

Editorial

AIDS discrimination bill needs approval

A bill that would ban discrimination against individuals afflicted with the AIDS virus was denounced by the Reagan administration on Sept. 21, clearly demonstrating its unenlightened attitude toward dealing with AIDS victims.

By opposing this bill, the administration is essentially saying discrimination against AIDS-afflicted individuals is morally permissible, a stance that is consistent with conservative resentment toward homosexuals and other members of the high-risk community, such as drug addicts and Haitian immigrants.

The bill, introduced by Rep. Henry A. Waxman, D-Calif., and supported by Sen. Edward Kennedy, D-Mass., would guarantee that results from an AIDS test would remain confidential.

Dr. Otis R. Bowen, the U.S. secretary of health and human services, announced the administration's opposition to the bill, claiming that confidentiality is not needed, as people may decide not to be tested if they fear public disclosure of the results.

Controlling the often-fatal disease, however, depends on testing people who are potentially afflicted. Not enacting this bill will create a disincentive against being tested because individuals might fear unauthorized disclosure of the results, prompting potential carriers of the virus to go underground.

As the AIDS carriers are forced underground, the virus will be also, thus remaining undiscovered, untreated, and hence unabated.

In order to facilitate voluntary testing of as many potentially afflicted people as possible — a strategy that will help curb the spread of the disease as well as treat those already affected by the virus — the Reagan administration should affirm, rather than oppose, the bill.

The anti-discrimination bill also would forbid discrimination against "an otherwise qualified individual in employment, housing, public accommodations, or government services" on the basis of affliction or alleged affliction with the AIDS virus.

Cases in which an individual with the AIDS virus has been discriminated against have surfaced increasingly throughout the United States in the work place, the housing market and the public schools. Moreover, this discrimination has been founded on fear; fear that has been perpetuated by a lack of information and education on the disease.

By opposing this anti-discrimination bill, the administration not only will escalate the degree of AIDS-related discrimination, but also will affirm the fear that feeds such discrimination.

Bowen also argued that such anti-discrimination measures should be implemented on the local as opposed to national level; however, AIDS related discrimination is a national problem demanding a national solution.

Although this bill is only a drop in the bucket in the fight against AIDS and the social problems the disease entails, it will help overcome the threat that AIDS poses to the national population.

The nation not only needs a nationally enforced anti-discrimination law, but also a stepped-up, nationally funded educational program to inform people of the facts about AIDS for the purpose of overcoming misinformation and fear.



"The Contras need enough additional money to attack here, here, here... here, here, here and... here in case the peace process fails."

Letters

Peace Corp

When we talk of the developing countries around the world, what images come to mind? The bloated stomachs of malnourished children in Africa? Archaic transportation and communication systems? The lack of basic human resources such as schools and health clinics? Rampant diseases such as polio, malaria and leprosy?

Well, let me tell you from first hand experience that these scenes are all true.

Since my return from a two-year experience in the Peace Corp in 1985, I have devoted countless hours to bringing my experience back home. As a returned volunteer I have a responsibility to inform the American public of some of the harsh realities that I encountered in the Republic of Niger, West Africa.

In the heart of Sahel, this country (the size of Oregon and California) is ravaged by disease, famine and drought. But this is nothing new.

What is new is the hope that the present situation is curable. Presently, there are aid agencies working along side the host country nationals making pro-

gress in deterring those menacing inflictions.

And one of those agencies is the Peace Corps.

No, the Peace Corps doesn't solve problems of the grand scale. But in small tidbit ways the Peace Corps does aid the most needy of the developing countries.

I urge all juniors, seniors and graduate students to contact my office to explore the possibilities of how you can make a difference.

The application process often takes as long as nine months before an overseas assignment can be arranged so its never too early to begin. And for the freshman and sophomores, now's a good time to begin gathering information.

Jake DuDell
Peace Corp Coordinator
Hendricks Hall, Room 129

Fine mess

Stan Laurel, recently overheard chatting with his old chum, Lt. Col. Oliver "Northell" Hardy:

"Yer know, Ollie... my wife Betty once told me that honesty is the best politics. Well, all I can say is: Here's another nice mess YOU'VE gotten us into!"

Col. Ollie merely shook his head and said, "MMMMPH!"

Neil N. Wahlert
Music

Wising up

In its editorial about Law School Dean Maurice Holland's testimony in the Bork hearings (ODE, Sept. 30), the Emerald suggests that, despite adding the disclaimer that he is "appearing on his own behalf and not on the behalf of the University," Holland should not have appeared before the Senate.

The Emerald's reasoning is that the dean's support for Bork will be reflected on the law school, which the Emerald claims does not support Bork.

Get wise, guys. Nearly every individual testifying in the

hearings is, or has been, a member of a major organization. Their individual remarks are a much needed input to the Senate Judiciary Committee. This does not mean that the entire organization of which the individual is a member is associated with the individual's testimony.

Did the Emerald consult each and every member of its own staff before writing this silly editorial? The Emerald doesn't even bother with a disclaimer. Am I to conclude that this opinion is maintained by all members of its talented staff? Well, I don't.

If the Student Bar Association is unhappy with the dean's testimony and wants to circulate petitions to make its own voice heard, that's great. That is the reasonable course of action.

Duane Dunganon
Journalism

Diversity

Your editorial suggestion that Dean Holland of the Law School acted improperly in personally testifying in support of the Bork nomination should not go unchallenged (ODE, Sept. 30).

It is possible that personal statements will be taken as representative. That is true not only when Dean Holland speaks in favor of the Bork nomination, but also when my colleagues and I speak against the nomination, when former Dean Bell spoke on racism, when President Olum speaks on nuclear weapons.

But consider the cost to the quality of public debate, and to the quality of institutional leadership, if we silence those voices out of fear of misattribution.

Anyone listening closely to the many voices of the University will get an impression of tolerant diversity. That is as it should be.

James M. O'Fallon
Professor of Law

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