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Portland City Council okays anti-war stand

Portland City Council passed an anti-war resolution Nov. 30, backed by the Oregon AFL-CIO and numerous peace, religious and community groups. The resolution was sponsored by City Commissioner and former Fire Fighters Union president Randy Leonard.

Leonard opposed such a resolution in 2003, and came to regret it.

"Three years ago, when the case was made for war, many people, myself included, were compelled to give those in charge the benefit of the doubt," Leonard said. "It is clear now that we were grossly misled, and our service men and women are standing in harm's way as a result."

The resolution calls for the U.S. to "immediately commence an orderly and rapid withdrawal of United States military personnel from Iraq," and urges that the money spent on the war be redirected to fund domestic needs, like education, health care and full benefits for returning veterans.

The reasons for the resolution are spelled out in a lengthy preamble.

"In October 2002, the United States Congress adopted a joint reso-

lution to authorize the use of United States Armed Forces in Iraq on the basis of imminent threat of attack by Iraq, possession of weapons of mass destruction by Saddam Hussein and the role of Saddam Hussein in the 9/11 attacks on the United States, all of which have been subsequently disproved."

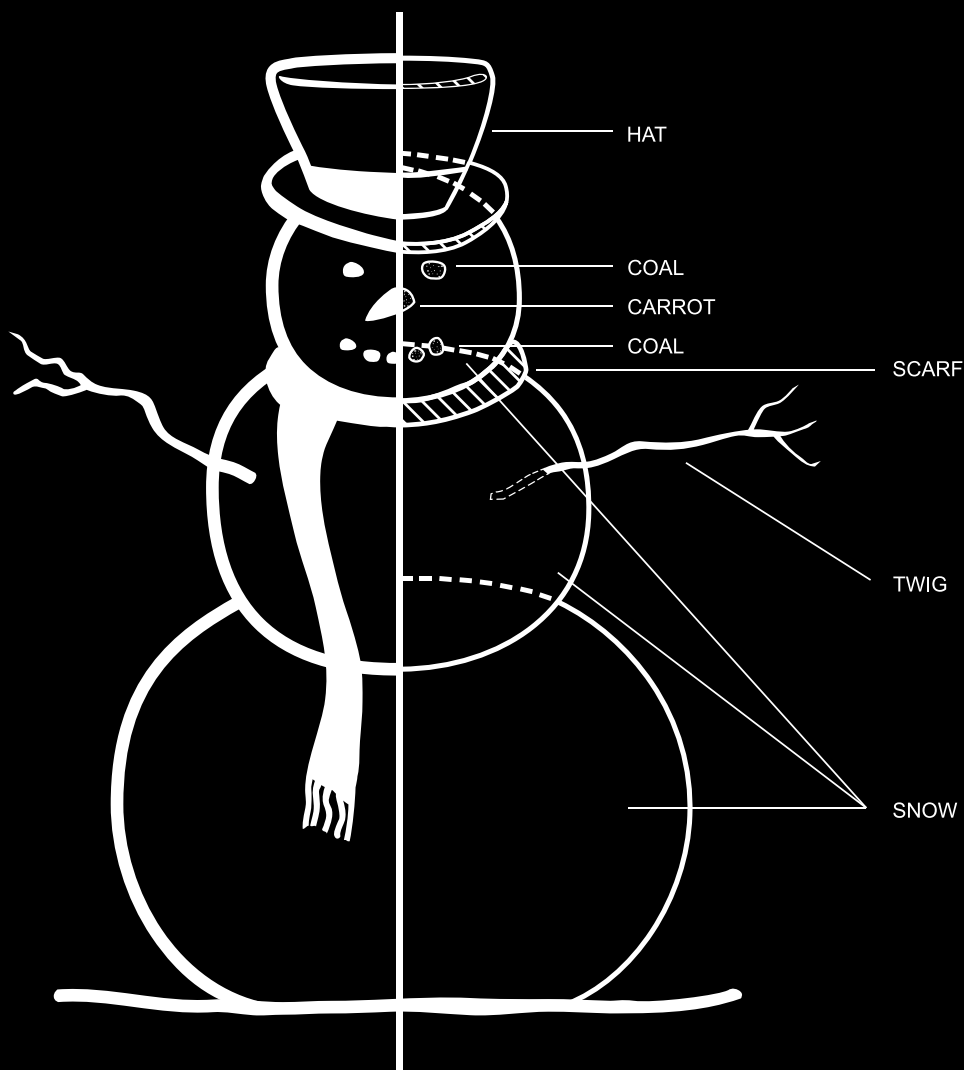
The preamble of the city's resolution refers specifically to a resolution approved at the October 2005 convention of the Oregon AFL-CIO, calling for the immediate return of the Oregon National Guard.

The city's resolution has no legal force, but is an official communication to the president. Portland became the 273rd local government to do so.

Oregon AFL-CIO President Tom Chamberlain and Oregon Rep. Diane Rosenbaum, were among those testifying in favor of the resolution.

Chamberlain served in the U.S. Air Force in the early 1970s.

Rosenbaum's union, Communications Workers of America Local 7901, was one of a number of community groups to endorse the resolution.



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