

Sometimes you have to fight for education

It's time for the State Board of Higher Education to stand up and fight.

Apparently unwilling to stir even the mildest waves in an otherwise stormy financial situation, the state board's *modus operandi* of late has been to throw in the towel before throwing any punches.

Last year when asked to cut the fat from their budgets, the state's colleges and universities had to adopt bare bones budgets. When Gov. Vic Atiyeh asked the state board for another hefty cut in the 1981-83 biennium to help the state balance an increasingly red-inked budget, they quickly began searching for places to cut.

Now the Legislature's Ways and Means Committee has asked the state board to prepare a backup budget in case additional cuts — up to 10 percent — are required. And again, the state board has responded with unnerving speed in meeting the requests.

Chancellor Roy Lieuallen's proposal for paring the state education budget by 10 percent: declare financial exigency (emergency) and cut some students, faculty and programs. That's a nice way of saying "ruin higher education in

Oregon for the sake of continuing the property tax relief program."

State board staff even entertained a plan that would give the board the right to declare system-wide financial exigency, or the bankruptcy of higher education. That notion met with immediate censure from institution presidents who are adamant in clinging to the right to declare exigency at their respective schools.

Acting University Pres. Paul Olum says exigency would destroy higher education as we

And according to Olum, even talking about exigency constitutes a self-fulfilling prophecy. "If I started telling you we're seriously thinking of cutting such and such a school," Olum says, "the effect would be devastating."

That's exactly what Lieuallen and the state board are doing.

Eliminating the fat from budgets is one thing; cutting programs, faculty and students without a fight can not be tolerated.

Given the board's recent lack of backbone in dealing with Salem, its stance on tuition should come as no surprise. True to form, the board has lacked passion in protesting the need for the tuition jumps and vehemence in its arguments that education should be at least partially spared from the budget axe. Instead, the board uncritically adopted a "non-recurring" surcharge policy that is sure to be prohibitive to many University students.

A change in the board's attitude is desperately needed. Rather than bowing to the wild-eyed requests of legislative committees, the state board should put down its collective foot and demand that the cuts come from somewhere else.

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know it in Eugene. It would mean eliminating academic programs, many faculty members, and as many as 2,000 students.

What's worse — those initial eliminations would be only the beginning of the end. The quality of education would surely decline, reducing enrollment further, which in turn would reduce funding, which would cause the elimination of more programs and faculty.

YOURS

Law clinic

Why would lumber mill owner Aaron Jones, a multi-millionaire race-horse fancier, be worried about the Environmental Law Clinic at the University? Why should powerful lumber companies, who spend fortunes to protect their interests (often through front organizations such as FORE — Foundation for Oregon Research and Education), object to students gaining first-hand experience in environmental law? Why should Aaron Jones and Wilson Hulley (director of FORE) fear such activities to the point that they try to threaten and manipulate academic freedom at the University?

Why? Perhaps because lumber barons are so used to controlling and profiting from Oregon that they won't tolerate Oregonians they can't control or profit from. Their millions, as they well know, have come only from the hard, life-long labor of generations of Oregonians. Jones fears that if a few students represent clients who oppose him, others may too. More Oregonians may seek to regain control over not only what he has taken from the forests of Oregon, but from their own hard labor.

If enough concerned Oregonians and mill workers banded together, they could demand a well-managed forest program (involving slash utilization and a ban on log exports, for example) that would provide enough jobs, be environmentally sound, and control profiteering off our land and labor. Fear of such coalitions, probably led Jones and his lawyer to urge some union leaders to front for him in criticizing the Environmental Law Clinic, a tactic which so far has not succeeded.

To date, those opposing the law clinic have been severely criticized by the Eugene Register-Guard, Salem Statesman-Journal, Oregonian, Sports Illustrated, 44 state legislators, American Association of University Professors chapter, United Oregon Professors, and Lane County labor leaders. Who will defend them?

Richard Young
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Inattentive

On Feb. 23 I enjoyed the exquisite opportunity of serving as an usher at the "Water for Life" concert, featuring various renowned and not-so-renowned

musicians who are united in their artistic expose of the anti-life forces epitomized by nuclear technologies. Nine thousand fans and supporters attended.

Since I am now in professional school and almost eight years removed from my university days, I had to work to develop an appreciation for the headspace of the predominantly college crowd. Everyone was obviously having a good time, and there was the usual urge to boogie — to get down to the loud, stompin' rock n' roll part of the concert. But it was painful for me, and many others, to have to endure the continuous inattentive chatter during Cris Williamson's and Jackie Robbins' set. Don't get me wrong either: I've been a rabid fan of Jackson Browne since 1973 when his first solo album was released. But there's something going on that you college kids oughta pay attention to.

Cris Williamson has been a singer-songwriter and recording artist for as long as Jackson has. Her lyrics have the same haunting, straight-to-the-heart quality about them, whether she is singing about personal relationships or tribalcollective response to the apocalyptic choices we all face. But most people haven't heard of Cris, and it's nobody's fault. It's simply that some time ago Cris elected to take the revolutionary

step of recording her music on a small, independent, cooperatively-distributed label: Olivia Records. In other words, she is her own boss rather than the "property" of one of the major labels who spoon-feed to you your inspiring tunes. (Remember when the Beatle started Apple Records?)

Give Cris and other talented, societally-conscious independents an attentive listen. They may not be blasting out of the jukeboxes "down the Boulevard" but their message deserves to be — has to be — heard. And it's O.K. to boogie, too.

Vip Short
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Christian outcry

It was recently noted in a news article that President Reagan has complained that the church in Central America has become too involved in the political conflict there. However, a recent report in Sojourners magazine (a monthly Christian publication) notes that Christians there are not being killed for political reasons, but for religious ones. They are speaking out against the oppression and mass killing of the poor. Many in El Salvador say that it was Bishop Romero's last sermon that was his death warrant because he called on Salvadoran troops not to kill their brothers. Also in the Sojourner article it was noted that any organization, even a women's Bible study, is outlawed by the U.S. supported junta. One priest noted that it is also considered subversive to have a Bible. A Salvadoran woman told of an incident she saw in which National Guardsmen threw two babies into the air and caught them on the edges of their machetes.

These incidents are not uncommon. It is for speaking out against these things that the Christians in Central America are persecuted and killed. And if they didn't speak out on these matters, how could they rightfully continue to take on themselves the name of Christ?

These atrocities are committed by right-wing terrorists. Terrorists whom the U.S. supports. Like the Christians in Central America, Christians in the U.S. also have an obligation to oppose (by any peaceful means) this murdering and oppression of the poor by our government. At least if our Christianity is to be taken as Biblical (read Isaiah 58). Otherwise we are silent assentors to their crimes.

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