

from it.

While the effects of meth use on babies are not well documented at this point, the effect on parents of these children is very simple. If they keep using meth, they die, or if they are unlucky, they keep using until everything around them is destroyed. I think calling methamphetamine an epidemic does a disservice to the truth. I use the term methamphetamine disaster.

*William A. Furtick  
Eugene*

**LOOK TO PAKISTAN**

President General Pervez Musharraf of Pakistan has recently suspended a major purchase of U.S. fighter planes, with a cost of \$5-10 billion, stating that funds are needed first and foremost for earthquake recovery. He has previously been criticized for refusing to cut his nation's military budget in light of the disaster.

Here in the U.S., President George Bush and the Republican Congress are in the process of suspending social spending and Medicare payments, with a cost of \$35-plus billion, to pay for Hurricane Katrina recovery. There has been scant criticism of our country's \$500 billion annual defense budget, which exceeds the spending of all the militaries of all other nations of the world combined.

Perhaps we should look to the priorities set by the democratic government of Pakistan for guidance in our own fiscal dilemma. And maybe we should begin to speak out.

*Benton Elliott  
Eugene*

**A NARROW READ**

This is a response to the "open letter" sent by Deb Huntley (11/17). In that letter Ms. Huntley seems to have a problem understanding the difference between "like" and "interest."



Just because I choose to read a column, in this case Sally Sheklow's, doesn't mean that I agree with or "like" the contents of the column. If all one does is consume that which one agrees with, then that individual will be certain to have an extremely narrow perspective indeed. Which would seem to suit Ms. Huntley just fine.

In fairness, I should concede that Ms. Huntley did allow that one is free to read or not to read *EW*, and I am thankful for her largess. And for what it's worth, Sally Sheklow invited me to submit my letter for publication, which to me shows a broader sense of perspective than I had previously given her credit for.

*Bill Fredericks  
Eugene*

**PROTEST VOTE**

Vip Short (11-17) is appalled at readers' choice of Jeffrey "Free" Luers for "Best Activist." I didn't vote for Jeff because I actually believe that he is the best activist. I did it because *EW*'s Best of Eugene presents another opportunity to draw attention to his case. It's a form of protest against his outrageous sentence.

As for the effectiveness of Jeff's actions, I agree with a previous commentator that the irony of Jeff's case is that his actions have only been effective because of his harsh treatment. Now he has a voice and influence on an international level that he never had before.

One gets the feeling reading Vip's letter that he has no remorse or respect for Jeff. It's sad that some peace activists think anyone who uses tactics they don't agree with deserves what they get from the state. What's non-violent about that?

I think it's questionable that anyone "with a genuine résumé would tell you that honesty, harmlessness and willingness for self-sacrifice are the cornerstones of any lasting and fundamental shift in human affairs." Religious pacifism is like any other dogma — it doesn't hold up in the real world.

Many pacifists celebrate s/heroes that really aren't part of the "non-violent" protest tradition at all (Nelson Mandela, the Sandinistas, Zapatistas, etc). Are we to believe that these groups and individuals broke the "non-violence" code because they're lying cowards unwilling to make a sacrifice? I didn't think so.

*Eric Blair  
Eugene*

**MISERY RELIEF**

I am a retired RN and have seen suffering you would not believe! Who knows, someday you may be in agonizing pain and wish you could have something that would make you a living human, not a ball of pain. Perhaps you could visit a hospital and see the suffering. Also picture someone you love in terrible pain. Would you not want to put them out of their misery?

Just close your eyes and visualize the above!

The marijuana initiative offers a sensible solution to our failed policy of prohibition. Rather than allowing marijuana to be sold by violent gangs and criminals, we could tax and strictly regulate it — producing an estimated \$28 million a year in revenue for the state. Half of this additional revenue would be earmarked toward funding drug and alcohol treatment. The other half could fund law enforcement, education, and transportation infrastructure.

*Lu Weiss, RN.  
Florence*

*"Coffee should be black as Hell, strong as death, and sweet as love."*  
*Turkish Proverb*

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