

Scapegoats

Out-of-state Students Are the Victims Of a Conservative, Tight-fisted Legislature

In handing down their tentative decisions to increase resident and non-resident tuitions, legislators have made it clear that they will make students the scapegoat for Oregon's financial ills.

We recognize that the tentative tuition decision is not final and that the State Board of Higher Education, not the state legislature, sets the actual tuition rates. The legislature, however, establishes intent and bases the higher education budget on that intent. The board has also indicated that it will raise tuition rather than cut academic programs and lower the quality of education offered at Oregon schools.

For the first time since World War II, the legislative session opened without a budget surplus. It was apparent that even to meet the proposals of Gov. Mark O. Hatfield's budget it would be necessary for the state to raise an additional \$50 million in revenue. The governor proposed several solutions to the problem including a net receipt tax and increased tuition.

In making their tentative decision, the education sub-committee of the Ways and Means committee indicate that they do not expect a radical tax reform this year. Changes in Oregon's antiquated tax structure might not be politically expedient at this time. The tuition increase fits well into the legislators' scheme: soak all college students, but hit the out-of-staters a little harder, after all they can't vote in Oregon and have no chance to repudiate the legislators responsible.

The sub-committee decision seems premature, but perhaps it is only a realistic appraisal of new revenue means which will come out of the session. The taxation package has not yet been prepared. The House is

still haggling over the cigarette tax and other proposals are still in the committee.

Sen. Alfred Corbett seemed to have a realistic proposal on non-resident tuition when he suggested it be raised over the next two or three years, thus giving a little more consideration to those students from out-of-state now attending the University. We would hope that the sub-committee will re-consider this proposal.

The only encouraging thing about the sub-committee action is the provision to set aside 10 per cent of the out-of-state tuition money for scholarship rebates for the non-residents.

It would be regrettable if the \$900 tuition became effective next fall. The psychological shock alone would be likely to slash the number of out-of-state students considerably. For it is impossible to assess the value of these out-of-state students in a cold, statistical approach.

The cultural exchange that takes place on the campus with increased numbers of out-of-state students gives the campus a more cosmopolitan atmosphere and steers us away from static provincialism.

Unfortunately it is too late in the year for Greater Oregon or the University itself to publicize the 10 per cent rebate plan. The psychological effect of hiking the out-of-state tuition up to an absurd level in comparison to other schools on the coast will do great damage to all undergraduate programs.

We hope the legislators will reconsider their action, for if they approve the increase they leave little alternative for the State Board of Higher Education, or out-of-state students.

Frayed Nerves and Tight Budgets

The following editorial is reprinted from the April 15 edition of the Eugene Register-Guard. We reprint it because we agree with the viewpoint it takes.

It must be the middle of April. Nerves are getting frayed up in Salem. Because they are worried and weary, people say things they shouldn't say.

That's what happened in a Ways and Means subcommittee meeting Friday, after the State Board of Higher Education submitted a written answer to an informal question. Earlier in the session, Sen. Ward Cook of the committee asked Chancellor Roy Lieuallen, quite informally and out in the hall, what would happen if the committee chopped another \$5 million off the budget the board wants. That's not the kind of question a man can answer off the top of his head.

The chancellor consulted the nine-member board about it. The board worked up the statement which the subcommittee saw on Friday.

The statement was mild itself. Its main point was that if \$5 million had to be cut, the board would favor tightening up admissions—both by increasing tuition again and by raising requirements. Quality over quantity, said the board. And in addition, the statement said, there would have to be cutbacks in some of the auxiliary services higher education now offers the state. Among these services are such politically and emotionally attractive activities as agricultural research, federal extension services, the teaching hospital, and the crippled children's division.

Senator Cook, who had asked the question in the first place, said he was "frankly shocked," adding, "I felt half sick to think the board would cut these things. The board is acting like a spoiled child; it wants to take its marbles and go home." Rep. Stafford Hansell was also shocked."

Likewise Rep. Ross Morgan, one of the co-chairmen of Ways and Means. Fortunately cooler heads, notably Sen. Alf Corbett, smoothed things over, assuring all hands that nobody was mad at anybody, really.

It's hard to believe that it has been only a little more than two weeks since the speaker of the House was critical because, he said, the board hadn't answered a question that had been asked of it. Would the Ways and Means subcommittee have preferred that Senator Cook's question had not been answered? Or would it have preferred to write its own answer without consulting the board? It seems, really, that the board did exactly as it was asked to do. There is no good reason for the irritation.

Again, chalk it up to frayed nerves at this critical point in the legislative session.

Another paragraph of the board's report deserves comment. "The board is aware," the statement said, "that it is difficult to achieve and maintain a reputation for excellence in the academic world; the process of deterioration, however, is easy and swift."

Members of the Ways and Means committee are getting on toward middle age, and there is certainly nothing wrong with that. They might understand, then, that an educational establishment may be compared with a middle-aged man who wants to play tennis or climb mountains. He finds it takes him a long time to get into physical shape. But he doesn't have to stop exercising long before he finds himself back where he started. So with a campus. We saw that in Oregon from 1956 to 1959, when salary schedules were so low. Good people left in droves. It's been a hard four-year struggle to replace the people who left so quickly. The plant could start falling apart again, a circumstance we must not permit.



HARBINGER

Can't Eat It, Have It Too

The following editorial is reprinted from the April 16 edition of the Portland Daily Oregonian. We reprint it because we agree with it.

The surprising element in the current relationship between the legislative Ways and Means Committee and the State Board of Higher Education is that members of the committee should be surprised at the unanimous proposal of the board to trim auxiliary services if the Legislature should cleave a substantial amount from the board's budget requests.

The Ways and Means subcommittee assigned to higher education has, for weeks, been conscientiously studying the board budget. Its questions have clearly raised the prospect of a recommendation of a reduction of as much as \$5 million in the \$81.8-million higher education appropriation recommended by Gov. Hatfield, which is, in itself, far below the \$96 million requested by the board. It is beyond question that such a big slice from an already pared budget would vitally affect the board's program.

The Ways and Means Committee members' "Oouch!" at the board's projected cuts reveals that political nerves can be more sensitive to threats to the higher education system's auxiliary services than to threats to its prime responsibilities in the classrooms and laboratories.

The State System of Higher Education's program can be broken down into at least three categories: Teaching, research, and service. The board, quite poorly, has proposed that, if its program is to be drastically cut for lack of funds, it should be cut primarily in the realm of services, such as provided by hospitals and agricultural extension services; and that its education program should be reduced in quantity rather than quality; that is, fewer students should be served through raising admission standards. The Ways and Means subcommittee, on the other hand, has toyed with the possibility of jeopardizing quality through reducing number of teachers employed and through an across-the-board reduction equivalent to an expected unexpended balance of \$2 million or so.

Reflection should reveal the comparative merit of the board's plan. And there can be no question that the board has the authority to apply its budget as it sees fit. The Board of Higher Education, not the Ways and Means Committee, has both the power and the responsibility to make operational decisions governing its program. A 1929 Supreme Court decision, in the year of the board's creation, confirmed that the assignment of such discretion to the board was not an unconstitutional delegation of legislative authority.

Ways and Means has regularly sought to undermine the board's authority and tie strings to its appropriations, but it is not on sound ground in doing so. Of course, the committee could act vindictively in the present situation, if it should choose to do so. But that is not to be expected. The committee would do well to take at face value the projection of the board, signed as it is by all nine members. Although it has been a "shock" to some members of the committee, it would be even more shocking to make such drastic cuts in the basic areas of teaching and research.

It is high time for some candid education budget talk at Salem. The Legislature cannot nibble away at its "quality education" cake and have it, too.

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