

The INDEPENDENT

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Opinion

Are local educators really concerned?

Considering education's increasing economic problems, public employees' potential loss of taxpayer financed pensions and the instructional changes mandated for schools, it was reasonable to assume that school board members, school administrators, teachers, classified personnel and students would turn out in large numbers to talk about those concerns with gubernatorial candidate John Kitzhaber when he was in Vernonia on March 31.

Kitzhaber was asked about improved funding for education, but the question wasn't asked by an educator or student, however, because none of them bothered to attend.

The meeting was at 4:00 p.m. on a week day and didn't interfere with either school or weekend activities. Posters were placed in two of the schools as reminders; Superintendent Ellis Mason was personally reminded of the meeting. Still, there were no representatives from Vernonia schools...not even one.

Attending the meeting and writing a report on it would have been a good extra-credit assignment for students, and should have been mandatory for potential journalism students, but none was there.

Since the local educational establishment failed to utilize an easy and convenient opportunity to discuss their concerns with someone like Kitzhaber and, since their attendance at prior candidates' forums is abysmal, it makes one wonder if their occasional expressions of distress are really about education, or if they simply reflect self-interest?

In either case, when teachers, parents, school administrators and other acceptable role models for young people display no interest in government, we cannot be surprised at the ignorance future generations will necessarily display.

As a matter of fact...

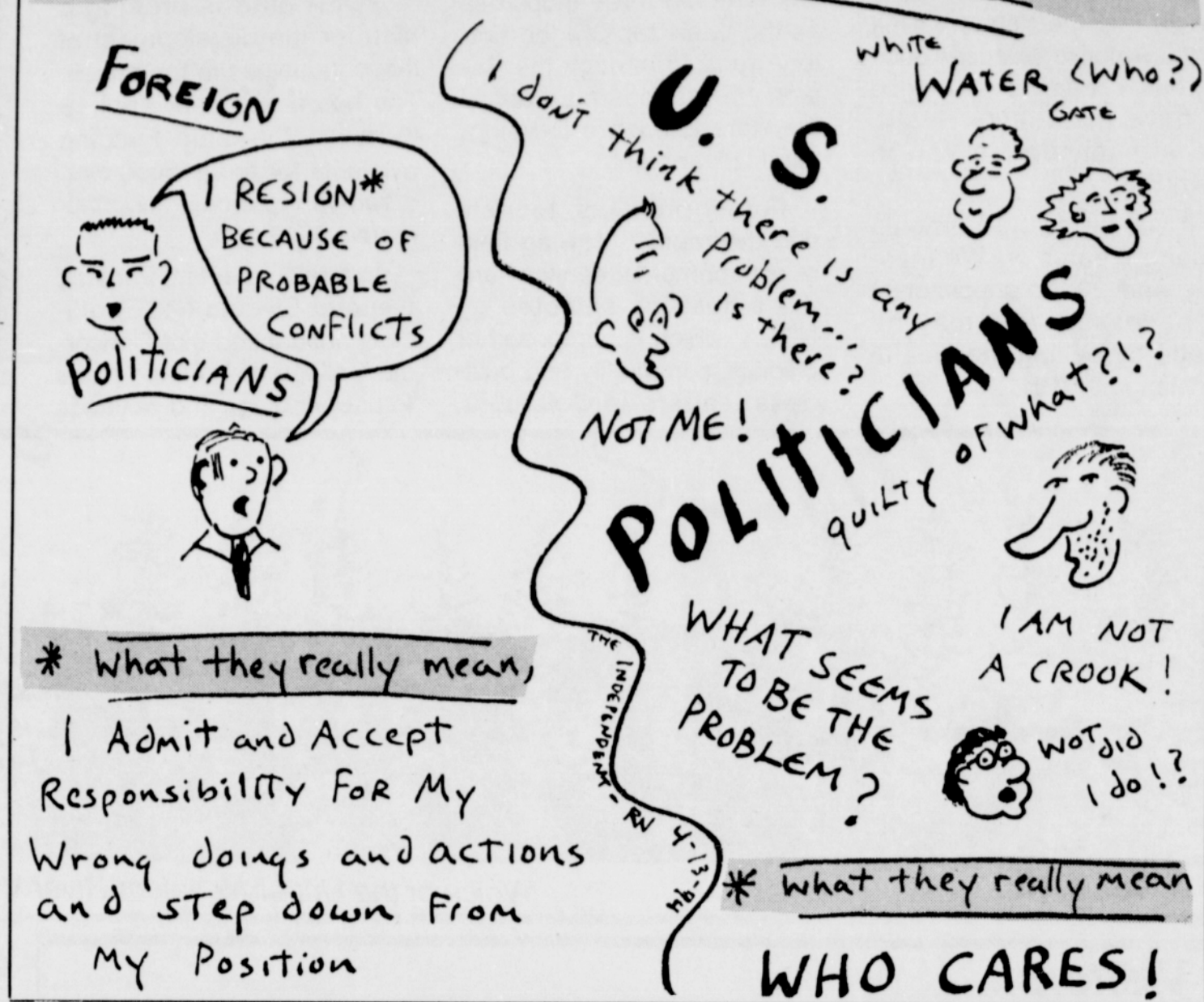
One of the most mind-boggling displays of taxpayers shooting themselves in the foot occurred in the March election, when Columbia County voters overturned the Systems Development Charge, which required new developments to pay fees for future roads and parks.

It's hard to believe that so many county residents are really seeking the opportunity to pay for those improvements on behalf of the newcomers who will make the costly improvements necessary. But that's what the vote did.

Now the question is: How long will it take the same people to start screaming about the taxes needed for improvements to accommodate the population growth? Not long. In addition, they'll probably blame their elected officials for the situation.

The INDEPENDENT will accept some responsibility for not pointing out the situation to voters. It didn't seem necessary to insult the intelligence of our readers by spelling out the obvious when they could read the measure for themselves. Oh well, wrong again.

THE WAY IT IS !!!



* What they really mean,
I Admit and Accept
Responsibility For My
Wrong doings and actions
and STEP down From
My Position

* what they really mean
WHO CARES!

Letters to the Editor

Students, teachers did outstanding job

To the Editor:

Due to the hard work and enthusiasm of twelve outstanding young citizens of Vernonia, I felt it necessary to publicly thank them for recently assisting the County Parks Department in planting two-thousand Western red Cedar seedlings at Camp Wilkerson. Parents, teachers and neighbors should be proud of such a fine group of kids.

I also feel it is necessary to thank an impressive group of teachers for their contribution to the project. It must be comforting for parents to know that their children have quality teachers.

So, on behalf of the Columbia County Parks Department and visitors to Camp Wilkerson, I wish to thank and express my sincere appreciation to the following people: Kelly Baska, Brad Bricker, Brian Collins, Michael Gosnell, Erica Hobart, Kirsten Hyde, Rachel McAlvage, Denny Peters, Heather Sargent, Stephen Serafin, Jeremy Stevens and Colin Tierney, as well as Mr. Howard, Mr. Richter, Mrs. Ward and Mrs. Waters.

Sincerely,

Charles J. "Chuck" Ashcroft
Columbia County Parks
Superintendent

Preschool Casino Night successful

To the Editor:

The Vernonia Preschool Casino Night fundraiser was very successful, raising \$1500 for Preschool while providing lots of great prizes for the players, including a

trip to Reno for two, a 19" remote color television, Pioneer CD player, an overnight stay at Skamania Lodge and lots of dinners and gift certificates.

We want to thank the following sponsors for their donations: S & J Chevrolet, Mike Pihl Logging, Roberts Chrysler Plymouth, K & G Construction, Gwin Logging, Gratter's Tire & Wheel, Cascade Concrete, Power Rents, Bassett Industrial, Doherty Ford and Miller & Sally Duns.

Some of the funds raised have been used to buy needed equipment and supplies. The remaining money will go toward kitchen remodeling and interior painting, a job made easier by Vernonia Hardware, which is supplying all of the paint at cost.

We also want to thank Randy and Kelly Ellson, who are building a swing set for the children.

Lisa Hardwick
Vernonia Preschool

Ample evidence of misunderstanding

To the Editor:

After reading my letter in The INDEPENDENT 3/9/94, some people expressed opinions that I am an atheist, agnostic, anti-Christ and a few other unflattering names.

To these folks, I suggest they return to whoever read the letter to them, have it read again, more slowly, and then have it explained to them.

Even the good minister missed the point. I did not attack Christ, God, the Bible, true Christians or true Christianity, specifically or in general.

Any group, religious or secular, may have the most

pristine intent at the time of their inception. However, if they survive and grow, with growth comes power, money, prestige and a prime directive that the continuation, protection and growth of the organization takes precedence over any and all of the original goals.

With growth also come proportionate corruption and a blind complacency.

If a person truly accepts Christ and the responsibilities and burdens that such a decision entails, they must truly believe and live that life.

Those who do so, may be a cut above average, but those who simply go through the motions and give lip service, who interpret the Bible to suit their life-styles and attitudes, are a cut below. They remind me of the old saying "And man created God in his own image."

Many people have a tendency to transfer their trust, love, worship, etc., to a more tangible entity such as a minister, priest, church, cult, etc., as a channel to Christ. It would be better to worship a Golden Calf, it will probably serve them much better than worshipping any entity other than God.

R. D. Stevens
Vernonia

Our town can show our spirit and pride

To the Editor:

Vernonia is "our town" for every man, woman and child who calls it home, and each of us has the opportunity to help make "our town" a better place to live. One whose streets are clean and stores are occupied. One that offers

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