GTFs ratify new contract with University

By MARK MATASSA
Of the Emerald

The Graduate Teaching Fellows Federation voted overwhelmingly Wednesday night to ratify a proposed contract with the University.

Union members cast 133 yes votes and 22 no votes. The GTFs have been working without a contract since Sept. 16, when the 1978-79 contract expired.

The new contract is good for two years and will expire June 30, 1981.

Workload has been the main obstacle to contract ratification since negotiations opened in April, according to GTFF Vice Pres. Jeff Edmundson.

"The workload issue has been the most controversial," Edmundson said. "But we were able to maintain the 150 hour normative."

Under the union's current contract, 150 hours per term is the standard workload for GTF's appointed at .30 full time equivialent. The new agreement maintains the 150 hour normative, but estabiishes 175 hours per term as the maximum a GTF could work. The workload provision will be in effect only during the second year of the contract.

Edmundson said it is important that the 150 hour normative was kept in the contract. University negotiators proposed that the standard be eliminated and only the 175 maximum figure be used.

"The standard still has to be 150 hours," he said. "We can still grieve if the work can't be done in 150 hours."

He said a grievance can not be filed if the work can be done in 150 hours and it takes up to 175 hours to complete.

A survey of University department heads revealed that workload would not increase under the new contract in most departments, said Charles Aker, GTFF president. But he added that the survey is not binding.

The controversy within the union stemmed from the possibility that a GTF may now have to work up to 25 additional hours without additional pay and without grounds for filing a grievance.

But Aker said the new language may actually help win grievances in many cases.

"Under the present contact there is no maximum — the language is vague," he said. "You can file a grievance, but the question is, can you win a grievance?"

He said with the new language, anybody who works over 175 hours can grieve and win.

Edmundson, who was on the GTFF bargaining committee, admitted that the contract is not as good as he would like it to be.

"This is not a fantastic contract," he said. "We won't have a great contact until a large number of GTFs become involved as actively militant members."

Spray

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kilogram, one-third to all of the litters were abnormal. Abnormalities included cleft palate, no eyes, incomplete fusion of facial skeleton, no lower jaw, small eyes, one nasal entry, brain outside the cranium, cystic kidney, club foot, abnormally located testicles, extended legs and abnormal enlargement of the cranium.

A U.S. presidential commission turned out the Mrak Report, concluded in a statement worded by Samuel Epstein, author of "The Politics of Cancer." "These results imply a hazard of tratogenesis (birth defects) in the use of this compound," said Epstein. "The problems of exptrapolation preclude definition of the hazards on the basis of these studies, but its (the hazard's) existence seems clear."

Several other Swedish and U.S. studies have also concluded that phenoxy herbicides are related to increases in cancer and birth defects.

Situations close to Eugene offer evidence of the harmful effects of herbicides used in forestry. A Coos Bay pediatrician and allergist, James Morgan, says he is convinced that patients' illnesses during and after aerial applications of herbicides are the result of the spraying.

"More often I am seeing younger and younger people complaining of illnesses associated with phenoxy herbicide spraying," Morgan says.

Morgan's contention is not based on a toxicological or pathological study, but he is not alone in his findings.

In Lincoln County birth defect rates at North Lincoln Hospital are occurring at a rate of 7 in 300, but nationally, birth defect rates have declined to 1 in 200. These statistics have led 15 of 16 staff doctors at North Lincoln Hospital to call for a moratorium on phenoxy pesticides.

In 1978 every physician within the Mendocino Coast Hospital District in northern California urged termination of the aerial use of phenoxy herbicides.

Those opposed to herbicide spraying are concerned that if they succeed in establishing a ban on phenoxy herbicides, chemical manufacturers will invent a new chemical.

This has already happened. In anticipation of bans on phenoxy herbicides, manufacturers have responded with non-phenoxy herbicides which some think could be just as dangerous.

Federal agencies and private corporations have recently used glyphocates, marketed under the brand names of Roundup and Krenite.

"Roundup and Krenite haven't been extensively tested yet," says Marla Gillham, an NCAP researcher. "It is known they form nitrosamines on contact with soil or water. Nitrosamines are the carcinogenic agents found in bacon and processed meats.

"Monsanto, the chemical's manufacturer, has conducted human patch tests and birth defects tests on rats, but claims the studies contain trade secrets and will not release them. I doubt that any chemical forming nitrosamines in the environment is safe."

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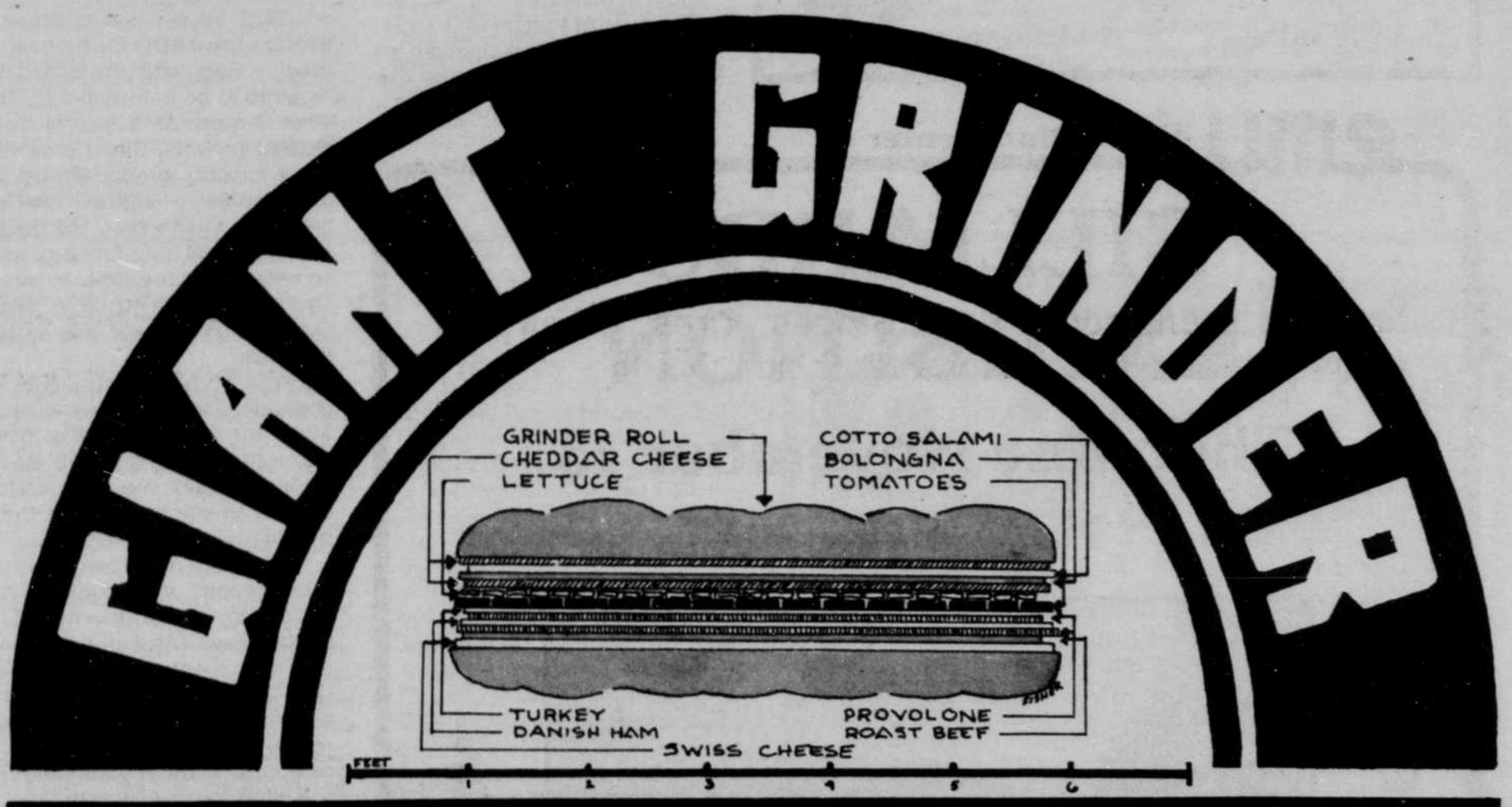

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