

Striking bus drivers need rider support

Eugene's Greyhound bus station at 10th Avenue and Pearl Street is usually jammed full of students looking to get home for weekends. On Friday, those same students found themselves either crossing a picket line or finding alternate means of transportation.

Drivers for Greyhound, the nation's largest bus line, went on strike Friday over wage and job security disputes. The strike has quickly turned ugly, with outbreaks of violence being reported all over the nation.

A sniper fired shots at a bus in Chicago. Buses were vandalized in Spokane, Wash. In Jacksonville, Fla., Olympia, Wash. and Minneapolis, picketing drivers were struck by buses; in Redding, Calif., one striker was killed when he was pinned against a wall by a bus.

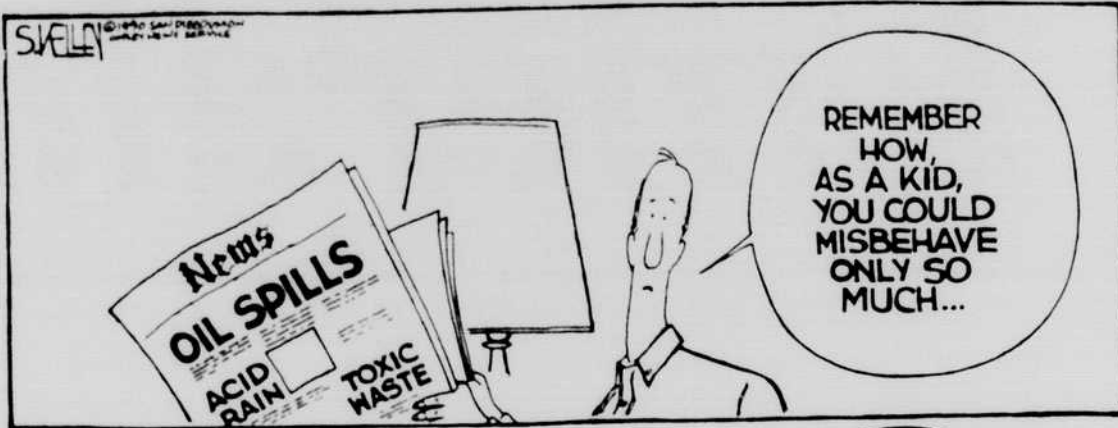
In Eugene, drivers have been wearing black armbands in remembrance of the Redding man, Robert Waterhouse. Waterhouse was well-known and well-liked by many of this city's drivers. Waterhouse has already become a martyr and symbol for union members determined to stick to their demands.

That means the strike is likely to be a long one, because the organization representing the drivers, Amalgamated Transit Union, has a long and confusing list of demands reflecting the different concerns of the union membership.

For instance, drivers in Eugene are most concerned with bus driving's long hours and low benefits; many drivers report 12-hour days and 70-hour weeks. Drivers in Spokane appear to be concerned with job security; they're afraid Greyhound is planning to drop the less-traveled routes in Eastern Washington and leave those for smaller bus lines. Other drivers want wage increases. It's going to take a long, frustrating time for union leaders to achieve a consensus on any contract approval.

The management the drivers are fighting is a new one. Greyhound was taken over by new ownership about three years ago. At the time, the company was floundering. The union gave up several concessions to management, and the company has since turned around. The union thinks it's now time for management to start giving back, and we agree. We suggest that, for the duration of the strike, students form carpools or take the train to get where they want to go.

At the same time, we implore the striking drivers to put a stop to the violence. Violence will only serve to lengthen the strike and drive people away from Greyhound for good. There are other companies, such as Amtrak and smaller bus lines, that are ready to profit from any long or ugly strike. A threat to ridership would hurt both management and employees.



LTD free ride program deserves praise

Though Eugene can nowhere near be considered a major metropolis, it does have its share of urban ills.

Anyone who has participated in the daily Ferry Street Bridge gridlock, or tried in vain to find a parking space near the Downtown Mall knows that driving in Eugene, at times, can be a pain. When you couple too many cars in the city with a confusing maze of one-way streets, you get a driving experience that is less than pleasant.

LTD already has a University program in which students ride the bus system for free, just by flashing a University I.D. card. The program has worked well, with ridership having increased by 250 percent in less than two years. Many students have left their cars at home in favor of riding the bus. Traffic congestion around the campus is less, and there are more parking spaces open.

Now, LTD wants to expand its free rider program by extending it to city workers. City employees would ride for free, thereby reducing the amount of cars in the downtown area. The city has tried in the past to help traffic woes in Eugene by expanding the number of parking spots. The LTD plan

will take this one step further.

The idea is a good one. The program is scheduled to begin in late April, and will provide service for 1,150 city employees. The city's parking reserve fund will pay for the free passes.

Traffic concerns aside, the LTD proposal also has other positive ramifications. Eugene residents, for the most part, try to be environmentally conscious. University groups are constantly trying to get people to recognize the environmental impact of driving a car. Eugene does not have the smog of a Los Angeles or a Denver, but a reduction in air pollution is welcomed.

The one concern of both city and LTD officials is the amount of city workers who will actually use the free system. If ridership doesn't increase substantially, the program may not survive past its one-year trial period.

City employees should support the LTD plan. It just makes sense. The benefits of the program are wide-ranging and appealing. From an environmental standpoint, from a traffic-congestion point of view, the LTD plan holds much promise.

Letters

Never forgive

The results of the recent elections in Nicaragua have caused me to reflect on the ten days I spent in that country in 1984. Unfortunately, I lack the time to enumerate the ways the Nicaraguans whom I met and who represented a broad cross-section of society, demonstrated the integrity of the Sandinista revolution as it worked to transform Nicaraguan society.

They had just held an election, after which seven political parties shared power in the National Assembly. Although international observers affirmed the fairness of the 1984 elections, the Reagan administration mocked them (because Ortega won) and quickly imposed an economic embargo while the Democratic Congress approved \$100 million in military aid for the Contras.

In true Orwellian fashion, the U.S. media has rewritten Nicaraguan history by depicting Violeta Chamorro's victory as Nicaragua's first "real" election (because Ortega lost).

I do not question the judgment of the Nicaraguans, who, reeling from eight years of a U.S.-backed covert war, and impoverished after five years of a U.S.-imposed economic embargo, have confessed that in order to live in peace it was easier to replace Daniel Ortega than to persuade the U.S. government to respect their sovereignty.

But, I doubt that I will ever forgive my government for misrepresenting and subverting the popular revolutionary process in Nicaragua. And I can never forget the indelible impression left by the parochial school teacher in Masaya who told me, "When you help someone learn to read and think in a new way, that is a revolutionary act."

Rob Koppelman
English GTF

Dialogue

It has come to the ASUO Student Senate's attention that Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee student member Lisa Calavetta informed

Students for the Ethical Treatment of Animals representative Jill Freidberg by phone that she would no longer be able to discuss IACUC matters with Freidberg.

In the phone conversation, Calavetta said the decision not to discuss IACUC matters with Freidberg was made during a discussion Calavetta had with both John Moseley and Charles Kimmel.

According to Freidberg, the matters Calavetta said she could no longer discuss included information on when the IACUC would meet, and on the status of Dr. Richard Marrocco's protocol. According to our understanding, this is public information.

It is also our understanding that after reviewing the Public Health Service IACUC guidelines, we could not find a specific mentioning of a need for confidentiality on matters the IACUC handles.

The Student Senate had worked very hard during the last two years to insure a student seat on the IACUC. It was our understanding that this stu-

dent would begin to represent the concerns of the University student body. Any interested student(s) should be able to talk to this representative about IACUC matters, including members from SETA. Administrative matters should not be hidden from the students.

We hope that, in the future, members of the IACUC will encourage, rather than discourage, open dialogue between the student community and the IACUC.

Tiffany Weed
Chair, Student Senate

Anti-business

Your article on hospital expansion (ODE, Mar. 1) is silly. Interviewing an irate Audre Keller who, herself, is at blame

for not applying for a space in the structure, is typical of the anti-business mentality of Eugene and Oregon. You should be worried about Kinkos, I never knew your place existed.

The hospital is necessary. Surgical equipment on six different floors, beds in the hallway; expansion is necessary. Sacred Heart is the largest hospital between Portland and San Francisco. Some of us can't ride in an ambulance for 12 hours while our guts are dripping out.

Be reasonable. Competition is a necessary evil. It keeps business fit and hopefully, honest. Stay informed, Keller. Things in Eugene aren't cut and dry.

Steve Epstein
Finance/PPPM

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.