Schools need to address war issues, panel agrees

With school systems nationwide urging parents to change the channel when the nuclear war dramatization "The Day After" airs next Sunday, a Friday panel discussion took on a particularly timely cast.

In EMU Room 101, a member of Students for a Nuclear Free Future asked two South Eugene High School students and two Eugene members of Educators for Social Responsibility to respond to the question, "should public schools address the issue of nuclear war?"

In their introductory remarks, each answered yes.

Student Paul Mapp said the schools generally shouldn't shy away from controversial issues, although he added that "there's nothing controversial about the effects (of nuclear war)."

Teacher Maggie Gontrum said nuclear war is "the most important educational issue of our time." But teachers' own ignorance makes their primary role a difficult one to fullfill, she said.

Teacher Dale Sturdevant spoke of additional societal and governmental pressures and opposition to airing the issue of nuclear war in the public schools.

Sturdevant, who teaches math

and science at Spencer Butte Middle School, said opponents of nuclear education, namely Pres. Ronald Reagan and Moral Majority Leader Jerry Falwell, "focus on the traumatizing of young children, not on preparing high school kids for particapatory democracy.

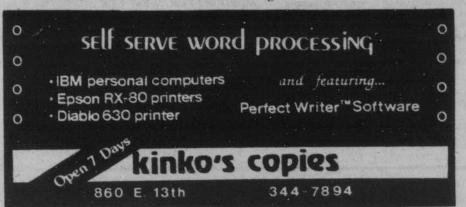
"Very clearly, they don't believe in participatory democracy," Sturdevant said.

Teachers should make students aware of the effects of nuclear war and should provide them with role models of "active dynamic people who've worked for peace," Sturdevant said.

An onlooker asked the panel to respond to the Portland school district's suggestion that people under the age of 16 not watch next Sunday's airing of "The Day After," which dramatizes the effects of a nuclear bomb blast on Kansas City and surrounding

Mapp said censorship was not a proper function of the public

Gontrum was noncommittal, but noted that the Eugene school district has made no public pleas for age restrictions.





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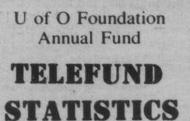
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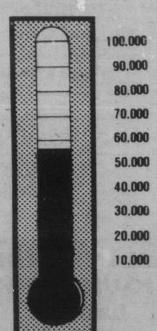
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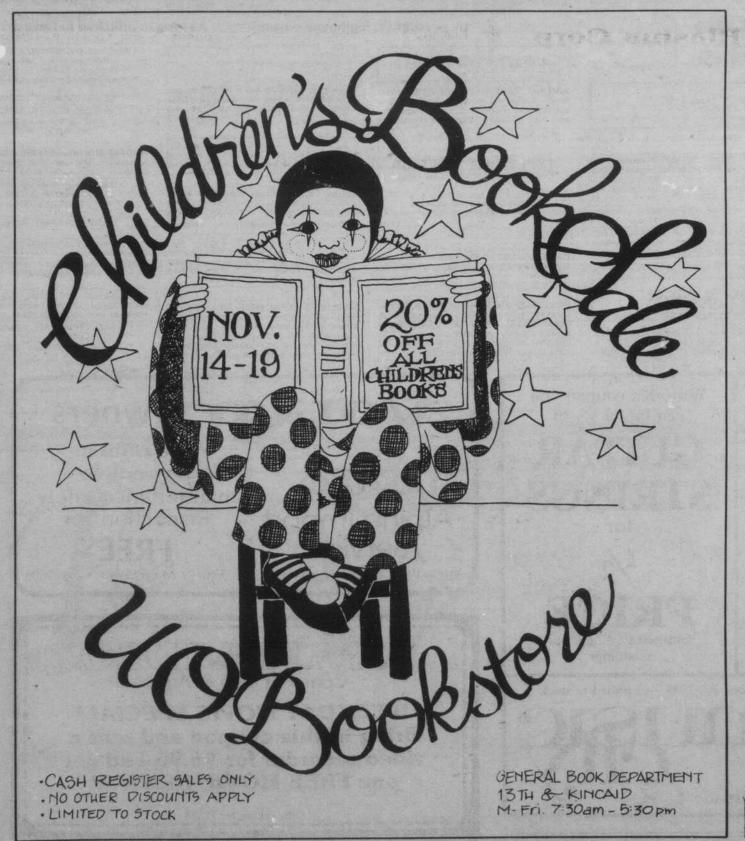
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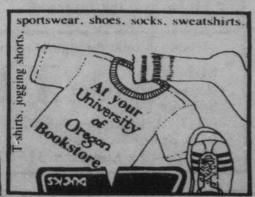
That brings the total for the telefund to \$56,011. Tonight the SURC/Finance Club will attempt to set a new record for total pledges received.

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