

— editorial — A birthday surprise

The year 1976 may mark more than the nation's 200th birthday. It may be the year that many of our personal and civil liberties are violated and rendered useless by Senate Bill One (SB-1). This bill could be the most surprising and disastrous birthday present in history. If projected time schedules hold true, Americans may wake up one day in the Spring of 1976 to find many of the freedoms guaranteed to us by the first ten amendments of the Constitution either so completely destroyed or so radically altered that they would bear little resemblance to the Bill of Rights envisioned by the citizens of 1789.

As frightening as this scenario is, even more frightening is that people are just now coming to realize that this bill even exists. The bill is currently being considered by the Senate Judiciary Subcommittee on Criminal Law. Chairmen John L. McClellan (D-Ark.) and Sen. Roman L. Hruska (R-Neb.) plan to lead the fight for full judiciary committee approval with the bill expected to be reported out of the judiciary committee in January. Hopefully by then the national media will deem the bill newsworthy enough to bring it to the attention of the American people. However, the time to take decisive action is before the bill reaches the floor of the Senate.

The provisions of the bill read like a grotesquely ridiculous version of some "1984" political fantasy. Normally it would be dismissed as the product of a twisted sense of humor except that the proponents of the bill are dead serious in their drive to push it through the Congress. The basis of the bill is the majority report of the Brown Commission. The commission, operating during the Nixon era and the civil disturbances of the 1960's, came down hard on political activists who opposed governmental policy. In their zeal to repress political dissidents, the proponents of the bill want to give Congress the power to authorize warrantless wiretaps and place unconstitutional limits on the dissemination of "classified" information. Under SB-1 severe prison terms of up to life imprisonment and fines of up to \$10,000 could be imposed on persons receiving, passing on or publishing restricted government information to unauthorized sources. In this case the unauthorized sources are the American people. Under this provision anyone associated with the Pentagon Papers case would have been subject to prosecution. These provisions alone would make a farce of the Bill of Rights' freedoms of speech and press.

Defenders of the bill claim some of the provisions in the 753 page document are worthwhile and should be retained and the objectionable sections dropped. They cite the amount of time and energy that has gone into the drafting of the bill. Unfortunately, the interlocking structure of the bill's sections makes it virtually unamendable.

If the options of defeating the bill or amending it are ruled out, the next option is the Supreme Court. In theory this option looks good; in practice it could take years and numerous test cases before the objectionable portions of the bill would, if even then, be ruled unconstitutional.

It is the Supreme Court and its power to interpret the Constitution and not the Constitution that is the supreme law of the land.

At this point what options are left? Clearly we can't afford to let this bill even reach the floor of the Senate. The danger here is that many Senators recognize the need to overhaul our present federal criminal code which suffers from a hodgepodge of overlapping and conflicting statutes. They might be tempted to vote for SB-1 and ignore those provisions that would invalidate the political freedoms essential to the operation of a democracy. Now is the time, while the bill is still in committee, to let our elected representatives know that we still value our freedoms. The best birthday present we could give to ourselves and our nation is to make sure that SB-1 dies in committee.

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Duck Soup
—Oregon Daily Emerald

The Ducks' biggest obstacle

Letters

Bureau funds 'hidden'

The establishment of the ASUO news bureau has a short but nonetheless interesting history. Seven days before its opening day the first hint of the proposed bureau surfaced in a vague memorandum to the various ASUO programs prepared by Don Chalmers. Several programs claimed that they had never seen the memo and a clear majority of the groups at the subsequent program meeting felt that the memo was announcing an established fact.

One working day before its scheduled opening Don Chalmers and Jim Davis announced its inception at the general program meeting. The reaction of the programs to the proposal was overwhelmingly negative. It was generally felt that the ASUO news bureau was an unwanted and unnecessary extension of the ASUO bureaucracy and that it was designed more as a flak-catcher and publicity unit for the IFC and the ASUO executive branch than as a service to the ASUO programs. Programs felt that they were never consulted as to their needs or as to the necessity of the creation of such a bureau.

Of the seventy-five letters that Don Chalmers claimed to have sent there were two replies. Although Chalmers did not volunteer what the content of those replies were, an individual from one of the two groups that did respond was present at the general meeting and protested that their reply was totally negative and that they spoke to him about it in person. Don dismissed her comments as being "only over tea and cake" — in effect, denying the validity of the responses he claimed to solicit. Although there was a clearly expressed need to discuss it further, Davis and Chalmers waved away objections at the general meeting on the grounds that they were too busy to talk about the subject now, that it was an established fact, and "why not give it a year, and if it doesn't work, we'll review it then." In a year, Jim Davis and Don Chalmers and several thousand dollars will be gone.

The fact that the proposed news bureau is being funded out of "hidden" EMU funds by the IFC in the same year that all the programs it claims to serve were subject to severe budget cuts is absurd. The student programs need that money in a useful function, not another ASUO vanity. More than that, the programs need and want to deal personally with the media. Dealing

through a press bureau prevents the contact, experience and flexibility of the programs in working with real people and real problems.

Perhaps we need to spend more than a single week in the creation of a news bureau. Perhaps we might be able to examine the real function and need of such a bureau before we spend that money.

Mark Staley
Assistant Director SEARCH

Crooks write law

A word on Senate Bill One: It was recently pointed out that the authors of this legislation are the same crooks who are now serving time or face charges for Watergate and other related election offenses. The legislation is intended to revise our criminal justice system. This is injustice. A national news commentator even pointed out that this means the crooks are writing the laws. Big deal. So, what else is new?

Barry Hood
Sr. Journalism

Prepare for shock

Remember the good old days when you just had to go to the administration building to get your free copy of the University catalog? Well, prepare for a shock. One can only guess that University President William Boyd is planning to install nickel-a-sheet toilet paper dispensers in the johns.

With this in mind, let us review some of Boyd's recent ideas on spending money. There it is, all laid out for you on the front page of the sports section of the *Register-Guard*, Nov. 18. Boyd says we'll spend money we don't have to increase the football recruiting budget by up to \$35,000. Rest assured, the recruiting program will be "impeccable in terms of procedure," a "model of ethic behavior." But what are we buying with this money? Read the next article, "Mean and messy." We are buying football players who play because "It's a situation where you can make people hurt, and not get in any trouble for it."

Thank you, William.

Stephen James Remington
Physics

Enough for Tumbleweed

'Tis the season to be trusting, blah blah blah blah. Friday I moseyed over to

the EMU (Student Union, as it is sometimes called) for lunch. This proved to be a complicated and altogether very unpleasant endeavor, because I was armed only with checks, no white man's green cash. I had a whole book of new First National Bank of Oregon checks. These were not acceptable to the Main Desk because I did not have a polaroid snapshot of my pretty puss on the back of my plastic ID card. I had the following pieces of identification; Faculty-staff plastic ID card (without photo), Oregon Liquor Control Commission identification card (with photo), Oregon Driver's license, and First National Bank of Oregon Courtesy card (with which I can cash a check even at Safeways without other identification).

Even without the photo on my OLCC card one could hardly go wrong with the description given on it, and on my driver's license, of me: I'm a blond, six-foot tall Neanderthal, with one eye in the middle of my forehead. But the bureaucrats at the main desk would not budge. Complaints by me brought out the boss, who would not talk to me, but simply shoved a statement of their policy under my nose. Sure enough, underlined in red, there it was. I was angry, I was frustrated, I was hungry and I was clearly in violation of the rules and regulations. Caught red-handed, what could I do but mutter "Drat! Foiled again!" and slink off to attempt other heinous crimes, like trying to sneak out of the cafeteria with a paper cup full of ice cubes or with extra pickles on my hamburger? I do not wish to get into an argument over whether or not people should be required to have a photo on the backs of their ID cards. I just think that, with abundant identification I presented (more than enough to cash a check in Tumbleweed, Arizona), I should certainly be able to cash a five dollar check at the EMU across the street.

Stan Sessions
Biology

Compliments offered

My compliments to Brad Lemley on his piece, "Thursday flatfoots homicide from A to Z" appearing in the 11-7-75 ODE.

From this vantage point that article was one of the finer bits of journalism in the Emerald so far this year. I hope there is more to come!

Kirby Garrett
ASUO Vice-President

Friday, November 21, 1975