

Reform no laughing matter

By Nan Henderson

Editor's note: Henderson is the Emerald's legislative correspondent.

University students lobbying in the legislature have begun to squirm during the past few weeks at the mention of student governments.

Abolishment of the ASUO Senate has, in fact, become somewhat of an embarrassing joke around the Capitol constantly repeated at hearings on student rights legislation.

Most recently, University speech professor Bower Aly told the House Education Committee that the animosities of student groups on campus caused "the clear vote to abolish the ASUO Senate" - another good reason according to Aly that students should not serve on the State Board of Higher Education.

Despite the snide remarks University students should realize that the abolishment of the ASUO Senate is one of the

outstanding achievements of University students during the past few years - brought about not by animosities but by the simple recognition that the ASUO senate was an ineffective, cumbersome, powerless organization.

Legislators and other persons around the capitol should view the abolishment for what it was; a mature way of changing a very non-productive status quo.

Written into the Constitutional amendment that authorized the abolishment were provisions calling for a seven-student board to begin negotiations with University faculty and administration to jointly contrive a better system of University governance.

Students are to be highly commended for recognizing the overwhelming ills of the past student government and for being unafraid to take drastic action to cure those ills.

All governing bodies for that matter should periodically take stock of their effectiveness and their problems and

innovate alternate ways of governing that would hopefully solve those problems.

That includes state legislatures. All governing bodies including the Oregon State Legislature, could use the shot in the system that the overhaul of student government at the University obviously has produced.

But the large majority of legislators, unlike students, are so tied to the present system that any thought of substantive change is literally laughed at.

The most recent example of this is the response to the bill introduced this session (HJR 8) that if passed would establish a unicameral (one house) legislature in Oregon.

Proponents of the unicameral legislature including Rep. Larry Perry (D) claim it would go a long way towards "correcting the ills" of the current legislative system.

They see those ills as the political bickerings that takes place between two houses, the unaccountability of a legislator

who can vote for a measure in one house and then actively work "underground" against the measure in the other house.

And the prevalent attitude that one house need not bother correcting small mistakes in legislation since the other house can "clean the bill up".

A house committee after joking about the bill tabled it. Yet the criticisms of the current system are from the observations of this reporter, valid. Whether reducing the legislature to one house (as Nevada did in 1937) is the answer to these problems is not clear.

But that is not the point.

The point is that legislators could perhaps learn something from the majority of student leaders who were unafraid to admit the problems of the ASUO Senate, who found these problems and possible solutions less than funny, and who had the courage to seriously propose and then adopt a new system which in their opinion will produce better University government.

Letters

Fair survey

After examining the recent survey on incidental fees that was administered to "random" classes around campus, I feel motivated to call to the attention of the student body the phrasing of a particular question so that students can interpret the results with full knowledge of what was asked.

I am concerned about the phrasing of question seven. It reads: "Would you be willing to pay a slight increase in incidental fees to finance the women's intercollegiate athletic program, or not?" You are able to answer either "1 yes-willing" or "2 no-not willing."

This question clearly puts in a bind the student who is not willing to pay more for incidental fees but feels the male and female athletic program ought to be equally developed. This reminds me of the recent discussions of military budgets and their handling at the federal level where the budgets are considered in isolation and without comparison to budgets that might benefit from or lose from a particular allocation. If one loses a sense of the whole while considering particulars - how valuable will the ensuing judgment be?

Another point of confusion that should have been clarified, was the category of "ASUO legal services" under question 10. Many people who are unacquainted with the scope of this service may believe this is for the ASUO only (due to its title) and respond with "not willing." Thus their response could mean at least two very dissimilar things, i.e. the ASUO should not have the services of this agency.

On the whole I think the questionnaire was fair and was particularly impressed that they did offer the student the choice of moving from the Pac-8 League to the smaller, less costly, Skyline League. However, I would encourage all students to read the original questionnaire before interpreting results that may be condensed (for example) to "Women's intercollegiate athletics - 50 per cent no, 50 per cent yes."

A copy of this survey is available at the YWCA in Gerlinger Hall.

Marti Sessions
Senior—Psychology

Likes Life

I write now to support Tom Mascott's views and to answer the charges of "blasphemy" and "unobjectivity" on his part made by Lynn Keesecker and Albert Wesselink.

I wish to affirm my own position first. I am an agnostic. Ergo, I do not deny the possibility of god's existence, but dismiss it as having no logical (i.e. rational, having to do with the undeniably factual evidence - for those Jesus Freaks in the reading Oregon Daily Emerald

audience) foundation.

But even with the possibility of god's existence, I cannot allow myself to lick the boots of the "Almighty" because I do not want to be punished for my sins. I am able to stand on my own abilities and do not have to rely on the psychological security given by a belief in an anthropomorphic superman as my personal savior from a fate worse than death.

Let us suppose, for the moment, that god actually does exist. One must ask himself the question, "Is He worthy of my worship?" After all, we don't want to end up worshipping the wrong god, or one that is a poor god at best.

Imagine a father who lets his wife viciously beat their son for no great reason, and the father does nothing to stop her from torturing the son. What can you say about the father's love for the son, in the son?

Only that it is about as deep as a pumpkin seed. Now, I would like some J.F. to explain why god permitted little children to be napalmed. Little children who had no chance to be "saved", only to die or be horribly maimed. And I don't want to hear how "He moves in mysterious ways."

Anyway, I would rather spend an eternity in hell with Albert Einstein, Bertrand Russell, and Albert Schweitzer than in heaven with Nixon, B. Graham and Norman Vincent Peale.

Tom Mascott certainly did blaspheme. I admire him for that. How many good decent Christians have the courage to tell god to go to hell? He was also unobjective in his atheistic beliefs, since one cannot deny god's existence absolutely, rather by

the probability that since there is no evidence of Him (other than a book of fairy tales called the Bible), there is a good probability that He is a figment of someone's warped imagination.

But at least Tom's heart is in the right place. And he has balls to stand up without the irrational fetterings of a child who is afraid of the dark. I'll bet he enjoys life as much as I do, and its preciousness is not diminished by the fact that it will end, indeed it only makes us savor it all the more.

Bruce Douglass
Mathematics

And to all J.F. - please stop accosting me as I walk across campus!

Can you feel

The University has been the slaves of the empire builders since the middle-ages. Until recently it exclusively served the skill needs of the property owners controlling thru the legislature to keep the businesses making a profit and in power over the common will of the people who have many unmet energy needs now.

A lot of you go to college thinking you are going to change the system or have given up on the idea and are conforming to a routine existence of anxiety, disgust and confusion behind blind belief. The trust is only on the surface as each of you probably think that you are not being controlled, sitting in a superior position of knowledge you put out pretending to understand anything.

The whole universe can be understood

by a person who is conscious of all the words they use and what part of experience they represent or its meaning or definition.

If knowledge is not felt directly, that is first hand it cannot be separated from fantasy by someone who does not act in the real world of nature. The rules of the city are our artificial agreement to define and value things the same so we can play the game that all is tamed or under control.

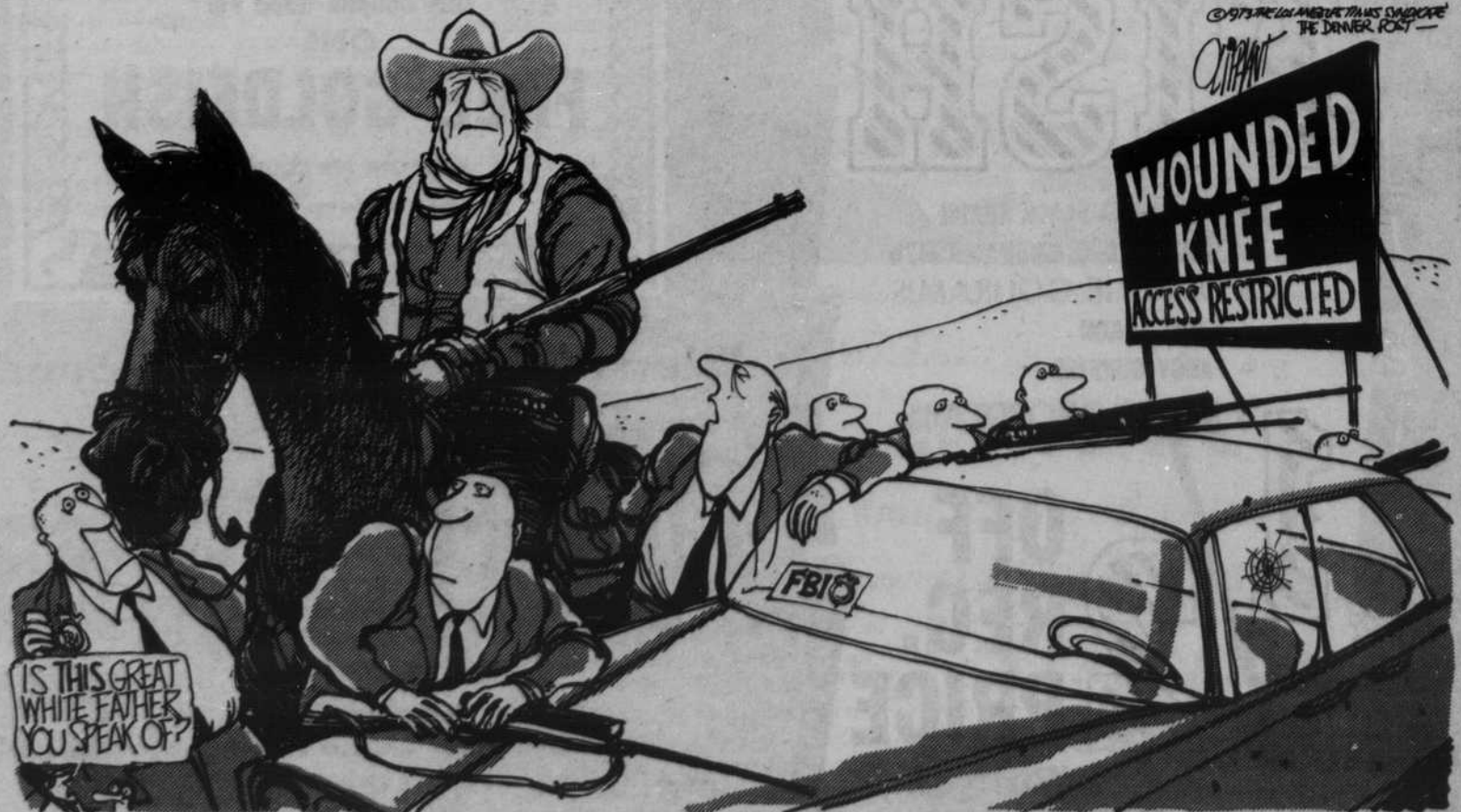
Power and making-decisions is the most important part of human activity because it is the cause of events all over the earth. How you control others or give directions is what turns people on to you or off. So give close attention to the things you think about, it is what the textbook says is real and can you feel what they say now?

Michael Sprague
470 E. 11th
Eugene, Ore.

Full representation

President Clark's statement on co-governance was not realistic. Students have as much at stake in the University as faculty or administration. That is what co-governance is all about, right? To allow one student vote for every ten faculty votes is ridiculous. Students must have more than 10 per cent self government. Students must be able to speak and act for University reform, since it is obvious that despite their many protestations to the contrary both faculty and administration have given up on it.

Tim Travis



'NOT JUST NOW, MR. WAYNE . . . PERHAPS LATER . . .'