

Give tenants control

Tenants of the University's Amazon Housing Project are angry about an expected \$10 rent increase, angry enough to have organized a rent strike in which about two thirds of them are participating.

The causes of the rent strike are widely misunderstood. Many people find it hard to sympathize with the Amazon tenants, since even with the \$10 increase, the highest rent at Amazon would be \$90 a month. That sounds pretty reasonable to most of Eugene's housing-starved renters.

But the rent hike isn't the primary cause of the strike. The lack of renter control of the Amazon project is. If Amazon residents felt the rent increase proposal had been developed with any significant amount of consideration for their views, interests and ideas, the rent strike would probably never have happened.

As it is, the University Housing Office has absolute management and decision-making responsibilities for both of the University's married student housing projects, Amazon and Westmoreland. For years the Amazon Cooperative Tenants have tried to assume some of this responsibility, particularly in the area of maintenance and repair. They've been frustrated at every turn, and the proposed rent hike was the last straw.

It's hard to understand why the Housing Office should refuse to take advantage of the resident experts on conditions at the Amazon project. The Amazon tenants could supply first hand information concerning maintenance priorities, landlord-tenant relations and management policies. Yet tenants have been given only token representation on committees with no decision-making power.

Given the current management structure of the Housing Office, the rent increase is probably inevitable. Amazon and Westmoreland must be maintained in such a way that they will be at least marginally habitable years from now. That, of course, costs money.

The Amazon Cooperative Tenants, however, have estimated that they could roll rents back by about \$10 a month if residents were allowed to manage the project. Certainly some money could be saved by allowing the tenants to assume responsibility for at least part of the day-to-day maintenance chores — painting, light carpentry, insulation and so on.

The only imaginable explanation for the Housing Office's reluctance to work with the Amazon tenants instead of against them is that bureaucracies are jealous of their jurisdictional territory. The Housing Office's inertia on the issue of renter control has irritated the tenants for years, and now it looks like it's going to cost them some money. It is this unwillingness to let the Amazon residents manage some of their own affairs that has led to the rent strike.

Tuesday at 7 p.m. in Room 101 EMU there will be a public hearing on the rent hike. Amazon tenants are likely to turn out in force. Housing Office officials should realize that the Amazon tenants are interested enough in their homes to be given some responsibility for their maintenance and management. Letting the tenants help themselves — and the Housing Office — makes sense for everyone involved.

Letters

No on No. 1

I would like to take strong exception to your Friday, May 13 editorial in which you urged a YES vote for the "safety net" school finance measure appearing on Tuesday's ballot. You properly characterize the measure as "baling wire" for the ailing Tin Lizzie of the present school finance system. What you fail to recognize is that passage of this measure may wire down all chances of significant school finance reform within the foreseeable future.

The present measure does absolutely nothing to remedy one of the major flaws of the present system: the gross inequities in taxation and school revenue distribution. For example, in 1973-74 one of the wealthiest school districts (Plush No. 18) taxed itself at a rate of \$5.02 per \$1,000 of true cash value to raise an average of \$2825.84 per pupil. By contrast, one of the poorer school districts (North Bend No. 13) taxed itself at a rate of \$18.22 per \$1,000 of true cash value to raise only \$1226.76 per pupil. Is it any wonder that North Bend voted to close down

its schools last fall?

Senator Boe's "safety net" plan, to be voted on by the public this Tuesday, May 17, will result only in muffling the voices of dissent from school districts that are suffering inequities similar to North Bend's. It forces all school districts to accept an automatic six per cent increase in the tax levy after the school district's voters have twice rejected the proposed levy increases. To be sure, such a procedure will prevent the schools from closing, but at what cost? It will foreclose on the possibility of the poorer and politically weaker school districts ever to rally a meaningful protest to a fundamentally unfair school finance system.

Voter turnout for school-related issues is typically small. I urge all registered voters to reverse this picture: make the effort to get to the polls and vote no on the "safety net" measure. A resounding rejection by the public of this hypocritical, cosmetic "reform" may be a sign to the present stagnating Oregon state Legislature that the time for a true school finance reform is now!

Bruce Bowers
Graduate-Special Education



Fraud and deceit

Spontaneously, I submit to the vagueness of unreason. I do not hold this to be ascertainable or even understandable; notions are only preparations for complications. I declare Bullshit! Unequivocal bullshit! There is no saving to cure this unresponsive patient. There is no justice to replete this daunted insanity. Collusion and conspiracy; voter fraud and deceit: this is precisely what I charge. Read the "Briefs" ... Conclude for thyself. Respond for thyself. Declare unto thyself that there shall be no false images or premature pinnacles of power. For: this end shall be resolved.

The issue I speak towards is the minute electoral process of the University campus which may, at a particularly suitable moment, constitute 11 per cent of the "student body." This fact is indeed troublesome. We need a greater voter turn-out; simply: your vote. We need a greater voter turn-out not only to elect the most viable and representative candidate (that being Craig Geary; a person I definitely proselytize for) but also to lend credibility towards our student lobbyists in Salem who are pressing for our student demands and needs. Voting is just one of your responsibilities as a student, damn-it-all.

I suggest that students familiarize themselves with the write-in issue surrounding Craig Geary's candidacy. I suggest that students familiarize themselves with the deceit and collusion which has its genesis within a tight clique of insiders now controlling student administration and activities (which also means the funding aspect, incidentally). I suggest that non-interest group affiliated students strive for greater parity, a more equitable distribution of the \$85 incidental fees payment.

I suggest you demand Craig Geary for ASUO President!

Raymond P. Molholm
Graduate Student —
Asian Studies

Unclassifiable

I'm referring to Martha Eiss' tirade against Trojan on the last page of the May 12 ODE, entitled "Come explore the innards of a nuke plant."

It seems just a little bit worthless to produce half a page of irrelevant simpering sarcasm, but there is no other way to characterize this ersatz article. The piece does not describe the inside of a nuclear plant, that is, unless you are content to accept cursory epithets such as "Warning signs appeared everywhere. Caution. Danger. Radioactive Material." or "The generator building was a pipe jungle..." as descriptions. There-

fore, it neglects the purpose ostensibly indicated by the headline.

Is it worthwhile in some other respect? Are objective arguments presented regarding the merit of nuclear plants in general? No, and I'm sorry that I can't find evidence for this, since there is nothing even approaching a real argument of any kind in this harangue. It can't be an editorial, even an editorial offers some justification for its existence.

Frankly, I can think of no suitable classification that would make it valid for publication. So what I want to know is, why do you print such shit, and how can I regard your paper as more than a joke for doing it?

Brad Verheiden
Freshman —
Computer Science

Pack the Ballroom

Who says we can't beat these tuition hike proposals? Ever since Portland State University and U of O students began to organize to fight at the end of last term, the governor and the legislature have made concessions to try and cool the struggle. Several weeks ago the governor offered his two-year "freeze" on in-state undergraduate tuition.

But we refuse to be satisfied with this divide-and-conquer proposal which leaves out-of-state students and graduate students with hefty increases, putting many of us out of school. The U of O Committee Against Tuition Hike and Cutbacks (CATHAC) continues to demand: (1) No tuition hikes; (2) No cutbacks; and (3) No new taxes or tax increases on working people to pay for education. Hundreds of U of O students have signed petitions with these demands. President Boyd told us this was an "Alice in Wonderland" dream. But the Legislature is now, for the first time, considering an across-the-board tuition freeze (Register-Guard, 5/14/77). Would this have happened if we had "moderated our demands" as Boyd and the Oregon Student Lobby (OSL) wanted us to do? No!

Now we have a hearing of the Education Sub-committee of the Joint Ways and Means Committee here on campus at 7:30 p.m. Tuesday. This hearing is no gift from the OSL or Boyd (he refused to help us get a hearing) or the legislature, for that matter. It's a concession that comes because hundreds of angry students at PSU and here have demonstrated, held rallies, signed open letters and jammed the phone lines to Salem.

Hundreds of students demanded and won this hearing. Now it's important for hundreds of us to get out Tuesday night and

lay it on the line against these tuition hike schemes. And we'll have to take our demands to the Legislature in Salem when they vote on the tuition hike later this month. That's the only way we'll stop these attacks on our education.

CATHAC calls for an armband day on Tuesday in support of the above three demands. Armbands will be available at the EMU Terrace and several other spots around campus. We urge people to come to a skit and pre-hearing get together at 12:30 p.m. Tuesday on the EMU Terrace. Most importantly, pack the Ballroom for the 7:30 tuition hearing! Unite to fight the tuition hike!

Alberta Bunner
Renee Romanoff
John Kaiser
Socorro Rios
for the Committee Against
Tuition Hike and Cutbacks

Ignorant editorial

Your editorial on "Save the Whales — Later" sounded completely ignorant; ignorant of SB 345 and ignorant of the workings of the human being. SB 345 calls for the boycott of Japanese and Russian goods on the state level. The anti-whaling group has not ignored response on the state level.

The whale issue has aroused people who have never or would otherwise not be aroused to a higher environmental consciousness. If just a few of these people grow and learn from this and become involved in other environmental issues, we've come closer to solving our problems.

This "wave of enthusiasm over Eugene" has brought people in Lane County closer together and I foresee nothing but higher consciousness evolving from the Save the Whales campaign.

Maria D. Rojo
Junior — CSPA

Satire valuable

In reference to the recent letter regarding Jack Hatfield's column:

It's too bad that every time someone attempts some newspaper humor around here some schmuck — in this case 12 — has to write in with some dour comments to match their personality.

Satire, and the process of laughing at the problems of the University and the world, goes a long way towards setting the machinery in motion for changing a few of them. Besides, what's wrong with a little fun? All I can do is shake my head and hope you guys can laugh at something — if not yourselves.

Steve Dodge
Junior — Journalism
Monday, May 16, 1977