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Photo by Erich Boekeheide

Iranian students go hungry in protest

At 1 a.m. Monday about a dozen Iranian Students launched a 72-hour hunger strike to protest the Iranian government's treatment of dissenters.

Their protest was sparked, say the students, by a Feb. 18 demonstration in Tabriz, one of the largest cities in Iran. During the demonstration, the students say, more than 100 persons were killed, 500 wounded and 1,000 arrested.

The students are using the hunger strike to focus on three issues. They are the sale of U.S. arms to Iran, the news media's reliance on sources the students claim are biased and the validity of President Carter's human rights campaign, which the students called "unrealistic."

Worker's comp laws under fire

Petition drive claimed thwarted

By KEVIN HARDEN
Of the Emerald

A petition drive to place a measure on the November ballot that would repeal three recently passed Workmen's Compensation laws has run into trouble and might not succeed because of obstruction by Oregon insurance companies, state lawyers and several government officials, a Springfield man claims.

According to John Reed, of Springfield, a petition drive that began last September has met with opposition from several state agencies and organizations that

stand to lose if it is successful.

The petition drive is aimed at repealing three laws passed by the 1977 state Legislature which reorganized the existing Workmen's Compensation Board and changed the way permanent total disability is computed for injured workers in Oregon.

The drive began last September, less than a week after the new compensation laws became active. Reed and Robert Faught, another Springfield resident, circulated petitions in hopes of gaining more than 30,000 valid signatures by October to challenge one of the three laws, Senate Bill

1048. Like the other compensation legislation passed, SB 1048 revised the manner of determining whether an injured worker was permanently disabled or was able, through rehabilitation, to return to work.

Senate Bills 1049 and 1050 have also drawn Reed's criticism because, as he puts it, they are "destroying the Workmen's Compensation Act of 1965." The bills created a new Worker's Compensation Department last September, reorganized the existing compensation board and required the disabled worker to file for both compensation and Social Security

benefits.

When the first petition failed to gain the needed support Reed filed another in December aimed at abolishing the newly created compensation department and repealing the legislation responsible for its creation. It also tries to give the injured worker greater freedom to file disability claims and challenge unfavorable claim judgments.

With less than five months to gather more than 40,000 signatures, Reed and others involved in the drive have been plagued by harassment from those opposed to the drive, Reed says.

According to Reed, much of the harassment has been in the form of "veiled threats" from state officials, surveillance by a large state insurance company, delayed action on claims from disabled workers involved in the drive and stolen petitions.

Although Reed is uncertain who is obstructing his petition drive, he is certain that the harassment is hurting his chances of success.

"I want this petition drive to be done constitutionally like it is supposed to be done," he explains. "That can't be done if people are coerced and fearful and don't know about the way their laws are being destroyed."

Several injured workers around the state have been involved with

the drive since its beginning, he says, and many have been harassed because of their participation.

One Jefferson woman, Shirley Mallone, who has been disabled since 1973 with an injury she received while working in an Albany hospital, claims one of the state's largest insurance companies has been photographing her and recording her telephone conversations for nearly five years.

Mallone, who only recently became involved in Reed's petition drive, says the Portland-based Liberty Mutual Insurance Company has been photographing her in front of her home and using the photographs in court as evidence she is able to return to work.

Several pictures were taken of Mallone during a family garage sale at her home and later used as evidence by the insurance company's lawyers to prove she was self-employed, Mallone says.

Although she has no proof the insurance company has tapped her phone, Mallone says statements from private conversations over the telephone have also been used against her.

"At one meeting between myself and the insurance company about my claim, their lawyer said some things that couldn't have been gotten any other way," Mal-

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'Political' women's day set

Women garment workers demanding better living and working conditions, an end to child labor and the right to vote started a tradition now almost 70 years old.

March 8, International Women's Day, has been celebrated since 1911. This year, women will gather at the Atrium downtown for an afternoon of singing, speeches and fellowship from noon to 2 p.m. Wednesday.

Paula Backus of the University Women's Resource and Referral Service, says they "wanted more of a political thrust this year." Three or four speeches during the afternoon will address "pertinent women's issues such as the gay referendum, abortion and the J.P. Stevens and Nestle boycotts," she says.

Also included in the festivities will be a martial arts

demonstration featuring "self defense-type moves," says Backus, lessons on Hungarian women's folk dancing and a performance by the Eugene Women's Choir.

Backus says they contacted "every women's organization and every group connected with women in town — over 30 or 40 organizations." Many groups will have information tables set up during the two hours, she says.

From 6 to 9 p.m., Gertrude's restaurant, 291 W. 8th, will host a special Women's Day dinner and songfest.

University employees have been given an extra half hour for lunch Wednesday and Backus says buses leave the campus for the downtown mall at frequent intervals. For more information, contact Backus at 343-5046.