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Letters

Should admire and emulate the wealthy

To the Editor:

In response to Out of My Mind, March 17, 2011, publication.

Just another article about someone trying to convince themselves and others the wealthy continue to receive government benefits. Far from the truth the wealthy pay more taxes and create more commerce than anyone that has ever committed or wrote against this fact. I have always admired the wealthy and worked hard and took financial risk to create more wealth for me and my family. In fact I started a business from ground zero and at the time of selling it employed 24 individuals. Let's talk about greed. In my opinion greedy are the individuals that continue to partake in social programs as a lifestyle and always want what the other guy has but not taking on more responsibility or working longer hours to create more for themselves.

Too bad articles like this one don't look into the burden social programs put on the deficit, both locally and nationally. How many times have you stood in line and seen a perfectly healthy person buying groceries with the Oregon Trail Card and what type of food was purchased? I bet it wasn't the staples; like flour, milk, beans and such. And gone to the emergency room or DMV and waited to be helped lots of tax-paying citizens hanging around in those waiting rooms lately. Or talked with someone that works in a hospital maternity ward and seen the amount of babies being born to people who think that healthcare is free because they are on the Oregon Health Plan.

The reference to 25 percent American homeowners are under water again is referencing the wrong issue. It's not the mortgage companies fault, people if you can't afford it don't buy it. Social programs were started to help anyone in time of need and I still believe that is needed but they have since become a lifestyle. I will always be grateful to my parents who taught me if you want something work for it, if you create a consequence pay for it. Yes I

was arrested at 17 years old. Guess who paid for that mistake? I did, as my parents saw to it I didn't get away with anything, it was my fault so I paid.

Mr. Abraham Lincoln said once, or something close to it, don't take from one man's house to build one for another. We need to get back to those basic principles. This is still the greatest nation on earth and land of opportunity. So if you want opportunity go get it don't wait for someone to hand it to you. The greatest gift we can give our kids, or kids we know, is work ethic and pride in themselves and basic principles.

**Brian Bassett
 Vernonia**

Action against Libya, Gadaffi is absurd

To the Editor:

Not since the war of Jenkins' Ear has there been a conflict so absurdly initiated, and subsequently fought, as this modern-day campaign on the part of the Obama administration to "punish" Gadaffi, and then deliver Libya into the arms of his opponents. As U.S. and "allied" military assets crash onto Libyan soil, spokespersons for the U.S. administration and its European sidekicks declare that they are "only interested" in protecting civilians from being massacred by Gadaffi's armed forces. Obama himself de-

clared the other day that he had visions of the awful deeds Colonel Gadaffi intended for people in the rebels' strongholds. "We had to act."

Now, don't these sorts of rhetorical ruffles and flourishes emanating from Obama and his crowd remind you of the rabid hyperventilating indulged in by Bush's neocons during the run up to our 2003 invasion of Iraq? How soon we forget! Just as people like Condoleezza Rice and Paul Wolfowitz had "visions of mushroom clouds" as they mulled the implications of Saddam's non-existent Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMDs), so today Mr. Obama maintains that he "had to act" due to bad dreams about the fate of rebels in their eastern strongholds. Yes, indeed, the President just "had to act" when it became clear that the rebellion was becoming totally unglued, and that Gadaffi's armed forces were a lot stronger and more proficient than anyone gave them credit for early in the game.

Obama waltzed into Washington D.C. as the man who would fundamentally change the bruised and battered relationship between the U.S., on the one hand, and the rest of the world on the other. To my way of thinking, his Libyan adventure provides positive proof that his administration differs in foreign policy only marginally, if

at all, from every single U.S. administration since Truman's. "We had to act."

Actually, Obama's fear of being styled a wimp in foreign affairs impelled him to act. Like every U.S. Chief Executive since 1945, Obama has had to "prove" his national security bonafides by indulging in a bit of interventionism and demonstrative militarism.

So far from being "different" from his predecessors, Obama's foreign policy actually represents "more of the same." And why was anyone fooled by Obama's rhetoric on the campaign trail? Just because his campaign rhetoric didn't reek quite as much of machismo as McCain's and Palin's merely indicates that he adhered to the "normal" tone of U.S. politician's post-1945 national security discourse. He does so today.

"He had to act."

**Frank W. Goheen
 Camas, Washington**

Policy on Letters

The INDEPENDENT will not publish letters with personal attacks on private citizens. Preference will be given to brief letters, 300 words or less.

All letters must be signed and include a verifiable address or phone number.

Salem Scene

*By Representative Brad Witt
 Oregon District 31*



The big news this week is the Ways & Means Co-Chairs budget. Governor Kitzhaber released his budget in January, and this is the Legislature's response to his suggested allocations. Chief among the differences is the Legislature's proposed funding for education over the next two years. It is by far the largest expenditure in state government as K-12 accounts for 38% of the general fund, which is made up of income tax and lottery revenues.

The Co-Chairs budget allocated \$5.7 billion for K-12 funding, roughly the same amount of funds as the current school year and slightly more than the Governor's budget. An additional \$55 million could be added for 2012-13 funding if the economy shows continued improvement. The \$5.7 million means school funding is flat or

slightly reduced for the next biennium and, according to reports from school districts across the state, it isn't enough to avoid layoffs and loss of school days for many of Oregon's schools.

Although the process has been relatively friendly in the face of a divided House, there are many remaining issues to be resolved.

Items of Interest...

On Tuesday, I was honored to be present as Governor Kitzhaber announced the granting of \$11.2 million to the Vernonia School District from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) for the dismantling of their flood ravaged school buildings and the creation of a city park. This event recognizes the remarkable collaboration of the community of Vernonia, federal elected and emergency management officials and the Oregon Solutions Team. The new city park will protect environmentally sensitive wetlands, as well as provide a venue for environmental education and school athletic performances. Congratulations to the people of Vernonia for their dedication to their community and their children. Way to go, Vernonia!