

Student lobbies ignoring one another

By SALLY HODGKINSON
Of the Emerald

Leaders of the nation's two largest student lobbies aren't fighting each other for power — they're trying to ignore each other.

Frank Jackalone, head of the United States Student Association, and Tom Duffy, director of the American Student Association, say they have very little contact with each other although both their organizations work on the same legislative issues in Washington, D.C.

"There's not much (in the ASA) to get along with," Jackalone says. "I don't think they're much of an organization. I don't think the ASA is much of a threat to us."

"Our working relationship with the USSA at this time isn't," Duffy admits, adding that the two lobbies have "philosophical differences."

The conflict between the two groups originated in August, 1978 when the USSA was formed by merging the National Student Lobby and the National Student Association in an attempt to create a more powerful student lobbying force.

Jackalone was selected USSA director over Duffy, who became the assistant director. Two months later Duffy quit and formed the ASA.

Duffy says the split was caused because the USSA gave too much attention to social issues such as the Equal Rights Amendment and abortion. The ASA sticks more to educational

issues than the USSA, he adds.

Jackalone disagrees, saying Duffy formed the ASA for personal power — not because of educational issues. The USSA spends about 80 percent of its time on issues that deal strictly with education, he adds.

The USSA doesn't consider the ASA a bona fide national student lobby, says Jackalone. "They haven't really done anything. All they're doing is paying Tom Duffy for recruitment."

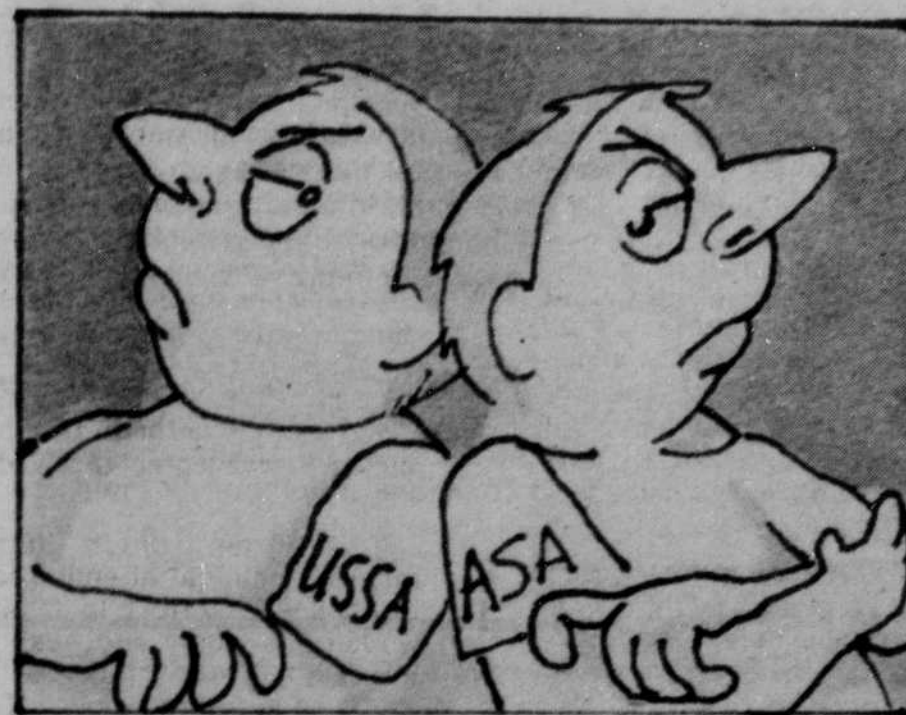
But Jim Bernau, executive director of the Oregon Student Lobby, says the USSA may have to "move over because the ASA is now an effective national student organization. It's unfair for Jackalone to say the ASA doesn't have the organizational framework or the ability to successfully compete with the USSA."

Although the USSA was more active this year than the ASA, Bernau says the USSA has some problems, including a \$157,000 debt that continues to grow.

"Much of the USSA's success this year is because of Joel Packard, their legislative director," Bernau says. "I'm afraid that when Joel leaves the USSA in a few months, he will carry a lot of that with him."

The two lobby leaders also find cause for disagreement in the fees each charges member schools.

Jackalone admits the number of schools paying dues to the USSA isn't as high as the 300 members the ASA claims. But



Graphic by Tom Ettel

an ASA membership "really isn't a membership" because ASA dues are only \$15 for two years, he says. The yearly USSA fee ranges from \$50 to \$275, depending on the size of the school.

"The effectiveness of an organization isn't based on how much you pay," Bernau says, adding that the OSL holds memberships in both organizations. "I admire the ASA's ability to operate their organization with small membership dues by relying on alternative funding."

Despite differences, the two feuding lobbies do agree on many educational issues.

Both groups list financial aid legislation and the re-authorization of the national higher

cause problems."

Another area of agreement between Jackalone and Duffy is the high quality and effectiveness of the OSL.

"If we (the ASA) can achieve the same measure of success on the national level as the OSL has on the state level, we'll be pretty strong," Duffy says. "The OSL is the leader in the nation on a couple of issues."

The OSL is carefully watching the two lobbies, says Bernau, adding that student lobby strength is in educational issues.

"You'll find that almost every student will agree that something has to be done about the rising cost and the declining quality of education," he says.

Much of the friction between the two national lobbies is due to the people involved in the conflict, Bernau says. "The challenge for both of them is to work together and not dwell on past rivalries."

Duffy says he thinks the lobby split is a temporary condition. "We're all arguing for the same cause," he says. "I hope it's just a matter of time before the lobbies come together, but I don't think that will happen until there are people in the USSA who don't harbor resentments toward the ASA."

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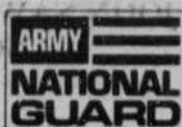
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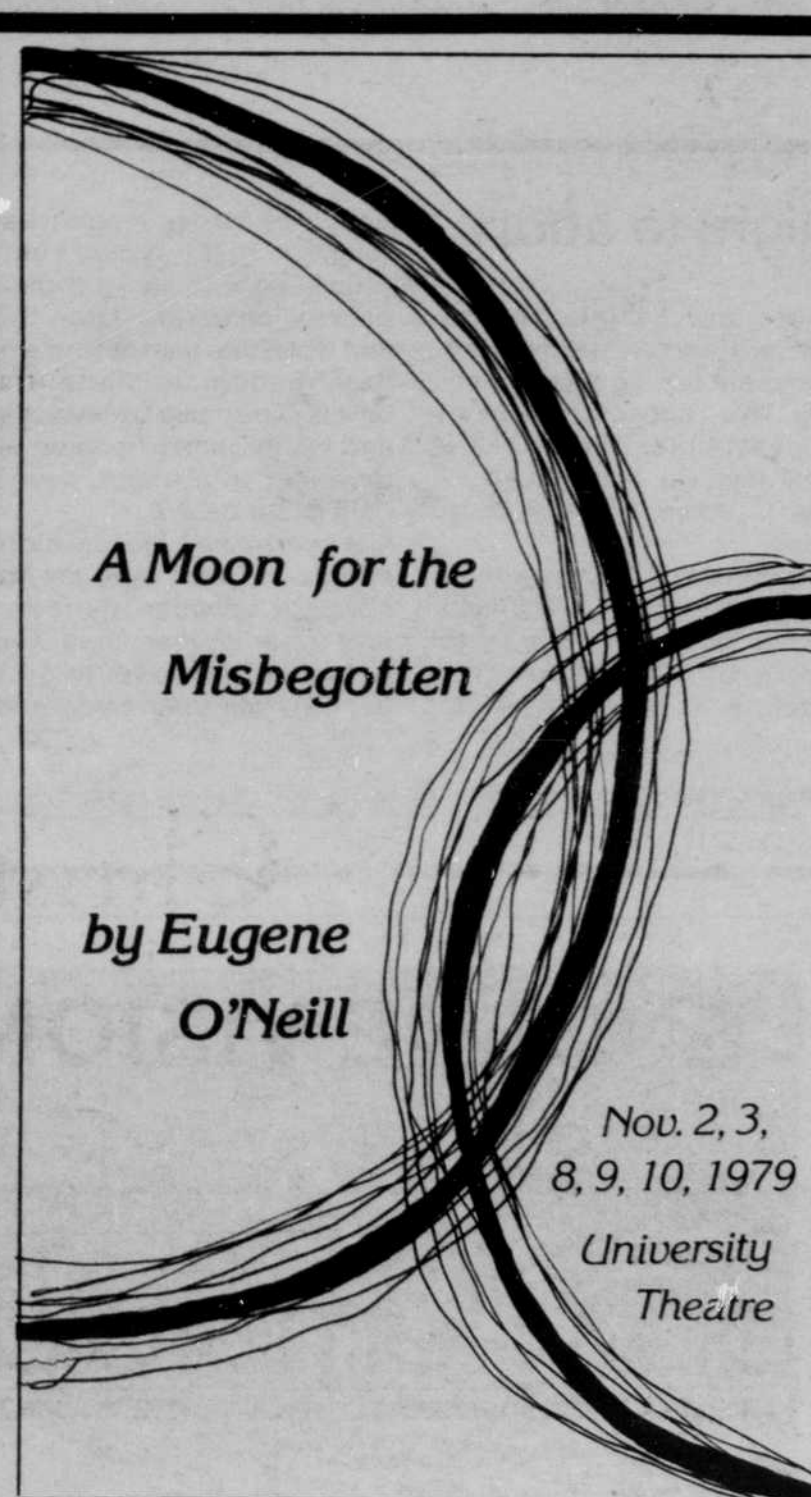
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