

System without PSU will be overcrowded

Depending on whom you talk to, a proposal made last week to close Portland State University is either a bold move or a foolish one.

Last Thursday, the governor received a plan from the Oregon Council of the American Electronic Association. In it, AEA/Oregon called for closing PSU, with the University turning it into a satellite campus. Oregon State University would also get into the act, creating another campus at or near the Oregon Graduate Institute.

Supposedly, doing this would strengthen higher education in the state by creating a Portland-based center for science and engineering education and research, to quote from the proposal.

PSU officials, faculty and students are irate. Oregon State System of Higher Education Chancellor Thomas Bartlett has called the proposal "premature," despite having said several times Oregon can't support three universities. House Majority Leader David Dix (D-Eugene) has backed the plan. Gov. Neil Goldschmidt is uncommitted.

To us, closing a campus — the second-largest university in the state — at a time when the rest of Oregon's colleges and universities are cutting back enrollment is a bad idea.

Attendance figures at the University have to be cut drastically over the next few years. Students who otherwise are qualified are being denied an education.

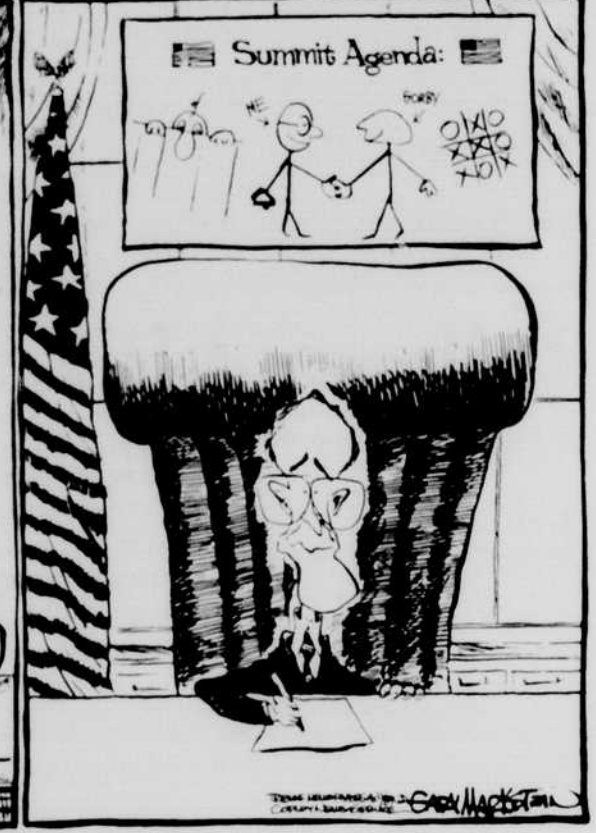
While students would still be able to attend college in Portland, it would be mostly for high-tech degrees. Liberal arts majors would flock somewhere else, either taking their resources and ability out of the state, or overcrowding the University and OSU.

Portland contains nearly 60 percent of the state's population. Not having a major university in the area is ludicrous. The AEA/Oregon proposal would polarize the state system into separate groups: Portland and downstate, technical and liberal arts.

No one will deny that higher education in Oregon has a lot of problems. Budget concerns are forcing administration officials to make cuts in programs they would rather not have to make. Money is tight, and drastic decisions have to be made.

But closing PSU is not the answer. Oregon schools are already turning away enough people. There is a danger of returning to the elitist attitude of the 1930s when higher education was considered a privilege reserved for the wealthy and highly intelligent.

A college degree is no longer just helpful for job-hunters; it's mandatory. No matter what the reasons to the contrary, PSU should stay open as is.



ASUO shouldn't meet behind closed doors

There's something insidious about governing bodies meeting behind closed doors. That's why we're disappointed with a recent action by the ASUO Executive.

Last Thursday, at its weekly staff meeting, the ASUO was to discuss whether to support a grievance seeking to prohibit CIA recruiting on campus. This grievance had been presented by Shannon Oliver and Tim Hughes of Student Campaign for Disarmament at the staff meeting the week before, and Oliver and Hughes had been invited back to hear Thursday's deliberation.

Shortly before the meeting however, Scott Wyckoff, ASUO vice president, moved to close the meeting, citing the reservations some ASUO members had over having their discussion monitored. After objections came from Oliver, Hughes and the *Oregon Daily Emerald* (we were curious as to why ASUO wanted to go secretive on this), Wyckoff pointed to an exception provided by the Oregon Public Meetings Law.

Certainly, ASUO does have legalities on its side; the ASUO's action isn't in violation of the letter of the public meetings law. But it does brush against the spirit of that statute — the law declares that the business of state

and local governing bodies (including the ASUO) is best conducted in the open.

Oliver and Hughes say they wanted to attend the staff meeting not to interfere with the proceedings but to simply listen. Wyckoff and the other ASUO members appear to have believed that the presence of outsiders would have muffled the Executive's deliberation on CIA recruiting. If that's the case, it says something about the courage of our student leaders — they should speak their views, yes, but they should expect to be held accountable for them as well.

In the end, ASUO decided *not* to endorse SCD's grievance. Oliver said the Executive had some justifiable legal concerns that have since been mended in a new grievance, but after the shabby treatment she received, she won't go back to get ASUO's official support.

That's too bad. A student group such as SCD should be able — should want even — to seek the support of all students of the University. If ASUO represents all students, as it ostensibly does, it needs to welcome the concerns placed before it. Quite obviously, an open door is more welcoming than a closed one.

Letters

Mistake

I wish to point out an editing error. On the "Letters" section, in my letter "Cleaner Air" (*ODE*, Nov. 6), there was inaccurate editing.

You printed "... bill (SB 1630) that would make California's automobile emission laws the toughest in the nation."

That makes it sound like the bill is aiming at California's weak standards. What was originally submitted was that California's are the toughest in the U.S., and all other states would also have to comply with the standards, making a national standard under SB 1630.

Punch Moasser
TCF

Social hub

In response to Kelly Johnson's letter (*ODE*, Nov. 7), I am surprised an alumnus would make such a shallow observation.

The so-called street people/transients are there for as many reasons you have for be-

ing there. It's a social hub for many, and personally, I am more apprehensive of the roving packs of frat boys looking for fun than I am of any transient.

No one should feel unwelcome in any part of our city, and besides, who are you to say who belongs here and who doesn't?

If you are insulted by the fact that people ask you to spare some change, maybe it's about time to do something about this problem. You can't pass by the "ugly people" your entire life.

If you really want to be proud of your community, do something about this problem, and earn your pride as easily as these people may have lost theirs.

Cindy Huijbreghse
Eugene

Getting better

Thanks for your front page article about the Native American Student Union's fall powwow Nov. 3. I've complained in the past about your lack of

coverage of Native American affairs, but things seem to be improving.

After last spring's Mac Court powwow, you printed a wonderful picture on the front page, and last month you ran a superb article about the Tlingit dance group that performed in the EMU Ballroom.

It's too bad that the Diversity Week activities sponsored by the ASUO ignore the Native American community. Congratulations to the *Emerald*, though, for covering events when they do happen.

Jeff Harrison
Student

Relevance

El Salvador. Does the topic seem moot, or inspire yawns of boredom? Well, it shouldn't. For over eight years the tiny Central American nation has been selectively thrust in and out of the American news spotlight.

During this time, the United States has poured nearly \$4 bil-

lion into the country, hoping to quell a popular rebellion among its economically disenfranchised majority. The policy has failed. Land reform was promised, but not delivered; two-thirds of the population remain landless.

The prerequisites for free elections were pledged, but not delivered: The regime of President Alfredo Christiani "won" the last election with less than 20 percent of the eligible vote.

And lastly, the much touted improvement in the government's human rights record has proved to be a sham: Death squads have killed tens of thousands while the U.S.-trained Salvadoran air force has terrorized the countryside with

bombings, leaving over a million homeless.

In the last year, the situation has grown worse. Since Christiani's ultra-rightist ARENA party assumed power, human rights violations have escalated dramatically. With this as a backdrop, our fiends in Washington continue to pump over \$1 million into El Salvador every day, making it the third-largest recipient of U.S. foreign aid in the world.

This policy has made the United States an international pariah. "U.S. out of El Salvador" may appear to be a worn-out slogan, but it has more relevance today than it ever had.

Christian Gunther
Eugene

Letters Policy

The *Emerald* will attempt to print all letters containing comments on topics of interest to the University community. Comments must be factually accurate and refrain from personal attacks on the character of others.

Letters to the editor must be limited to no more than 250 words, legible, signed and the identification of the writer must be verified when the letter is submitted.