

Mindpower — meaningless in budget crisis

It's irony at its most bitter that today marks the beginning of National Higher Education Week while colleges and universities in this and other state systems are in the throes of financial disaster.

Two weeks ago Portland State University declared financial exigency — bankruptcy. They did so to comply with a faculty union agreement requiring a year's notice before laying off tenured faculty. It's obvious that PSU will be laying off qualified faculty to stay afloat.

PSU, like all eight state campuses, was told by Chancellor Roy Lieuallen to submit 1982-83 budgets 4 percent less than present spending levels.

That may not seem like an extraordinary cut — but this 4 percent is another slice into a budget pared by \$11.8 million and shaved another 3.5 percent by Gov. Vic Atiyeh. Compound this with last year's special session budget measures. Higher education may have been pushed off a cliff and is plummeting to a depth where financial survival is doubtful.

Who's to blame? Most point to the chronic failure of Oregon's lumber industry, which has had revenues slumping way below expectations. The Legislature advised institutions that they would have to reduce or eliminate programs if they

wanted to maintain faculty and instruction.

What's to guarantee when — and if — the ailing lumber industry recovers the Legislature will restore institutional budgets to original, pre-1980 levels?

Even if the lumber industry makes a vital recovery, there lies the immediate specter of "Reaganomics" on the horizon.

Irving Spitzberg, general secretary of the American Association of University Professors said in *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, "All the

OURS

problems we are seeing right now are the overture. The sad symphony itself will be when the Reagan cuts come."

The shifting of education programs from federal to state control, meaning less state funding, is what concerns educators. Pres. Ronald Reagan has already ordered a \$16 billion cut in college aid.

It all seems a hopeless tangle of circumstances that we as students, faculty and administrators can do little to unravel.

But these cuts to higher education were put into

effect by the legislature, and the governor — not to mention the federal cuts being orchestrated by Pres. Reagan. All those people are elected officials. If they are not being responsible we can remove them through the ballot box.

The colleges and universities are right now educating the future of this country. Mindpower — America's greatest energy source — are the bywords of Higher Education Week. Those bywords are just empty phrases if higher education is permitted to perish at the hands of misguided legislators.

To shrug and accept fewer course sections, less faculty, and institution closures — which is being seriously considered at the University of Washington — amounts to mute compliance with those short-sighted enough to continually hack away at higher education budgets.

There are some truly special events scheduled for Higher Education Week at the University, culminating in Pres. Paul Olum's inauguration. Let's not allow this week and the weeks following to be the last hurrah for higher education in Oregon.

It's a cliché — but your voice can make a difference in the future of higher education.

YOURS

Bowing to pressure

Pres. Olum and others who claim that (1) an arrangement with an outside environmental group is violating university "neutrality" and (2) that therefore the environmental law clinic should be thrown off campus, are wrong in both their assumptions and their remedy. This university (or any other) is not now neutral, never has been, and never will be. Can Olum point to one example of university "neutrality"? Advocating different points of view forms the foundation of education. Also, throwing the law clinic off campus is itself not a "neutral" action, it is a clear bowing to pressure from such as Aaron Jones, a multi-millionaire race-horse fancier and owner of the non-union Seneca lumber mill, big-business front groups such as FORE (Foundation for Oregon Research and Education), a few influential Law School alumni, and a misinformed labor union, Lumber Production Industrial Workers. A much greater volume of support for the clinic has come from 44 state legislators, almost all other labor unions (including all campus labor unions), all major state newspapers, and some national publications (e.g. *Sports Illustrated*), not to mention almost all Law School students. Therefore Olum's intended actions are clearly taking a position, and it is that of a wealthy and powerful outside minority.

Olum's actions are an example of passivity, not of neutrality. A "neutral" action would be to invite the timber companies to set up a law clinic to help educate students about their positions. This way, even more money could be brought into the hard-pressed University. Instead, Olum's actions will just worsen the financial condition of the University, should the National Wildlife Federation remove its thousands of dollars of support. However, lumber companies may not judge it necessary to pay for their own clinic, since their views already seem to be so well represented at the University.

The Emerald deserves credit for covering the story in detail and for taking a stand, because this issue is a crucial one, not just for the University, but for the society at large. Organized labor has recognized its importance, because at the national level, the AFL-CIO has formed a coalition with many environmental groups to combat the Reagan attacks on the Occupational Health and Safety Act, the degradation of air quality, etc. The International Woodworker's Association President, Keith Johnson, is spearheading the coalition in the Northwest.

Dick Young
Research Associate
Psychology

Question tuition increases

Well, fellow students, once again we succumb to our apathy, and bow down to the powers that be in the bureaucracy. Once again we allow ourselves to be the victims of forces seemingly beyond our control. Beginning this term, Fall 1981, we have been saddled with an increase in our general deposit of \$25, and an increase in tuition of almost twice that. Have you not even questioned way this has come about, or are you only too willing to simply put up and shut up?

Admittedly, the reasons lying behind the increases in tuition and fees are many and complicated. However, this does not release us, as those who bear the brunt of the increases, from our responsibilities to bitch and moan about the increases. Admittedly, our bitching and moaning should have occurred last year, when we were in a better position to influence our elected representatives in government. Now, due to our apathy, we have created our own abyss and are falling into it.

Rather than sit docilely by and put up with these increases, I would rather suggest that you join me in

writing to the State Board of Higher Education, President Paul Olum, your representatives in Congress, your parents, local newspapers, (even *The Emerald*) etc. It is too late for this year, or even the next, unfortunately, but perhaps if we start now some changes can be made for the future.

Start writing!

Barbara G. Powell
Senior, CSPA

Newsletter in error

This is to inform those vets who picked up a copy of the University Veterans newsletter that the American Legion and the American Red Cross do not offer short term loans to vets as I stated in the newsletter. While the Red Cross will help veterans in cases of extreme need; like no food and no heat, they do not offer short term loans.

I apologize to those of you who made inquiries into these organizations, to the organizations themselves, and to David Isenberg, director of the University Veterans Association, who seems to have caught most of the flack for my errors.

David Wellsfry
Coordinator, University Veterans Newsletter

Proud union member

As a member of the classified staff of the University, and as a proud union member, I echo the sentiments of Nancy Garvin in her letter of Sept. 29 concerning the Fair Share issue.

The aim of OPEU is to secure the best possible contract for classified employees and to have the ability to enforce that contract efficiently. That has not been totally possible in the past because of the large percentage of employees who have been willing to freeload off the labors of their fellow employees in the union.

Why the outrage over Fair Share? Every other public employee union that I know of has had it for years. Right here at the University the Graduate Teaching Fellows Federation has had Fair Share for sometime. Several other state agencies, like Adult and Family Services, and the Department of Transportation, have had Fair Share since 1977.

At the recent OPEU convention further steps were taken to make the dues structure even more fair. The minimum dues level of \$9 was reduced to \$7 for employees who gross less than \$500 a month, (mostly part-timers). Other than that the dues structure was not raised and cannot be raised until the next convention, which isn't scheduled for another 2 years.

The members of the union are the ones who demanded Fair Share in this contract. We are sick and tired of the non-members holding us, (and themselves), back. You cannot tell me that the motive of most of the signers of the de-authorization petition isn't simply blind cheapness.

Alan W. Brown
Custodian, Education
Friday, October 2, 1981

THEIRS

