

Task force should educate against racism

What do the Post Office and Kinney Shoe stores have in common?
30,000 black loafers.
What do you call a bunch of black people buried up to their necks?
Afro-turf.

Funny stuff, huh? Did it feel good to laugh? Jokes of this ilk are on the upswing not only nationwide, but at this University. Laughing at a "joke" such as this — telling such a "joke" — (even writing it here) is a racist act. And Pres. Paul Olum, by instituting a racial harassment task force, is taking active measures against the resurgence of racism here the University.

Odd, isn't it? These are the '80s — the latter half of the twentieth century, and the supposed concern for human rights hasn't even dented the hard edge of race hatred. Ignorance, in this age of omnipotent technology, begets but more and more human ignorance. If it weren't so frightening it would be amazing to consider that racism in all its vile manifestations is still prevalent.

The University's task force was set up to investigate incidents of racial harassment, to serve as an avenue for redress, and to promote an awareness of the problem of racism. At present the office of Affirmative Action is the only course a student can take if subject to racial harassment. The office is in a reactive posture — the task force is intended to deal with the problem of racism before the problem becomes acute.

It is generally felt by those on the task force, and in the administration, that the possibility exists the problem of racial harassment might smoulder and eventually flare-up.

What has prompted the administration to take this step? Apparently, there has been an increase in the number and vehemence of racial incidents. Olum, at his May 11 press conference, cited incidents of harassment, "ranging from graffiti and racist remarks to 'somebody feeling pushed'."

On the surface that doesn't seem enough specific justification for a

full-fledged task force. Yet, an administration official cites the "jokes", the graffiti in the lavatories, and acts of a racist nature — all of which are occurring with a greater frequency. The most alarming aspect of this is the statement that racist remarks have been directed at members of the faculty.

Oregon is a queer state. While progressive in much of its legislation, this state is still a bastion for elements of the Ku Klux Klan. Racism persists in Oregon — which is something Oregonians should realize with shame. To fight this racism Gov. Vic Atiyeh wrote into law a bill making racial harassment a punishable offense. An Albany, Oregon, couple were recently convicted under this law. They wrote "KKK" and racial slurs on the walls of an apartment shared by two blacks.

A racist attitude, much like morality, is almost impossible to legislate. The Emerald recognizes this, and hopes the task force perceives its objective not entirely as a disciplinary body. The most important direction the task force could take is to define the areas of racial harassment and educate the University community. Almost five percent of the University's minority student population is black, hispanic, Asian, and American Indian. The task force, by promoting an awareness of the problem, will serve the five percent — and the 95 percent — best.

letters

Major impact

Students, sometimes frustrated by the lack of impact they may feel they have on life around them have a chance to make a major impact this Saturday.

It can happen by marching — with faculty, staff and townspeople — to Alton Baker Park for a demonstration in support of the nuclear freeze. All of us now have a chance to say "No" to the doomsday trend toward nuclear disaster orchestrated by some heads of state.

A freeze, when it is achieved, must be only the first step — to be followed by the "thaw" that always comes after winter: the thawing of existing nuclear armaments.

George Beres
Asst. professor

Caretakers

We must not despair in the face of the madness that is the deadly game between superpowers — played with our lives — called the nuclear arms race. As caretakers of the planet and guardians of future generations, we can no longer ignore the spectre of the final holocaust. We must oppose the decline of our economy spurred by the irresponsible increases of defense spending involved in the arms race. The movement for a bilateral nuclear weapons freeze is an opportunity for our awakening to the danger posed by 50,000 nuclear weapons worldwide and the allocation of nearly half the U.S. federal budget for military expenditures. The freeze movement is a broad-based, grassroots campaign growing rapidly in communities across the country which makes clear people's choice for sanity and survival. We are not merely learning how to say "No" to the nuclear arms race, we

are also beginning to realize that, as individuals — in cooperation with others who care — we can make a difference. We will not only stop the arms race and focus on meeting human needs, but there is great potential, if all of us work together, to create a new, more just, more humane society.

Your chance to express support for the freeze takes place on Saturday, May 15 in Eugene's Alton Baker Park. The Eugene chapter of Citizen Action for Lasting Security (CALS) is organizing a Rally For A Nuclear Weapons Freeze with help from Students For A Nuclear-Free Future. At 11 a.m., short mini-rallies will be held at five locations throughout the Eugene/Springfield area (including the EMU Courtyard on campus). Following these rallies, people will walk from their neighborhood gathering points to Alton Baker Park for the main rally which begins at 1 p.m. For more information call Eugene CALS: 343-8548, or drop by the office at 454 Willamette.

John L. Jordan
E. 15th, Eugene

Nuclear freeze

What can mere University student do to stop nuclear war?

The Nuclear Freeze Proposal, calling for a US-USSR halt to testing, production, and deployment of nuclear weapons, was unheard of two years ago when small towns in New England, encouraged by grassroots citizens groups, began passing resolutions calling for a nuclear weapons freeze. What hope could a little town like Deerfield, Mass., have of affecting government policy? Yet today the "freeze" is a national movement documented in Time and Newsweek. It is a Senate joint resolution sponsored by over 150 Congresspeople.



It has made even traditional hawks question Reagan's plan to spend \$1.5 trillion on defense for the next five years, at the expense of social programs.

People, by joining together, can make a difference. In Eugene, hundreds of people have joined together to plan the May 15 Eugene Rally for a Nuclear Weapons Freeze. We invite every student on this campus and every resident of the Eugene/Springfield area to join together with us on May 15 in Alton Baker Park, to support a bilateral nuclear weapons freeze.

The gathering place for University and east Eugene residents will be the EMU Courtyard at 11 a.m. on May 15. Aaron

Novick, head of the University Biology department, and Commissioner Jerry Rust will address nuclear issues. Local poets and musicians will also be featured. At 11:45 we will walk to the main rally, joining the residents of north, south and west Eugene, and Springfield, in Alton Baker Park. The main rally will begin at 1 p.m.

Please join us. Nuclear war is everyone's concern. For more information please contact Students for a Nuclear Free Future in the EMU Survival Center of Eugene Citizen Action for Lasting Security.

Sherrie Schultz
Freshman, computer science

staff

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