

New civil rights bill ploy for re-election

Imagine that. A new civil rights bill, just in time for re-election '92 — and all without sacrificing the good ol' white-boy vote.

After two years of civil-rights legislation battle between the White House and Congress, President Bush said he'd sign a compromise civil rights bill recently passed by Congress.

The bill makes it easier for those experiencing job discrimination to sue their employers, somewhat making up for the 1989 Supreme Court rulings that made it harder for minorities and women to prove discrimination.

The measure doesn't allow quota hiring practices, Bush's main sticking point on past civil rights measures and prized baby for staying in good with America's moneyed folk.

Non-quota and increased legal-power reasoning falls right into line with conservative ideology, supposedly empowering suppressed groups with the means to help themselves out of their "lowly" positions.

What those supporting this belief don't realize is quota hiring is often necessary to get minorities and women a job in the first place.

This country's conservative populace likes to voice the "everyone-is-equal" dogma, stating everyone — even minorities and women — are on equal terms. This being true, something like quotas isn't necessary.

Quotas, however, are often still necessary to force open long-locked doors. Unfortunately, they can also lead to the hiring of subqualified people to fill legislated holes.

The answer isn't clear-cut, but one thing's for sure: The increased legal power will give minorities and women the authority to force employers to treat them as equals once they're in the door.

The measure also added protection against gender-based job discrimination and sexual harassment as a new menu item — no doubt resulting from the attention focused on these issues via the Thomas hearings.

Too bad the bill couldn't go all the way with it, though: collectible cash damages to those suing in these cases was capped at \$300,000.

Is it possible the approving crony club, ever dominated by you know who, really believes the integrity of a woman (because in most cases it would be a female suing) is worth an amount equal to one-third of the sum General Motors paid lobbyists and law firms to oppose clean air amendments from 1981-89? (On file at The Congressional Office of Records and Registration.)

Bush claims the victory prize for supporting the bill, saying it defines him as a true supporter of civil rights without selling out on his Republican stance.

The bill has too many holes for it to be considered a true step forward in civil rights: it looks more like a re-election ploy. More harm than good could have been done via passage of this half-baked bill.

But it's here now. It's hoped women and minority groups will use the rights it did establish to progress on the long road to equal representation.



LETTERS

ROTC defended

It has come to my attention that a special higher education commission has been formed to attack the ROTC for its hiring/recruiting practices. This is an outrage as there is a University-endorsed program that openly discriminates when hiring! The University and many students should clean up their own back yard before pointing fingers.

Who (you might ask) is the gross offender here? The CIA? Nope. This organization is not only endorsed by the University, but by many students (myself included), and they perform a vitally needed service on par with police and fire protection. Who could possibly get away with such vile policies and still be seen in a positive light?

Project Saferide. If you doubt my words, take a good long look at one of their recruiting posters — you will see they will only consider hiring women. Now I understand that a woman who is seeking a safe ride home may be uncomfortable in the presence of a man, but then again, the men and women in the CIA and ROTC may be equally uncomfortable in the presence of homosexuals.

The question is "Is 'being uncomfortable' a valid excuse for refusing to hire a certain segment of society?" I say no, but it should also not matter what subset of society is being treated unfairly.

Jordan C. Lund
English

Repeat it

In response to Matt Kokkeler and his irritation with all the "pansy whimpering" about Columbus (ODE, Oct. 29): It's precisely because of people like you that the debate over Columbus has re-arisen.

Think of how your argument would run if this were the Holocaust rather than Native Americans you were discussing: "The Jews were just too weak to resist the Aryan race and we should stop whining about it and forget the past," as if the past were irrelevant to

our lives today.

And it wasn't that Native Americans simply succumbed to disease brought on by a diverse culture — we slaughtered them.

The mere fact that people feel there was nothing wrong with Columbus shows the need to re-evaluate him — I mean, the guy caused the genocide of the entire Arawak Indian population through enslavement.

As you should know as a history major, those who forget the past are bound to repeat it.

Marc Weber
English

No concept

Once again certain people are calling for the Reserve Officers' Training Corps program to be forced off the University campus. These people, for the most part, have little or no concept of what the ROTC program is all about. Don't take their word for gospel on ROTC, or the military, for that matter.

The next time you see an ROTC cadet on campus, feel free to ask one of us about the ROTC program. Cadets are students, just like you. We are here to learn and earn our degrees. I am personally more than happy to field questions from anyone who cares enough to ask.

Or if you really feel daring, take a Military Science course yourself. It is worth University credit and carries no obligation other than completing the class. This is one sure way to learn about ROTC, and come to an informed opinion about it.

Find out for yourself what ROTC is all about. Ask someone in the know or experience it for yourself. Either way, you will be glad you did.

Ron Harper
Sociology

Read

This is in response to Matt Kokkeler's letter, (ODE, Oct. 29). I was surprised to read that he is a history major after reading his comments about Christopher Columbus.

First, the "alleged genocide" that he discussed was not only

real, it exists today. When the U.S. Army donated its small-pox-infested blankets to the Native (note native) Americans, it knew they were diseased. That was true genocide. This had nothing to do with any inability of Native Americans to deal with change. The government told them repeatedly to move out, or be killed. Read your history.

Had it not been for the Native Americans, the first white settlers would have starved to death. They were given food and taught how to work with the land by the indigenous people of the "New World." Read your history.

As for their struggles of "starvation and constant warfare," no one tries to deny that they existed. They exist in every culture of the world. You fail to mention the Native Americans tried time and time again to sit down and find some agreement with the Europeans so everyone could live here peacefully. But somehow the newcomers could not be satisfied with sharing. No, they wanted it all.

This is not social change, this is take-over. As an African-American student, I can see how disturbing this history must be for all Native Americans.

Please, read your history.

Callan T. Coleman
Counseling Psychology

CORRECTION

The second part of the AIDS series which ran Wednesday contained an incorrect statement attributed to White Bird Clinic Coordinator John Shoemaker. Shoemaker actually said: "Pre-seminal, seminal and vaginal fluid all have the virus in enough concentration to expose someone."

The Et Als that ran in the Nov. 6 issue of the Emerald were from a previous day. The Emerald regrets these errors.

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