

## We must get on

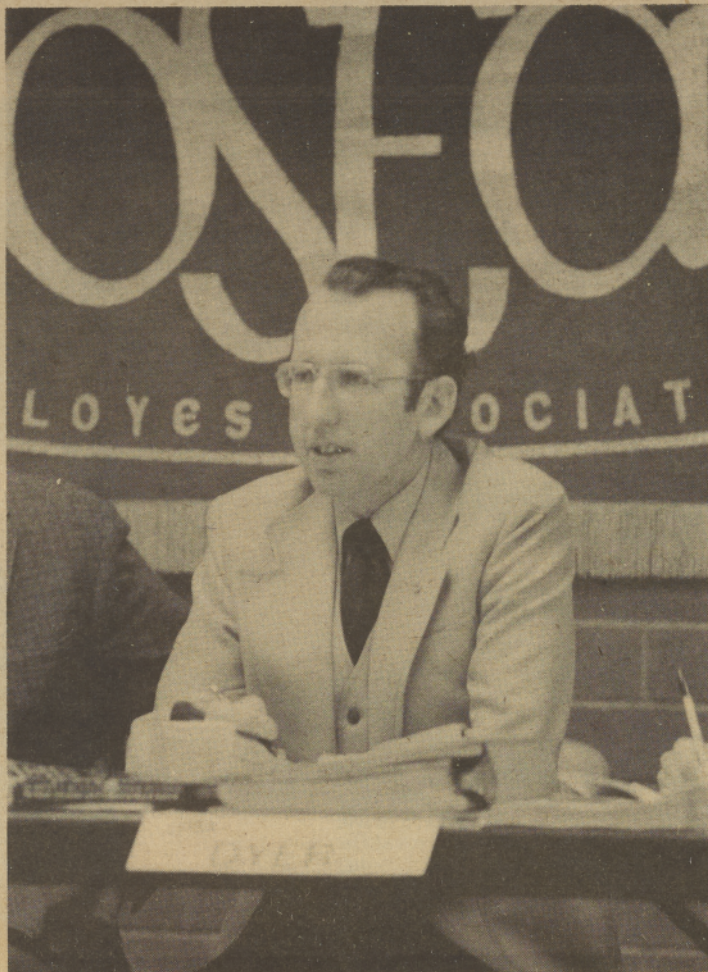
By JIM DYER  
OSEA President

I have spent a lot of time researching and studying the current state of affairs of OSEA. I feel that I must make certain that some things are understood.

First, it must be clear by now to the most casual OSEA member that there is a planned attack being made on their Association. One form of this attack is in the lawsuits brought against the Association, its Board and its Executive Director.

These attacks are obviously designed to drain OSEA of its funds and its staff's and officers' time. Although the Portland office is well-staffed, they are finding it increasingly difficult to resolve grievances. I believe it is because of the continual divisive action of a few who proclaim themselves spokespersons for all of OSEA. It is my considered opinion that the continual innuendo, suits and half-truths of these few are costing each and every bargaining unit employee (both member and fair share payer) dearly by weakening the union -- particularly in Portland. It must be noted that the areas where such divisive action does not occur are stronger in union activity and contracts are more easily enforced.

Why, then, do the people affected allow this? I wish I knew. Maybe fear. Maybe they are truly mislead into believing the best way to correct a problem within an organization is to first totally destroy it. My opinion (and that of many who have examined the record) is that the unchecked harassment by this few will without a doubt destroy the best independent public employees union in this part of the United States.



PRESIDENT JIM DYER

I plead with the members in **behalf of our union** to search their hearts and minds for the best way to help our union stay alive and well.

Demand of those who make charges against OSEA to prove that they have exhausted the internal processes. Examine the motives of those making the charges. Weigh them against the good of the union.

I close these remarks with one final plea to our members.

Stand up for your rights and those of **our** Association. Demand of those giving support to these senseless, destructive actions that they cease **NOW**.

Please give us, the elected leadership on this Board, your support and your confidence. We must get on with the business of collective bargaining together. If not, we can expect **and we will get** nothing but the leavings from the legislative table this session.

## Matter of procedure

It's a matter of procedure.

In the emotional highs which are created by our internal problems, the temptation to play it in the commercial media certainly is there. I believe that has long since been a tragedy which succeeds with the majority of OSEA members. As the graph on pages 4 and 5 of this issue shows there is a direct correlation between the reporting of damaging stories about OSEA and the drop in our membership.

It's become an axiom of OSEA leadership that this kind of publicity ultimately will hurt us at the bargaining table. Apparently management subscribes to that

kind of thinking too. In a newspaper story which appeared on the streets of Salem at the very minute that our negotiators were at the first central bargaining session with management, Executive Department director Jim Bedingfield said, "If there are differences between the union leadership and a large number of state employees there is no way it can't have an effect (on negotiations). I don't see how they (OSEA's internal problems) can help but have some bearing on it (labor negotiations)."

What's the better procedure. Well, not too many weeks down the road it will be time for district and chapter elections.

Changes any member wants to bring in OSEA can be made by changing the leadership in chapter and district elections and by changing the policy at General Council.

The suits and attacks at the leadership which get reported in the media damage all OSEA members and all public employees who look to OSEA for leadership in providing better wages, hours and working conditions. The chart in this issue shows what this has done to our membership numbers and the Bedingfield quotation shows that management is fully aware of it.

-- JIM DYER

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