

Support striking workers

This week the Emerald published an advertisement for a Chef Francisco Thrift Sale sponsored by the Southwest Oregon Museum of Science and Industry with proceeds going to the Museum. The workers of Chef Francisco are on strike. There are two major issues the workers hope can be resolved: wages and overtime.

Currently, the wage scales at Chef Francisco are about 23 per cent behind the national average for food production workers. The company is offering wage increases less than half the difference between current wages and the national average. We are not greedy people. We are not even asking for an average wage, but we are demanding a wage much closer to the national average than now offered.

The second issue concerns voluntary overtime. Currently, the company has the right to demand the services of a worker at any time, on any day. Failure to report for work could be grounds for dismissal. The workers are demanding a strictly voluntary system for overtime. In its simplest form, this issue is a question of who controls the worker's lives: the company, or each individual worker? It is the position of the workers that this issue must be resolved confirming the freedom of each worker to control his or her own life.

Perhaps these are not dramatic issues, but they are sufficiently important to the workers that the two thirds majority vote necessary for a strike was obtained. What I ask is that all people concerned with worker's rights and struggles refrain from purchasing any Chef Francisco products until the strike is resolved. Since the proceeds of the Thrift Sale are to support SWOMSI, instead donate your money directly to the Museum. The reason for this is goods which Chef Francisco sells through Thrift Sales are overstocked products, products rejected by the quality control department, and other products which for a variety of reasons are no longer commercially profitable. These Thrift Sale goods take up valuable freezer space which the management would like for its own commercially profitable goods. Therefore, you can support the striking workers struggle for a just wage and control of their lives by not purchasing Thrift Sale goods and keeping the freezer full, with no room for the profitable goods the company is now attempting to produce with scab labor.

As with many other strikes and human rights struggles there has been harassment by the police. Several workers have been assaulted and arrested. The union legal department is studying the possibility of filing complaints against the police. Also, striking workers have been hit by cars driving through our legal picket lines.

Thus, I ask all people of social conscience and belief in worker's rights to support the striking workers at Chef Francisco, to refrain from purchasing any Chef Francisco goods until the strike is resolved. If you have the time, come to the plant to show your support for the workers and their struggle. If possible, when you come bring a camera. In the event of future violence the testimony and photographic records of non-participating, non-striking citizens would be invaluable in pressing the workers claims of assault and harassment.

Steve Hiaasen
Graduating student-Biology
Striking Chef Francisco employee

I submit to you to please re-think your position in regards to the future of the University of Oregon.

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Charlottesville, Va.
22901

Grim laughter

Some of us in the Theatre had a grim laugh at the Emerald's headline Wednesday: "Boyd urges students to take heavier loads." Our Elements of Acting class has 40 people (enough for two more sections) on a waiting list. The University has refused to fund available instructors to teach these people. The old double-bind at

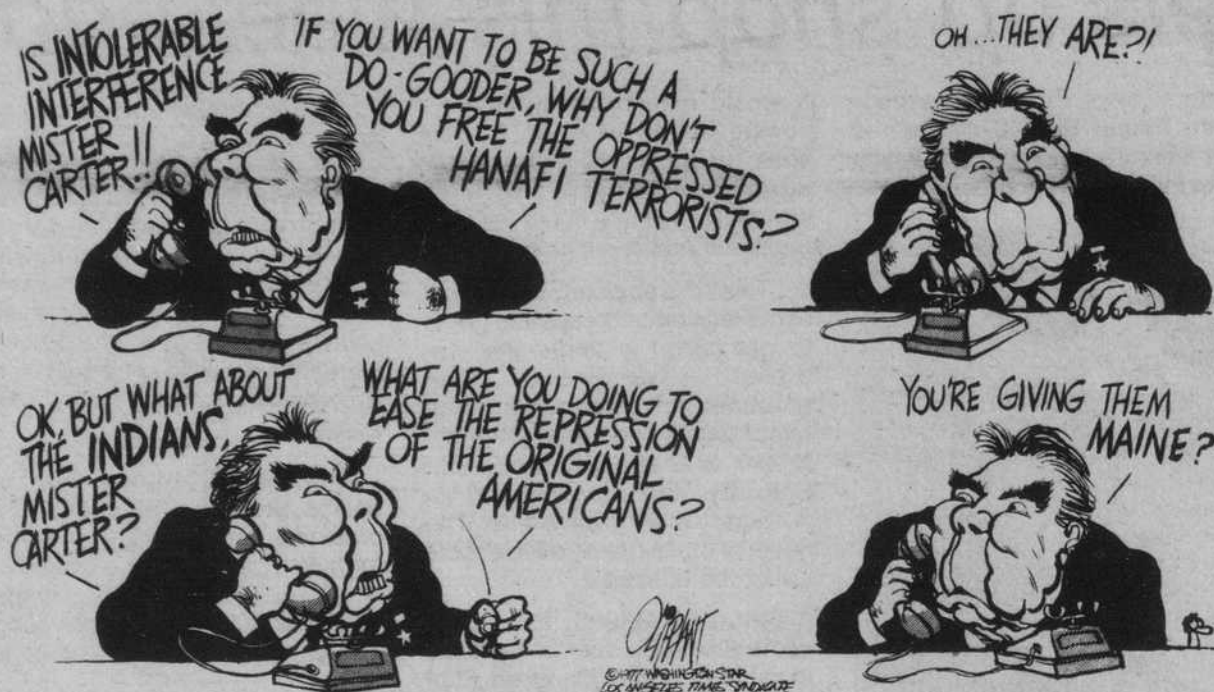
work once again. I am sure the situation is the same in many departments.

Students will increase their course loads when they can get into the courses they want.

Betty Bernhard
Ph.D. candidate, Theatre

Letters policy

The Emerald will accept and try to print all letters containing fair comment on ideas and topics of interest and concern to the University community. Letters must be typed, double-spaced and no longer than 300 words. All letters must be signed and include complete identification of the writer: major, class standing, phone number and address.



Letters

Varied defenses

After reviewing Heather McClenaghan's article "Women take steps to defend against rape," I felt confined to aggressive defense methods. Ms. McClenaghan only offers two "steps" of defense; martial arts and weapons.

Martial art can be an effective defense if the woman practices the movements continuously. Physical defense can be difficult if the attacker carries a weapon. In Lane County 40 per cent of rapes occur with the attacker using a weapon as a means of threat.

Ms. McClenaghan writes about "Billie" who packs a sweet little

loaded .38 automatic. Billie feels that mace and hat pins can be turned against a lady. She believes that a gun is difficult to take from a woman and is effective from a considerable distance. Well, Billie, not too many rapes happen at a distance. Statistics show that this method of defense can cause more harm to the victim in that the gun can be used against the victim. It is also illegal to carry a concealed weapon.

I want to dispel the notion that the article carries of the Lane County Rape Team advocating the use of guns. The best defense, for men and women, is to avoid dangerous situations. Deny the rapist the opportunity for attack. There are many preventative measures one can use. It is true

that women should have the right to go anywhere they want. A woman should know the dangers of hitchhiking.

Besides aggressive defense methods, which can be useful, non-aggressive defense methods can be used. Many times if a woman remains calm, she can wait for the right moment to use surprise (verbally or physically) or shock the attacker, and then escape.

There are many steps a person can take to defend themselves against rape without confining themselves to the martial arts and the sweet little .38 snubnose.

Debra Irwin
Senior-CSPA
Rape Team-Volunteer

At no point in the article was the Rape Team linked to the advocacy of violence. Earlier articles in the rape series examined conventional means of protection; the final article looked at women who have found these methods unsatisfactory.--ed.

Exact opposite

Dear President Boyd:

As an alumna of CSPA and a graduate of the University of Oregon, I wish to express my concern on your budgetary cut of the Wallace School of CSPA.

I believe that the department of CSPA does more in preparing undergraduate students for the professional job role than any other school. It seems to me that across this country more and more higher education institutions are instituting similar schools in their colleges and universities, while our own institution is doing the exact opposite.

I cannot understand your reasoning when CSPA is ever growing while other departments are decreasing.

Equal rights for gays

The Oregon Legislature is again considering legislation which would prohibit discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation — Senate Bill 603. Fair treatment is the fundamental concern of this civil rights proposal — fair treatment in employment, housing and public accommodations.

Few would doubt the wisdom of prior equal rights legislation prohibiting discrimination on the basis of race, religion, color and sex. Looking back on that action now, it hardly seems like it was controversial. But, it was. It took the exceptional foresight and good sense of our legislators to adopt such progressive legislation. The same exceptional foresight and good sense demands the adoption of the proposed sexual orientation amendments. Immediate controversy there may be, but doing justice is not always a quiet task.

The days when one had to be secretive about his or her religion for fear of discriminatory action — catacombing one's religious beliefs — are, thankfully, long gone. But the need for closeting one's homosexuality is ever present in our time. Sexual orientation discrimination is particularly invidious. The prejudicial attitude is so prevalent that the victims are unwilling to reveal themselves because of the discriminatory consequences that can result from disclosure. Gay people are present in all walks of life, doing good, competent productive work but hiding their sexual orientation.

What is so terrible about concealing one's sexual orientation? It is demeaning to human dignity! Imagine having to keep secret that you are a Catholic or a Jew. Or, that you are of a certain ethnic origin. But more than the secretiveness, imagine that you must pretend to be what you are not, for example, a Catholic when you are a Protestant. Or, that you must pretend to be a nationality that you are not. You must be secretive and live a lie about an aspect of your life that reaches to your very core. It is a denial of self. Such societal oppression is intolerable.

The choice for the homosexual has been either to reject and repress his or her sexual orientation or to accept and hide it. Neither course is without grief; neither is acceptable. For a few, a new course of openness has emerged but with that openness comes the inevitable discrimination.

If you are a fair minded person who respects the rights of minority groups, your help is critical. A short letter of support will be of tremendous assistance; our legislators need to know that they will not have to stand alone for a controversial but just cause.

If you are gay, you owe it to yourself, your own future and to all other gay people to write in support of SB 603 — a matter so critically important to ourselves. Oregon would be the first state in the union to declare that discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation is contrary to public policy. And once that lead is established, others would soon follow.

Letters should be addressed to: Senator Keith Burbidge, Chair, Committee on Aging and Minority Affairs, State Capitol, Room S215, Salem, Oregon 97310. The Governor's Task Force on Sexual Preference has issued a Preliminary Report which documents the existence of discrimination and dispels the stereotypes and myths about homosexuals. A copy is on reserve at the Law Library reference desk.

Dominick Vetri
Professor of Law

