

Editorial

Immigration law helps illegal alien problem

After five years of legislative battles, the immigration reform bill signed into law earlier this month is a significant effort to confront the problem of illegal aliens in this country.

The bill provides widespread amnesty for aliens who have been in the country for some time and enacts tough criminal and civil penalties for employers who hire illegal aliens.

The new legislation corrects an anomaly in previous legislation, which made it illegal for aliens to enter the country and find work without the proper papers but did not make it illegal for employers to hire these people.

The current bill affects both employers and aliens, giving aliens who have been in the country since 1982 temporary, then permanent, residence and increasing the criminal and civil penalties for employers who hire illegal aliens.

This allows those aliens who have been living in this country for some time the opportunity to come into the open and begin to enjoy the legal protections other workers receive.

This will cut down on exploitation of these workers because they will be able to seek legal assistance in disputes over wages, hours or working conditions.

On the other hand, the flow of illegal aliens will be stemmed because employers will be required to document their employees' residence status; failure to do so or hiring an illegal alien can result in stiff fines or imprisonment in the case of a "pattern of practice" of knowingly hiring illegal aliens.

The bill helps employers by expanding the "H-2" foreign worker program, which mostly applies to farm workers, allowing employers to request the secretary of labor to allow foreign workers to fill positions after domestic workers have been sought.

Thus, the bill brings the hiring of foreign workers above board, and eliminates much of the possibility of exploitation of foreign workers.

Aliens who have been in the country since 1982 are granted amnesty, and temporary residence status. After 18 months they can become permanent residents.

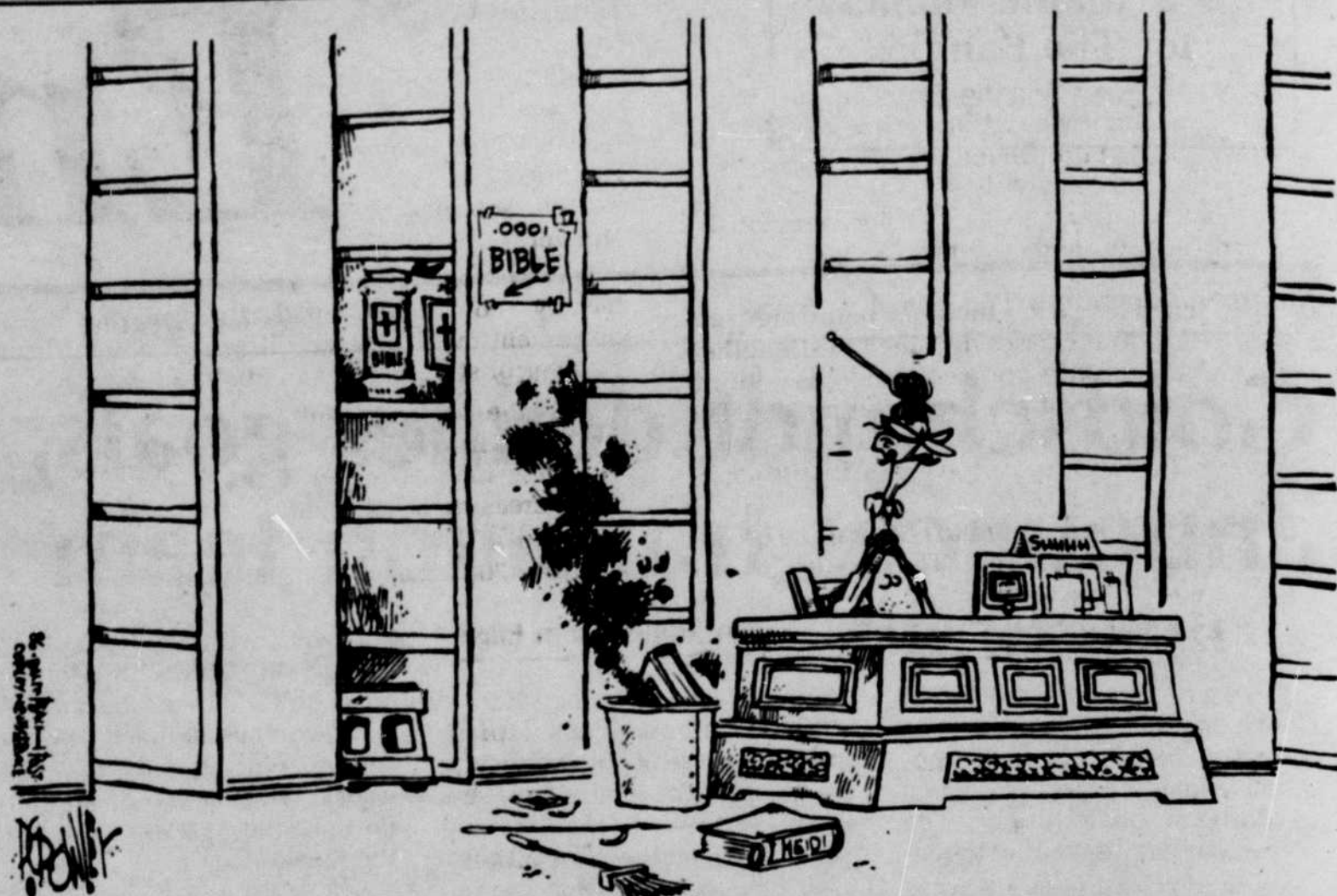
However, they can't become full citizens until five years after becoming permanent residents and cannot receive most forms of public assistance until then, except in special cases. This is an important aspect of the bill because allowing them to stay in the country is important, but for every non-citizen who receives public assistance, a citizen cannot.

The legislation creates an Office of Special Counsel to investigate and prosecute any charges of discrimination, and prohibits employers from discriminating against legal residents who are not yet citizens.

The bill also has a specific shut-off mechanism for employer sanctions if Congress determines that the sanctions have resulted in discrimination or have unduly burdened employers.

The legislation gives \$1 billion a year for four years to reimburse states as they apply the new law. The extra costs go to increased enforcement and verification of residence status.

Undoubtedly, the bill will be difficult to administer at first, and many unforeseen problems will arise. However, it is a necessary first step in resolving the problems associated with illegal aliens in this country.



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Letters

Empty air

I usually try to ignore misinformed and hostile letters like M. Francisconi's on Nov. 12, but I believe that the message he conveys is an important one to dispute.

First, I see no evidence that Leisha Sanders' letter was an "intentional and malicious" attempt to libel the man in the cemetery, rather it was a justified attempt to alert women to the real, possible dangers of rape or other physical violence on this campus.

Secondly, his views of her concern as a "high school gossip session" perpetuates the myth that a woman's valid responses to a man looking at her in a threatening manner are either trivial or a concerted, devious effort to harm a man's reputation "for kicks."

Why is this man living in the cemetery and how is his life being threatened? I think that Leisha Sanders' life is much more threatened by Francisconi's promise of legal actions against her.

If libel is being thrown around, the largest chunk was just hurled by M. Francisconi — hopefully, he'll soon discover that he is only throwing some hostile, empty air.

Gail Albers
Graduate student

We're strong

I am writing this letter in response to Julie Paul's article "Courting University women" Nov. 11.

In this article I was misquoted as saying "girls." I want it to be made very clear that under no circumstances did I say "girls." I find that term very offensive and told Julie Paul that in our interview.

I said that the court system and its tryouts objectified women and that it's demeaning.

It is true that women have the right to choose whether or not to go through the try outs, but it is the so-called "prestige" and pressure from the system that forces them into it.

I find it hard to believe that people honestly believe this is good, clean fun for women, when it is obvious that the bad far outweighs the good. And as for women being responsible for putting out a man's fire... that's a crock of — if I ever heard one.

Women, we are strong human beings, and if we constantly let pressure get to us and subject ourselves to these types of situations, things will never change.

Men are not our protectors — we must stand up and protect ourselves!

Becky Bilyeu
Co-director Women's Resource and Referral Center

Poor focus

I am very disappointed by what appears to be an incorrectly focused attitude on the part of the Emerald regarding the recent break-in by the Animal Liberation Front.

The editorial (Abandonment of animals... Nov. 11) especially tries to reduce and trivialize the impact of the animal rights movement to seven rabbits supposedly found in a field near Roseburg and laments over the possible fate of the other animals taken. Where is your editorial outrage over the thousands of animals tortured to death in the laboratory?

"Atrocities," writes George Bernard Shaw, "are not less

atrocities when they occur in laboratories and are called medical research."

I do not know who the individuals are who belong to the ALF, but everything I have heard and read about this organization only illustrates their dedication; their absolute purity of motive in rescuing animals who face a fate truly worse than death.

I have every reason to believe the animals rescued would have had homes provided for them long before they left the lab.

As for the seven rabbits — we've all been told they have been spirited away to another institution "for safe keeping," so we cannot actually verify their existence. But even if seven rabbits actually were released, for whatever reason, that still leaves 143 other animals who are certainly better off than they were before.

B. Reimers Kang
Eugene

Reflections

I found out today that the Greeks first created education for a leisure pursuit. That is exactly what I'm doing, rather than bowling, golf or playing bridge. Education for leisure — my recreation, hmmm. I love it.

Later that same day... Just got off my 18-speed Schwinn. Love flying in the wind and sun along the shimmering river from Springfield. Golden leaves giving one last fling to pave the yellow brick road, winding through the cottonwood and maple.

Me in my new light-blue, hand-knit sweater. No coat in November. Joy! Life! Excitement! It's cold, but I'm not. Sweet smells of nature. Just flew under a train. Careful! The leaves are slippery — yesterday a guy crashed, going way too fast.

So I'm a grandma now. Wisdom completes its circuit. Experience. I'm on to their secret. Somebody is smiling — sharing my exhilaration.

Carolyn Harper
Junior

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