

# Editorial

## Court's decisions must have authority

The injunction freezing OSPIRG's funds raised IFC member James Randall's question about OSPIRG's activities very effectively, but, ultimately, was not appropriate. The Constitution Court's decision last Friday to suspend the injunction was a good one.

The injunction would have frozen the funds to a number of OSPIRG projects — including its student voter registration drive — and OSPIRG payroll. Randall's concern is more with OSPIRG's use of its office space and phones.

However, ASUO President Steve Nelson, who enforces the court's injunctions, handled the matter inappropriately.

Nelson noted, correctly, that the original injunction was not in the proper form. However, at the court's hearing Friday he called the injunction a mere "piece of paper" and made clear his intention not to enforce it or a further "piece of paper" attempting the same thing.

Remember, the Constitution is only a few "pieces of paper" that bear the basis for American democracy.

Nelson has since admitted that this remark was inappropriate, but it still shows a danger of erosion of the court's authority.

We believe that OSPIRG can survive a legal challenge in this case, and that the injunction wasn't appropriate to the concerns raised. However, what we or Nelson believe doesn't matter; it is the sole decision of the court.

That is why students are allowed to present cases before the court — to challenge what the government believes to be appropriate.

The last recourse for individual rights is the court, and if any one student has any concern about any student government action, the court must be able to hear the case fairly and issue an enforceable judgment.

If the court does not have this power, the only appeal will be to University President Paul Olum and the State Board of Higher Education — neither a judicial body. Currently, the president and the board rarely need to intervene.

Ultimately, the court is the basis of democracy; student empowerment stems not from the personal judgments of student leaders, but from the protection of individual concerns of students.

## Jacobsen's release hails

The Monday release of David Jacobsen after a nearly 18-month captivity in Beirut, Lebanon comes as a sign of hope for the remaining six American hostages in Beirut.

It is still uncertain what approaches the kidnapers hailed as bringing about the release of Jacobsen, but certainly their attitude has thawed; they called their release of Rev. Lawrence Jenco this summer a "goodwill" move that would not be repeated.

Officials say the release was aided by the recent arrest of a leading anti-American official in Iran, causing a pro-American shift in Iranian government.

Anglican church envoy Terry Waite, who has been instrumental in negotiating with the kidnapers and securing the release of other hostages, has issued a statement of cautious optimism that the remaining two hostages held by the Islamic Holy War also would be released soon.

His last message of cautious optimism came on the eve of Jacobsen's release.



## Letters

### Harassment

Students need to remember that they have several options besides the Affirmative Action Office in sexual harassment cases.

Students can:

1. Go directly to the alleged offender's supervisor for resolution. If the resolution is not satisfactory, go to the supervisor's supervisor.

2. File a formal complaint under the Oregon State Board of Higher Education's discrimination grievance procedure. Your signed and dated written statement must be transmitted formally by the OAA to the UO president and the State System of Higher Education chancellor. The OAA can assist with the organization and editing of the statement, or you can mail it or hand it in to the OAA (472 Oregon Hall, 686-3123).

The president will assign someone to conduct an investigation and make recommendations to him for his final decision. If you disagree with the president's decision, you can take further action — all of which is set out in Oregon Administration Rule 580, Division 15, available in any central UO administration office.

3. Write or telephone the U.S. Department of Education's regional Office for Civil Rights

(which handles Title IX complaints), located at Third and Broad Building, 2901 Third Avenue M/S 106, Seattle, Washington 98121 (202) 442-1930.

4. File a lawsuit.

Please also remember: Option four applies to most, but not all student discrimination cases; check with the OAA if your complaint is based on race, age or disability.

In any discrimination complaint, retaliation is prohibited by law.

Options for employees are somewhat different and will appear in a subsequent letter to the editor.

**Bean Comrada**  
Director, Office of  
Affirmative Action

### Back again

Just when I thought it was safe to go back to the Emerald... another letter from Michael (double-) Cross surfaces.

I had hoped that the happy occasion of his graduation would provide welcome relief from his compulsive opinion sharing. Instead, it appears that the letters will just keep coming back to haunt us. Now I know how trapped the characters in those awful Halloween films feel.

At least he returned during the appropriate season.

And as a bonus, we now know what kind of supporters Bruce Long attracts. I'd as soon vote for Lyndon LaRouche.

**Jamie Rothschild**  
Psychology major

### Set it straight

Mr. Steinbach's letter (Oct. 17) claims that the Nicaraguan government is systematically trying to stamp out religion because there is a conflict between it and the hierarchy of the Catholic church. As I worked for nine months in northern Nicaragua, I believe that I may be able to set the record straight.

In reality the root conflict is within the Catholic church itself, and it began in the early 1970s (long before the current government came to power). At that time some priests and lay people, following new pastoral directives of the Vatican Two and the Medellin conferences, began to form groups called "base communities," in which people would read the Bible and use that inspiration to work concretely for the betterment of their community. Many of these Christians, appalled by the conditions in which their people lived, and shocked by Somoza's brutal repression, participated directly or indirectly in the revolution.

Indeed, many Sandinista leaders both on the local and national level come from these groups. During my work I had the opportunity to work with many base communities. Base community members often minister to the physical and spiritual needs of the rural people affected by the Contra war and because of this, are themselves favorite targets of the Contras.

The Nicaraguan bishops to whom Steinbach refers feel their doctrinal authority threatened by Catholics who carry their own, perhaps revolutionary, biblical interpretation, and therefore they oppose both this progressive Christian movement and the government which has given it room to exist.

**Bruce Bondurant**  
Chemistry alumnus, 1986

### Cartoonville

The Emerald, in a recent editorial, came out in support of Peter DeFazio in his upcoming 4th District Congressional race against Republican Bruce Long. Mr. DeFazio, as we found out on Oct. 27, learns about and follows the Contra freedom fighters in the Doonesbury cartoon. Are we to assume the Emerald does too?

**Rick Bergesen**  
Math

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