

pressed in recent articles in this paper, fails my mother's test.

There are two aspects of this issue that may seem impossibly Midwestern to those who support the culture of pre-emptive alienation.

First, if there are two Americas, the breakdown is not 50-50, it's 90-10. During the Revolutionary War only 10 percent of colonials supported the resistance. For the rest, one George was as good as another. The business of daily life was, and rightly so, the only worthy cause: working, parenting, loving, living. It is the differences in our natural resources and our geographic location that distinguish us from our sisters and brothers in the Ukraine or Uganda. Sign-carriers on downtown Eugene street corners will be lonely for at least another century.

Another aspect of this issue glares at me: If there is a conservative agenda, liberals running away to a Canada-of-the-mind supports it nicely. Peter DeFazio is doing something. The guy who directs Eugene PeaceWorks is not. When the idealists on one end of the seesaw refuse to sit down, the result is going to be obvious. The nature of politics allows no vacuum.

Let's be honest about what "working outside the system" is and is not. It's self-expression. It's therapy. It's even stimulating to read about it. But my mother would not approve.

*Steve Downey
Eugene*

SEXISM REIGNS

Our Constitution is being much touted these days, and now there's a suggestion that foreign-born people be allowed to run for U.S. president. Hey! *First* let's pass the ERA (equal rights for women) into the Constitution. Sexism still reigns in certain areas. Let's fix that.

*Nancy Slagle
Springfield*

SLOW EROSION

The election Nov. 2 introduced an insidious threat to the integrity of our voting system—the use of electronic voting machines that produce unverifiable and virtually un-auditable election results.

Regardless of whom you voted for, the future consequences of the use of this method must be eradicated. Unverifiable voting machines jeopardize not only our federal presidential vote, but our votes on local issues and propositions as well.

The potential for malicious manipulation is overwhelming. This is how a democracy is overthrown; not in a dramatic military coup, but eroded one layer at a time right under our noses, by our own people. It's done by evolution, not revolution.

We must be vigilant to jump immediately on the slightest infringement on our rights. Would-be usurpers' tactics must be nipped in the bud no matter how petty or inconsequential they may seem. In this kind of internal coup, if you give the insurgents an inch, they'll take a mile, and then turn around and demand 10 more miles from you as if it were their right.

Most Americans don't seem much concerned about this flagrant violation of their constitutional rights. Some even mockingly

dismiss any dissent as paranoia or sour-grapes rhetoric. Where is the outrage? Is blind acceptance the default reaction of the general voting public? Perhaps a nation of such sheep deserves to be led to the slaughter?

*Pat Sheppard
Cottage Grove*

ENVIRO R'S

When you think of environmental protection, you probably think of Sierra Club or NRDC. Another organization, however, works equally hard to preserve our air, water and land. That organization is Republicans for Environmental Protection, or www.rep.org.

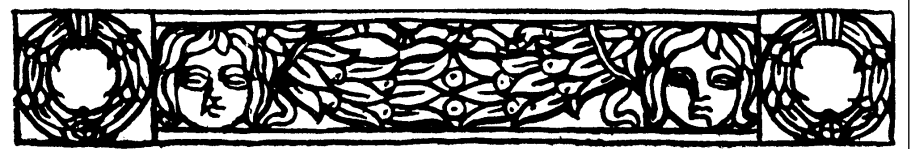
Sound surprising? Not really, when you consider that it was Teddy Roosevelt who set aside more than 100 million acres of national forests, Dwight D. Eisenhower who helped create ANWR, and Tom McCall who guided more than 100 conservation bills through the Oregon Legislature.

Sadly, many of today's Republicans are trashing some of the same environmental protections that members of their own party labored to create. Fortunately, there is REP. Founded in 1995 by conservation-minded Republicans from around the country, REP seeks to restore the GOP to its proud tradition of environmental preservation.

If you are a Republican and value a healthy environment, I urge you to contact REP. Roll up your sleeves and work alongside other compassionate individuals who, like yourselves, seek to protect this sacred planet upon which we all depend for life.

*Brian W.S. Moore
Eugene*

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