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## Teamsters file counter suit against police

By KEVIN HARDEN  
Of the Emerald

Calling two lawsuits filed against officials of the Teamsters' Union local 670 by 15 Eugene Policemen a "ruse," L.B. Day, union secretary-treasurer, filed a \$1.4 million counter-suit Saturday.

The suit, Day says, is in response to the two suits filed at the end of January by members of the Eugene Police Department for defamaion of character by Day, Joe Edgar, president of the joint union council, no. 37 and an account carried in the local teamster newspaper.

"It's nothing but a ruse," Day explains. The only reason it was filed was to put pressure on the union to drop several personal injury suits against some of the police involved in an arrest of teamster picketers during a strike March 30, he says.

The personal injury suits were filed against the police by eight union members after they were arrested during a strike against the Chef Francisco Inc. that month.

The 15 Eugene police officers filed a defamation of character suit against Day, Edgar and the teamster newspaper last month for remarks to local news media that allegedly damaged officers' reputations.

Their suits, which ask for nearly \$700,000 in damages charge that statements by Day to the Eugene Register-Guard and KASH radio accused the officers of excessive force and attacking union pickets without provocation.

Both Edgar and Day wrote letters to Gov. Bob Straub, Pierce Brooks, Eugene police chief and Mayor Gus Keller, making the same charges and asking that a full-scale investigation be made of the incident, the officers' suit says.

Day's suit, however, claims the officers' suits were not "brought in good faith" and are an "abuse of the process of court."

"Since when it is a crime to criticize the police department for something they did in the line of duty?" Day says. "I'd say that it's a right and a duty to criticize them when you think they were wrong."

Any remarks by Day about the officers' conduct while making arrests during the March strike were "nothing more than fair comment and criticism of public officers," he says.

"It's a sorry day for the City of Eugene because of the way they (the officers) acted," he says. "If those police officers can't take criticism then they don't have any business wearing their uniforms."

The personal injury suits against the police will continue despite the officers' libel suits, Day says. "Hell yes, they will. We aren't going to be threatened by this sort of thing," he says.



Photo by Adrienne Salinger

## Body language

Patrons of the ASUO Program Office-sponsored Noon Gigs were treated to something a little different Monday. This talented individual displayed the art of belly dancing to an appreciative lunchtime crowd — undoubtedly making it hard for many to eat lunch.

## Feldman says minimum wage imperative

In light of the recent finding that University non-resident enrollment is declining, ASUO Pres. Gary Feldman thinks it is imperative student workers be paid minimum wage.

"Part of the incentive we offer people is a financial aid 'package deal,' including cheap housing for married students, loans, grants and work study," says Feldman. "If we start letting some of our financial package slip," the incentive would decline, he says.

Feldman has talked to University Pres. William Boyd, who, he says, agrees with the

package concept. The University, however, decided in January not to meet the minimum wage rate for some student workers, saying there was not enough financial aid money to do so.

Feldman says he "totally recognizes that the University is exempt from paying minimum wage" under the Fair Labor Standards Act, but he thinks "students make a significant impact of this University," and that "students deserve a fair and reasonable rate."

A University policy statement issued last August states that the University will pay

the minimum wage. Even though the University is technically exempt, Feldman believes it must change the August policy to come officially under the federal act.

If they want to change the rule, clearly they can, says Feldman. "But they should follow the policy they have set until they do," says Feldman. Feldman and Don Chalmers, Office of Student Advocacy Director, say the University should change the policy under the Administrative Procedure Act.

Feldman says the University probably won't change its decision to pay less than

minimum wage, but they will have to at least change the policy to align it with that decision.

If the policy is changed, it will take effect on the day it is changed, says Feldman. The University, therefore, would be forced to pay retroactive wages to student employees who have been paid less than minimum wage since Jan. 1.

One suggestion Feldman has made to Boyd is to "reduce the upper end of the pay scale and transfer those funds to the lower ends." This process would meet minimum wage rates for every one, he says. He expects Boyd to give him an opinion soon.