

20-day voter cutoff will eliminate voters

Oregon is the only state that allows voters to register on the day of an election. But the furor over voter-registration fraud in November's Wasco County elections has caused a majority of our state legislators to push for a revision of registration laws. (Charges of fraudulently registered pro-Rajneesh and anti-Rajneesh Wasco county voters circulated during November).

The House State and Federal Affairs Committee is considering three bills that would alter the state's registration laws. Two of the bills, sponsored by House Republicans, would establish a 20-day cutoff prior to an election. The first bill — House Joint Resolution 5 — is a constitutional amendment that would create the 20-day cutoff. The second — House Bill 2066 — would do the same thing by amending the Oregon statutes.

The Democratic alternative, which is sponsored by Secretary of State Barbara Roberts, would establish a four-day cutoff with a requirement that voters provide proof of residency if they register between the 12th and fourth day before an election.

Roberts believes it is inevitable that the Legislature will establish a new cutoff period because of the potential for fraud that exists within the present system. We believe the Democratic-sponsored bill — House Bill 2952 — is the best of the three plans.

In 1982 about 100,000 Oregonians registered to vote in the 20 days prior to the state's gubernatorial election; in 1984 about 75,000 people registered to vote during this same period. The majority of these registrants were people who had moved and forgotten to re-register, new state citizens unaware of Oregon's election laws, and working people who did not have the time to register at the local board of elections. Roberts fears that if the 20-day cutoff were to become state law most of these people would be denied the opportunity to vote.

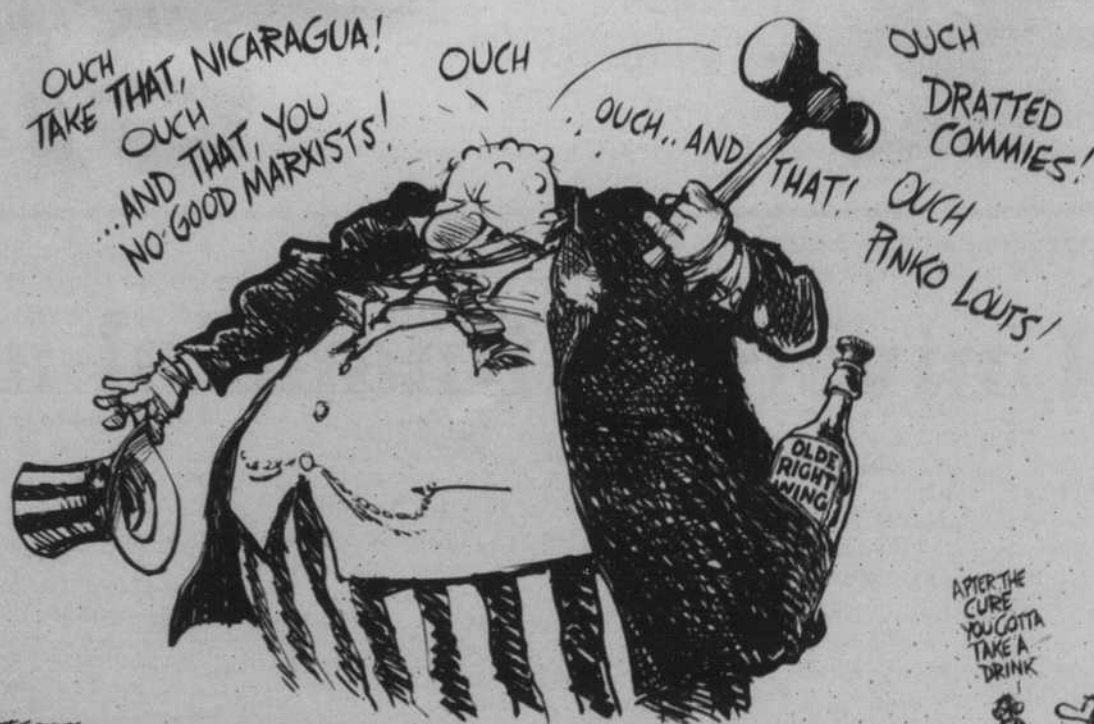
State Rep. Randy Miller, R-Lake Oswego, argues that the 20 day cut-off would give local elections officials the opportunity to verify the validity of registration forms. Other supporters of this plan argue it is inconvenient for elections officials to process registration forms during the three-week period prior to an election. But Roberts — Oregon's highest elections official — argues her plan will ensure that voters are legally registered.

Roberts is convinced that a 20-day cutoff would be ruled unconstitutional. She cites a 1972 Tennessee case in which a court ruled that a state cannot disenfranchise voters simply for "administrative convenience." She says her four-day cutoff will give elections officials adequate time to process registration forms.

State officials have the responsibility to ensure the sanctity of the elections process. They must identify fraudulently registered voters and guarantee the legitimacy of the elections process.

But this does not mean they have the authority to prevent eligible voters from casting a ballot simply because they registered during an inconvenient period. Our political process will only survive as long as all eligible voters have the opportunity to vote. To deny anyone this opportunity is a violation of a trust that all government officials must fulfill.

It is ironic that the sponsors of the 20-day cutoff argue for the vote-by-mail ballot because they believe it would increase voter participation. But at the same time they support a registration revision that would disenfranchise thousands of Oregonians.



UNCLE SAM'S SURE-FIRE HANGOVER CURE

letters

Some comment

Two letters to the Emerald on April 29 deserve comment.

First: Steve Richkind must have either been trying to be cute or apparently he didn't understand the satirical purpose of Students for Bestiality.

Dan Goulet never advocated "fornification with sheep." The group's function was to expose the fact that the only thing a particular deviation requires in the attempt to gain acceptance is political organization. And how anybody could say a display stating, "Bestiality—right sex, wrong species. Homosexuality—right species, wrong sex," promotes interspecies sex—any more than it promotes same sex relations—is beyond me. The purpose was to make people think about value clarification issues.

Second: Jack Stranton's attempt to imply Christians view women merely as "sperm receptacles" is blatantly false. Christians see men and women as special creations and life as being part of our growth and maturation process. Reproduction is a natural and necessary part of life just as eating, sleeping and breathing, but no single function is singled out as the sole function of existence. All are required for human life to exist — and all are natural.

Nobody could argue that heterosexual sex was anything but natural but there's no way anyone can justify the rectum being used as a sperm recep-

tacle. And apparently 98 percent of American women fail to see anything desirable or natural about allowing another woman to salivate on or otherwise play around with their vulva either.

Michael Cross
Senior
History/Political Science

An honest man

The letter to the editor written by Dan Goulet (ODE, May 1), seems to advocate political extremes.

Either you blindly love the United States or you absolutely hate it.

What about us folks who feel blandly at ease with this country? What sort of political relationship should we have with our country anyway?

The time has come for me to reveal the answer to this burning question: treat your country as your friend.

You do not stand idly by while your friend wreaks havoc amongst his/her friends. Nor do you berate your friend, either to his/her face or behind his/her back.

You feel a fondness, perhaps even love toward your friends, and yet you also care enough about them to try to help them improve themselves. Because my country is composed of my friends, it is natural for me to think of my country as my friend.

Well, this is good and fine (and redundant), but what about those people in my country who I don't view as friends, whom I may even consider as enemies?

Do I avoid them like I would a bill collector? Or perhaps I might work to undermine them.

I must admit, I don't know the answer to this second burning question. (Another first in the Emerald letters section, someone actually has admitted this).

You'll simply have to find out for yourself.

Dean Livelybrooks
Physics/Geology

It's a mistake

The Incidental fee committee decision to reduce the Outdoor Program's budget is partly based on the fallacy that community participation is a "free ride."

Program participation is a "cooperative" effort. The cost for activity involvement is split equally among all participants.

The program resources available for use (i.e. wilderness/outdoor instructional literature, maps) are non-consumable products that remain at the Outdoor Program.

Community participation takes nothing away from students; on the contrary, it reduces individual activity costs, adds a greater diversity of outdoor expertise, which lead to safer trips, and adds to the "whole" fun and enthusiasm of the programs.

To penalize the O.P. for being open to a more economical, diverse, and safe program is a mistake which hurts students and non-students alike.

Richard Halpern
Springfield

Assembly line

New students
Here they come
More on the conveyor belt
Soon they'll study the same things I did
If all goes right,
They'll look like me and talk like me
in four short years
They look so excited
The reflection on their smiling white teeth is death

Before four years is over
most will die —
They will learn to think —
Like I did
For a meaningless search for meaning
And a piece of paper
that proves they know
all those things which carry no meaning

Excuse me while I wallow
in disgust, self pity, enjoying it
all the while
and excuse me now
while I vomit through this smile
David Menache
Graduating on the bandwagon

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