

"DEMOCRACY SUBSTITUTES ELECTION BY THE INCOMPETENT MANY FOR APPOINTMENT BY THE CORRUPT FEW."

— GEORGE BERNARD SHAW

Like horsebetting or bluffing in poker, newspapers are unable to resist the fever of political bookmaking. Their influence is probably negligible and only among readers of similar prejudices. But politics is the only adult game, the saying goes, and speculating on breeds is an ancient vice. Unable to remain aloof and unsullied, the Times Eagle has prepared a modest shopping list of a few of the many ballot issues and a random selection of candidates.

YES on Measure 4, which replaces the public utility commissioner with a three-person commission appointed by the governor. The measure opens rate hearings to the public, which enable the elected Citizens' Utility Board (CUB) to participate.

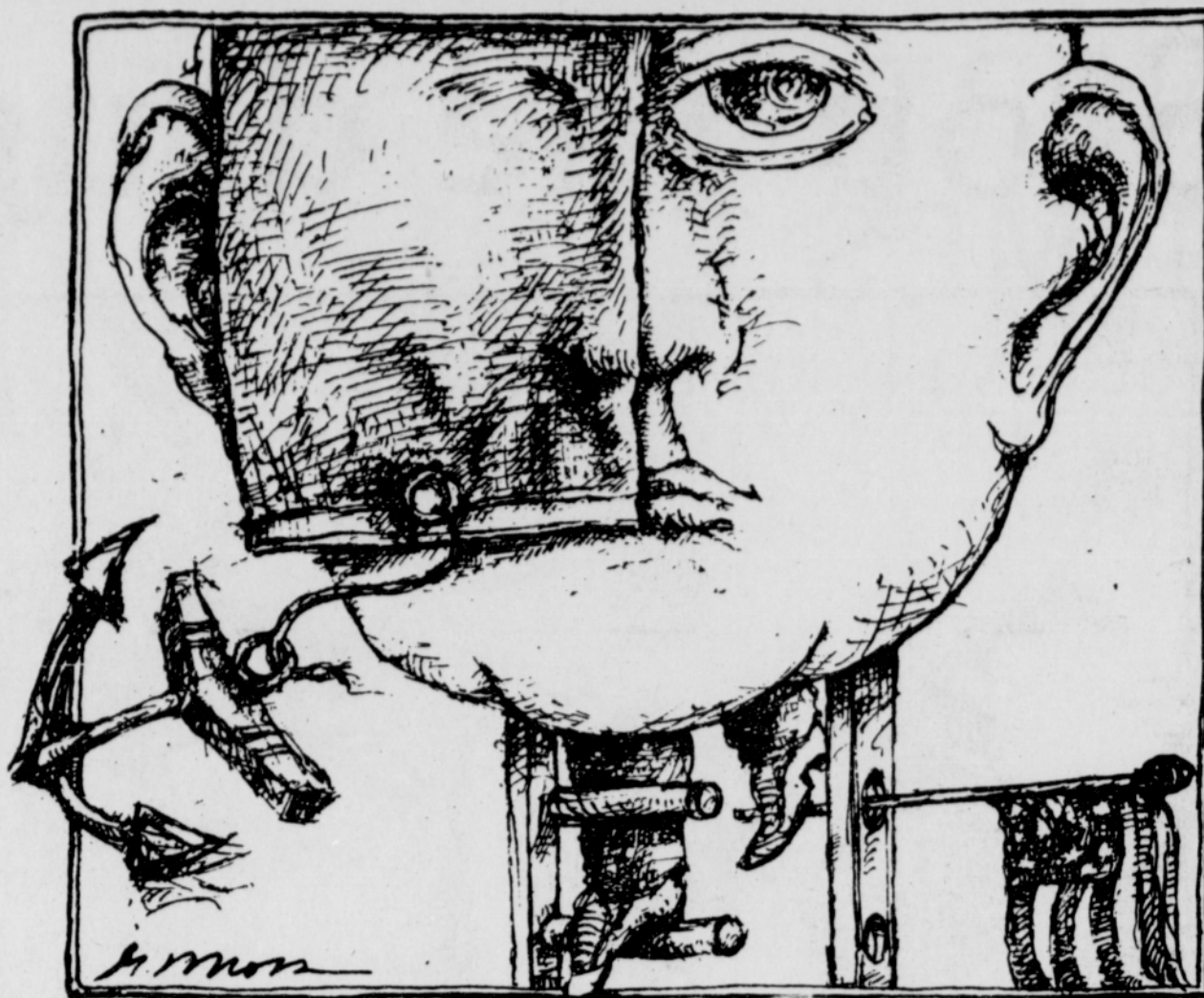
YES on Measure 5, which would allow growing and possession of marijuana for personal use but not for sale. The issue is about civil liberties, not drugs, and although marijuana has health risks, so do all of our pleasures and vices. The real danger is being made criminals for pursuing pleasure. Possibly the most exotic argument favoring the legalization of cannabis appeared in the Voters Pamphlet. "The measure will lead to a Christian revival in Oregon and less drug use," the writer predicted. "Marijuana plants growing in yards will identify people who are searching for the peace and high that only Jesus can offer." Watch out for a police and judicial backlash if the measure fails.

NO a dozen times on Measure 6, which would prohibit state funding of abortions unless the mother's life is in danger. Rape, incest or endangering the mother's health are not exceptions. Whatever arguments might be made about abortion, a couple of things should be incontestable: the right of a woman to make her own choice about her pregnancy; and justice is not based on the ability to pay. The Oregon constitution has already established that all publicly funded abortions must be medically necessary. The intent of Measure 6 is to impose a rigid censure upon those most vulnerable, poor women who depend on the state for medical care, after having failed to scare away the issue with shrieks and bombs.

NO on Measure 7, which revives the sales tax, a regressive form of double taxation that shifts the burden from the wealthy and corporations to low and middle income taxpayers. Oregon voters have turned down a sales tax seven times since 1933, the last time by a margin of about four-to-one.

NO also on Measure 9, which in its claim to cut property taxes eliminates all tax bases in the state and thwarts local decisions about local services and expenditures.

YES on Measures 11 and 12, which provide some property relief and school revenues through raising the tax rates of corporations and applying more stringent progressive income tax levels. The Oregon Federation of Teachers supports both measures.



Eagle's Picks

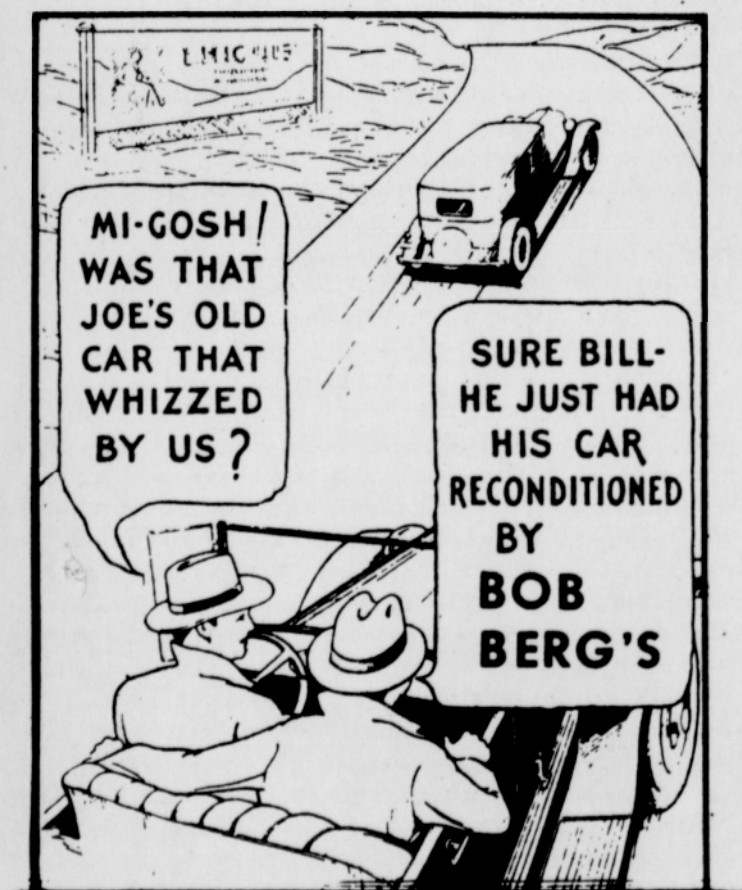
NO on Measure 10. Sympathy for crime victims obscures this measure's repression of rights of the accused, a cornerstone of our political philosophy that limits the excesses of authority. Although most people are as fed up with crime as they are with drunken drivers, they must be cautious that their fervor does not erode rights they may wish to possess in the future.

YES on Measures 14, 15, and 16. Nuclear Free Oregon. "Shut the sucker down," one woman said of Trojan.

NO on Clatsop County Homerule. Democracies often vote themselves out of existence. Though the problems of inefficiency are great, eliminating elective offices is not the solution.

As for persons to represent us in various elected offices, a potpourri: TweedleHe instead of TweedleShe, as Ed Fadeley named Neil and Norma, for governor; the plucky Rick Bauman for U.S. Senator; Les AuCoin for his seventh term in Congress; Tom Hanlon for his fourth term in the state house; Geoffrey Stone for state senator; Debbie Boone for Clatsop county commissioner; and Laurel Hood for mayor of Cannon Beach.

— MICHAEL PAUL McCUSKER



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