

# Republican-labor liason?

## Very feasible, says labor lobbyist

By TOM WOLFE  
Of the Emerald

Do Republican candidates and labor lobbies make strange bedfellows?

Not necessarily, according to Irv Fletcher, executive secretary of the Lane County Labor Council.

Fletcher cited Lane County Labor endorsements of Republicans Sen. George Wingard and Rep. Mary Burrows, both of Eugene as examples of current labor/Republican romances, when he spoke before the Rubicon Society Thursday.

"We don't demand complete fidelity," Fletcher explained. "But when an occasional affair with the other side turns into something more, we start wondering."

To attract and retain labor support, Fletcher said a candidate must remain sympathetic with labor on such issues as unemp-

loyment and workmen's compensation, minimum wage requirements, collective bargaining and increased state support for school funding.

There's no reason that person can't be a Republican, said Fletcher.

The lobby recognized the history of labor allying itself with Democratic candidates, a tradition he traced to the New Deal days of Franklin Roosevelt.

He and Rubicon members also noted that times and issues have changed since those days making Republican-labor alliances more feasible.

University Prof. Paul Holbo, history, said these alliances might grow as working people's social values come nearer those supported by Republicans.

Other Rubicon members said "overwhelming" economic needs

organized labor challenged during and immediately following the Depression had largely disappeared because of advances already made by labor.

Fletcher admitted that the percentage of union members in the overall workforce has been "slowly descending" since the 1950s. He attributed some of the loss to disappearing distinctions between social, moral and economic issues.

An example is the bottle bill the Legislature passed without labor endorsement in 1972. It's not that labor wanted litter along the highways, Fletcher explained. "We opposed the bill because it made no provision for relocation or retraining of displaced bottle industry workers."

"On the other hand, we did support raising minimum wage levels although few trade union people directly benefited from it," said Fletcher. The lobbyist admitted that trade union members could expect indirect benefits as pay scales are adjusted upward to accommodate new minimum levels.

State and local labor endorsements are made only with a two-thirds recommendation from representative bodies. While endorsements occasionally appear during primaries, they are normally restricted to final elections, said Fletcher.

Donations from labor may be given at that time, he said, but the money must be donated and not collected from union members.

# Balanced budget is good news for voter

By LARRY MAGDER  
Of the Emerald

It's good news for taxpayers this year. They will not be faced with the decision of whether to give additional funds to the county's budget. Higher-than-expected revenues from federal timber sales enabled the county to pass a budget last month which would not require more than a six percent hike in property taxes, according to Wanda Henson, member of the county's budget committee. Any raise in property taxes of more than six percent has to be approved by Lane County voters.

Commissioner Archie Weinstein opposed the adoption of the budget. He said there were a number of items in the budget he was against, but he specifically objected to an increase in the county's Lane Council of Governments dues, and the perpetuation of property taxes as a source of county revenues.

Henson said after the budget was initially formulated, the committee decided to make a two percent across-the-board reduction in departmental budgets. Weinstein was in favor of a 10 percent reduction.

Henson said it was unusual for the county to be deliberating on a budget in December. She said the county formulated the budget in two phases last year because the amount of funds from Oregon and California timber sales was not known until mid-October. She also said two new commissioners and new budget committee members slowed up the process.

This year will be different, she said. "We now have a process figured out by which we think we can have a budget by July 1 taking into account different possible levels of timber funds," she said.

Approximately 62 percent of the county's revenues will come from the federal government due to timber sales, grants, contracts and revenue sharing. Ten percent will be acquired from state contracts and revenue sharing and 27 percent will come from local sources including property taxes and voter-approval levies and bond issues.

The approved budget allocates 37 percent of the revenue for human services, 28 percent to environmental services, 15 percent to law enforcement and judicial services and 20 percent to general government and management services.

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