

## Work to avert strike of Bethel teachers

There seems to be no solution to the debate between the Bethel School District administrators and its teachers.

Last Thursday, the Bethel teachers' union voted to strike. Unless some miracle cure is found by Feb. 5, 3,800 students in northwest Eugene will come to class only to find their instructors picketing outside the gates instead of teaching inside the school.

It is a typical dispute over a typical issue. The teachers' union wants a 6 percent salary increase; the district has offered 4.5 percent. The teachers want paid benefits; the district says it can't afford them. The union wants bonus for longevity; the administrators say no.

These, and other problems, have caused the split between the two sides. And no one is prepared to back down. The teachers are prepared to do "whatever's necessary" to get a favorable settlement. They're prepared to walk off the job.

Both sides say there is still the possibility of averting a strike, but no one is betting on it. In all likelihood, the Bethel teachers will strike on Feb. 5.

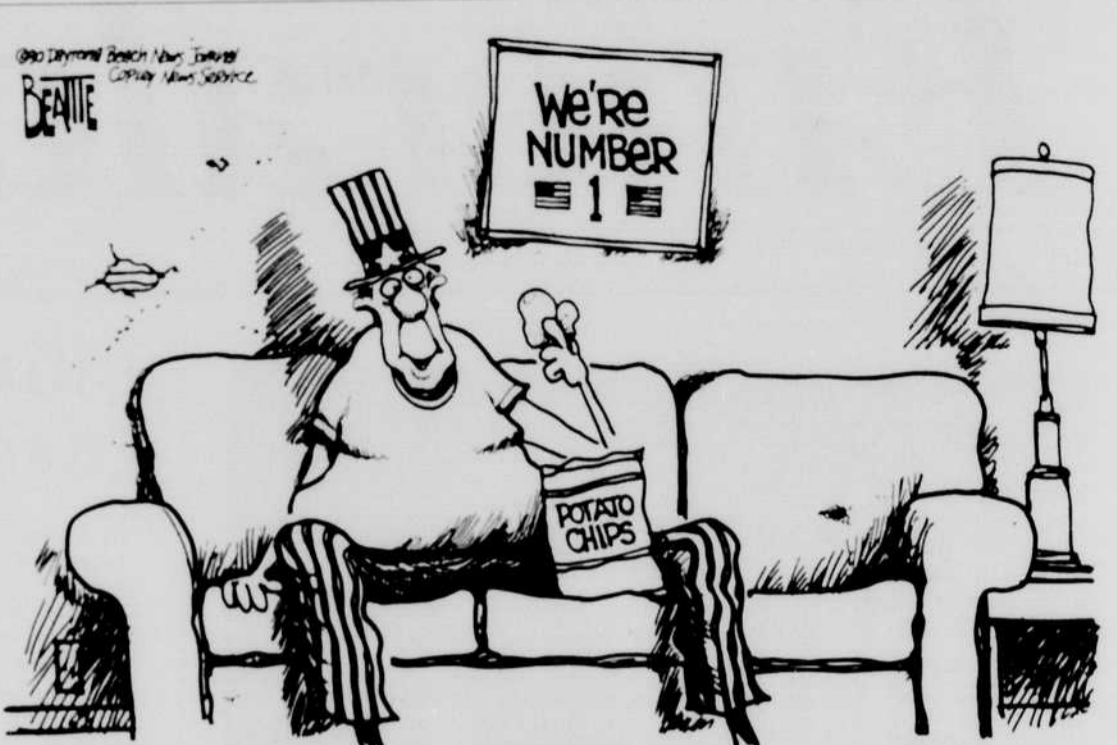
This strike, of for that matter, any other strike, has direct implications for the rest of the community. Undoubtedly, Eugene will be affected in some way. Parents of Bethel students will need to find alternative means of daycare. Some of them won't be able to afford them.

At the University, it is highly likely some students live in the Bethel School District. It is also probable that some have children who attend school in the district.

While it would be tough for any union to strike, it must be especially painful for teachers. In order to fight for decent wages, they have to leave schoolchildren without teachers. The very reason they became teachers is taken away from them because of bureaucratic money-crunching.

If the union does strike, 3,800 students will be locked out of classrooms. There is no way district officials can round up enough substitute teachers to replace the 239-person teacher's union; at least not in the near future. So children will miss school, and with the present state of the Oregon public education system, any time away from classes is a crime.

Both sides need to sit back down at the negotiating table. An equitable solution must be found. If possible, the strike must be avoided — there are 3,800 students in Bethel who need teachers.



"Why worry we can't make computer chips in this country anymore? We still have the technology to produce these!"

## Don't risk school funds on stock market

In November 1988, Oregon's voters passed a measure to allow the state to invest part of the common school fund in the stock market. The idea was to enable the state to manage the fund like "a prudent person would." Since the ballot measure was passed legal experts have been looking for a legal way to enact the law, because the Oregon Constitution does not allow the state to own any stocks.

Well, after a year the experts have come up with a plan, but it does not appear to be a very good one. Their idea is to give the money to a private broker, have the broker invest and manage the money and pretend as if the broker owns the stock.

After finding a way to enact the measure, the State Land Board voted to invest as much as \$25 million of the common school fund into stocks. The common school fund collects money from a variety of sources. Twice a year, a portion of the fund is divided up between all the school districts in the state where the money funds approximately 1 percent of each student's educational costs.

The common school fund is one of the more dependable forms of educational funding we have in the state right now. Currently, the school fund's \$199 million are invested in low-risk bonds and money-market accounts.

If the stock measure is enacted and the State Treasury invests \$25 million of school fund revenue in stocks, it is predicted that the stocks would probably lose money this year and for the next few years before the stocks would begin to make a profit.

This is no time to play with money for school funding, especially not in the stock market.

New York stock market analysts are projecting a very volatile picture for the market in the 1990s. The weakness of the U.S. dollar, the price of savings and loans bailouts, and ever increasing interest rates have made the stock market a risky investment. The market has turned bearish lately and has been losing points on the average trading day. With two crashes in the '80s and no predictions of a better picture, stocks seem to be a rather foolish investment.

## Letters

### Pay raise

Last year, when the state of Oregon hired a new chancellor and the University selected a new president, I was surprised and somewhat perturbed to find out that each was receiving a sizable pay raise relative to what their predecessors had earned.

Chancellor Thomas Bartlett's combined salary and "expense account" was raised from \$113,870 to \$135,000, and President Myles Brand's total income went from \$103,590 to \$113,020. These represent increases of 18.5 percent and 9.1 percent, respectively.

Today, I am totally incensed to read that each has been handed an additional 5 percent raise. Why did the GTFF have to beg, bargain and demonstrate before finally getting a 4 percent raise? The official excuse for this administrative overindulgence has to do with "keeping quality administrators in state."

The message here appears to be that the administration themselves don't care much

about the quality of the teaching assistants they employ, much less the quality of their lives.

In real terms, President Brand's pay raise means \$5,600 for the year. (This is, incidentally a figure equal to my annual salary; give or take \$17.60.) Taking into account a first time employer contribution toward health care for the GTFF, my increase in income for the year will be about \$300.

In defense of our administrators, I guess that \$100,000 just doesn't go as far as it used to. But just where the hell does it go — especially for a man who doesn't even have to pay rent?

Hans-Michael Vermeersch  
GTF

### Loud music

The *New York Times* reports that cities across the country are ticketing drivers who boom loud music from their cars. Eugene should do the same, particularly around the campus, and also ticket persons who boom loud music from

campus dorms and houses around the University.

Helene Johnston  
Political science

### Choice

The place where you should be free to choose a book is a bookstore or a library. The place where you should be free to choose the music that you listen to is a record store or a live music club. Unfortunately, many of these places will put popularity of opinion and profit before free speech.

In the same way the Ayatollah pressured the B.Dalton and Waldenbooks chains into not carrying *The Satanic Verses* for its controversial content, or the further examples of the Mapleshorpe art exhibit, the film *The Last Temptation of Christ*, the Dead Kennedy's *Frankenchrist* album, the comedy of Lenny Bruce and the comic strip *Doonesbury*, the critics of the *Cherry Poppin' Daddies* would do the same based on their interpretation of our name and content.

They have succeeded in bullying local clubs into not allowing us to play under our original name, but have thus far been unsuccessful with local record stores selling our tapes.

All this under the thin guise of fighting words, hate crimes, misogyny, child abuse — knee-jerk arguments that don't stand up at all when critically evaluating the message of our music, or the sometimes ironic expression of our artistic intents.

This zero-tolerance mentality sets a dangerous precedent and allows for shortsighted, irresponsible judgments that I hope educators are not encouraging, and free-thinking citizens should not accept.

Steve Perry  
Cherry Poppin' Daddies

### Discouraged

I've been reading the *Emerald* just about every day this year, and I can't help being discouraged by all the negative letters that are written.

Wouldn't we all rather get a pat on the back or read something encouraging about a classmate or community member rather than seeing who can "slam" who the best?

As I was growing up, I was always taught to take any problems I had to the source, and deal with them rationally and reasonably. For the sake of humanity and the betterment of ourselves, let's question our own motives for arguing or disagreeing with one another, and if there really is a problem that deal with it in a manner that might actually solve the problem.

How that is to be done will rest in the hands of us as individuals, realizing we are responsible for our actions.

Let's not use the *Emerald* as a vehicle to complain and gripe about every little thing that we have a problem with. I wonder what would happen if we were to consider one another before ourselves. Think about it.

Darrin Beech  
Student