

# Reagan's policies favor discrimination

Is the Reagan administration trying to erase years of progress in eliminating discrimination in education and employment? The U.S. Commission on Civil Rights and the Leadership Conference on Civil Rights have accused the Reagan administration of just that.

What has lead this civil rights commission to such a conclusion? In a 17-page letter sent to Pres. Ronald Reagan the civil rights commission points to a number of specifics that support their contention.

- They cite the waiving of "established guidelines that have the force of law" in settling a dispute with North Carolina over desegregating its public colleges and universities.

- They point to the announcement that the Department of Education is considering dropping a requirement that colleges that receive federal funds must file a form assuring the government that they will comply with civil-rights law.

- They note the failure to insure in its proposals to change the Department of Education to a foundation, that adequate authority to enforce civil-rights laws would remain in the new agency.

- They see the administration's attempts to narrow the coverage of Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, which bars sex bias in federally assisted education programs.

The civil rights commission, in its letter to Reagan, wrote that despite a measure of progress, "some school systems still are illegally segregated. Other policies and practices rooted in past and still persisting prejudices continue to deny minorities, women, and other victims of discrimination the equal education they need to compete for their fair share of employment opportunities."

The civil rights commission accused the Justice Department of abdicating its responsibility to enforce the laws enacted by Congress.

They charged that political pressures by conservative Congressmen had caused the Justice Department to change its legal interpretations of a number of policies, which included abandoning the 11-year-old policy of barring tax exemptions

for racially discriminatory schools and colleges. The Reagan administration had to hastily retract that policy change after a public outcry.

And despite a recent Supreme Court case which approved the use of voluntary affirmative-action plans, including hiring goals and timetables — the civil-rights commission said Assistant Attorney General William B. Reynolds had "announced unambiguously the department's intention to abandon... goals and timetables as a remedy to correct systemic discrimination in employment discrimination suits."

There are other instances of the Reagan

administration's de-emphasis of existing civil-rights laws and a marked lack of proposals for future civil rights legislation. The Voting Rights Act of 1965 is still wallowing in Congress in need of reenactment and the attention of a concerned president. The civil-rights commission is correct in their view the Reagan administration is intent on breaking the back of civil-rights laws.

Without a strong federal commitment to enforce the current laws and enact future laws civil-rights and its promise of equal educational and employment opportunities for all will be ground under the dirty boot of discrimination.



## letters

### Bigotry

I was truly heartened to read Michael Patrick Lysne's letter of Feb. 26. It is rare to see such hardcore bigotry anymore, these days. Extremists of both the right and left have proven unfortunately loath in recent times to make statements strongly in favor of fervent prejudice. I am, therefore, happy to see that there are still persons who harbor deep-seated, heartfelt prejudices and are not afraid to express their feelings openly.

I was perplexed by the failure of Lysne to attack the Jewish Student Union, however. Surely anti-semitism deserves to be ranked alongside racism, sexism, and bias based on sexual preference. I can only assume that this omission was due to a lack of thoroughness on Lysne's part.

There is one criticism I have

for Lysne's letter, though. While prejudice deserves to be eluded wherever and whenever found, there is still no excuse for a poor vocabulary. So Michael, not that I am suggesting you resort to niceties, but next time you call a fag a fag why don't you consider perhaps instead calling him a fruit, homo, queer, uranist, fairy, nance, pansy, poove or a queen.

David Dodds  
Sophomore, history

### Waterheads

I felt in the letter-writing mood today, so here's my contribution. Waterheads one and all should send at least one letter of incredulous disbelief to an elected official. They are dismantling our system of education. Squeal and whine or we shall all be forced to pump gas or some equally blue-collar drudgery. Also, why is the

Reagan administration pumping \$33 billion into the military to protect our Middle East oil funding for energy R & D, namely shale oil refineries which even Exxon claims could produce \$35 a barrel oil. Oh, excuse me. All energy research is being cut except nuclear development. Reagan's a fun guy.

David Triebwasser

### Neanderthal

Dave Gutierrez, who advised women to accept remarks about their bodies as flattery in his letter Feb. 23, may have a heart of gold, but his neanderthal logic needs to be responded to.

The reversed situation that he used to make his point would only be appropriate in an egalitarian society. Unfortunately, we do not live in such a society. In a society where a woman earns \$.59 for every dollar that a

man earns, where the fear of rape is a constant threat, and where women have no power, unsolicited remarks about our appearances do not suggest an interest in our minds, they are a form of psychological rape.

Sure, I need reassurance, I like to feel good about myself too. But remarks about my body do not celebrate my strength and intelligence, they remind me of my weakness in this male society.

I do not hate men. But any man that I am involved with must be willing to work to erase these injustices. He must see that these inequalities are not only detrimental to women, but to society as a whole.

So if you want to be my friend, not my oppressor, work to change society. Do not embrace the status quo. Fight for women, not against us.

Until we live in an egalitarian world, your "flattery" will be

interpreted as mental rape. It will be seen as a threat to our survival. It will fill me with disgust, and anger, and fear.

Stacey Neble  
Senior, english

### letters policy

The Emerald will accept and attempt to print all letters containing fair comment on issues, ideas and topics of interest to the University community.

The letters **must** be limited to 250 words, signed and the identification of the writer must be verified when the letter is turned in to The Emerald offices, EMU 300.

The Emerald reserves the right to edit any letter for length, style, or content. Publication is dependent upon space available.

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