

House grants police right to judge intent

In its most recent answer to the public outcry against crime, the Oregon House of Representatives introduced a bill that would hand law enforcement officers the right to stop and question anyone who seems "about to commit a crime."

House Bill 2250 passed 47-11, and now moves toward the Senate. Although the bill easily passed in the House, we hope the Senate will consider the ramifications of granting such an ambiguous and far-reaching power to police officers.

Rep. Bill Dwyer, D-Springfield, displayed his integrity by standing up to those in favor of the bill. Dwyer fully understands the political implications of opposing any crime control bill. He represents Springfield, and ran his last campaign heavily weighted with crime control issues. But he still understands the unchecked abuse this bill might create and called it a "I-don't-like-the-looks-of-your-face-and-skin-color-law." The powder-keg nature of such a law should be obvious.

If indeed the proposed law would act as a preventative only, and would not empower officers with a license to harass, as its supporters suggest, it serves little purpose anyway.

Clearly, a potential criminal would hesitate to commit a crime if a law enforcement officer visibly patrolled the area. Nothing currently prevents an officer from doing so. Mere presence of an officer stands as a deterrent to crime. The answer, then, would have to be more police officers, not "Robocop" measures — not cops with the power to justify whatever lines they decide to cross.

As seeming proof of the proposed law's necessity, one proponent offered the following example: Under current law, an officer cannot question a suspicious character peering into a car with a flashlight until a move is made to commit a crime — that is, until the window is broken. But under the new law, the officer would have no grounds to remove the "suspect," and no further means to deter anyway.

We question the purpose of such a law and point out the likelihood of its being seen by lawmakers as a political pacifier that will settle the stomachs of their crime-queasy constituents. Don't be fooled by lawmakers' attempts to pad their anti-crime resumes for the next election.

HB 2250 would give birth to rights infringement charges and police harassment all across the state. Such a law would solve absolutely nothing.

Fast food possibility fades as single bidder rejected

We may never see a fast food alternative in the EMU, thanks to the bumper-car driving strategies that so far have constituted the EMU Board of Directors' decision-making process.

After eight months of dangling a carrot in front of the fast food business community, the EMU Board voted against its only successful bidder, Carl's Jr., a burger chain from California.

Although Carl's Jr. apparently met all of the guidelines set forth by the Board — affirmative action, ban of Styrofoam, vegetarian alternatives and previous college campus experience — some board members showed dismay over the bid's singularity. Now, after the Carl's Jr. rejection, the board plans the arduous task of re-evaluating and restarting the long bidding process, with some suggestions of taking it even more slowly.

At best, we can hope for a long delay in the board's decision. More likely the board will decide the fast food plan should be scrapped altogether. After all, the EMU Board of Directors has changed its face considerably. Along with member changes during the fast food bidding have come new ideas about the fast food restaurant plan. The new board seems less inclined toward the necessity of a fast food restaurant in the EMU.

The guidelines the board set for potential fast food bidders allowed little latitude in the first place. Concern over allowing a private business, particularly a fast food chain, into the EMU understandably arose. The board's cautiousness was no doubt necessary, but proved fatal to potential bidders.

Obviously, the EMU Board has little idea what it really wants. Rather than find a creative solution that would permit bidding by restaurants that the board would approve, the fast food restaurant plan has the board headed for another brick wall.

It seems in the University community's best interest to speak up on this issue: not simply approval or disapproval of a fast food restaurant, but of the EMU Board of Directors' comedy of errors in searching for a solution.



Letters

Selfishness

I, Karl Hornyik, would like to congratulate Jason Keuter (ODE, Feb. 1) for upholding the standards of indecency that so many of us secretly cherish. He has the courage to face rampant morality and public concern with a grand display of selfishness and cruelty that most of us aspire to but few of us are able to achieve.

Karl Hornyik
Student

Christianity

As someone who accepts Jesus Christ as my Lord and Savior, I would like to make a request of my brothers and sisters who write letters to the Oregon Daily Emerald:

(1) Please, DO NOT PRESUME TO SPEAK FOR GOD. Taking a chunk of scripture out of context and using it to illustrate your own assumptions and prejudices does not constitute divine revelation.

(2) Please, DO NOT PRESUME TO SPEAK FOR ME. Don't give the impression that all Christians everywhere — if they're real Christians, that is — have the same opinion. World Christianity is an extremely dynamic faith with a great deal of diversity; millions of people acknowledge one Lord but have very different ways of following that Lord. I can love and accept you in Jesus' name, unconditionally, while disagreeing with your interpretation and your view of the world.

Finally, a comment on what passes for a "discussion" of homosexuality in these editorial pages: sure, some Christians believe that all lesbians and gays are going to hell for their sexual orientation. Many Latin American Christians also believe that all North Americans are going to hell for exploiting their countries. Still other Christians have entirely different views of heaven and hell. Get it?

Could it be that the only one with a corner on the truth market is God? Or, as Charles Schulz has entitled Snoopy's book on theology:

"Has It Ever Occurred To You That You Might Be Wrong?"

Lee Krahenbuhl
GTF, Theatre Arts

Attitude

I would like to extend my "congratulations" to Jason Keuter, who so proudly demonstrated his total "lack of concern" for the environment and the people with whom he shares the planet. Jason, your attitude is one which has pervaded our society for many years. It is this same attitude that has led to the numerous environmental problems we face today. It is completely selfish to continue such destructive behavior in light of man-made disasters such as Chernobyl, Savannah River, and the destruction of the Amazon rain forest, just to name a few. There is a definite movement in this country that supports proper stewardship of the Earth, so that we can guarantee that future generations will have a healthy, beautiful place in which to live. So, congratulations, Jason. You have succeeded in promoting the notion that the Earth is ours to rape and exploit. I hope that someday, you, and others who conform to your philosophy, will see that you lack common sense and goodwill.

Dalene Lovie
Student

Holocaust

I would like to thank Tom Ribe for his thoughtful contri-

bution to the "Forum" (Jan. 2, 1989), but I disagree with his assessment that the "anti-abortion movement challenges the long-accepted premise that each of us has a right to live our life according to our own religion and faith without treading on the rights and religions of others." Many who take a strong right-to-life stand do so because they feel that the "right" to an abortion constitutes the right to murder another human being. Far from being a purely religious conflict in which an embattled minority is attempting to foist its convictions upon a pluralistic society, the fight against abortion proceeds because the murder of millions is a mind-blowing holocaust.

Mark Watson
Knight Library

Protest

The members of MEChA, the Chicano/Latino Student Union, would like to join with NASU in protesting the allocation of funds to the MBAA. We at MEChA are not impressed by their examples of service to the people of color at the University. There has never been, to our knowledge, any type of recruitment effort made within our student union (or any of the other student unions for that matter) by the MBAA. We have business majors within MEChA, as well as people in other fields that could be strong MBA candidates that have never been approached. Deliberate omission is also a form of racism, and should not be supported in this environment with student fees.

Joel Montemayor
Co-Director, MEChA

Letters Policy

Letters to the editor must be limited to no more than 250 words, legible, signed and the identification of the writer must be verified when the letter is submitted.