

Legalized prejudice

A Seattle police officer and several religious groups are trying to legalize prejudice in Seattle by repealing Seattle's Open Housing and Fair Employment Practices ordinances with an aptly designated initiative drive, Initiative 13.

The drive to repeal the ordinances, which prevent others from denying constitutional rights to racial, sexual and religious minorities, is a blatant example of well-intentioned overkill.

The ordinances in question do not allow persons to be fired from their jobs because of their personal lives—only on the basis of the work an individual produces can he or she be fired. The same holds true for housing; a person can be evicted if property is destroyed or because of financial irresponsibility, but he or she cannot be evicted because of his or her sexual preference or any other factor pertaining to personal lives.

The initiative drive is the result of the same fear that grips everyone when confronted with something foreign to them: xenophobia. But when nationally known entertainers with political axes to grind start entering the picture, the xenophobia turns into unadulterated, monomaniacal hatred.

There has been talk that Anita Bryant, the Florida orange juice-drinking homosexual baiter, in her nationwide anti-gay crusade, will show up in Seattle to lend her support to the drive. Bryant means well, but her desire to change those she obviously does not understand will go beyond merely irradiating gay persons from Seattle, a scary proposition in anyone's book.

The ordinances under fire protect not only gays, but every minority, from others taking away their constitutional rights. To repeal the ordinances on the basis of one aspect they encompass is short-sighted and sets a dangerous precedent.

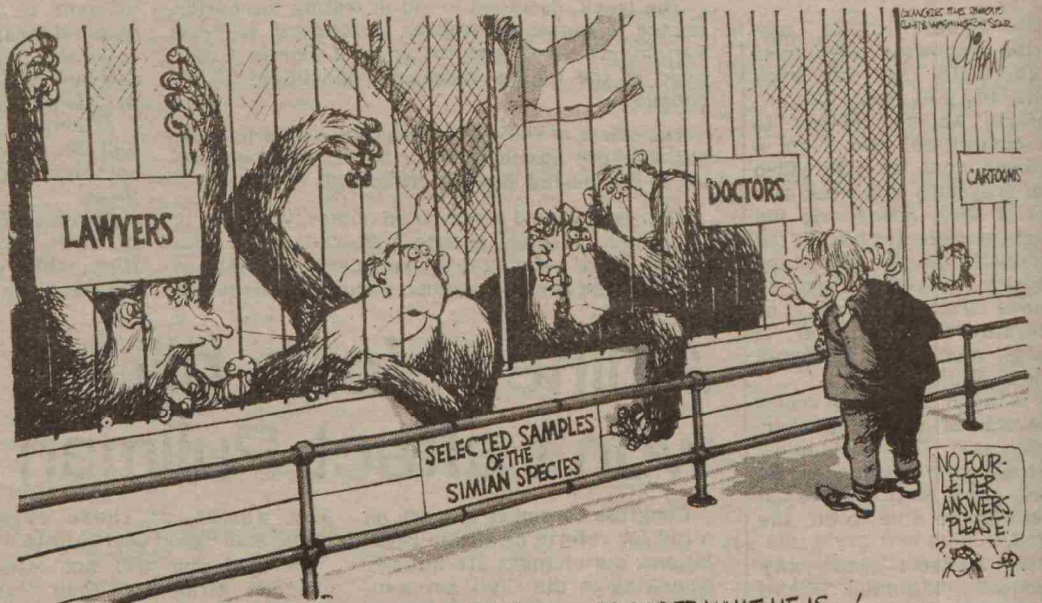
If it were suddenly decided by an aggressive interest group that those persons who engage in wearing odd-matched socks represented a dangerous and immoral standard to the children of the city, these oddballs could be fired and evicted for no other reason than their boss or landlord did not like the colors of their socks.

All minorities, including the physically and mentally handicapped, the aged and the poor, are protected by the Seattle ordinances. To allow others to deny these persons their very basic constitutional rights is tantamount to allowing the American Nazi Party free reign in "disposing" of persons of the Jewish faith. Literally, it legalizes prejudice.

For a city that recently celebrated a "Gay Rights Day," the intent of the initiative drive appears to be affected by a bad case of tunnel vision. The Seattle ordinances protect much more than gay rights and to repeal them on the basis of one facet of their protection clearly represents a crusade that has not been thoroughly thought out.

Who knows?—maybe the next group to come under fire, if the initiative drive passes and the Seattle voters repeal the ordinances, will be those persons who got it passed in the first place. Religious persecution is usually the next stop after the "clear thinkers" get rid of the sexual minorities.

B.R.S.



'AT LEAST WE KNOW WHAT WE ARE — I WONDER WHAT HE IS...'

Your views

Turning point

This weekend, at Central Washington University in Ellensburg, a significant event will occur which could represent a turning point in the quality of Higher Education in the State of Washington.

The Washington Association of University Students (WAUS) is sponsoring a symposium for students which consists of a broad range of workshops. The intent is to provide a basic familiarization with some of the important concerns that will be brought before the respective universities and the Legislature in Olympia.

Some of the topics of the workshops, seminars and informal brainstorming include: state financial aid, faculty evaluations, S & A fees, veterans' affairs, student trusteeships, student cops, landlord-tenant relations, Title IX and affirmative action. If some of these topics sound foreign, don't feel alone. If we were all experts in these areas, the symposium would be pointless.

This is open to all students and we're looking for a large turnout from this university. A registration fee of \$15 covers meals and lodging for the three days as well as information packets. (WAUS is underwriting the bulk of the expenses.)

For registration or any further

information, come up to the Activities Center, third floor CUB.

Tom Pirie
ASWSU President-elect

Reaction

This is a reaction to a letter titled "Anniversary," written by Mr. Omar on May 12, 1978. Dear Mr. Omar, thank you for enlightening me about the Middle East situation. However, I would like to share with you some of my thoughts. You brought up the point that the Palestinians were driven out of Palestine (for your information, the state of Palestine does not exist, the place is now called Israel, since 1948) by the Jews. You forgot to mention that the United Nations' resolution of 1947 gave the Palestinians more than 50 percent of the land of what is called today Israel. The Jews accepted the resolution and were happy with their part of the country. However, the Arabs wanted every part of the country for themselves, which led to the first war.

Jews and Arabs lived together in harmony for many years. In fact, the Arabs were the ones who sold land to the Jews without any pressure or coercion. Therefore, it was not the "cruel" Jews who drove the Arabs out of their land.

If it was imperialism that helped Israel to force the Arabs

out of their land (and the U.S. is a part of that imperialism as you have implied), then why are you in the United States, when you could be so much "better off" going to school in places that are not imperialistic, such as the Soviet Union or the Arab countries. There you could find freedom, democracy and certainly you would not find any imperialism.

Since last November when President Sadat visited Israel, there have been many changes in the politics of the Middle East. It seems that peace is closer now than ever before, so please, try to be more positive and see the hope for peace.

Dubi Lufi

Letters

Due consideration will be made to print every possible letter to the editor. However, letters can be printed only as space allows. They will be selected by the editor for publication based on timeliness and relevance of the issue, potential interest level of our readers, and the utilization of writing skills by the author.

Letters must carry the full name, address and phone number of the author. Unsigned letters or letters signed with pseudonyms will not be printed. The address and phone number will not be printed. Names will be withheld only under unusual circumstances and with the approval of the senior staff editorial board.

Letters should be typed and limited to 250 words. The editor reserves the right to edit for matters of libel. Letters may be edited for length with permission of the author if they exceed 250 words.

Correspondence should be addressed to the editor, P.O. Box 2008 C.S., Pullman, Wash. 99163 or brought to Murrow Communications Center 122.

Once submitted, letters become the property of the Daily Evergreen and will be retained in a confidential file.

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by Garry Trudeau



Daily Evergreen Staff

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