

Make immigration laws preventative

Illegal immigration has become a hot-button issue recently in the western part of the country. Californians, expressing their frustration about illegal immigration, passed Proposition 187, a measure that limits social and economic benefits, including education and medical care, that illegal immigrants and their families can receive.

That same idea has come to Oregon.

Rep. Bill Markham, R-Riddle, has proposed a similar bill to the one in California, arguing that illegal immigration can become a large problem in Oregon just as it has in California. He argues that tough steps need to be taken.

Illegal immigration is a problem. However, the way to stop it is not to punish the families of the illegal immigrant. Proposition 187 and the equivalent measure proposed here in Oregon are not answers to the problem. They punish those who need the services most, such as children and the elderly, while doing little to ensure that illegal immigrants stay out of the United States.

Rather than cut off benefits such as education and medical care to the families of illegal immigrants, more emphasis should be placed on enforcing existing laws, such as ones preventing the hiring of illegal immigrants.

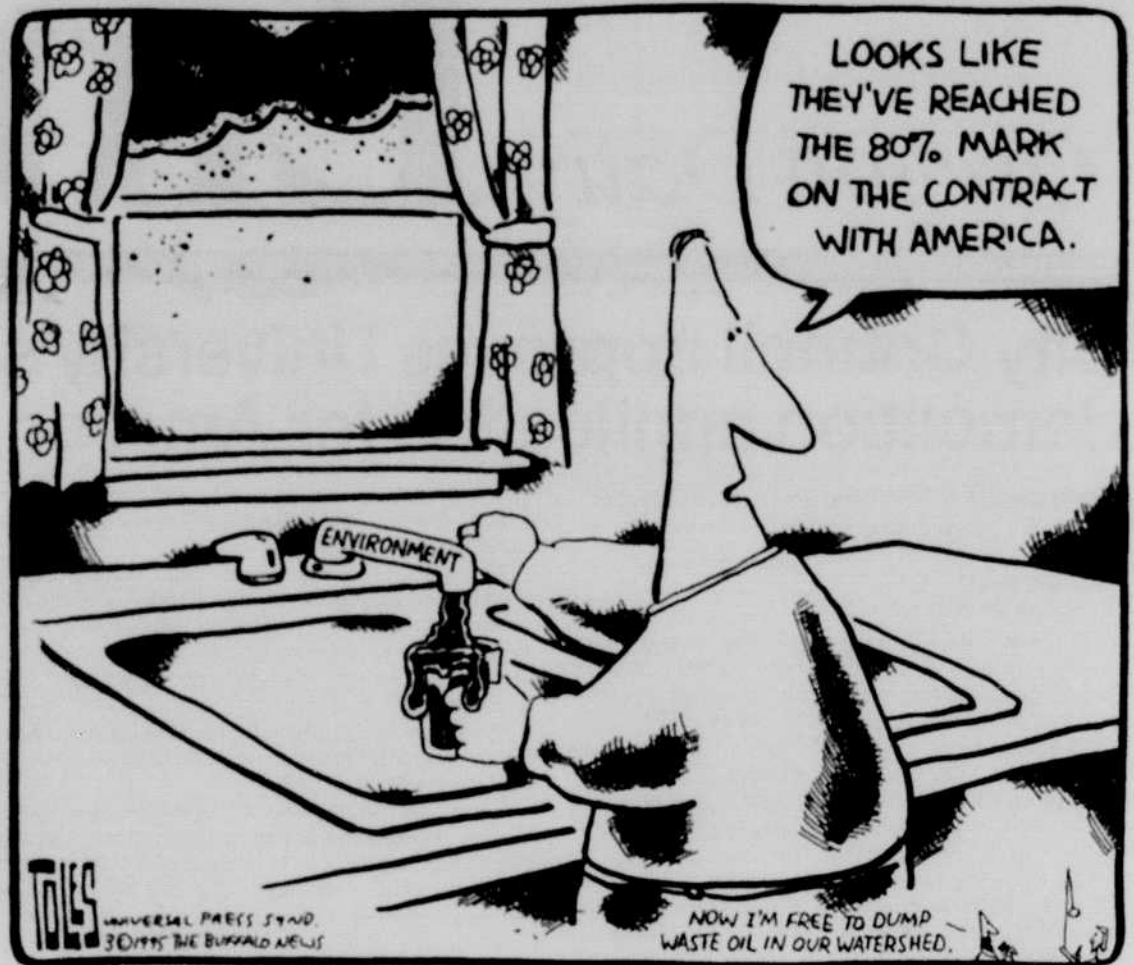
Current federal law mandates that the eligibility of a person to work in America be checked at the time that the person is hired. This would help to cut down on the number of people who live in the country illegally, as it is quite difficult to live without a job.

Illegal immigrants should be stopped from entering the country, instead of punished once they get here. Steps are already being taken by the Border Patrol to increase security along the southern border with Mexico. Physical security, such as fences, has been improved along the border and additional staff have been placed in certain areas. The impression that nothing is being done to stop or slow the flow of illegal immigrants into the country is ludicrous.

Bills like Proposition 187 are cathartic for some because it gives the impression that they help to fight the problem of illegal immigration. People who are desperate enough to come to America illegally will probably find ways to stay here.

To reduce the problem, illegal immigrants must be stopped from making the trip to the country. The way the United States can do this is by enforcing current laws and stopping people as they try to come into the country illegally.

Proposition 187 was wrong for California and is just as wrong in Oregon. Markham's bill to limit services to illegal immigrants must be defeated by the Oregon Legislature. There are better ways to combat illegal immigration. Oregon should have the courage to show it isn't looking for easy answers to solve difficult problems, but the right ones.



LETTERS

Share cake

While more famous Republicans are exposing their greed and making fools of themselves in the American government, Brian Womack does his best for all of us in the *ODE* (Feb. 21).

He claims affirmative action programs are the real cause for racism. For no good reason, since whites and non-whites, as we know, are and have always been treated, hired and generally considered equal in the United States, these programs make sure that minorities get their share of everybody's American cake. Yes, Brian's big cake too.

Now Brian, have you ever been in grade school and some bigger kid stole your sandwich or decided to beat you up because he didn't like the way you looked? Do you remember how satisfying and comforting it was to have a parent or teacher make sure you got your share of food or personal space? How good it was to have your own affirmative action, making sure that however powerless you were, you were treated equally?

Now imagine that you are grown up and your skin isn't white. You find yourself having a harder time than your white schoolmates finding a job, a house, or even polite and efficient service from some people and businesses. Your parents can't do much for you now. No teacher to go to. You know you are treated unfairly (and illegally), but without a job and a salary, you won't be able to hire a lawyer to prove it.

What would you do and how would you feel?

While this situation and the feelings it generates do not justify violent and other illegal acts, it can certainly explain some of them. And if affirmative action makes the big kid a little resentful because he has to share and he hasn't learned to, it also puts the other kid somewhat more at peace with the society he lives in.

Wake up, Brian. Share your cake. There is enough for everybody.

Now what really gets to me and

what prompted me to write this letter is the quote at the end of your paper. You are otherwise entitled to your opinion, as I am to mine. But I cannot believe you had the guts to appropriate MLK's words, an appeal to tolerance and generosity, to top off your racist and selfish opinions. In a country where governmental politics have now little to do with ideology and where Republicans don't even have the scruples, or the simple prudence, to hide what their agenda is really about (motto: "We have most of it and we want more of it until it's all gone"), this grotesque boldness fits, alas, perfectly.

Géraldine Poizat-Newcomb
French Instructor

Study abroad

Viele grüße aus Stuttgart! I know that usually during the colder, wetter months in Eugene, my thoughts used to drift off to sunny, far away places...and although the sun doesn't always shine in Germany, I sure feel far away from Eugene! There are things I sometimes miss, like 24-hour convenience stores, Allan Brothers Mexican Mochas and Oregon's beautiful landscape and crazy people, but the experience of being an exchange student in another culture makes it easy to live without those things for a year.

I am studying architecture at the Universität Stuttgart, which is right in the center of the city. The education system is very different here in Germany than what I was used to in Eugene — motivated students have a lot of freedom to attend lectures, go on excursions or do research on whatever interests them, but less motivated students don't find anyone on their backs demanding assignments every few days.

(The real test comes at the end of the term...!) Some students attend the university for up to 10 years, of course partially because they don't have to pay for their education. At any rate, their degree gives them more than career training, it gives them a good education and an incredible ability to see many sides of most issues. Germans love discussion!

As an exchange student, I've taken advantage of the 'free' academic atmosphere to educate myself about German life. There is more to German culture than beer and bratwurst! It is a country with a very rich history, some very strong traditions, a lot of diversity and a very carefully planned social structure. I've really enjoyed looking at European city planning, which manages to give a very high quality lifestyle to an incredibly dense population. People walk and ride bikes much more in Europe than in the States, giving the streets a more pleasant atmosphere and a stronger sense of community. In general, it is harder to meet people, but once you get to know them, the friendships are usually very strong.

It's been good for me to get out of Eugene for a year, to realize there are other ways of getting an education, other ways to live and to appreciate what we have in Oregon! It has been an excellent experience and I'm looking forward to the next months.

Regardless of where you go, a year overseas will bring you and the people you meet so much happiness and understanding. It'll help you realize there are very different ways of living than what we are surrounded by in the States — but it'll also make you appreciate what we do have. Do it! Good luck!

Britta Weller
Exchange student

LETTERS POLICY

The *Oregon Daily Emerald* will attempt to print all letters containing comments on topics of interest to the University community.

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