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Perspectives

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A S T E P *in the right direction*

University President Dave Frohnmayer recently sent a letter to corporate licensees of the University logo requiring full disclosure of several important labor facts. It was the right decision and made in the right way. There is an urgent need, no doubt, to join in the fight against sweatshop labor throughout the world, but in this instance, the methodology of reaching this decision was as important as is the final result.

The decision to require information on employee grievance procedures, locations of production facilities and names, titles and phone numbers of company officers is a small step in the right direction. Acknowledged by all as only the beginning in a battle on sweatshop labor practices, hopefully the inertia of getting the ball rolling

will continue to move the process along as quickly as possible.

While the end result was critical, the method of reaching it was even more important. Instead of immediately bowing to groups such as the Human Rights Alliance who tried to impose arbitrary deadlines for a decision, the president followed advice of a diverse panel of serious individuals dedicated to change within the system. Using a formal process offers several important benefits to the decision.

One important benefit of withstanding vocal protesters in favor of a school committee involving students, faculty and administrators is a boost to the credibility of a final decision. By listening to the Licensing Code of Conduct Committee, Frohnmayer sent a message that University business will be conducted by a thoughtful process and will resist the often fickle nature of public demonstrators. Not only will students know that the decision has the backing of the administration, but companies who license Oregon logos will receive the message that this is a policy that is measured and not subject to negotiation.

Another benefit of a formal process is that it takes longer. Though it would be easy to

bemoan the time necessary for such a well-measured process as a hindrance to righteous change, the time itself lends perspective to those charged with making such important decisions. Large, raucous crowds living in the moment are not known for their judicious policy making.

Obviously one must appreciate students who are involved and stay active in the local politics of the school. There is no substitute for a concerned student body, and there should be heavy involvement and oversight on the part of students throughout the rest of the process, as well as constant review once a policy is in place and working.

In an era where a public truth is built from spin and reputations are won and lost on the ability to demagogue, the decision to ignore meaningless deadlines for change sent just the right message from Frohnmayer. But for all the discussion on how the decision was made, the fact should remain unobscured: the process for ending University-licensed, sweatshop-made wares is underway, and we should all be happy with that.

This editorial represents the opinion of the Emerald editorial board. Responses may be sent to ode@oregon.uoregon.edu.



Giovanni Salimena Emerald

THE WEEK IN THUMBS



To one more comeback

The Ducks won the Sun Bowl, upsetting number 12 ranked Minnesota and leaping into the top 25 in the polls. The win is expected to help recruiting and keep donor money flowing in.

To a house of winners

Delta Sigma Phi fraternity was recognized by the Governor's Council on Alcohol and Drug Prevention for a pledge to keep a dry house. The recognition comes in the form of the governor's Outstanding Community Service Award.



To the storm after the calm

After the new year came without any significant computer problems, lawsuits are expected to build against computer consultants as some believe the hype provoked unnecessary computer improvements. Come on, bite the bullet and move on.

To the end of a good thing

Peanuts cartoonist Charles Schulz issued his final comic strip on Jan. 3 after retiring to fight off a cancer he is facing.