



*We see the world
through Black eyes*

The right to protest

Since before the U.S. became a nation the process of non-violent civil disobedience has been a method for the people to seek changes in laws or policies they consider wrong.

During the 1960s thousands of people were jailed and persecuted because they used non-violent protest as a method to bring public attention racially discriminatory laws and practices. The Vietnam war brought peaceful protest from all segments of society until finally that immoral and illegal war was ended.

Although governmental and law enforcement officials were not kindly disposed toward protesters -- and many sacrificed their lives or their reputations -- the right to free speech, to public assembly and to petition for change were more or less accepted.

Now PGE asks the court to prevent the Trojan Decommissioning Alliance and others from holding a non-violent demonstration in protest of the Trojan plant. Few would deny that PGE has the ultimate right to eventually have trespassers removed from its property, but it is far more serious to attempt to prevent a protest before it happens -- before any laws are broken.

The protesters expect to be arrested and possibly jailed. Those who break the law in civil disobedience in order to change the law expect to suffer the consequences, and PGE can use the courts to attempt to impose those penalties.

The goal of TDA is to close down Trojan through peaceful and legal means. Though PGE might have legitimate fears that this goal might someday be reached if the protests and other actions continue, this is hardly an excuse for PGE to attempt to deny the constitutional rights of concerned citizens.

Religion in the air

As unbelievable as it might seem, there is actually a move afoot to introduce legislation to bar religious programming from radio. Supported by prominent atheists, the legislation is sought under the guise of religious freedom.

We have supported efforts in behalf of freedom of religion -- or freedom from religion. We believe that the U.S. Constitution guarantees every person the freedom to choose his own religion or to refrain from religious belief. We

supported the decision to remove prayer from the public schools and we opposed those who because of their own religious beliefs would deny the right to abortion to other women.

But this is going a bit far. After all, religious broadcasts bring great comfort to many elderly and handicapped persons who otherwise would have no access to religious services. Even those who consider themselves too busy or disinterested to attend church can get a little inspiration via the airwaves.

Those who want no religion have no right to deprive those who do.

Time to take a stand

Governor Straub, Vern Cook and other public officials who have had the courage to take a stand against Ballot Measure #6, the 1 1/2 percent tax limitation, deserve our commendation. No public official or political candidate should favor this measure, which will wreak havoc on state and local programs without bringing real tax relief to those who need it most.

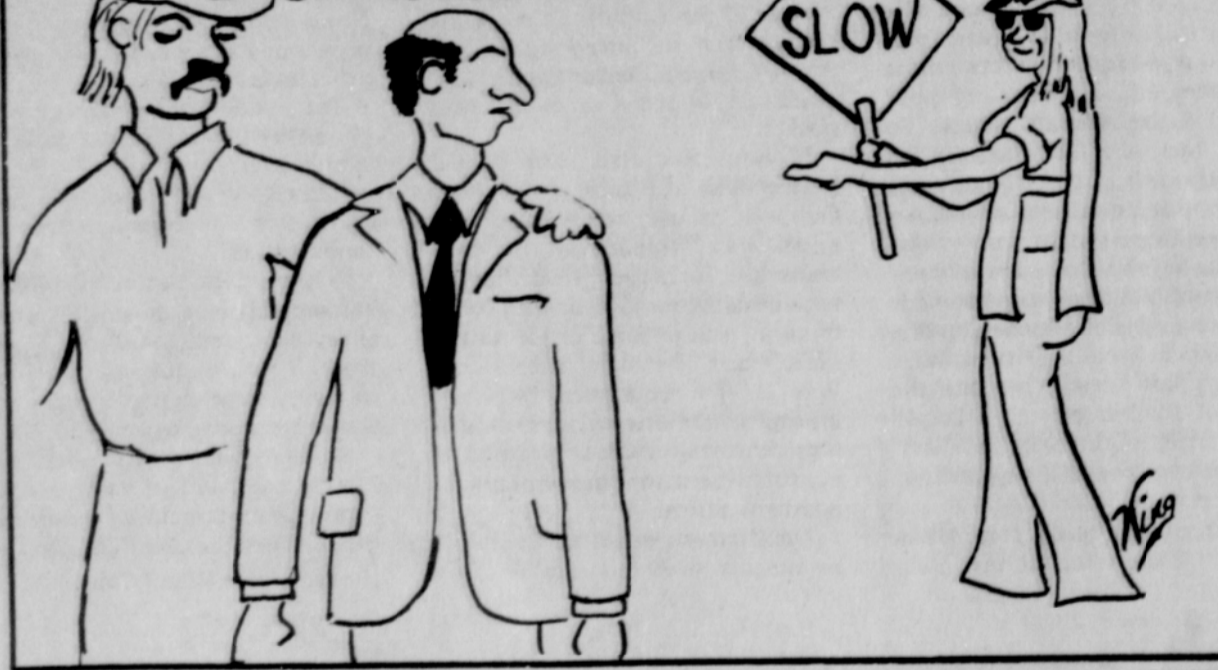
Measure #6 will bring benefits to the owners of business and industrial property. Those elderly citizens on fixed incomes whom we hear so much about will lose most if not all of the tax refunds they now receive.

A few state officials and candidates have been brave enough to announce their opposition to the measure. Last week State Senator Vern Cook (candidate for U.S. Senate) appeared on a talk show and since then he has been regularly smeared and castigated on the air. Apparently few listened to what he said. Governor Straub has strongly opposed the measure in spite of the fact that he faces a tough race against Victor Atiyeh.

Now the question is whether these men's opponents will be brave enough to take a similar stand -- or will they remain silent and give implied support. There is no doubt that the measure has great popular support, at least at this time, and that some candidates may try to ride into office on its coat tail.

So it is time for Vic Atiyeh to get off the fence and say where he stands. And Mark Hatfield might just as well make his statement, too. It would be too bad if important political decisions were made on one issue -- especially an issue that is as little understood and as misrepresented as Measure #6.

AS YOU CAN SEE MR. AFFIRMATIVE ACTION OFFICER... WE DO HAVE A MINORITY ON THIS JOB!! I CAN'T UNDERSTAND WHY THOSE BLACKS ARE COMPLAINING!



ALFRED L. HENDERSON
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The "tax revolt"

by Vernon E. Jordan, Jr.

The so-called "tax revolt" spearheaded by the action of California voters in voting for the infamous Proposition 13, a massive reduction in local property taxes, represents the triumph of the politics of selfishness.

It reflects the growing tendency of middle class voters to favor personal gain over the public good. If this trend continues, effective government could be severely hampered and the fragile ties that bind a pluralistic nation weakened.

Stripped to its essentials, the tax revolt represents a shell game, in which middle class voters fall for meat-axe slashes in taxes that benefit the rich while saving a few pennies for themselves, if that, and reducing the public services that benefit the poor.

In California, for example, the bulk of tax savings will go to businesses, large agricultural enterprises, and rich homeowners. Middle class property owners will soon find that their savings on the property tax will be offset by substitute taxes in the form of user fees for public services. They'll pay more in federal taxes since their property tax deductions will be lower.

They'll also find themselves hurt by a reduction in public services. Their kids' schools will lose teachers and books, their garbage will be picked up less often, and there will be fewer firemen to respond to emergencies.

Why then, did they vote for something so potentially destructive? Part of the reason lies in the peculiarities of the California situation -- a real estate boom that has sent housing prices skyrocketing and an assessment policy that put property taxes on the same escalator.

That legitimate gripe doesn't exist everywhere else, so there is hope the excessive California reaction won't be duplicated elsewhere. But in fact there is a nationwide trend. Some states have similar tax limitation drives. Twenty-three state legislatures have passed a call for a constitutional amendment to ban federal budget deficits.

And spineless political leaders are scrambling to get aboard the anti-tax bandwagon. They are abdicating the responsibility of leadership, which is to govern effectively and to educate the public to the fact that taxes pay for the services the public demands. Poll after poll shows public expectations of government is high. People want better schools, a strong defense force, better roads and transit, and even health insurance programs.

If the tax revolt gathers strength those things will be out of reach of government's ability to provide them. But you can bet that the tax breaks and hidden and overt subsidies that benefit rich people or favored special interests will remain intact.

But talking of the tax revolt in terms of its impact on government revenues and services only obscures what may be the real meaning of this

negative movement. For the tax revolt amounts to a major escalation of the war between the classes.

America's dirty little secret, carefully hidden from view and denied by almost all, is that we have a class system. There are people on top who call the shots, there are people in the middle who identify their own interest with the powerful, and there are people on the bottom, effectively excluded from America's riches.

That bottom portion of our society includes disproportionate numbers of Blacks and other minorities. Twenty-five million people are poor, almost double that if you use more realistic figures than the official government statistics. They need services only government can provide -- public service jobs, training and education programs, and, yes, welfare programs to allow them to barely survive.

And those are the programs that are the targets of those who so enthusiastically preach lower taxes and balanced budgets. The same people who protest high taxes will back a billion-dollar-plus B-1 bomber, but they'll fight public housing tooth and nail. The same people who complain about higher taxes on their \$100,000 homes will bitterly oppose modest attempts to house the homeless.

So it all comes down to an attitude that can be summed up as: "I've got mine and I won't help you get yours." Make no mistake about it, the issue is not rationalizing an often inequitable tax system; the issue is the war on the poor.

Letters to the Editor

Political prisoners at OSP

To the Editor:

Andy Young said there are political prisoners in the U.S., and it caused a commotion among the politicians. Prisons, federal and state are some of the biggest political plums that exist in this society, playing on the fears of the public about crime and criminals is one of the oldest and surest roads to success for aspiring politicians, and yet some are outraged that anyone would imply that America has political prisoners.

What is a prisoner doing three years for driving with a suspended license called? Street criminal? Dangerous felon? Twenty to thirty thousand dollars in taxes is used to apprehend, convict, and imprison this desperado. Twenty to thirty thousand is taken out of the taxpayers pockets and put into the pockets of the state bureaucracy, (minus the two or three thousand necessary for the prisoner's food and two sets of used blue jeans), and the politicians yell "Foul!" when their motives are questioned.

Prisons are slave labor camps. The conditions are better than the slave camps portrayed by Hollywood and television land: prisoners live in brightly painted cells, are allowed to buy radios, magazines, potato chips. But painted cells and the privilege of being able to buy radios, magazines, and potato chips, (which include a

healthy profit for the state), does not negate the fact that forced prison labor makes hundreds of thousands of dollars each year for the state. The money goes to the state bureaucracy. Politics anyone?

For each prisoner the state draws so much per head from the taxpayer. Plus millions in federal aid is poured in. The money goes for more and higher paid staff, more fringe benefits, higher retirement allowances. Some trickles through for out-of-date textbooks, a half dozen basketballs, three new softballs. Some of the money goes for fat contracts such as a ten thousand dollar renovation of showers that could have been done with one hundred dollars and satisfied everyone concerned. Everyone, that is, except the people playing politics with prisoners and appropriations.

Recently a prisoner detailed the staff's continual abuses in the S&I building to a lawyer in this prison's public security visiting cubicle. The prisoner is a diabetic and takes medicine each night. The staff forgot his medicine that night, and he went into a seizure. The staff carried him out in a blanket twenty minutes after the seizure began. He's not a political prisoner any more than the suspended driver is, but such incidents and waste of life can be multiplied a thousand times. It's called rehabilitation.

But it's politics. Pure and simple.

Political prisoners in the United States? The politicians, from the aspiring district attorneys to the upset Congressmen in Washington, know there are political prisoners: that's why they are so upset.

Sincerely,
Donald Danford #32323

Congratulations

To the Editor:

Congratulations for your recent recognition by the Oregon Newspaper Publishers Association.

Democracy cannot survive on ignorance. For that reason, the press constitutes one of the most important elements of a free society.

The dedication of your management and staff to the principle of a well-informed and, thereby, free society, deserves the high recognition of your peers which your award symbolizes.

Your paper stands as one of the finest in the state. I know you will continue to provide Oregonians of the future with the same high standard of service that earned your award.

Sincerely,
Bob Straub
Governor

Zaire

(Continued from Page 1 Column 6)

difference to the wishes and Assist in Halting The Invasion." "Stability of Zaire Could Be Perilled, Vance Tells Hill," "Egyptian Soldiers Arrive In Zaire," "France Airlifting Moroccan Troops To Help Out In Zaire" and so forth and so on. Pretty much the same scenario was repeated this year except this time, the catch phrase was: "whites massacred in Zaire."

Because of all this deliberate confusion, the public failed to understand the reasons behind the invasion. Everybody became overly concerned about whites being massacred and the charges and counter charges flung back and forth between Carter and Castro.

Mobutu is a dictator. Of that there is no doubt. But, he is a pro-West dictator, so he's 'okay'. The moment his corrupt regime is threatened by his own people, fed up with the

corruption, the waste and the endless repression, Britain, France, West Germany, the U.S. and Belgium scramble to the rescue, once more underscoring the West's callous indifference to the wishes and aspirations of the Africans.

Together, the Western powers concoct a plan to create a Pan Africa Force "designed to protect governments that are friendly to the West." Not one word in the statement says anything at all about the rights of the people! Which means that, all any dictator threatened with internal revolt simply has to do is be pro-West and he is assured of support. That way, we will have dictators staying in power for decades regardless of how hard their people may try to topple them.

Like Tanzania's President Julius Nyerere, I have no objection to the creation of a Pan Africa Force as long as it is credited to the behest of

the OAU and is intended to safeguard Africa's hard won independence and not to keep some unpopular dictator in power. I would support it if it were intended to expand African's individual liberties and not merely to ensure the continued outflow of profits to some foreign capital.

When questioned about the objectives of the National Front for the Liberation of the Congo (FNLC), its leader, General Nathaniel M'Bumba said the aim of the FNLC was "to chase Mobutu from power and create a government of national unity." Not a word about communism or the expulsion of foreign workers! It is also interesting to note here just how few journalists bothered to hear the "views from the other side" -- how many even knew the name General M'Bumba. So much for fair coverage!

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