

Health care, fair trade key to U.S. industry, speaker says

By Gerrit Koepping
Emerald Reporter

The government needs to take more of a role in making the United States more competitive, Douglas Fraser, former president of the United Auto Workers of America said Friday.

Speaking at the Eugene Hilton, Fraser outlined a number of problems, including lack of health care and unfair trade sanctions confronting labor and industry during this period of increased competitiveness.

"We are engaged in fierce economic competition," he said. "People wish we could go back to the glory days of the '50s, but we are never going back."

A result of this increasing level of competition, Fraser

said, is that competition has become a buzzword for reducing wages.

But by focusing only on wages, industry has missed "the other side of that equation, which is productivity," he said.

Fraser said U.S. workers are some of the most productive in the world.

But on a social level, he said, "if you try to match the wages of Mexico and North Korea, you are in danger of losing the middle class."

Fraser said the real challenge was not to lower the standard of living of the United States, but to increase the standard of living in more poor countries.

"You cannot divide up scarcity, you can only share abundance," he said.

Fraser also called for an end to what he said was a one-sided

trade relationship with Japan. He said Japan's trade policy discourages U.S. automakers from exporting products to Japan.

"Should Americans stand idly by and be slaves of the free market while American industries are being destroyed?" he asked.

One way government could help labor would be if the United States went ahead and established universal health care, Fraser said.

"The United States is the only country in the world where labor has to negotiate for health care," he said.

On an economic level, Fraser said, industry is put under a great financial strain by having to pay for workers' health care.

But industry also has to do

its part to make the United States more competitive, he said. An example of an industrial success story is the Saturn automobile plant in Springfield, Tenn., which General Motors runs.

Workers helped design that plant, Fraser said, and have a voice in making decisions, such as what advertising agency they will hire and what distributors they will use.

Recently, the demand was so great for the cars that the plant needed to go to a 50-hour work-week.

Instead of management dictating to the workers, the issue was put to a vote, with 88 percent of the workers voting for the increased hours.

This kind of management is the trend of the future for both industry and labor, he said.



Douglas Fraser

"The labor movement cannot be satisfied with its traditional role of letting managers make decisions and then fighting those decisions they don't like," Fraser said.

OPS

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ing an officer from the Eugene Police Department if he feels uncomfortable handling a particular situation.

"Any situation that myself, as an untrained officer, am handling and I feel threatened, I call a (Eugene Police Department) officer," Scarborough said.

Ask any officer — OPS or EPD — to describe the relationship between the two departments, and the word that pops up most often is "close."

EPD Sgt. Mike Cline said he feels more a part of OPS than he does EPD because of the "good working relationship" with OPS. He said he checks in every morning at the EPD but then comes over to OPS for the day. In fact, Cline even has his own desk at OPS.

Cline, who heads the five Eugene police officers assigned to campus, said he thinks the OPS officers he works with are efficient in their position.

"Overall, I've been impressed with the (OPS) officers I've worked with," he said. "They're very dedicated and they're out there busy."

The University's contract with EPD was signed four years ago. The officers patrol campus and the surrounding area almost 24 hours a day, along with OPS officers.

Although OPS officers can legally patrol only University-owned property, Eugene police have full law enforcement anywhere within city limits. Thus, OPS

and EPD work fairly close together in many situations.

"The two levels have a very good working relationship," said EPD Lt. Jan Clummitz, supervisor for Cline and the EPD campus officers. "There is a spirit of cooperation with the EPD and OPS."

While OPS and EPD officers may work together on campus, there are clear distinctions between the two levels.

Although campus security officers are trained at the same place as police officers — the Board of Public Safety, Standards and Training in Monmouth — security officers receive a different, less intensive training program than police officers do.

Consequently, OPS officers are not permitted to carry weapons and have no authority to make an arrest on campus, other than a citizen's arrest.

As a citizen, anyone has the right to make an arrest if they have seen something they believe is illegal. Thus, OPS officers have no more authority to arrest a person than does a citizen.

What, then, is OPS's purpose on campus? To OPS Director Carey Drayton, the answer is simple.

"Our job is to maintain peace and order on campus," Drayton said.

Although different and perhaps less exciting than police work, Drayton and his network of 16 full-time security officers have their work cut out for them.

To OPS, students' safety means securing University buildings — classrooms and dormitories — respond-

ing to the emergency calls on campus and dealing with any other problem or situation that arises.

With so many responsibilities and so few OPS officers, Cline said he believes OPS's limited resources are being spread thin as a consequence of budget-tightening.

"The University area expects a lot out of these officers, from dealing with a person locked out of their car to a false alarm," he said. "There are a lot of expectancies the University puts on a small number of people."

An OPS officer's role in the event of a dangerous campus situation — one that he or she feels threatened or uneasy with — is to serve as the eyes and the ears for the EPD.

"(OPS officers) are not police officers and they know that," Cline said. "They work with us and when they are asked to step aside, they do."

Cline said that while Eugene police try to avoid involving OPS officers in dangerous situations due to their lack of weapons, OPS officers, depending on the particular situation, will usually get involved alongside the EPD.

"In bike thefts, (OPS officers) assist in that situation, generally speaking," he said. "If there is a fight or someone runs, OPS joins right in until the situation is under control. But, as police officers, we can't put them in dangerous positions because they don't have a gun."

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