

Straub requests housing audit after letter campaign

By TOM WOLFE
Of the Emerald

Gov. Bob Straub requested Tuesday that Norma Paulus, secretary of state, audit the University Housing Department.

The audit request followed a series of letters from Amazon tenants, Oregon Rep. Jim Weaver and State Rep. Mary Burrows, R-Eugene, and others asking that Paulus examine the department's accounting and management practices.

"Considering the questions which have been raised concerning housing office accounting practices and the potential effect this could have on rent increases, I think an audit of the office is appropriate," said Straub in a letter to Paulus.

"I urge you to prepare a report on the office's financial management as soon as possible."

Paulus was already directing an audit of higher education as a whole, expecting to release results in a "few months." But she is now expected to complete a "spot audit" of the housing department for earlier release.

Outcry for an audit began when the housing department's cost-accountant informed superiors

that a \$37,270 building reserve fund had become a \$45,810 deficit. The housing office said the discrepancy resulted from inconsistent budget analysis.

Later examination by State Comptroller Ross Hall found \$67,000 in the reserve fund, \$24,000 more than the one percent of replacement rate required by the state.

While Hall's finding laid aside fears that the reserve funds were gone, it left tenants unsatisfied.

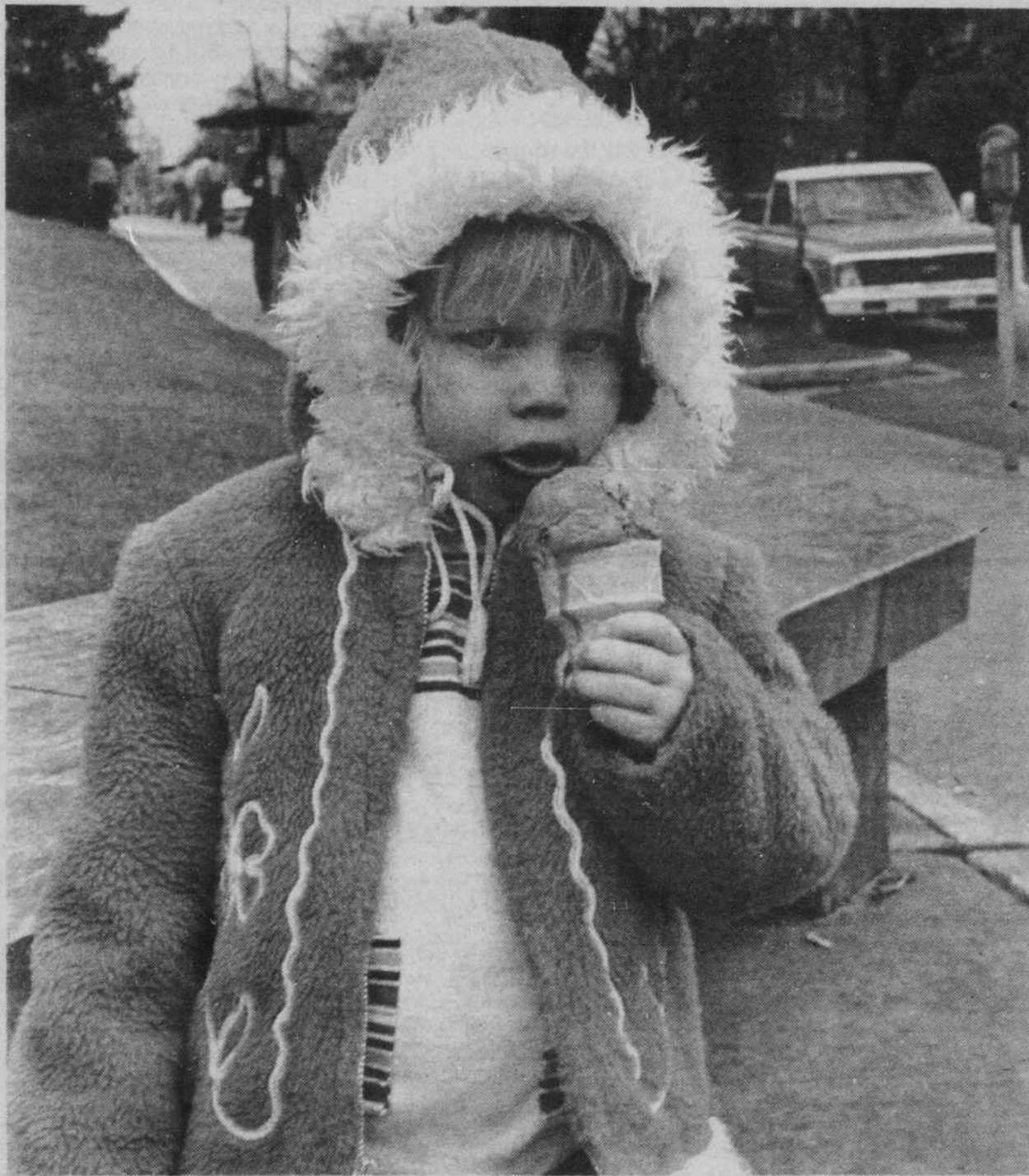
About 100 Amazon tenants wrote to Straub and state representatives asking for an audit.

University Pres. William Boyd asked Roy Lieuallen, higher education chancellor, to support an audit to "lay this situation to rest, one way or another."

First citing earlier studies of housing department budgeting and management, Boyd said "I believe that the University would be best served if you could arrange to have an audit by the appropriate division of the office of the Secretary of State."

Lieuallen supported Boyd's request and forwarded a letter to Straub's office March 1.

After internal audits, an independent audit last year, and an ASUO review of that audit, Boyd says he is anxious for completion of the state audit to settle the issue.



Lickity split

Photo by Greg Gawlowski

'It's all mine and you can't have any' says Tara Stevenson as she slurps down her ice cream cone.

Divestment

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suggests American presence in South Africa might be beneficial.

Another question to be considered by Redden is whether former Atty. Gen. Lee Johnson's 1976 opinion on the two corresponding roles of the two state bodies places control with the board.

Johnson defined OIC's role as sub-agent to the board, which PSAF, SALSC and ASUO labels as merely an executory arm of

the state board.

This, of course, would mean the OIC would have to follow state board orders to sell the stocks.

The board sent a letter to the attorney general consisting of 11 questions for Redden to consider in making his decision. All the questions centered around the roles of the two state bodies and ultimately who has the right to divest.

Nelson says Redden has requested the questions to be re-

duced and consolidated so his final opinion can be more easily understood.

Don Chalmers of the Office of Student Advocacy, says now that the attorney general's investigation into the Oregon Liquor Control Commission is winding down, the divestment question might get the immediate attention it deserves.

Whatever Redden decides, it looks as if it will be coming out this spring — maybe.

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