



DICK WASSON

## a quorum of one

The American revolutionary demand of "no taxation without representation" could well be raised today by the promoters of voting rights for residents of Washington, D.C. The 800,000 residents of the nation's capital paid \$1.5 billion in federal taxes last year — more than the citizens of 11 states.

But a more compelling motto might be, "No death without representation." Two hundred thirty-seven young men from D.C. perished in the Vietnam War, a higher per capita contribution to the Southeast Asian mistake than 46 states, and higher in absolute numbers than 10 states. The fact that those 237 didn't help elect the Congress that sentenced them to die reflects the inequity of the present situation.

Against that backdrop, the Oregon House's failure to join the Senate in OK'ing an amendment to grant representation to Washington is a glaring

error. Rather than approve the resolution, the lower body voted to send the issue to the people.

On an abstract level, the idea of granting voting rights is impossible to oppose. The fundamentals of democracy dictate that each person help decide his or her fate.

Those working against the concept do so out of pragmatic, political considerations.

Many Republicans oppose the plan out of fear that the two representatives and one senator chosen by the District will be Democrats. Some Westerners reject the idea because it means giving additional strength to the Eastern-urban block.

But both arguments skirt the basic question: Should people be forced to sacrifice dollars, time, even life, without some voice in setting the policies that extract those tolls?

The Oregon Senate should refuse to accept the House's version of the resolution, which would force the formation of a conference committee composed of members from both chambers. And the conference committee should route the Senate-approved version of the legislation back to the House and give legislators there a chance to correct themselves.

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Last week, a Portland newspaper ran a long piece on women in the Legislature, pointing to the fact that there are 14 female legislators with a woman on every House committee but one, the article concluded that feminine influence in state government is waxing.

The story also noted that the Senate has no women members and, lacking the

refinements and culture females inherently possess, it is a crusty and vulgar body.

As an example, the article's author mentioned that a major piece of gay rights legislation, SB 844, is informally known by senators as "the cocksucker bill."

If a woman sat in the Senate, continued the story, such vulgarity would not be permitted.

This concept conflicts with one expressed earlier in the article: That women have been unfairly stereotyped, making advancement difficult. It's just as presumptuous to suggest that all women are "nice" and wouldn't lower themselves to such improprieties.

The idea that language acceptable among men has no place in mixed company represents the kind of thinking that kept women out of politics for so long.

## yours

### History 'need'

There appears to be disagreement as to the value or necessity of offering courses in Afro-American history at the University of Oregon. Prof. Kenneth Porter, in his recent contribution to this debate (Emerald, last Thursday), claims that those who demand black history evidence "a good deal of ignorance as to what is currently taught in general American history courses." He supports this charge with the fact that Nat Turner, Booker T. Washington, W.E.B. DuBois, and other black figures are indeed mentioned in Morison and Commager's *The Growth of American Republic* — the standard American history text through most of the fifties and sixties, and the one used in Prof. Porter's own classes.

I was inspired by this appeal to the enlightened nature of American historiography to look again at Morison and Commager's text, which I acquired as a student in the late sixties. I looked not only at the names in the index, but at the substantive discussions of the problems of blacks. Here is what I found in the section on slavery:

"The Negro, as Dr. Albert Schweitzer has observed in Africa, is not lazy but casual, not sullen but merry; yet always expedient."

"Owing to his capacity for hard work, in addition to his adaptive qualities and irrepressible high spirits, the Negro was a great success as a slave."

"While the average white European or North American disliked the Negro as such, the Southern slave-owner understood and loved him as a slave; Southern gentleness still love him 'in his place.'"

After telling us that the majority of white masters were "kind and humane" (527), Morison and Commager proceed to describe life on a Southern plantation, whose main feature in their eyes was the aggravation caused to slaveholders by the Negro's "casual" ways. "Such a life was a continuous exercise of

tact, self-control, and firmness; yet the condition of unlimited power over a race with such exasperating habits was a constant temptation to passion. "The Southern gentleman," they write, "would tolerate any amount of shirking and evasion that would drive any Northern employer frantic." (533)

(The quotes are all from Vol. I of the fifth edition, the one employed by Prof. Porter. A casual glance through the sixth edition shows that some but no means all of this objectionable material was deleted.)

I suspect that if Morison and Commager had had the opportunity to take a good Afro-American history course when they were in college, the image of slavery that they imparted to generations of college students might have more resembled reality and less resembled "The Song of the South." Judging at least from the authority that Prof. Porter himself cites, there is good reason to conclude from what has been taught in past history courses that the need for black history is a real one.

**Cheyney Ryan**  
professor, philosophy

### 'Death Wish?'

In the past few years I have heard new things being said about college students. It has been said they no longer have any idealism, they would rather work for the system than fight it, they only care about their own self-interests, etc. If this is true then it seems the student body is guilty of negligence. It's extremely difficult, if not outright impossible, to concentrate on your own goals, when you've suddenly received an induction notice telling you to report next week for two years of active duty.

Is it possible that the lessons of the 60s and the Vietnam War have been so soon forgotten and the only things to come out of the whole anguished era are "The Deerhunter" and "Coming Home"?

The House Armed Services Committee is considering a bill which would revive the draft. I



believe enacting a draft or draft registration during peacetime is tantamount to involuntary servitude which is contrary to the 13th amendment.

Unless you have a death wish I strongly urge you to get involved now in opposing the draft legislation in Congress. Write your legislators on the state and federal level and get involved with CORD (Coalition Opposing Registration and Draft). Make yourselves heard!

**Dave Isenberg**  
205½ E. 23rd St.

### 'Why not Idi?'

President Boyd's recommendation for Victor Atiyeh to speak at the June commencement seems so common-place in comparison with other speakers we could have. I am sure that the decision to ask Governor Atiyeh to speak at the commencement did not come easily since other enlightening speakers range anywhere from Richard Nixon to Rev. Moon. As President Boyd says, "We can be proud that Victor Atiyeh, and many others of disparate views, use this campus for the expression of their positions."

After all, if Boyd is right that we should take pride in a speaker, regardless of his views, i.e., look up to him merely because of his prestigious position, then my only

complaint is that we couldn't get Idi Amin to speak.

**Aaron Johanson**  
Junior, English

### RCYB debate

The recent spontaneous debate between visiting high school students and members of the Revolutionary Communist Youth Brigade may have been quite educational for the high school students. Perhaps we should keep the RCYB around precisely for its educational value.

Two of the best things I learned in college were that there are an infinite number of possible opinions in this world and none of us has to believe blindly in what someone else says. That second part is true even if that "someone" seems important, intelligent or frightening.

To say "my dad hates communists," doesn't take any reasoning power. To run around with a raised fist shouting "Death to so-and-so" is equally senseless. Last Friday's confrontation probably helped to show our visitors how very little relationship there is between a shout-down (or by extension a war) and real thinking.

**Nola Shurtleff**  
Secretary,  
Comparative Literature

### Correction

A typographical error and omission of material partly garbled a letter in Tuesday's Emerald written by Prof. Joseph Fisman on Holocaust commemorations. The affected portions of the letter should have read:

"For well over 30 years now Jews the world over, including former ghetto fighters, veterans of partisan warfare and concentration camps have marked the day of April 19 with a lighting of six candles."

The final paragraph should read: "Finally, one wonders why the Pioneer Mother was chosen as the campus site for the candlelighting ceremony of that evening. If the choice was made for reasons of symbolism, one wonders as to the kind of symbols involved. Of grieving universal motherhood? Redemption? Victory? Victory over whom and for what? Perhaps some deeper probing into one's consciousness and soul and the implications of our acts are in order before we act."