

PERSPECTIVES

Editor in chief: Jack Clifford
 Managing Editor: Jessica Blanchard
 Newsroom: (541) 346-5511
 Room 300, Erb Memorial Union
 P.O. box 3159, Eugene, OR 97403
 E-mail: ode@oregon.uoregon.edu

EDITORIAL EDITOR: MICHAEL J. KLECKNER opededitor@journalist.com

Public Safety's Bait and Switch

The Emerald reported Monday that the University's Department of Public Safety has violated Oregon law by purchasing and using vehicles with red and blue lights — a privilege allowed only to certified police officers. Does violating the law make DPS officers safer, as they claim? Maybe. Is it in the best interests of the campus community, as DPS also claims? Hardly. Are either of those claims a reasonable excuse for a public university to flout the law? Absolutely not. The lights should be removed.

Oregon Revised Statute 816.350 is clear on this issue — only police officers' cars being used for law enforcement may have blue lights. And there is a good reason for this. When the public sees blue lights,

they are supposed to be able to assume that a law enforcement officer is near. This serves an important purpose in society by giving warning to lawbreakers that law enforcement is nearby, and more importantly, by identifying an officer who may be able to help in cases of need.

Campus security cannot arrest anyone, and they don't have guns. According to DPS Director Tom Fitzpatrick, campus security can detain criminals (as can any citizen who sees a crime occurring) and frisk people, but Fitzpatrick made clear that DPS prefers not to have physical contact and would only do so if a situation was threatening. However, DPS vehicles' red and blue lights could confuse someone needing immediate assistance, and that situation could become danger-

ous as a result of the mix-up.

DPS officers say that the lights make them feel safer and in turn help them make the campus community feel safer. We can't see how. Whether they mean to or not, the lights give campus security more of a tough-guy image in society. Police have the right to use potentially lethal force to stop criminals, and DPS is exploiting this image by using the vehicles.

By riding the bulletproof vest-tails of actual police officers, campus security is appearing to be more serious and more forceful than they are. This can't be good for community relations — DPS is supposed to be providing the campus with a sense of peace. According to its mission statement, the role of DPS on campus is "provid-

ing a safe, secure and welcoming environment."

Campus security should be defusing situations, helping community members who are locked out of their cars and making us all feel safer instead of threatened by their tough-cop image. Will having red and blue lights really make for better relations with students and visiting parents or football fans? If it does, it will only be out of a misguided fear that DPS has police power. They don't have that power, and they shouldn't.

What of the money the University is spending to lease these police cruisers? We realize that DPS needs to replace their aging fleet of patrol vans, and Fitzpatrick said that DPS is getting a good deal, but is leasing the best use of University

funds? Why don't they spend money to improve campus security in a positive fashion, such as adding lighting, placing more emergency boxes, heavily publicizing their evening safety escorts or starting a peaceful intervention service for intoxicated people on campus, similar to the city of Eugene's CAHOOTS service?

There are ways to make our campus safer and more peaceful. Choosing red and blue lights for DPS vehicles only serves to further alienate the community from the officers hired to keep the peace. The Eugene Police Department may not be willing to issue citations for this law-breaking behavior, but we're willing to cite the best interests of the community. Remove the lights.

Undemocratic decision disregards students, workers

GUEST COMMENTARY

Human Rights Alliance

University President Dave Frohnmayer bypassed established decision-making processes two weeks ago by joining the Fair Labor Association. Capitalizing on students' absence over the summer, Frohnmayer avoided any official form of faculty or student involvement. This was an outrageously hypocritical action that disempowers students and endangers the workers who make University apparel.

Last April, after a year of research and discussion that involved the entire campus community, the University joined the Worker Rights Consortium. Membership in the WRC was approved by a student referendum, an administrative committee, the University Senate and several University student organizations. The FLA was approved by one person — President Frohnmayer.

Frohnmayer has said that he made an executive decision because of the urgency to start monitoring factories and to uphold our code of conduct. Yet he felt no urgency last year when the four students on the Licensing Code of

Conduct Committee, along with several student leaders, pleaded with Frohnmayer to act quickly. This request was made after the licensing committee, which had met for almost a year, reached a unanimous decision to join the WRC. If the University had joined when students wanted, the University could have attended the founding conference of the WRC. Frohnmayer, however, said he could not do anything until the University Senate considered membership.

This time, students were notified of Frohnmayer's intention to join the FLA the day before the official announcement. ASUO President Jay Breslow pleaded with Frohnmayer to wait just one week so that students could return and weigh in on this decision. He was flatly refused.

Wherever you stand on this issue, let us be clear on one thing — there is no democracy on this campus. Students, faculty, staff and other campus constituencies have a voice only if President Frohnmayer allows it. Perhaps our current dictator is mostly benevolent, but what happens when Frohnmayer is replaced by someone worse?

This decision obliterates democracy on campus, but its real impact will be felt by a largely unseen and

often neglected group — the workers in overseas and domestic sweatshops who make university apparel. Why? Because, despite some insubstantial, vague, and ultimately insufficient changes over the summer, the FLA is still protecting corporations' rights, not workers' rights.

The way the FLA is currently set up, companies choose which of their factories are monitored, and when. In many cases, factory managers are in the same room with workers when they speak to monitors. Under the FLA Charter, it could be possible for a company to have less than 30 percent of its factories monitored and still earn the privilege of the FLA's sweat-free tags in its entire product line. Well-meaning consumers will think their purchase helps workers; instead they will only perpetuate the situation. University membership in the FLA actually hurts workers instead of helping them.

Despite what President Frohnmayer says, which monitoring body the University associates with is a crucial decision — as crucial as which person you choose to vote for in the upcoming

elections. Common sense does not dictate acting against moral and ethical principles.

Don't be fooled — these issues are important. They affect you and the people your age (or younger)

who make the products you buy. The question is, do you care?

Please contact the HRA in the Survival Center (346-4356) or e-mail phlwoods@gladstone.uoregon.edu with comments/questions.

Speaking out against stereotypes is not a choice

GUEST COMMENTARY

Cris Cullinan

I was one of the administrators who called and talked to Becky Merchant, advertising manager of the Emerald, about my disappointment and anger that the Emerald chose to run a Yahoo! ad campaign that was both offensive and sexist, as well as homophobic.

To my surprise, Ms. Merchant volunteered that she also found the ads to be sexist and offensive, that there was a review process she could have used to reconsider the ads and she had chosen not to use it. She told me that "the students here did not seem bothered by the ads." And so she did not speak up. Perhaps one of the things she was worried about was that "the students" might think she was being "too PC." Is there an atmosphere at the ODE that convinces staff they might be ostracized if they speak up?

Ms. Merchant's behavior stands in contrast to the actions of Erica Fuller, director of the Multicultural Center, a person new to this campus who could have remained silent and yet chose to respond to what she and others found to be demeaning and dangerous. Fuller wrote a guest commentary that helped readers think about the ads in terms of their effects on all members of the campus community.

To put this matter in a different context, I believe it is not appropriate for me, as a white person, to do or say whatever I want without thinking about how it might affect a person whose skin is not the color of mine; that is, if I hold to the prin-

ciple that I do not want to contribute to racism and discrimination based on skin color. Nor is it sufficient for me to claim to have "a black friend," for instance, who will tell me if I get out of line. For me, taking responsibility for the privilege I enjoy as a white person means to think about and realize how my actions affect others, particularly those who do not enjoy the presumptions of innocence, worthiness and competence I often get automatically just because of the way I look. I did not just land on the planet and I am capable of thinking about my actions in context.

When the editor of the Emerald says, in his written response, that he is "quite comfortable with the belief that no one at the Emerald, in any department, endorses rape or homophobia," he implies that they have no responsibility for contributing to an atmosphere where those things are more likely to be condoned. And yet, in running this ad series the Emerald basically said to the campus community, "We don't have to care about how this affects you, particularly if you are 'too sensitive' because you have been the victim of sexual violence. As long as the others are silent, then they must think these ads are OK. You don't count because they are not complaining."

We have many examples of genocide, racial profiling and other hate crimes continuing while the majority stayed safely silent. It is past time that we learned to think before we act and to consider how others besides ourselves are affected both by our actions and by our silence.

Cris Cullinan is an officer of administration in the University's human resources department.

