

opinion

Arming education

Perhaps there's a silver lining to the National Commission on Excellence in Education's report calling the years of cuts in education, "unthinking, unilateral education disarmament."

The report validates the cries for help that Oregon higher education lobbyists have made and will continue to make to the Legislature's Ways and Means committee this week.

This week, state system officials will be telling the committee that higher education cannot be cut further without reducing the number of students and decreasing the quality of education.

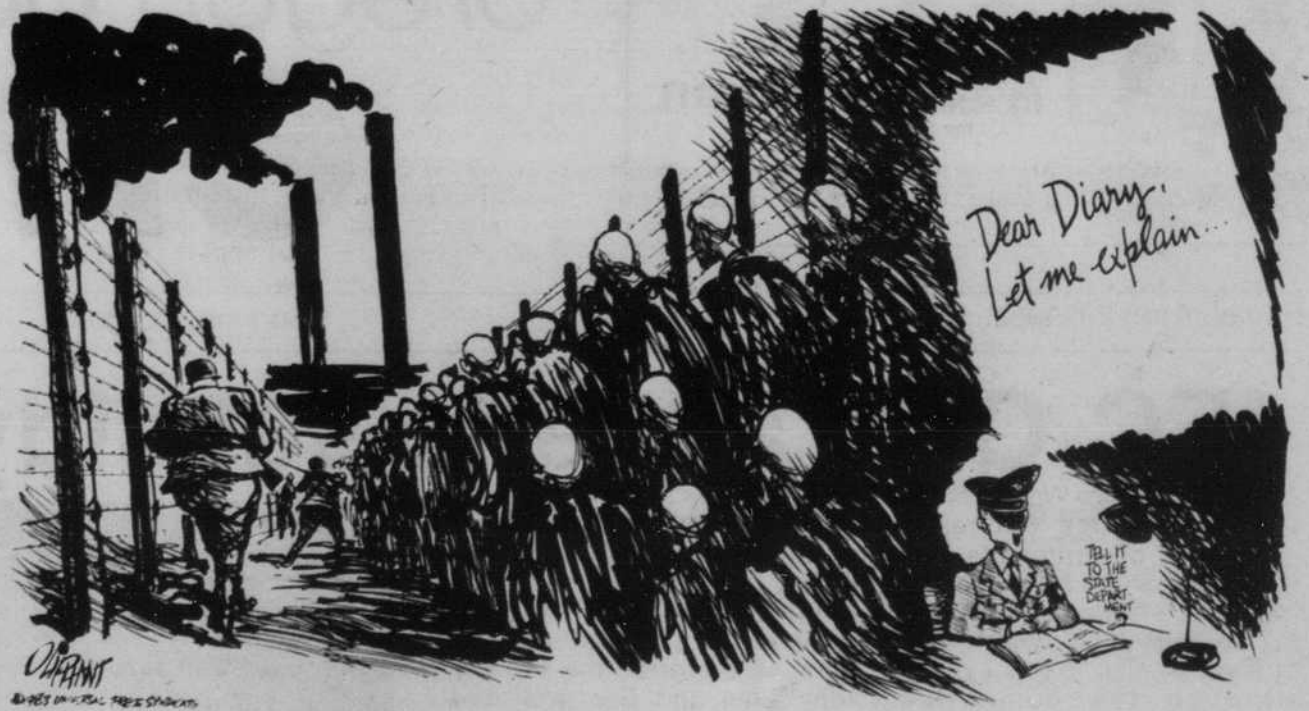
Most likely, they will reiterate the well-documented point that tuition must be frozen, faculty salaries must be increased, and the state must pledge its support, if higher education would continue to be a viable force in Oregon's recovery.

At the least, the national commission's report, based on a 20-month study by a bi-partisan federal commission, should add fuel to the fire.

The report called for stronger high school graduation requirements, better teacher's salaries, longer school days and more homework.

The report embellishes and reinforces Chancellor Bud Davis' call for more college preparatory courses in high school. It notes the "rising tide of mediocrity" that demonstrates, in our opinion, the current support, and what could soon be the quality of higher education in the state.

The Legislature now has a federal report backing up what they will be hearing from higher education representatives: Oregonians — along with most other Americans, — have been shortsighted in recent years when it comes to education.



your turn

Involving rights

One year ago Sunday, I said goodbye to a friend at the Warsaw Central Train Station and climbed aboard the mid-afternoon "Express" southbound to the city of Krakow. I was on a mission of sorts from West Berlin — to visit friends, to transport food, minimal supplies and medication to them — in essence, to observe the deteriorating state of our world.

One year ago today the martial law of Poland — at present supposedly "lifted" from the shoulders of my friends — determined when and where one would be between the 11 p.m. and 5 a.m. curfew. It brought the young soldiers, clutching their automatic weapons, out into the streets to monitor their own families and friends; it killed a few demonstrators; it outlawed trade union activity; it rolled the underground presses into full, though risky, action; it emptied the shelves of groceries, clothing, and daily supplies; it made people hungry; it created anger, frustration, hopelessness, and helplessness for a majority.

That was one year ago in Poland. Which is only one nation of nearly 150 others on this planet.

Today are they much better off? How about the other 145 or so recognized and "unacknowledged" countries in the world?

The Poles are not alone.

In every corner of the world — even here in protected, idyllic Oregon — people are attempting to remove appalling injustices from their lives, needing to live in cooperation with their natural environments and resources, pleading for an equal chance to guide their own short lives.

How might it feel to live as a black person in South Africa or under the threat of being murdered in Central America or Southeast Asia?

And how about Lakeview, Oregon? Not 250 miles from Eugene people have died or are dying of lung cancer traced directly to the Uranium Tailings mined there. Our Willamette River is being transformed into

who-knows-what by toxic seepage near Albany — waste products of a company's plant which produces much of the zirconium used in the manufacturing of nuclear weapons.

We are all involved whether or not we enjoy believing it. Our tax dollars supply military hardware and "advice" into developing and third world nations, our backyards and biological systems are contaminated by wastes and abuses, our utility bills may eventually require payment on the seven billion dollar default on WPPSS.

Pessimistic? Fatalistic? Realistic.

If nuclear technology suddenly escalates into the release of missiles, it will not be selective in its choice of annihilation. We share a vulnerability unlike any other, and even those who plead ignorance or apathy will not get off the hook. Unfortunately, there are no innocent bystanders.

Unless immediate care is given, in any capacity.

Eugene and the University communities provide well-informed, organized and effective student-operated groups. We have our own newspapers and media sources who care: SNUFF, the Survival Center, OSPIRG, the Food OP, the ASUO, the Emerald, KWAX, SORD, the Council for Human Rights, People for a South African Freedom. The list goes on, again. (My apologies to those unmentioned. Please write in).

Look beyond text books and blue books. Ask. Care.

When I think of Piotr, my friend in Warsaw, I see him wanting to say so much, to do so much, to care so much. But he lives in a perpetual fear of the consequences for speaking his mind. He can't influence and participate in decision making. And neither can most people in the world.

We can, and we must exercise our rights before we lose them, for ourselves as well as for those who can't.

Corey Tong

Tong is a senior in architecture.

letters

Reflected

Richard Burr is generally a fair and responsible reporter, yet his story in Monday's Emerald concerning the SUAB re-election reflected something other than responsibility.

He stated that I said that I would probably win the re-election. Though I uttered those words, I subsequently informed him, quite clearly, that I believe the opposite, and that I could easily lose the election.

It is obvious, when the votes were 358 to 384, that the general election was close and that the outcome could have gone either way. The turnout was a clear indication of the power that both an SPA endorsement and a Creek endorsement possesses. It is my belief that the re-election outcome will be equally as close.

It seems that a reporter's job is to convey the intent of the source, to include the whole message, if it is relevant, and to write the truth, to the best of his or her ability.

Burr had the opportunity to indicate that I took back my former mistaken statement and also to report what I actually believed yet, he chose not to. I question the ethics of this.

Karin Keutzer
junior, rhetoric
and communications

Nit picking

While I agree with the opinion expressed in the April 22 Emerald editorial regarding the fee bills before the legislature, I have two nit-picks: The ASUO Executive never set the 7 percent limitation on fee increases, indeed, it hasn't the power. The limitation has been mandated by the ASUO Constitution for many years. Additionally, since 1980 the 7 percent limitations has only applied to a portion of the budget. A 1980 Constitutional amendment exempted the athletic department and much of the EMU budget from the limitation.

Alan Contreras
law

oregon daily emerald

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The Emerald will attempt to print all letters containing fair comment on topics of interest to the University community.

Letters to the editor must be limited to 250 words, signed and the identification of the writer must be verified when the letter is turned in to the Emerald office. The Emerald reserves the right to edit any letter for length, style or content.

"Your turn" is an Emerald opinion feature submitted by members of the University community. "Your turns" must be limited to 500 words and typed. This editorial column will not be edited by the staff, but selection will be based on appropriateness.

Letters to the editor and "Your turns" should be turned into the Emerald office, Suite 300 EMU.

Unsigned editorials appearing in the Emerald are based upon the majority opinion of the editorial board.