

# COMMENTARY

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## Letter to the editor

### State must fund suffering education system

Bent over the guillotine, funding for post-secondary education sits on the chopping block; the blade of the state budget cuts hovers a mere inch above the heads of students. Once the current budget plan, recently signed by the Oregon Senate, receives the governor's signature, more than 3,000 Oregon college students will lose some or all of their Oregon Opportunity Grant for the next school year. Oregon recently received an "F" for affordability by the National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education, and any further cuts will drastically damage students' abilities to attend college.

I know that K-12 education is facing a funding crisis and that the Education Stability Fund money is needed to keep K-12 schools going. However, Oregon's colleges and universities are suffering their own crisis as well. Oregon needs to support education at all levels, rather than transferring funds between higher education and K-12. By maintaining funding and grants for higher education in the next biennium, students will have the opportunity to receive a college education, allowing Oregon to reap the economic benefits of a highly educated workforce in the future.

Tobias S. Piering  
 freshman

pre-planning, public policy and management

## Ending tobacco sales on campus will help students both now, later

### Guest commentary

We, the physicians, nurse practitioners and professional staff of the University Health Center, would like to encourage you to eliminate tobacco sales on the University campus, specifically in the Erb Memorial Union. As health care professionals, we feel strongly about this issue as we see the harmful effects of tobacco on students.

In an article in the Journal of the American Medical Association, it was said that, "Tobacco use is common among college students (22 percent) and is not limited to cigarettes. College appears to be a time when many students are trying a range of tobacco products and are in danger of developing lifelong nicotine dependence. National efforts to monitor and reduce tobacco use of all types should expand to focus on college students and other young adults." Discontinuing the sales of tobacco on campus would establish and maintain an environment that discourages harmful substance use as well as sending a clear message to students and the campus community.

Our primary mission at the University Health Center is to enhance the educational process by minimizing health-related barriers to personal development and learning. Additionally, we provide prevention, health promotion and education services that enable students to take full advantage of their academic experience and serve as the health and medical resource for the University community. We feel obligated to do what we can to protect students from the harmful effects of tobacco. It is with this in mind that we are asking that tobacco products not be sold on our University campus. Selling a product condones its use. The American College Health Association has published standards of practice for health promotion in higher education and within these standards, we are reminded as health practitioners to "advocate for policies and practices that recognize the interdependent concepts of health, community and academics." The EMU is a community of interdependent groups that are responsible for providing a healthy learning environment for our students. The sale of tobacco in the EMU gives the message to students that profit is more important than the health of our students.

The University is one of only two of the 29 public or private colleges/universities in the Pacific Northwest to sell tobacco products on campus, and one of three of the Pac-10 schools to vend tobacco. Many universities across the United States have discontinued the sale of tobacco products on campus, and we encourage the EMU Board of Directors and the ASUO Student Senate to follow the lead of the University Bookstore and other universities across our nation in refusing to sell tobacco.

Dr. Paula Ciesielski and 37 co-signers are doctors and staff at the University Health Center.



Steve Baggs Emerald

## Inspectors give false comfort to peacemongers

### Guest commentary

Hardly anyone argues that Saddam Hussein's addiction to weapons of mass destruction, his history of aggression, and his connections to terrorists don't pose a grave threat. Yet obvious as these points are, peacemongers and the leaders of France and Germany have managed to raise the level of noise over whether to go to war to disarm Iraq to such a pitch that reasoned discussion seems impossible. Still, I'll give it a try.

At the end of last summer, President George W. Bush acceded to the requests of Kofi Annan and Jacques Chirac, followed the advice of Colin Powell and Tony Blair, and went to New York to get the United Nations' imprimatur to disarm Iraq. The Security Council unanimously passed Resolution 1441. Among other things, it put inspectors back into Iraq after four long years.

Since then, many seem to have lost sight of the fact that getting inspectors back into Iraq was not the objective of 1441 — disarmament was. That the inspectors have not yet found a "smoking

gun" is evidence in and of itself of Iraq's failure to disarm. Iraq has had 12 years to design its programs so they can proceed in an environment of inspections, and they are experts at denial and deception. The return of inspectors has provided no assurance whatsoever of Iraqi disarmament. On the contrary, it has given false comfort that Saddam is somehow "contained."

Saddam is playing to type, giving just enough here and there to appear to be cooperating, all while hiding his weapons. Yet Blix, backed by Chirac and German Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder, calls this progress: The number of Iraqi minders per inspector has been reduced from five down to one; Saddam has allowed seven of the 3,896 scientists listed as having a role in Iraq's weapons programs to be interviewed, albeit in downtown Baghdad where they and their families may be subject to torture and execution; and Iraq finally passed a law banning weapons of mass destruction.

These were Blix's best points. Incredibly, he even downplayed the discovery of 17 "empty" chemical warheads. What Blix failed to mention is that empty is the only way to store these weapons as they were not designed to

store chemicals for long periods.

Resolution 1441 clearly states that this is Iraq's final opportunity to disarm. When the United Nations makes a statement like that, it puts its credibility on the line. To understand what's at stake, it's worth recalling the history of the League of Nations: After the invasion of Abyssinia, the League collapsed because member states were not willing to back up their declarations with consequences. That lesson was summed up by Canadian Prime Minister Mackenzie King who declared "collective bluffing cannot bring about collective security." The question is whether the world has learned that lesson.

You can't rationalize people out of things they didn't rationalize themselves into in the first place: If for the sake of peace at any cost, France is determined to veto any resolution to disarm Iraq by force, and in the process allows the U.N. to become an ineffective, irrelevant debating society, so be it. Either way, Bush and the nations that are willing to help must enforce Resolution 1441 and disarm Iraq militarily because the risks of inaction are simply too high.

Sean Walston is a graduate student in physics.

## Americans must end support for oppressive Israeli rule

### Guest commentary

The swastika is a sign of hatred, murder and imperialism. It is a horrible symbol of man's inhumanity toward man. That is exactly why it was drawn in the street next to "Bush=Hitler." Today, President George W. Bush is on the brink of invading a nation, and has used nationalism to appeal to the fears of an ignorant population. Hitler used nationalism to appeal to the German population.

Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld spoke of possibly using nuclear weapons in Iraq. That would create a Holocaust times 10. Bush supports a brutal regime in Israel that ruthlessly murders Palestinian civilians. Every morning, you wake up and check to see that you still have a head. Then you check to see that your family is still alive. You do this every day if you are Palestinian. More than 45,000 Palestinians have had their homes bulldozed, and are left homeless.

Many times, they have been left without drinking water because Israeli

troops will bathe and urinate in the water tanks. Tens of thousands of Palestinians have been imprisoned, and thousands have been tortured in their own land. Israeli tanks and soldiers are everywhere, and they shoot with no discretion. Young Palestinian boys who throw rocks at tanks are popular targets. Last week, a pregnant woman and a 13-year-old boy were bulldozed to death in their house. In the past year, the Israeli military has killed 2,500 Palestinians. Israel has 600 casualties.

The United States is the reason this can take place. Washington supplies Israel with everything they need to occupy Palestine. The United States gives billions of dollars each year to Israel, \$6 billion in weapons alone. The United States gives more money to Israel than is given to all other countries combined. The American media has a one-sided portrayal of Palestine, and will not focus on the thousands of Palestinians being brutally killed. The media choose to focus on the retaliation by Palestinians, who are exacerbated by oppression, murder and 36

years of brutal occupation.

Stand up and be a drum major for justice. Speak out, or blood is on your hands. Do not be like a Nazi citizen, just standing by and letting the Jews incinerate. Hitler wouldn't have come to power if these people didn't support him. It is ironic, though, after all the Jews endured, that they would turn around and oppress the Palestinians. We must want peace, but there can be no peace until we have justice. Justice means a free Palestine. This starts in the United States with you and me, demanding the withdrawal of U.S. support for Israel.

While the Palestinians are in refugee camps, the United States prepares to invade Iraq to kill hundreds of thousands of Iraqis. A million and a half Iraqis have died because of sanctions imposed by the United States. The swastika was drawn next to "Bush=Hitler" to remind people to stand up and say "no" to war, racism and oppression before it's too late. As Thomas Jefferson wrote, "I tremble for my country for justice does not sleep forever."

Paul Aranas is a senior religious studies major.