

mike rust

rust never sleeps

"Interesting" is as good a word as any to describe the recent "confrontation" between state organizers for Moral Majority and opponents in Eugene.

Interesting not because of the rhetoric — judging from news reports, ludicrousness seems to have been the rule rather than the exception — but instead because it demonstrates that demagoguery and self-righteousness transcend political beliefs.

To borrow from Gore Vidal's characterization of Tom Hayden, both sides are giving opportunism a bad name.

Moral Majority, the fundamentalist Christian political lobby, is attempting to cash in

on a victory that's not theirs. The group is receiving indirect assistance from the people who claim to be their most fervent enemies.

A majority of the people who voted earlier this month chose Ronald Reagan to be the next President and elected the most conservative Congress in years.

Most observers attribute this to dissatisfaction with both the current state of the economy and foreign policy. Some also have suggested that after 50 years of centralized, activist government, the natural flow of history is following its course.

Virtually no serious observer has said the future of the Republic is resting in the sweaty

palm of Jerry Falwell, the force behind MM, which bombed in six of the eight congressional races it took an interest in.

But that hasn't been the case here on campus. There has been much wailing and gnashing of teeth over the supposed power MM's diabolic forces have captured at high levels of government.

The high-level hysteria that has swept through the ranks of our Birkenstock Bolsheviks has aided MM's effort to foster the illusion of power.

Much of this is simply an attempt by bewildered Lefties to explain away the liberal debacle of several weeks ago. It's far easier to believe that evil religious fanaticism has infested the country than it is to question the wisdom of the prevailing liberal orthodoxy.

This hysteria also shows that most people on campus are willing to adopt just about any attitude or belief provided it doesn't cost anything, is in step with the attitudes and beliefs of their peers, and supplies the illusion of courageous action while not risking anything — whether socially, physically or intellectually.

The safer it is, the more they will talk of their willingness to

defend it to the death, as an MM spokesman did Tuesday. The more popular and chic it is, the more they will congratulate one another on their remarkable courage in upholding it, as most of MM's opponents did the same day.

To MM, we can wish the same happy fate that befell Mr. Claude Amos of Bob Fork, Ky., a gentleman of similar theological bent who died of snakebite while engaging in Divine Worship at Rockhouse Pentecostal Church.

To their opponents, we can reiterate the one sensible point that was made all day when John Hubbard, director of Fishpac, a local Christian political action committee that is more moderate than Moral Majority, pointed out that both sides probably could have found more important things to do.

To which we all can add an emphatic "Amen." (This column contains the opinions of the writer and not necessarily those of the Emerald.)

Rising enrollments tax journalism profs

By MARIAN GREEN
Of the Emerald

The journalism school is suffering from the same ailment affecting other University professional schools — an increasing student enrollment without a corresponding increase in faculty size.

Journalism Dean Galen Rarick says the size of the journalism school's faculty has remained at 13 since 1972, but for that same period enrollment has increased by more than 70 percent.

Recent University budget cuts have compounded the problem, Rarick says.

Larger class sizes are one effect of increased enrollment, Rarick says.

"Classes are too large to teach as well as we would like to teach."

In addition, many classes don't have graduate assistants to help out, he says.

With more students enrolled in the journalism school, Rarick says academic and career advising has become a problem.

"This term we have 63 students per faculty member for advising, even for masters and graduate students who should have more time."

Journalism Prof. Jack Hart shares Rarick's concern.

"I'm teaching more students this year than I taught at a state college in California," Hart says. "And I just found out I won't have a teaching assistant because, I guess, there isn't enough money."

Next term Hart will teach an

additional 30 students in his Law of the Press class, which usually has 220 students.

"We don't have the equipment we need, so I can't put reporting students on the VDT (video display terminal) system. Even if we had access, there's not enough terminals," he says.

Recently, other professional schools such as the College of Business and the Computer and Information Sciences Department have excluded non-majors and pre-majors from taking certain courses to insure that majors can fulfill degree requirements.

Rarick says he hopes the journalism school won't have to impose similar restrictions.

"We really don't want to do that. We really benefit from having those students in our classes."

Decisions on whether to restrict non-majors and to raise admission requirements to the journalism school won't be made until the end of winter term at the earliest, Rarick says. "We're not complaining about the quality of students — there's a lot of good students. That's why we want to go slow."

"We don't want to make arbitrary decisions that affect the careers and lives of students."

Even though enrollment in the school has increased, Rarick says he doesn't think the journalism job market is more crowded than usual.

"By and large, those students willing to go where the jobs are can find them."

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