

Protection needed

The uncertainties connected with the current economic climate, tax structure and mood of the electorate underscore once again the need for strong representation in the areas of collective bargaining and political action.

Three current events are good examples: layoffs in the Oregon Employment Division, termination of three tenured faculty members at Eastern Oregon State College in LaGrande and the passing of California's Proposition 13 and the impetus that passage has given to similar efforts in Oregon.

Layoffs cannot always be avoided as was the case a year ago when OSEA gained acceptance for a system of cutbacks through attrition in the Department of Transportation, rather than laying off workers.

But when they must occur, we can insure that they are completed in an orderly manner that is both logical and equitable. That is done through a strong contract and a strong organization that is a viable force in dealing with management.

The termination of tenured faculty members at EOSC, which is apparently designed to test the validity of Oregon's higher education tenure law, probably wouldn't have happened if a collective bargaining agreement were in effect there.

The EOSC faculty rejected collective bargaining less two years ago and currently have no official representative although about one third are OSEA members. A new election has been requested and will be held sometime this fall.

Proposition 13, the Jarvis-Gann amendment to the California Constitution, limits property taxes in that state to one percent of true cash value. Massive layoffs of public employees were predicted before passage and it appears that thousands of local government workers will be laid off. Governor Jerry Brown immediately announced a freeze on hiring of state employees.

Although the proposed Oregon measure, which may well be on the November general election

ballot, would impose a one and one-half percent limit, drastic measures may be necessary here, too.

The alternative to reduction of governmental services -- and layoffs of public employees -- is an alternative source of funding to replace revenue lost from property taxes.

It is in the political arena that those kinds of decisions are made and the combined strength of OSEA and other public employee unions will be vital in protecting the interests of government employees at all levels.

Strength and credibility are the keys to effectiveness in employee representation at all levels and they are achieved through involvement and collective action.

Signing up non-members, contributing to the CASE political action fund and working for political candidates has never been more important. **YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE. DO IT NOW!** (Larry Oglesby)

Voter turnout

Once again Oregon voters have set their sights on a record -- the second lowest primary voter turnout since World War II, 43.5 percent.

That figure is actually more of a "guesstimate" than fact, because of the increasing numbers of independent voters who can't vote for partisan office in the primaries, and who choose not to vote on the non-partisan and ballot measure races. Also, it has been estimated that as many as 15 to 20 percent of those listed in the poll books have moved, or changed their names or for whatever other reason are not eligible to vote.

While the above mentioned may appear to brighten the primary turnout picture, there is one more figure which actually dims it even further. Over 200,000 eligible Oregonians have never bothered to register.

What does it all mean? Of those who are voting age, less than 40 percent chose to participate. It means that a substantial number of Oregonians just didn't bother -- a pretty sad state.

The excuses for not voting remain fairly constant: "I was out of town," "I had to watch the kids," "My vote won't make any difference anyway. . ." This last excuse is particularly painful. If Richard Nixon had received one more vote per precinct nationwide in 1960, he would have been president 8 years sooner than he was. A school budget once passed in Oregon by a vote of 2 - 0 (which, by the way, means that not even all the board

members voted). Examples like this are everywhere.

The real danger of low turnout is that a minority of Oregonians are now electing governor's, assessing taxes, and otherwise giving government the mandate to "lead."

For OSEA, and other special interests low turnout could increase our influence over the process of government. If we, in coalition with others, turn out in

greater numbers than the state population as a whole, our votes and our endorsements will be worth much more.

This idea may appear calloused and cynical, but with low voter participation it is an increasing reality. For those who complain about the electoral influence of special interests, I have only this to say -

"Didn't vote - Don't Bitch!"
(Bill Wyatt)

Coming events

June 24 -- Board Meeting -- Salem

July 1 -- Deadline for Chapter Elections

July 15 -- Chapter and District Election results due at Headquarters (or postmarked)

July 20-22 -- WAGE Annual Conference, Flagstaff, Arizona

July 21 -- General Council Resolutions due at Headquarters

July 28, 29, 30 -- Chapter President Workshop

August 5 -- Board Meeting -- Salem

August 10, 11, 12 -- AGE General Assembly, New Orleans, Louisiana

September 4 -- Resolutions mailed to General Council Delegates

September 7 -- Names of nominees for statewide office published in the OSEA News

September 16 -- Board Meeting -- Salem

October 18 -- Board Meeting -- Portland

October 19, 20, 21 -- 36th Annual General Council -- Portland

October 21 -- Election of statewide officers and installation of statewide and district officers

OFFICERS

PRESIDENT (Interim)
JON LUCKE
3938 Lancaster Drive NE
Salem 97303

VICE PRESIDENT
JON LUCKE
3938 Lancaster Drive NE
Salem 97303

SECRETARY/TREASURER
FRED M. TOLLESON
3093 Ridgeway Drive SE
Turner 97392

DIRECTORS

1. DALE E. MEYERS
0333 SW Vermont
Portland 97219

2. GARY STRAUSBAUGH
1777 Sonya Drive SE
Salem 97301

3. PATRICK J. O'CONNOR
P.O. Box 157
Talent 97540

4. LYLE SWEARINGEN
6321 Dennis Drive
Klamath Falls 97601

5. JOSEPH P. ROCHE
714 NW Bailey
Pendleton 97801

6. MARTHA E. BROWN
145 NW 16th, Apt. 605
Corvallis 97330

7. RON FOREST
6125 N. Vancouver
Portland 97217

8. G. LOUIS ROBERTS
790 Harrison Street
Astoria 97103

9. WALLY SCHMIDT
4715 Verda Lane NE
Salem 97303

10. D. EARL BEIER
2336 SE Caruthers Street
Portland 97214

11. RUSS HEINEMANN
1220 14th NE
Salem 97301

12. ANNA SUE HOLLISTER
5045 Saratoga
Eugene 97405

COMMITTEES

EMPLOYEE BENEFITS
MARY LASKI
Chairperson
7225 SE 20th Avenue
Portland 97202

EMPLOYEE REPRESENTATION
DAVID GEORGE
Chairperson
410 N 2nd Street
Silverton 97381

MEMBERSHIP RELATIONS
SANDI ADAMS
Chairperson
560 16th SE
Salem 97301

STAFF

MORTON H. SHAPIRO
Executive Director

CHARLENE R. SHERWOOD
General Counsel

THOMAS J. GALLAGHER
Special Assistant

BENTLEY B. GILBERT, JR.
Publications Director

LARRY OGLESBY
Associate Publications Director

ELEANOR M. MEYERS
Personnel Analyst

WILLIAM WYATT
Government Relations
Representative

JOHN LUND
Education and Research Director

KAY MARTENS
Business Manager

BROMLEIGH LAMB
Legal Research

EMPLOYEE REPRESENTATIVES

GORDON WEBB

KENNETH ALLEN

JIM BARNES

PAULA CHINN

PHIL DEAS

F. PETER DeLUCA

MARIA STEINHAEUER

HARRY C. WARD

JUNE WISSMATH

ROGER YOCKEY