

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

in history from the working and middle classes to the wealthy.

Recently an *R-G* op-ed piece "America Fails Wealth Gap test" states that the top 20 percent of wealthy individuals own 85 percent of the wealth, while the bottom 40 percent own very near 0 percent. The income gap is not any better. The richest 1 percent takes in 24 percent of the nation's income up from 9 percent in 1976. About 80 percent of the increase in income since 1980 went to the top 1 percent of the richest individuals.

The City Council's decision to make the local income tax more progressive should be applauded. It's time to act before America becomes a "banana republic" ruled by an oligarchy and where public schools, through underfunding, are destroyed while the rich send their children to private academies.

Pete Mandrapa
Eugene

R-G TRANSPARENCY?

A judge's Twilight Zone interpretation of the Open Meetings Law has public officials confused about communicating with each other between meetings. What can the daily newspaper responsible for inflating the case do next?

The *Register-Guard* could lead us out of this mess by modeling how to conduct its business in public. No more unsigned editorials drafted in closed-door quorums. Sure, the *R-G* is not subject to open meeting statutes, yet this isn't a time to hide. Can *R-G* management comfortably go on meeting in private to influence public opinion? Since it finds great fault with how some Lane County

commissioners have done it, let the paper set an example.

Release all internal emails and directives related to development of its righteous indignation toward offending commissioners. Make public all notes from discussions between editorial staff. Country Club chatter with contacts, too. Any dissenters inside the paper? Let us hear from reporters who may not agree with ownership.

For an institution that states above its editorials that it is "endeavoring to be candid but fair and helpful in the development of constructive community policy," now is the time to show everyone how it should be done.

David Sonnichsen
Eugene

EDITOR'S NOTE: This letter was submitted earlier to the *R-G* but not published by the time we went to press.

LOCAL SEXPLOITATION

Eugene Weekly is our local newspaper, with a loyal following. Our community eagerly awaits its appearance every Thursday. We ask the staff to use thoughtful policy and discernment in the writing and advertising chosen for publication. Nothing published should make an object of any person, especially those who are the most vulnerable in our community.

The trafficking of minor girls is driven by market demand. Eugene is on a major trafficking route, San Diego to British Columbia. Portland is a major source of minors for trafficking and Eugene is another target. The prime age for entering prostitution is 13.

Is there any reason to encourage a market for sexual exploitation? To run a full-page advertisement that appears to have a very



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