

OCA's recall effort misguided, divisive

The Oregon House of Representatives took a step toward ending the local battles over gay rights last week when it passed House Bill 3500, which, if enacted by the Senate and made into law, would prohibit city or county governments from either supporting or opposing gay rights.

The reaction by the Oregon Citizens Alliance was as misguided as it was swift: leaders of the OCA immediately began a recall effort against 14 of the key legislators who voted in favor of HB 3500.

The organization's attempt is inappropriate because it is not motivated by a desire to replace inept or incompetent members of the state Legislature, which is the only legitimate reason for a recall. It is clearly designed to remove those legislators who believe that the OCA's crusade against gay rights, currently being waged in local communities like Junction City and Springfield, should be fought only on a statewide level.

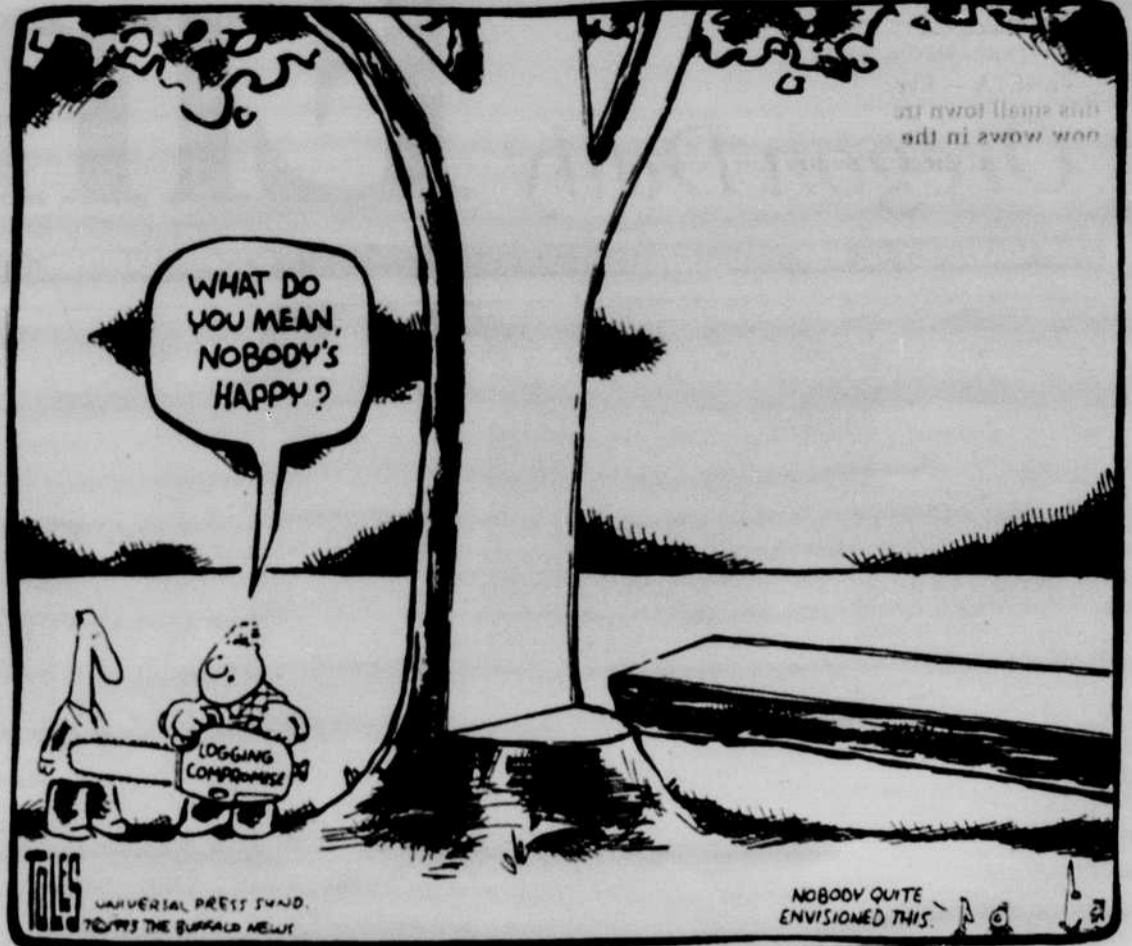
Why the OCA should be so opposed to HB 3500 is not immediately clear; after all, the bill prohibits local governments from enforcing any ordinance that "singles out citizens or groups of citizens on account of sexual orientation," which would make "special rights" as equally forbidden as the OCA's more severe anti-gay rights objectives (like the "wrong, abnormal, unnatural and perverse" language in last November's failed Ballot Measure 9.)

If HB 3500 makes it impossible for communities to grant "special rights" to gays and lesbians, then the OCA should support it. The fact that it is not indicates that there is more on the OCA's conservative agenda than preventing "special rights."

HB 3500 frightens the OCA because it will rob the OCA of its ability to fight winnable wars in local communities like Junction City. Such small victories are crucial if the OCA is to expand its base of support and hope to eventually win a statewide measure.

No matter what the OCA's real reasons for opposing the bill, the means of opposition, the recall, is what demands attention. The misuse of the power to recall is commonly threatened, but rarely is it threatened by a group as large and powerful as the OCA. The Legislature cannot help but notice, and some members of the Senate may even oppose the bill when it comes up for a vote, simply because they fear OCA retaliation.

Oregon has elections for state legislators every two years; if the OCA feels that its views have not been taken seriously, then it has every right to mobilize its supporters and replace those legislators when the appropriate time comes. The power to recall representatives should be reserved for those occasions when a representative has demonstrated that he or she is unable to do the job, not for when that representative makes a choice that happens to be different than the one voters would make.



OPINION

Streaks and stars at the break



As baseball slogs into the All-Star break, it's time to reflect a bit on the season thus far.

Where once baseball ruled as America's pastime, it has now become just a way to pass time between football seasons. The names of Mantle, Williams and Aaron — giants one and all — have been replaced with bickering egoists Bonilla, Canseco and Bonds. Superstars, yes, but tainted role models.

Still, baseball has an allure no sport can match. After all, even George Will was moved to wax poetic about the game, though he made it sound more like quantum physics than chalk lines and rawhide Spauldings.

Thoughts on the 1993 season: Expansion was a good idea, and the committee that chose Colorado and Florida now looks like a genius. The Rockies' attendance has been unbelievable. What would happen if this team started winning? ...

The Mets and Padres have been around for a while but look more like expansion teams than the real ones do. The Mets have a bloated budget and can't win ball games, and the Padres traded soon-to-be megastar Gary

Sheffield for the baseball equivalent of used chewing gum. Both teams should be sent to AAA baseball for a couple of future prospects ...

Smartest baseball move: forcing bigoted Marge Schott out of the game. Dumbest possible baseball move: considering letting her back in ...

Comedy of errors: the finger-pointing on the Texas Rangers after Jose Canseco went down with an elbow injury after a pitching outing. Nobody can decide whose fault it is. Try everybody, folks ...

Camden Yards is the perfect place to have the All-Star Game. It is easily the best park in baseball ...

More on the All-Star Game. Anybody bitching about quality players left off of the roster miss the point of the game. It is not a showcase for the sport's best; it is a fan excursion ...

Given that, there are some notable absences. With all their fans, how come the Rockies don't have any starters? Andres Galaraga is hitting 40 points higher and has more RBI than John Kruk, who starts the game tonight ...

Everybody is clamoring for Bo Jackson as Comeback Player of the Year, but how about Fernando Valenzuela? Taking nothing away from Bo's amazing rehab, Fernando's return to the game is just as miraculous. When last seen, his screwball had left him and he had Little League pitching speed. Now, despite his 4-7 record, Fernando has an ERA of

less than 4.00 and a string of 23 scoreless innings. Not bad for a supposedly washed-up pitcher dumped by two teams ...

While the Padres' fire sale of players makes them the dumbest front office in baseball, the Mets aren't far behind. Look for Dallas Green to get dumped by the end of the year, but in all fairness, Casey Stengel couldn't get this group to perform. They have talent but seem apathetic ...

Anthony Young deserves an award not only for perseverance, but grace under pressure as well. Not many people could take losing 26 straight games. The only smart move the Mets have made this year is not giving up on him. He's not pitching badly, despite the record, and sending him down could destroy his confidence and career. Let him work it out in the bigs. It's not like the Mets are in a pennant race or anything ...

The search for a commissioner continues, but slowly. Owners are looking for someone who is (a) highly visible, (b) eminently distinguished and (c) extremely malleable. People with backbones need not apply ...

Barry Bonds seems to be worth every penny of his contract. Ex-teammate Bobby Bonilla does not ...

Most Valuable Players: the aforementioned Bonds and Toronto's John Olerud.

Predictions: No way. Ask me again in August.

Don Peters is a columnist for the Emerald.

Oregon Daily Emerald
 P.O. BOX 3155 EUGENE OREGON 97403

The Oregon Daily Emerald is published daily Monday through Friday during the school year and Tuesday and Thursday during the summer by the Oregon Daily Emerald Publishing Co., Inc., at the University of Oregon, Eugene, Oregon.

The Emerald operates independently of the University with offices at Suite 300 of the Erb Memorial Union and is a member of the Associated Press.

The Emerald is private property. The unlawful removal or use of papers is prosecutable by law.

Editor: Jake Berg
Photo Editor: Anthony Forney
Associate Editors: Ed Carson, Martin Fisher, Scot Clemens
Night Editor: Jake Berg
General Manager: Judy Riedl
Production Manager: Michele Ross
Advertising Director: Mark Walter
Advertising: Frelime Bell, Jeremy Mason, Van V. O'Bryan II, Angie Windheim, Patrick Wong
Classified: Becky Merchant, Manager
Business: Kathy Carbone, Supervisor
Production: Ingrid White, Production Coordinator, Stacy Mitchell, Jennifer Roland
Newsroom: 346-5511 **Display Advertising:** 346-3712
Business Office: 346-5512 **Classified Advertising:** 346-4343

