

Time is running out for ERA ratification

There's a cliché among editorial writers — when faced with that blank page, there's always the ERA.

That's the Equal Rights Amendment and not Earned Run Average — although, the ERA of the ERA has been disappointing.

But now the battle to ratify ERA is entering its final stages, and, we hope, its final ratification by a majority of states.

That's been the insurmountable barrier for the amendment. To date 35 states have approved the amendment, just three shy of the number needed to have the amendment become part of the Constitution. The deadline for state legislatures to approve the ERA measure is June 30. That's not very far in the future. Supporters have openly admitted time is running out.

Support has come from various enclaves as diverse as the Mormon stronghold of Utah — 30 percent of Mormons canvassed signed a petition supporting ERA — to a pair of former first ladies Betty Ford and Lady Bird Johnson. And presently, the National Organization of Women has launched a multimillion dollar ad campaign and canvassing tactic that they believe will succeed.

"The smart political money is against us," NOW President Eleanor Smeal reportedly said. But she added, "I can't imagine — I literally can't imagine — our nation turning its back on progress for people and for women."

Unfortunately, Smeal doesn't have to imagine this nation turning its back on the ERA — it has had its indifferent side to the ERA since 1977.

The problem is less than 20 words — only a few more words than the free-press clause of the Constitution. Yet, it is equally as important as the free-press clause.

"Equality of rights under the law shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any state on account of sex."

The wording has never seemed that ambiguous — nor that revolutionary — nor indicative of all the upheaval its opponents say we will reap.

The latest tactics in the ratification battle include a campus campaign, expanded door-to-door canvassing project, a letter-writing appeal, several television spots and a movie.

The emphasis of the campus campaign will be

in the Northeastern United States. Some 25 campuses will be the site of organizational rallies in a six week period.

The campaign will extend to the anti-ERA states, Florida, Oklahoma, North Carolina, Missouri, and Illinois, in an effort to mobilize grass-roots support for the ERA. This grass-roots support will then put pressure on each state's legislature.

The nationwide television campaign features a commercial spot of a smoky room with wheeling and dealing politicians. The voice-over (spoken by Smeal) says, "a handful of politicians in a handful of states are blocking the ERA."

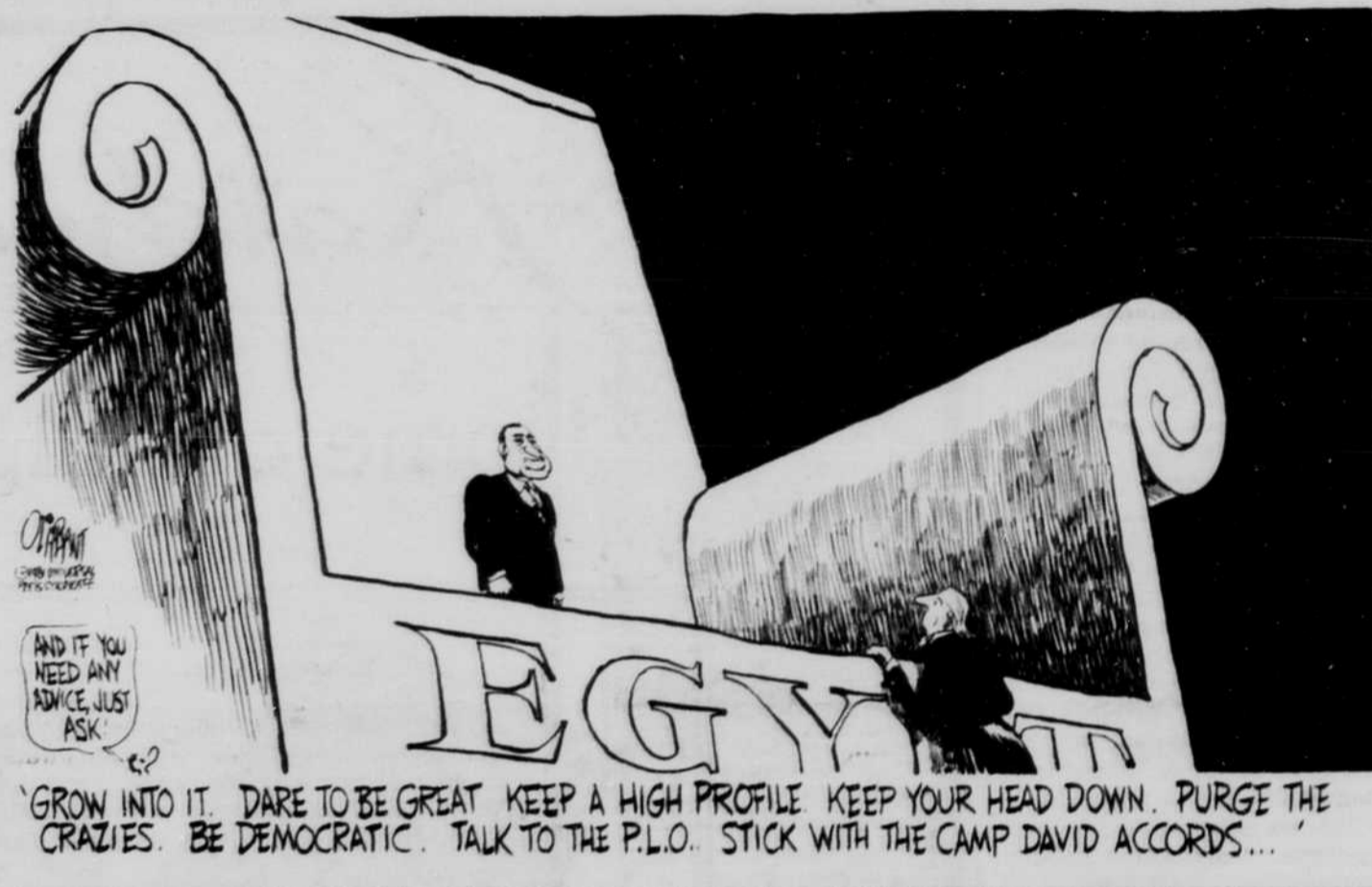
This is a devastatingly accurate statement. Even more evident of the handful of politicians blocking the ERA is the conservative swing that

swept state legislatures in the last election. Pres. Ronald Reagan — the conservative icon — snidely says he favors "the E and the R but not the A."

Reagan should realize that the E and the R carry no weight without the A. It may be that he does.

Smeal says she can't imagine this nation turning its back on the ERA — nor can we when rationally considering the validity of the amendment. Yet, since when has rational thinking and validity been a criteria for state legislatures?

Ratification in those key three states will not be easily gained. There is stubborn opposition from a motley of odd and not-so-odd right-wing groups. All the might of NOW, and all the truths about ERA have yet to dislodge the legislators. The big push is now — or never.



the American culture, it is designed for the benefit and advancement of interest of its members, and that's its strongest point.

Alan W. Wright
Pi Kappa Alpha

Hypocrisy?

It was most interesting to read in the Oct. 12 Emerald that former University Pres. Bill Boyd thought the Pacific Northwest Resource Center should be moved off campus because the University is unable to have sufficient control over its own programs.

I'm sure we wouldn't want to make our beloved Bill Boyd into a hypocrite. Using his own standards, if a program usurps University control in such areas as the selection of instructors and administrative personnel, the maintenance of supervisory control over the actions of these personnel, and monetary control over the program it should be moved off campus.

In this regard I must regretfully point out that over at 1679 Agate Street there is a white two story building by the name of ROTC which has those exact characteristics.

For example, with regard to the selection of instructors and administrative personnel the Army does the original screening from among its own personnel. The University has the power not to accept any particular candidate but it must ALWAYS choose from candidates selected by the Army. It should be quite evident this selection procedure insures that no candidate deemed not acceptable (loyal, dedicated, etc.) by the military will ever be an instructor or administrator in the ROTC program.

In the interest of a single standard it is necessary that ROTC be relocated to a location off campus. Otherwise we'd have to conclude that Boyd has been indulging in some selective fibbing. Of course that might explain those "lines of nervous tension" which creased his face during his tenure here.

David Isenberg
Senior, international studies

Moslem error

Who is Jesus Christ? I recently read a pamphlet distributed by the Moslem Students Society which purports to answer that question.

According to the pamphlet, Jesus was "a poor carpenter...of the class of the slaves who raised a cry equally against the Roman imperial power and the debauched lackey anti-popular aristocracy...represented by the scribes and the Pharisees."

In addition, the pamphlet states that he was "a voice crying in the wilderness" whose "prophetic mission" was to call for a "revolt against imperialism" and to spread the message that "the meek shall inherit the earth."

The above statements are utter bohunk. The author has obviously never read the Gospels or, if he has, did not understand what he was reading.

First, Jesus was not the "voice of one crying in the wilderness." That was John the Baptist. (Mt.3:1-3)

Second, there is no evidence in the Gospels that Jesus ever attacked imperial Rome. In fact, Jesus healed the slave of a Roman centurion. Jesus did not denounce the centurion as an "imperialist pig" nor did he berate him for owning slaves. On the contrary, Jesus praised the Roman for his great faith! (Mt.8:5-13)

Third, Jesus did not come simply to teach the "Golden Rule" or to proclaim that "the meek shall inherit the earth."

Jesus, contrary to the claims made about him by other religions or by modern "spiritual leaders," was not just another prophet of God. He, in fact, claimed to be nothing less than God — the Creator of the Universe — in the flesh. (Jn.8:57-59; Jn.1:1-4;14)

His mission was not to call for class struggle, but to call men to repent of their sins and to turn to him for forgiveness. (Mk.1:14; Lk.5:22-24)

Finally, the heart of Jesus' message was not the "meek shall inherit the earth," rather it was: "I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the father but by me." (Jn.14:6)

Tom Visoky
Senior, journalism

letters

Greek society

In colleges and universities all over the country, the greek system means different things to different people. Some people look at fraternities and sororities with contempt and ridicule, while others look at them with respect and pride. In actuality, the greek system is organized in such a way as to reflect American society. This microcosm of our culture combines the basic principles of opportunity, friendship, and individual growth, to create living organizations that influence college campuses all across the country.

The greek system provides limitless opportunities for an interested individual. A fraternity or sorority gives a person the chance to test their ability at leadership, whether it means becoming one of the officers, executive council members, or committee chairmen. Even those who are not involved in the administrative aspects of the system are given the opportunity to learn from the vast pools of talent and expertise that its various members have to offer.

Of course, the most important opportunity is the chance to make true and lasting friends. Obviously, as in any living organization, you won't like everyone you're living with, but the fact that you're under the same roof with the same daily interests and obligations helps to form a common bond between individuals. This bond often is a lasting one that will live on long after we receive our diplomas and go out into the "real world."

And even though not every person in the greek system appreciates the value of the friendship and opportunities they are receiving, they still grow from it. By cooperating with one another, and by being responsible, a person can find personal growth and self satisfaction.

Needless to say, the greek system is not for everybody. It is like any organization in our society, it has advantages and its drawbacks. But like most systems in