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Ex-campaign staffer charges:

Republican party controls Lausmann

By KEVIN HARDEN
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Pressure from a national organization which aids Republican candidates in 1978 election races may be hurting the campaign to elect congressional challenger Jerry Lausmann, a former campaign worker says.

Daryl Whitman, a University graduate student who worked as organizational director for the Lausmann campaign through most of the summer, says pressure from the Republican National Committee and several other political organizations has forced Lausmann to revise his stands on issues.

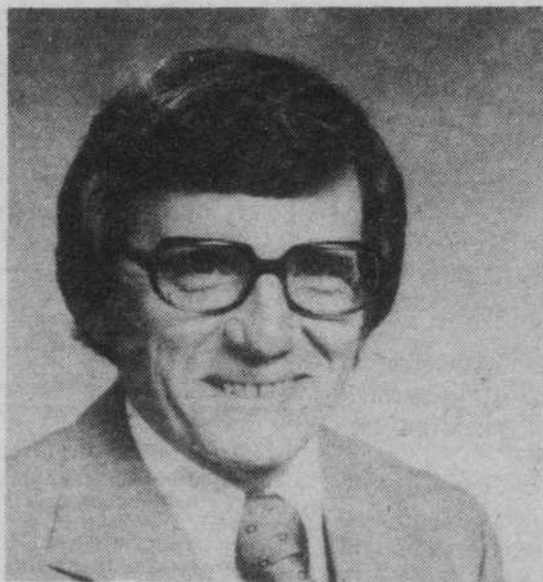
That pressure may also be alienating Oregonians who would otherwise work on the Lausmann campaign, Whitman says.

Lausmann, a Medford plywood mill owner, is challenging incumbent Congressman Jim Weaver, D-Ore., for the Fourth District congressional seat.

Whitman joined the Lausmann organization in June and worked as the campaign's organizational director for nearly three months until he resigned because of pressure from several political contributors and the RNC. That influence also forced several other members of the organization to quit the campaign, he says.

As organizational director, Whitman managed the every-day affairs of the campaign from Lausmann's Medford office. For nearly three weeks, Whitman ran the campaign while it was without a campaign manager.

During that time, Whitman says, the pressure from the RNC and other groups which contributed money to the campaign forced Lausmann to support Oregon's property tax reform measure and nuclear power, even though Lausmann has doubts



Jerry Lausmann

about both.

Lausmann, who announced his support for Ballot Measure 6 during the summer, says his position was the result of the grass-roots support the measure has received.

"The people are up in arms about taxes and this is a message to Congress that I hope I can carry to Washington, D.C.," he says.

Ballot Measure 6, if approved, would limit state property taxes to 1.5 percent of the 1975 assessed value of the property.

Lausmann also endorsed further study of eliminating nuclear waste. Although he would not shut down the Trojan Nuclear power plant near Ranier, Lausmann says more study should be done in the area of nuclear fusion.

Those stands, however, may have come directly from the RNC and a major West Coast utility company, Whitman says.

During a private conversation with Whitman last summer, Lausmann expressed concern about Measure 6. Lausmann also told Whitman the measure was "bad for the district" and he could not support it.

After a meeting with RNC member Norm Trunnette, RNC regional representative Matt Wirgau and a representative from Woodward and McDowell, a San Francisco public relations firm hired by the RNC to work for the campaign, Lausmann was told to not only be in favor of Measure 6, but to also "campaign vigorously for it," according to Whitman.

"That position came straight from the RNC, and Jerry has accepted it over his own personal convictions," Whitman says.

Lausmann's support of nuclear power came from a utility company that has helped the campaign find contributions through several political action committees set up to funnel money to federal candidates, Whitman says.

Most of the information on nuclear power has been given to the campaign by the company. Through private conversations, Whitman says Lausmann expressed doubt about nuclear power, but decided to support it with the utility company's financial support.

Lausmann, however, says his information on nuclear power came from scientific journals and "knowledgeable persons" and that research into nuclear power has been his "hobby" for several years.

Trunnette and Wirgau are part of a "top-notch" effort by the Republican Congressional Campaign Committee and the RNC to elect Lausmann to the Fourth District seat. That effort has already forced a campaign manager to quit the organization, Whitman contends.

Dom Contreras, who headed the Lausmann campaign until July, was dropped from the campaign because Trunnette, Wirgau and Clarence Warner, an Oklahoma political consultant hired by the RNC to help the campaign, felt Contreras wasn't a good fund raiser, Whitman says.

Contreras, who has since moved to California and could not be located for comment, confronted Trunnette, Wirgau and Warner during a campaign staff meeting and accused them of hurting the campaign.

After the meeting, Trunnette told Lausmann to fire Contreras.

"The first thing they (Trunnette and Wirgau) were concerned about when Dom left was if he could hurt them," Whitman says. "Apparently they have since worked him around into a position where he can't hurt them. I suppose that's what they have done with all the campaign workers who have left."

Until Contreras was fired, the campaign was in financial trouble, Whitman says, because the RNC and other large contributors would not give Lausmann money.

Afterward, however, the RNC began donating several thousand dollars to the campaign, Whitman says.

Because of the pressure from the RNC and other groups that have contributed to the campaign, Lausmann has "gotten lost in the campaign," Whitman says.

"Jerry became too concerned about becoming a congressman to think about representing his district," Whitman says.

"The RNC insulates him from the rest of the campaign. I haven't ever seen Jerry Lausmann, I've just seen the image of Jerry Lausmann that the RNC wants the voters to see."

today

A citizen's advisory committee is working on ways to reduce air particulate pollution in the Eugene-Springfield area to meet federal Clean Air standards. Reporter Ken Sands reports on the Lane Regional Air Pollution Authority's suggestions to the committee for control plans on **Page 6**.

Those with friends and lovers up north will have to resort to means other than the mail to pass on sweet nothings. An embargo on mail to Canada is now in effect. See the details on **Page 6**.

Several old homes in the Eugene area have been restored to their former glory and are now open to the public as restaurants. Emerald reporters take a look at four such homes on **Page 4B**.

The women's volleyball team won resoundingly Wednesday night in their version of civil war with Oregon State. They go against Montana State next, in an invitational tournament there — see **Page 8**.

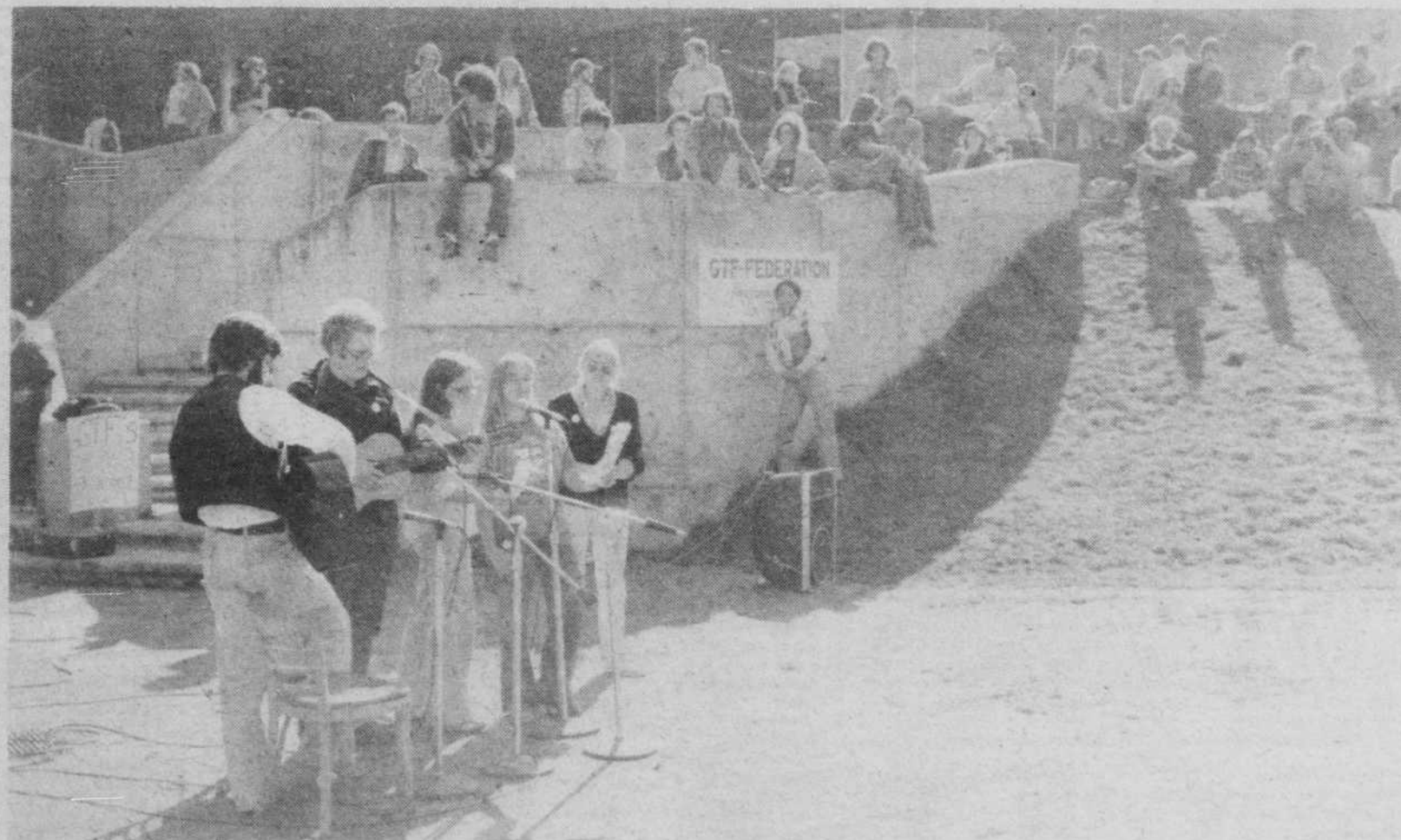


Photo by Doug Williams

Labor organizing ballads a la Woody Guthrie punctuated rousing speeches Wednesday at a rally to generate enthusiasm and publicity for the Graduate Teaching Fellow Federation's strike-vote meeting, which begins at 7:30 p.m. today in the EMU Ballroom. ASUO Pres. Ramon Herrera said he'd honor picket lines, history professor Tom Brady charged

that University Pres. Boyd "has his priorities wrong" and the Lane County Labor Council's Irv Fletcher hinted a strike could jeopardize organized labor's support for higher education when budget lobbying begins in the legislature. GTFF leaders' message: "you won't win a fair contract without voting to strike."