

Local labor leader defends Mondale

Endorsement reflects membership views

By Brooks Dareff
Of the Emerald

The AFL-CIO presidential endorsement of Walter Mondale last month was not, "as the media chose to view" it, a "choice from on top," but was an accurate reflection of membership sentiment, Oregon AFL-CIO President Erv Fletcher said Tuesday.

Fletcher reported on his trip to the AFL-CIO national convention during the weekly Lane Demo Forum in Eugene's Bavarian Restaurant.

Boasting a membership of 13.7 million, the largest union confederation in the country, the AFL-CIO threw the full weight of its 1984 presidential support behind democratic frontrunner Mondale at its national convention in Miami.

While the AFL-CIO endorsed Mondale, Fletcher indicated they would support whoever won the democratic nomination.

"I think we would even support the governor of Florida (Ruben Askew) — and he's an avowed right to work-er."

To prove that the AFL-CIO endorsement was representative of membership, Fletcher detailed the efforts the organization went through to guarantee the statistical significance of its membership poll. Fletcher said the AFL-CIO queried 23 percent of its membership, or 3.5 million people. He contrasted this with

national pollsters, who he said take a nationwide sample of "maybe 1,500, 2,000 persons of the more than 220 million."

The membership poll was taken nationally for each union, such as the woodworkers or metalworkers, rather than statewide, so Fletcher said he didn't know how the Oregon membership voted.

Fletcher said the unions who have endorsed Mondale are not special interests, but represent a

aggressive as I'd like" in vocalizing opposition to Pres. Ronald Reagan's invasion of Grenada, Fletcher said he feels Mondale is the best candidate available.

To back this up, Fletcher referred to Mondale's longtime professional, personal and philosophical association with liberal standard bearer Hubert Humphrey, who ran unsuccessfully as the democratic nominee against Richard Nixon in 1968.

According to the AFL-CIO, Mon-

'While we endorsed Walter Mondale... the theme in Florida was anybody but Reagan'
Oregon AFL-CIO Pres. Erv Fletcher

significant proportion of the U.S. population.

"To those from both parties who have been spitting and moaning that Mondale has been securing the support of the special interests, 13.7 million (people) is not a special interest."

The endorsement of Mondale was "in no sense a repudiation of the other candidates," said Fletcher.

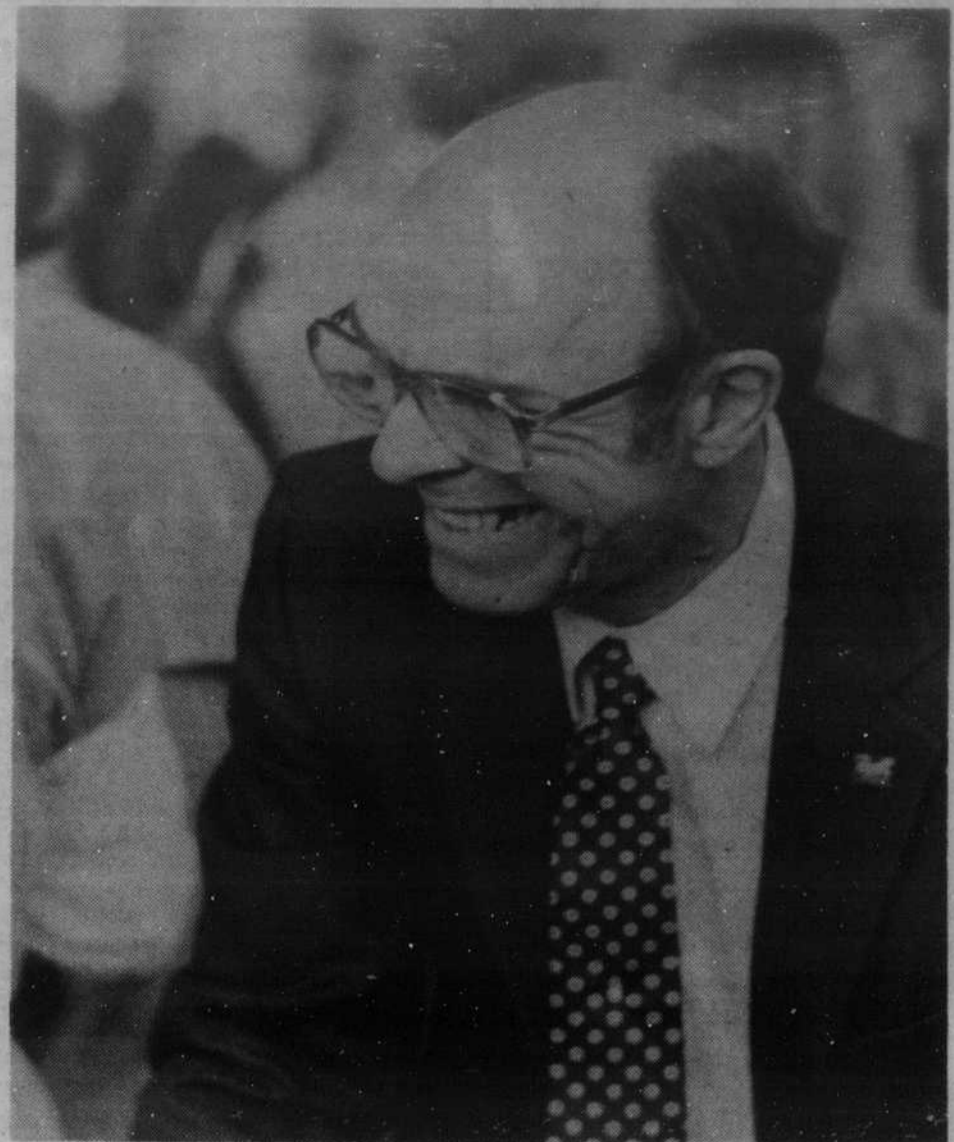
While "we endorsed Walter Mondale... the theme in Florida was anybody but Reagan," he said.

"I'd be comfortable with Jesse Jackson," he added.

While Mondale is "maybe not as

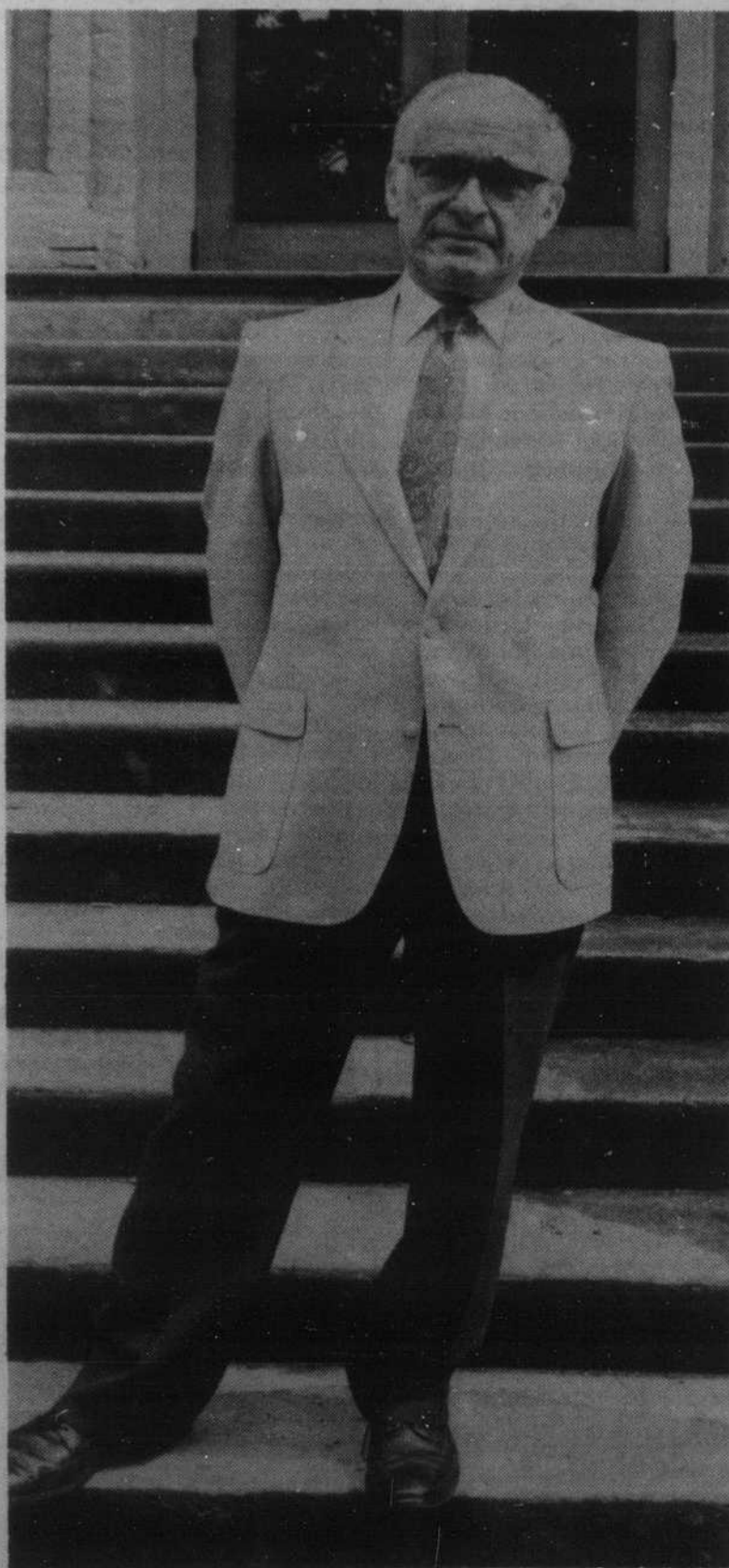
dale voted "correctly" in the Senate 93 percent of the time on labor issues like job safety and health. Mondale left his Minnesota seat in 1976, when he ran successfully for the vice-presidency.

Fletcher said the Mondale people have not yet put together a campaign committee in Oregon, which has a primary in May next year. They are concentrating their efforts in states like New Hampshire, New York and Iowa, where primaries occur much earlier. Campaign organizers may be estimating the nomination may already be sewn up by May, he said.



Emerald photo

Erv Fletcher, Oregon president of AFL-CIO, says his organization's endorsement of Mondale accurately represents the thinking of membership.



Emerald photo

Pres. Paul Olum visited universities during his recent trip to Japan.

Hiroshima, colleges highlight Olum's visit

By Joan Herman
Of the Emerald

On a typical day, Paul Olum can walk through campus with little, if any, fanfare. Few students give a respectful nod or friendly wave when they see the University's president approach — perhaps because few recognize him.

Such was not the case during his recent goodwill trip to Japan, where Olum was given "the royal treatment" by his courteous Japanese hosts.

After being prompted by several University professors to reciprocate many visits by Japanese delegations to Eugene, Olum decided to make the voyage — but not without some "trepidation" on his part, he says.

"I don't speak the language at all and everything in Japan is in Japanese," Olum says in his Johnson Hall office. "I wasn't sure how it (the trip) could be pulled off."

"As a matter of fact," the president says, "It turned out to be absolutely magnificent. It was just wonderful. I

'It was remarkable to see how built up (Hiroshima) is. It's a totally modern, rebuilt city'

— Paul Olum

had a marvelous time. I thought from the professional point of view it was far better than I'd hoped it would be, and from the personal point of view it was terrific."

The professional aspects of Olum's trip entailed visiting university after university throughout Tokyo and neighboring cities, which gave the American professor insight into the Japanese educational system.

On a more personal note, Olum traveled 650 miles from Tokyo to visit Hiroshima, sight of the 1945 atomic bombing by American military forces.

The journey held a personal interest for Olum. In 1943, Olum interrupted his graduate studies in physics at Princeton University to work on the Manhattan Project in Los Alamos, N. M.

Alongside the world's leading scientists, the 25-year-old Olum helped construct the world's first atomic bomb.

University prof. Aaron Novick, who now heads the biology department, also worked on the Manhattan Project.

"It was very moving and very disturbing," Olum says of Hiroshima.

The atomic bomb, which was dropped on the large city in 1945, leveled Hiroshima for miles around, he says.

Nothing was left standing.

Nearly 40 years later, Olum was surprised at what he found there.

"It was remarkable to see how built up (Hiroshima) is. It's a totally modern, rebuilt city. You would never know what happened."

Except one place, he adds.

"Right under ground zero (the point of the bomb's detonation) they left one building standing. This one building, made of concrete and steel, was very tough. It was just devastated except for steel girders, which formed a dome, and some pieces of the building below."

The Japanese people deliberately left that one building standing as a reminder of the bombing, Olum says. Then they built a peace park around it, filled with statues and monuments.

One particularly moving monument, Olum says, was built in memory of a young Japanese girl. The girl was two years old when the bomb was dropped, he says. Ten years later, she died from radiation poisoning, or what the Japanese call "atomic bomb disease."

Today the monument is surrounded by thousands of colorful cranes, made from folded paper and placed there in accordance with an old Japanese myth.

According to the myth, if ill people each make a thousand cranes in time, they won't die. The girl had tediously folded more than 700 cranes before she died, Olum says. Her death made national news and today children come from all over Japan to leave personally folded cranes on her monument.

"I don't see how you can help feeling a sense of some guilt and responsibility for the whole thing. It concerns me a lot," Olum says.

Olum has other memories of Japan as well.

The bulk of his 12-day trip was spent in visiting the country's lavishly funded universities. What Japanese universities lack in prestige — compared with their American counterparts — they more than make up for in funding, he says.

At Waseda University — the self-proclaimed "Harvard" of Japanese universities — Olum chatted with the University's American exchange students, who are spending the year studying abroad.

Olum also discussed with his Japanese counterparts plans for establishing exchange programs at other Japanese universities, including Tokyo's Aoyamagakuim University, where 15 University students will study in 1984-85.

Olum professor dined on a typical Japanese dinner of raw fish at a sushi bar. "Wonderful food," he said sincerely. He even learned to be "fairly fast with the chopsticks."

And whenever he rode Tokyo subways, American rock-and-roll blared in the background.