

Loan plan eyed

The Oregon Student Lobby, a group representing the student governments of seven state colleges and universities, appears to be making some headway in its plan to make student loans repayable as a percentage of the student's income after graduation. OSL executive secretary Dan Garner travelled to Washington D.C. to present the plan to a conference on student financial aid, as well as other education specialists in Washington. The conference, in turn, has recommended the plan to the U.S. Office of Education.

The initial rumblings for reform of the student loan program began long ago, and they were aggravated by news reports of a \$400 million loss to loan defaulters between 1968 and 1976. About six per cent of the total amount of money loaned to students in those eight years was lost to default. At the University, the National Direct Student Loan program has shown about a 24 per cent default rate since 1975, according to State Scholarship Commission statistics.

With these default rates, which are far above the normal bank loan default rate of one-half of one percent, someone is going to step up soon to suggest severe restrictions on the student loan programs — unless, of course, someone steps in with an excellent suggestion on how to make student loans more easily repayable, which would greatly reduce the amount of defaults. The OSL has done exactly that.

To examine one program, the National Direct Student Loans, assume that a student borrows the maximum allowable: \$5,000 for an undergraduate. The minimum payment is \$30 per month, and the entire amount must be repaid within ten years with three per cent interest. So \$5,150 would be calculated to an average monthly payment of \$37, which doesn't seem like a whole lot, unless you're trying to live on paltry wages.

In another program, the Guaranteed Student Loans, a maximum of \$6,000 may be borrowed for a twelve-term program. At seven per cent interest (after a nine-month grace period) the student would be paying about \$6,420 over the ten years, or \$53 per month.

If the student loans were combined, and the student paid a percentage of his or her income on the total of the loans, these figures would be reduced to a payment that the student could afford over the term of employment, no matter what the position pays. The point is that the loan programs rightly justify a guaranteed return for the loaners, but guarantee the student no security whatever after graduation. No student knows how much that all important first job will pay, or even how long it will take to find a first job in a chosen profession. In effect, the student is gambling by taking a loan: gambling with his or her future and with his or her ability to repay the loan.

The OSL plan would take the gamble out of the student loan programs. If such a plan is implemented, and it surely should be, the student would know from day one that the percentage of income could be affordable — easily more affordable than a flat dollar amount.

The worst-case possibility presented here would most likely be a student from lower-middle income brackets, who are most likely to need these kinds of loans. The poor can get grants, the rich can afford the price of an education; but these lower-middle income people are hurting more than any other group.

The OSL plan might just give the kind of relief that is desperately needed. If all goes well, the OSL plan won't get lost in the bureaucratic shuffle in Washington. Let's hope it doesn't.

City should denounce gold

The Eugene City Council should follow the example set by the Portland City Council in denouncing the sale of the Kruggerand, a gold coin minted in South Africa. The council, which tabled an anti-Kruggerand motion in October, is now bringing some life back into the proposal in response to the petitions circulated by the People for Southern African Freedom.

As things stand now, the freedom group and the Commission on the Rights of Minorities, part of Eugene's Human Rights Council, will mull the issue in a Thursday, Jan. 12, meeting. The council apparently hopes to get that commission's recommendation before the petitions are brought to the council chambers.

Routing the petitions through the

human rights commission may help revive the interest in the issue on the City Council itself. With the combination of a recommendation by the rights commission and a wad of petitions, the council may support a denunciation of the sale of Kruggerands.

The Commission on the rights of minorities should recommend to the council that it urge the citizens of Eugene to boycott the Kruggerand.

Apparently the People for Southern African Freedom are encouraged by the city Council's latest motion, and they indicate some support on the minorities commission for the proposal. With the Portland decision to denounce the sale of the coins and the support for such an action here, the council should reverse its October decision.

Letters

Publish and perish

Publish or perish? After years of 60-hour weeks, work weekends, red-eye specials, lost vacations, and deadlines, I've learned that the motto isn't publish or perish. It's both!

Barak Rosenshine
Visiting Professor of Education

Heroic struggle

The last issue of the Emerald for Fall term contained a letter attacking Iranian students and the Iranian student movement. The ideas presented in it in no way reflect the interests of the American people. Our interests lie with the struggle of the Iranian people against the fascist regime of the Shah.

The letter displays total ignorance of the situation in Iran. The reality of brutal oppression and vicious exploitation is well-documented and well-known the world over. That the Shah is a despotic dictator is quite evident from the 100,000 political prisoners; the arrest, torture and executions going on daily; and the total absence of even the most basic political rights. The Iranian people have never accepted these condi-

tions and are today waging a widespread and heroic fight against the Shah's regime. This is a just struggle against oppression and deserving of our active support.

But that's only one part of the situation. The other part is the fact that the Shah was put into power by the United States and is maintained in power by the United States. This is well-documented. A democratically-elected government was overthrown by the CIA and reactionary elements in Iran in 1953 and the CIA returned the Shah to power on a throne of death and brutality. Ever since, the U.S. has supplied him and his regime with all the necessary support — billions in arms, tens of thousands of advisers, economic assistance, etc.

In return, Iran has been a source of tremendous profits for the U.S. oil companies and other U.S. corporations, and has served the U.S. throughout the Persian Gulf, sending its troops where needed to protect U.S. interests (such as Oman). When the Shah came to the U.S. last November to pay homage to his masters, Jimmy "human rights" Carter spoke of the "special relationship" between the U.S. and Iran. It's a relationship of exploitation and

oppression. It's called imperialism.

That's what the Iranian students — and their thousands of American supporters — are opposing when they demonstrate here and around the world against the Shah and the rulers of this country. Not against the American people — they don't call us "decadent capitalist pigs" or any hogwash like that.

Here's what an active member of the Iranian Students Association recently told the newspaper, The Worker: "We are putting a great distinction between the American people and the American government. Our struggle is the same as yours, on different battlefronts. We believe the American people will be happy when our country is emancipated as we will when America is free of the imperialists who rule it."

The heroic struggle of the Iranian people is an inspiration to people all over the world to fight back against the abuses and attacks they face. The Iranian students movement deserves our continued and redoubled support.

John Kaiser
Revolutionary Communist
Youth Brigade

A DANCE TO 1978.



THIS YEAR'S DANCE CELEBRATES A CHANGE -



FOR THE WORSE.



I'M GOING TO QUIT MAKING AN EFFORT.



I'M GOING TO SLIDE DOWNHILL FAST.

I'M GOING TO WITHDRAW INTO MYSELF.



I'M GOING TO COMPETE MALICIOUSLY AND VINDICTIVELY.



I'M GOING ON A SELF-DESTRUCTIVE BINGE.



COULD BE I'LL COME BACK STRONG IN 1979.



BUT FOR '78 WATCH OUT FOR ONE LONG TANTRUM.