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Employee strike leashes Greyhound

By Michele Matassa
Of the Emerald

Greyhound buses are not racing out of their blocks this week due to a nationwide strike by about 12,700 company employees.

Bus drivers and station workers abandoned their buses and terminals to walk the picket lines beginning at midnight on Wednesday, leaving company terminals full of empty buses and allowing Trailways Bus System to shift into high gear to accommodate stranded Greyhound customers.

The strike has "doubled and tripled our business," Trailways ticket agent Dave Coker said.

"We're doubling our buses out of here going east to Bend, all the way to Salt Lake City, to Denver and back East. We're doubling out of Portland and out of Los Angeles. They've been putting two buses on each schedule," Coker said.

He said Trailways has been preparing about a week for the strike, which was ignited by a contract disagreement between the Greyhound company and the Amalgamated Transit Union.

No talks were scheduled after negotiations broke off Monday night, a few hours before expiration of a three-year contract.

Greyhound will remain shut for two weeks and will "invite the employees to return to their jobs," said spokeswoman Dorothy Lorant from Greyhound's corporate headquarters in Phoenix, Ariz. She said copies of Greyhound's final offer — including wage cuts — were mailed to members of the striking Amalgamated Transit Workers.

The company seeks 9.5 percent salary cuts for drivers and terminal, maintenance and office workers, saying the cuts are necessary for the bus division to remain competitive. It also wants workers to contribute 5 percent of pension costs and accept fringe benefit cuts.

But Ed Perkins, secretary/treasurer for the Portland ATU branch, said that the company contract offer would cut employee wages 20 percent to

25 percent. The Portland ATU branch represents Greyhound employees in six Western states.

"They want \$80 million out of our pockets the first year of the contract. They showed a clear net profit last year of a little over \$20 million," Perkins said.

"It's just pure and simple. They want whatever they can grab. We don't plan on giving it to them," he said.

Perkins said 98.3 percent of union members rejected the company's offer because "no one could afford to work under the package."

"They have no justification economically. They're simply looking to increase the shareholder's profit, not through improved business techniques or improved efficiency but through taking it out of our hide," Perkins said.

Greyhound Corp. Chairman John Teets disagreed with Perkins.

"Greyhound's higher labor costs prohibit us from effectively competing against discount airlines and other bus companies," said Teets.

Under the current contract, the union's 7,500 bus drivers earn an average of \$27,437 a year in wages and \$8,307 in benefits; terminal workers \$20,429 in wages and \$6,185 in benefits; maintenance workers \$21,576 in wages and \$6,534 in benefits; and office workers \$16,947 in wages and \$5,312 in benefits.

Perkins said he doesn't see a quick solution to the disagreement.

"In my personal opinion, it (the strike) will last until Mr. Nageotte and Mr. Teets are thrown out on their ear," he said. Nageotte works for the corporation headquarters in Phoenix.

Perkins said he's confident union members will stick with the strike, because they are mostly "experienced and senior people" who have been through strikes before, some lasting 80 days.

And the strike could go on that long if the company continues refusing to negotiate, Perkins said.

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Photo by Brian Erb

Striking Greyhound workers picketed the front of the bus line's terminal Thursday afternoon over a contract dispute.

Oregon needs healthy attitude Ex-governor says sales tax will attract business

By Doug Nash
Of the Emerald

A healthy attitude is the key to a healthy Oregon business climate, former Gov. Bob Straub told a class of business students Thursday.

Speaking to graduate-level business analysis and forecasting students, Straub was emphatic in both praise and criticism of state land-use and economic planning.

On the side of praise, his message was short and sweet.

"I know that Oregon is the greatest state in the nation, and I'm not running for anything," said Straub, Oregon governor from 1975 to 1979 and now an industrial consultant in Salem.

He pointed to the state's air and water pollution legislation, the bottle bill and state land-use planning as examples of Oregon's progressive leadership in environmental awareness.

But that awareness has turned into a "phobia" that is constricting Oregon's economic development, he said.

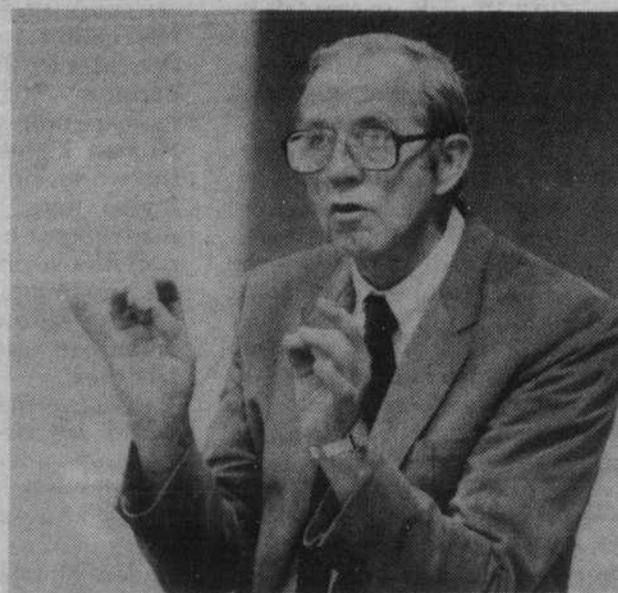
"We've got barriers that are causing businesses to skirt around Oregon," Straub said.

An attitude that is unwilling to recognize "the fundamental changes that have taken place in the timber industry since 1979" heads the list of those barriers, he said. 1979 marked the depletion of the state's old-growth Douglas Fir resources, which Straub called "the finest timber in the world." Since then, Straub said, the state has had to rely on second-growth timber that does not have the same competitive edge the old-growth had.

As an example of the decline, Straub noted that in 1960, 50 percent of jobs in the state were in forest products. By 1980, the proportion had fallen to 30 percent, he said.

"In 20 years, it declined almost by half and in my opinion it's going to continue to decline," he said. "We've got to have new industry. People don't realize that we're going to have to roll up our sleeves and work."

To entice new industry, Straub said the state



Bob Straub

should implement a sales tax, an idea he said he previously opposed.

"The sales tax would be a sign that Oregon really is trying to do something in the state that makes it more attractive to industry."

In addition, Straub said state and local regulatory procedures must be streamlined if the state's fight for new industry is to be successful.

"Here, I would judge it's two years before you get a commitment of any kind," he said. "A business is not going to wait two years if they need to build a plant. They've gotta go."

Straub, who said he enjoys private life because "I can speak the way I feel," said delays and waste are just as prevalent in industry as it is in government.

"Have you ever walked into the second floor of a bank, where all the vice-presidents are? What a joke. I mean they're all sitting around reading newspapers. They aren't doing anything."

Faculty organization opposes intervention

By Melissa Martin
Of the Emerald

If some University faculty members had their way, Pres. Ronald Reagan would keep the U.S. military out of Central America.

About 12 faculty members showed up at the Collier House last Friday to create Faculty Against Intervention in Central America, says Colette Craig, University linguistics professor. More than 260 faculty signed a petition supporting the group.

"It was very clear what we came together for," says George Ayora, romance languages professor. "We all shared the concern about the actions of the United States towards Central America and what seems to be a policy of military and political intervention."

The organization's purpose is to show that the American people are not behind Reagan, says psychology Prof. Barbara Pope. She calls U.S. intervention in Central America Reagan's "excuse to show his muscle."

"Reagan has been wanting to get his hands dirty for a long time in Latin America and Central America," she says.

The group's first concrete project is a panel discussion Monday with community and faculty representatives who recently toured Latin America.

Craig says the faculty group is a network, not a structured organization, which would require definite meeting times and

elected officials. Instead, the group will operate on two levels, with one group contributing time and another group providing support through money and petitions, Craig says.

David Curland, romance languages professor and one of the founders of the group, says University faculty members are a valuable resource in understanding Latin American affairs.

"We want to make sure people are informed on issues in the broadest sense and not simply limited to what the administration in Washington may be saying about any given situation," Curland says.

The group wants to communicate its ideas to the University and Eugene communities, Ayora says. He calls it a "civic duty."

Prof. Peter Jusczyk is collecting money from psychology faculty members for the upcoming ASUO-sponsored conference on U.S. intervention in Latin America. Response has been good, he says.

But Jusczyk is doing more than raising money for the group. By monitoring BBC and CBC news reports about the developments in Grenada, he is developing a "definitely different perspective" on the U.S.-Cuba stand-off.

He joined the group because his views agreed with those of other faculty members.

"I viewed the invasion as both moral and illegal. And above that, it's clearly not in the U.S. interest," Jusczyk says.