part-time job — 8.5 percent, or 5 votes
- Wait for financial aid — 20.3 percent, or 12 votes
- Drop out of school — 13.6 percent, or 8 votes

Cut back and eat lots of ramen — 16.9 percent, or 10 votes

Parents pay the bills — 23.7 percent, or 14 votes

What tuition surcharge? — 10.2 percent, or 6 votes

Leave me alone! — 6.8 percent, or 4 votes

This week: What was your favorite PBS kids show?

Choices: 3-2-1 Contact; Electric Company; Mister Roger's Neighborhood; Reading Rainbow; Sesame Street; I watched cartoons; Leave me alone!