

other viewpoints

Endorsements

For the second consecutive year, the Print is making editorial endorsements of candidates for key Associated Student Government positions.

We are doing this because in a student election there is little opportunity for voters to really get to know the candidates and platforms and goals.

Campaigning is done over a short period of time and most students learn little about the candidates except information they gain from posters.

The candidates were interviewed by members of the editorial board and asked identical questions. Based on the results of these interviews the edit board decided on candidates to support for each office. We felt that candidates for business manager were so closely qualified, that we endorse either candidate.

We hope that this makes voting easier and helps create an informed voting student body rather than one that votes on looks or plays eenie-meenie-minie-moe at the ballot booths.

President

On the basis of campaign platforms and personal interviews, we believe Cindy Bennett to be the best qualified candidate for Associated Student Government president.

Bennett's enthusiasm and determination to get the job done are a serious factor in any election of this caliber.

True leadership must be for the benefit of the followers, not the enrichment of the leaders. Bennett's campaign exemplifies this leadership behavior both for the benefit of her cabinet and the student body.

She plans to include delegation in her every day tasks of being president. We feel that to delegate responsibilities and problems to her staff would benefit the students in the long run because more issues of concern could be covered. There would also be more creative ideas generated because of the increased student involvement.

Bennett seems to be well informed on student and current issues. She has covered her bases well and deals well with problems she faces.

Lao-Tzu, an ancient Chinese philosopher, once said, "As for the best leaders, the people do not notice their existence. The next best, the people honor and praise. The next, the people fear; and the next the people hate . . . When the best leader's work is done the people say, "We did it ourselves'."

We believe, if Cindy Bennett is elected ASG president, the College will benefit from a feeling of group accomplishment.

Editor's note: This editorial ran in the Oregon Daily Emerald, the student newspaper at the University of Oregon. It was written as a position paper from the University of Oregon Veterans and compiled by Russ Linebarger.

University Veterans is an organization of Vietnam-era and post-Vietnam era veterans. In recent months this organization has led the fight against the draft and draft registration. We have been questioned, chastised and attacked for this stand. This statement, therefore, is to clarify for the record our intent and motivation concerning this life-and-death issue.

University Veterans is headed by veterans who have direct war experience through the Vietnam War. As survivors of that war, we came home to the alienation of friends, families and a society caught up in its own guilt about the war. We were greeted, not by brass bands, but by a swollen and inflated economy where unemployment or underemployment was the norm. Our G.I. Bill was so eaten up by inflation that many have been unable to sustain themselves while trying to gain back the education that was lost to time while fighting a dirty and unpopular war.

The Veterans' Administration continues to cut back programs that are a direct benefit to veterans. It claims there is no significant emotional affect stemming from the Vietnam War; it continues to ignore the fact that many of us are chemical time-bombs waiting to go off. And how that many of us are standing up to speak out against another atrocity in the making, we are branded by the VFW, the American Legion (groups supposedly advocating for veterans), and the military, as anti-American or unpatriotic. We are neither. We are veterans who have seen the waste, corruption and death that our over-zealous military has created and operates within. We search for a way that our young and future generations may live without having to face such degradation.

For these reasons, we oppose the current efforts at reinstating the draft. We know and see the draft for what it is: a vehicle to carry this country to war.

Our top leaders have said so, and still the public remains deaf to these messages.

Energy Secretary James Schlesinger has said that the Persian Gulf is the key to the free world as we know it. Defense Secretary Harold Brown has said we would use "military force" to protect U.S. oil interests. And Deputy Assistant Secretary William Crawford has stated that the U.S. would be willing to go to "war" to protect Saudi oil.

When put into context, these statements lend credence to the Pentagon's new terminology of protecting our "national interests." The military has forgone even trying to whitewash our intended aggressive action in the Persian Gulf by labeling it "national defense." In the words of the DoD's own study, "we depend increasingly on external sources of raw material, with oil the most disturbing example of our dependence. For that reason alone, our interests in the Middle East and the Persian Gulf are bound to be substantial."

Even though our leaders and military have stated our involvement in the Persian Gulf is mandatory, the Pentagon still tries to claim its All-Volunteer Army is a failure, and that the need for the draft therefore is crucial. But the DoD's own study, entitled "A Report on the All-Volunteer Armed Forces" states that

average test scores of recruits have risen (testimony to the fact that the quality of the recruits has improved under the AVF system), educational levels are higher now, retention of enlisted personnel and disciplinary incidents have decreased since the early 70's.

In recorded testimony before the House Armed Services Committee last year, all of the heads of the Armed Services had to concede the AVF was working well. Secretary Brown agreed as early as January of this year.

But, the U.S. needs arms sales to control its investments in and access to strategic raw materials. Currently the U.S. imports 75 to 100 percent of these materials. Although this strategy seems quite apparent, the military still uses fear to persuade civilians that we are vulnerable to Russian attack . . . out-manned and out-gunned. But, Pentagon figures are often distorted and often downright lies.

For example, the Pentagon would have the public believe that the Russians have such a large military that this nation is under imminent peril of being attacked. In 1975 the Soviets had 4.8 million troops in their military as opposed to our 2.1 million. Yet many of the Russian troops are used for jobs that our civilians perform here at home, for example: 250,000 troops are used for construction; 150,000 are used to build railroads and works on farms; 430,000 for internal security; 500,000 are permanently stationed along the Sino-Soviet border; another 55,000 troops are stationed in Czechoslovakia and would have questioned the quality of these troops. It should also be pointed out that the Soviets have outnumbered us much of the time since the end of World War II.

On the European front, one which the military claims would be overrun in a matter of days, DoD numbers fail to include the 50,000 French troops stationed in West Germany of the 330,000 troops France has in its military. Our military also does not tell us that NATO outnumbers the Warsaw Pact by 200 million people, has nearly three times the Gross National Product (GNP) of Russia and a 70 percent higher GNP per capita than the Russians.

As University Veterans, we are tired of the facts being distorted to meet the military's end. As University Veterans, we strongly oppose this kind of national policy . . . a policy built on aggression, selfishness and waste. As veterans, we are painfully aware of the DoD's intent to use "experienced" veterans to fill initial battle loses of "green" troops, or to train new troops. With a cadre of combat-trained veterans, the DoD intends to boost morale and troop strength, in the event of a sustained conflict, and it has made its attempt known in provisions set in HR-23.

University Veterans contend that what this country needs is not a foreign policy based on protection of our "national interests," but rather a national policy based on moral fortitude, and a realistic view of Russian "superiority."

As a consumer of 30 percent of the world's oil, while having only 6 percent of the world population, the U.S. needs to control its energy consumption and rely less on its protection of multinational corporate profits.

If this current "national interest" is allowed to continue, then it will be our sons and daughters paying with their blood so our vehicles can continue to roll down American highways.

