

# EDITORIAL/OPINION

## Fight sales tax now

The Oregon Legislature's Democratic Party leadership—led by the so-called liberal wing of the Party—is caving in to the sales tax proposal offered by a group of Portland businessmen.

Rather than fight the sales tax with all their might they are passing the buck, abdicating their responsibility. "Put it on the ballot," they say. "Let the people decide." Fine in theory, but unjust when they know that the corporations will pour millions of dollars into the election campaign, using confusion and half-truths to buy the vote. The citizens who will have to pay the tax do not have the resources to fight such a media blitz.

The Democratic leadership seems to forget the philosophy on which their Party is founded—that government should serve the needs of the people, that the cost of government should be born by those with the ability to pay. They eloquently say in public speeches that a sales tax falls most heavily on the backs of the poor, of the working class. Yet they are willing to put an unfair tax on the ballot.

Perhaps they forget that the State Democratic Party platform opposes a sales tax. Perhaps they forget why we elected them and not their Republican opponents.

## Why attack Libya?

President Reagan's intrusion into the territorial waters and the airspace of Libya last weekend might have a more devious reason than meets the eye.

It might be an attempt to justify a massive U.S. arms build-up in the Middle East.

The largest new U.S. military command since Vietnam was born on January 1—the Rapid Deployment Force. Originally conceived by President Carter as a small expeditionary force, the Command has grown into a massive unit that will include a half-million troops. Two army divisions, one Marine division, five Air Force tactical fighter wings and three aircraft carriers will be added with a \$20 billion start-up cost.

Originally planned to "protect Persian Gulf oil and trade," the RDF has turned into a massive military wing that will guard "U.S. inter-

ests" in an area encompassing at least 20 nations of the Middle East and Southeast Asia.

The RDF will be a threatening U.S. presence—reminding such "friendly" nations as Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Oman, and Pakistan that it would be foolish for them to consider a more non-aligned approach that would preclude the U.S. government from using them as military bases.

CIA reports of rumors that Quadafi planned to assassinate the president of Sudan and take control of that country sound too much like the highly publicized CIA rumor that Quadafi was sending assassins to dispose of Reagan and other U.S. officials. The quick military response by the U.S. was a good cover story for the deployment of thousands of men and machines to the deserts of the Middle East and it will provide a good response if any U.S. taxpayer bothers to ask why.

## Letters to the Editor

### Unemployment brings stress

To the editor:

Not long ago, an article in *Psychology Today* Magazine said that people living near an unsafe nuclear plant—the Three Mile Island plant in Pennsylvania to be specific—were under more mental stress than people who lived far away from such a plant.

A later study in the same magazine said that unemployment was the cause of considerably more stress and worry than living near an unsafe nuclear plant.

With the worst unemployment in this country since the 1930 Depression, it might be worthwhile to look into one cause of it.

U.S. corporations are taking profits made in this nation and building factories in foreign countries. When the factories go overseas, so do the jobs.

Why are U.S. companies moving their factories overseas? Mostly, to take advantage of the low wages. For example, the head of the Irish Development Association, who was in this country recently trying to persuade American businessmen to move to or build factories in Ireland, said, "The Irish worker does two-thirds as much work as the German worker, but we pay him only half as much."

In Ireland alone, three hundred

U.S. companies have factories there with Westinghouse, by itself, having seven. Many other nations are bragging about their low wages and low taxes in an effort to attract U.S. companies.

During his campaign for the Presidency, Ronald Reagan promised to put people back to work. Instead, he has put millions of people out of work. He has permitted the continued movement of U.S. industry to low-wage foreign countries so it seems to me that he did not take his own promise very seriously.

Henry Korman

## Opposes sending teenagers to adult prisons

Sending teenagers into adult prisons would only breed more rape, retard and perverted young people, insanity and syphilis. Can you see the moral decay in Prophetic Symbolical Babylon (Amerikkka) similar to the Roman Empire? Crime will not be stopped until the "why" of crime is answered. As long as unemployment continues, the high rate of crime will remain.

The problem of unemployment, induces the socio-pathic personality resulting in anti-social behavior. Yet, no human is predestined to be a criminal. To deny any person the right to work is in itself a criminal act. It's dangerous for the unemployed to start doubting their own abilities.

The toughest part of crime prevention is making him or her believe in himself as a person. Building more jails will not solve crime in our community. Within those walls, juveniles would have to fight like animals to protect their manhood. The thrust or effort to combat crime should be to demand employment for the unemployed.

Think of the breakdown of our

public schools, and the non-teaching atmosphere that produces alien children, creating boredom, leading to delinquency, the outcome of which results in crime.

I don't believe the proliferation of drugs within our community could exist without the law enforcement agencies having knowledge of it. Who would want to put a teen-ager in prison, warehouses of human degradation. In this nation, prisons manufacture crime rather than discourage it. Ninety-five percent of all the expenditures in the entire field of correction in this nation goes for custody—iron bars, stone walls, guards.

Forced homosexuality is openly tolerated. It would be difficult to devise a better method of draining the last drop of compassion from a human being than confinement of teen-agers in adult prisons as they exist today. Rape and homosexual culture involves most of the inmates by choice or force.

Studies have shown that most teen-agers suffer from some mental disturbances at the time they commit their crime, but treatment for

mental illness in prisons is virtually nonexistent.

Human dignity lost, drug usage is common in prison and many inmates become addicted. Most authorities agree that sexually segregated adult penal institutions are breeding grounds for homosexuality; and homosexual practices are so commonplace in many prisons that officials admit at least privately, their inability to adequately cope with the problem. Sending teenagers to adult so-called correctional institutions would be a travesty of justice.

Enforced sexual segregation and the inevitable homosexuality, would prove itself thoroughly detrimental to the rehabilitation of teenagers in adult Sodomy factories.

I'm inclined to believe, most crime is a manifestation of psychological aberration. Disease of the central nervous system can cause deviant behavior have been discovered and they can be recognized and handled by internists, neurologists and neurosurgeons using standard methodology.

Dr. Jamil Cherovee  
Field Director for CORE

## The decline of C.O.R.E.

by Manning Marable  
"From The Grassroots"

I first learned about the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE) in the spring of 1961, during the civil rights movement. In December, 1960, the Supreme Court ruled in *Boynton v. Virginia* that racial segregation was illegal on all interstate buses and trains, and in all transportation terminals. On May 4, 1961, thirteen members of CORE, including national director James Farmer, traveled into the Deep South.

Predictably, the biracial group encountered violent resistance. John Lewis and another "Freedom Rider" were assaulted in Rock Hill, South Carolina on May 9. White mobs in Anniston, Alabama, attacked and burned one bus. In Montgomery, Alabama, white racists pulled Freedom Riders off the bus and gave them a brutal beating. In Jackson, Mississippi, Farmer and a group of 26 Freedom Riders were given 67 day jail sentences for sitting in the "whites-only" sections of the city's bus depot. Farmer's jail term served to mobilize every CORE chapter. Hundreds made the journey south to join the Freedom Rides.

In later years, CORE became a "Black Power" formation, aligning itself with the more radical Student Non-violent Coordinating Committee. CORE leader Floyd McKissick stood second only to Stokely Carmi-

chael as a nationally-known proponent of black nationalism. McKissick and CORE attacked the Johnson Administration's illegal and immoral war in Vietnam. One might disagree with CORE's controversial political stands, but not even its worst critics could claim that the organization did not identify with the goals and ideals of the oppressed black community.

Today, this statement is no longer true. Inch by inch, CORE has retreated from the vanguard of progressive struggle into the open arms of the forces of Reaganism, racism and economic reaction. From "Black Power" of the 1960s, CORE and its leader Roy Innis have abandoned their militant history for acceptance into the posh corridors of the ruling military-industrial complex.

In 1976, CORE pushed the plan to recruit Afro-Americans to fight as mercenaries against the new progressive government of Angola. Innis advocated support for UNITA, a black puppet organization which is backed by the Republic of South Africa and the United States. Objectively, CORE was placing its name and prestige in the service of international terrorism and white supremacy.

Finally, last month, CORE reached an all-time low in the annals of the civil rights movement. At the

fortieth anniversary convention of the organization, CORE gave a special award to a rightwing reactionary, Gen. William Westmoreland, who commanded U.S. troops in Vietnam. Innis declared that any criticisms of Westmoreland were unfair because "the man was [just] carrying out orders." CORE also presented a special award to a black vicepresident of Anheuser Busch brewery. The firm is currently engaged in a struggle with Jesse Jackson, Operation PUSH, and other civil rights leaders over the lack of adequate affirmative action and critical black economic support. Thus Innis and CORE, by applauding Anheuser Busch at this time, have undermined efforts of civil rights activists.

At some point, we must begin to hold our so-called black leadership accountable when they objectively and pathetically serve the interests of multinational corporations and international racism. For unlike the Jesse Jacksons, whose emotional grandstanding and florid rhetoric may simply irritate, Innis has moved behind the boundaries of political opportunism into the camp of the enemy. The rich history of CORE and its vision of equality has been uprooted by a group of self-serving black elites who reinforce the processes of racist exploitation and economic oppression.

## Salem Watch

Hazing of freshmen state legislators is a longstanding Salem tradition. They did it this year to Larry Hill (D-Springfield) when he carried the first bill of the season. By shifting votes prior to the final tally, bills which will eventually pass temporarily appear defeated. Hill appreciated the joke, and his Arbor Week bill finally passed.

It wasn't hazing, however, when support started peeling away from a later bill supported by another freshman, Rep. Ed Leek (D-Portland). Before HB 2373 could even come up for a vote on the House floor, Associated Oregon Industries (AOI) was out to scuttle a proposal to allow out-of-work Oregonians to receive both unemployment insurance benefits and vocational retraining. Currently, Oregonians have to choose between receiving unemployment compensation or seeking retraining. To the original 54 sponsors of HB 2373, this choice constituted cruel and unusual punishment for those experiencing the worst effects of Oregon's stalled economy.

HB 2373, however, ran into a formidable obstacle in the form of AOI, one of Oregon's most influential lobby groups. Suddenly, the State Employment Division began working against the bill they had helped to write. Governor Vic Atiyeh paid a visit to House Speaker Gratten Kerans (D-Eugene), trying to persuade Kerans to let the bill die. When Kerans went ahead and organized a floor fight in the House of Representatives on February 8, rumors circulated that the governor might veto the bill if the Senate didn't kill it for him.

Now why would industry oppose a bill allowing benefits to unemployed workers who are acquiring skills relevant to the industries Oregon would like to attract? AOI lobbyists claimed it would be "fiscally irresponsible" to bankrupt Oregon's unemployment insurance fund—which would mean higher unemployment insurance rates for AOI's member companies. Specious as this argument may appear, it—or rather AOI—was strong enough to convince the 10 Republi-

can sponsors to vote to send the bill back to committee. When this diversion failed on a party line vote, all but three representatives (two Republicans and one Democrat) went ahead and voted the bill over to the Senate. Despite the apparent unanimity of the vote, the power of AOI remains clear: That AOI was able to convince 10 Republican sponsors to vote against their own bill demonstrates industry's power over this political party. AOI's clout with Republican legislators becomes that much more obvious when one realizes that even the Portland Chamber of Commerce would not go along with AOI's efforts to kill HB 2373.

Now that the dust has temporarily settled on the first floor fight of the session, the question remains: Why would a powerful industry lobby expend so much political capital killing such a sensible bill? The answer is not "fiscal responsibility," as AOI claims, but internalizing the costs of a poor economy. By allowing certain unemployed Oregonians to seek retraining while receiving benefits, the cost is shifted from society in general and the worker in particular to the employer. No new costs are created; they are shifted—or in economic jargon "internalized"—to the business sector. Labeling a public policy decision such as this as "fiscally irresponsible" is technically incorrect; it is, however, politically expedient.

AOI's coining of the term "fiscal responsibility" is nothing short of brilliant. Use of this term enables AOI to put liberal legislators on the defensive, while giving AOI room to maneuver behind its own pet program expenditures. Thus, it becomes "fiscally irresponsible" to fund worker retraining from employer monies, social and welfare services from the general fund, and infrastructure improvements from user fees because the monetary reserves are depleted. On the other hand, it is "fiscally responsible" to fund tax credits, vocational training, and subsidized energy generation costs from the general fund since these expenditures improve

Oregon's business climate.

As unfair as AOI's strategy may seem, this is how the political game is played. AOI—as do all special interest groups—desires to shield its members from the full costs of problems they generate. And, since AOI lobbyists are skilled gamblers (and women), they have been relatively successful in convincing legislators that their special interests are really in the public's best interests. Unlike political conservatives, AOI has not adopted the simple-minded approach of "less government is better government." Industry profits by many state expenditures, and AOI maintains that these should, indeed, be expanded. So herein lies the brilliance of the "fiscal responsibility" argument: that which benefits business and industry is "responsible," that which benefits workers as "irresponsible."

Thus, we have a consistent AOI stance: take the credit (and tax support) for creating jobs, but avoid the blame (or the costs) for creating unemployment. The reality is that most of AOI's members operate in an economic system which rewards short-term activities and is impatient with long-term investments; the result is increasing capital movement and increasing occupational displacement. Someone, somewhere, must pay these costs.

The real dilemma facing members of the legislature is not how to act in a fiscally responsible manner themselves; but rather, how to get AOI's members to act as responsible corporate citizens in an economy which penalizes such behavior. Legislators must realize that it is neither fiscally nor socially responsible to maintain unemployment insurance payments while denying Oregonians the opportunity to obtain the skills necessary to return to productivity.

Support of HB 2373 by Rep. Leek and his colleagues seems to be an equitable first step in sharing the burden of the costly problem of unemployment. Let us hope that the last laugh, if there must be one, will not come at the expense of those unemployed Oregonians least able to afford and least responsible for creating this severe social cost.



MEMBER



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