

'Normal People' Have Rights, Too

FOR a country dedicated to the principle of giving everybody a fair chance to succeed, our government has a lot of rules that may handicap those who might be able to make it on their own.

For a number of years, the word "discrimination" has been used mainly with the negative connotation of making differences in treatment on a basis other than individual merit.

Discrimination also is defined as using good judgment. To discriminate does not necessarily involve prejudice.

Certain regulations prevent employers from determining the character, intelligence and qualifications of applicants. Questions about prison records, religion, families, alcohol and drug usage, and ethnic backgrounds that might be useful in making good judgments either are restricted or barred.

Deprived of essential information for making good judgments, employers may be compelled to take undue risks with new employees.

In addition to minimum wage laws, government supervises sala-

ries and wages paid by private enterprise in a number of ways. Apparently no allowance is made for people who may be more productive, more useful and more profitable than others in the same category. No allowance is provided for slow, lazy or indifferent persons.

Research scientists have been making studies and turning out reports that show there really are differences between men and women and between people raised in one atmosphere as compared to others who grew up in other types of neighborhoods.

Yet, the federal attitude seems to be that no such distinctions exist. In June a federal court at Dallas ruled that Southwest Airlines may not choose only males for ticket agents and only females for stewardesses. Hiring must be blind to sex.

Another recent action that is likely to precipitate a rash of lawsuits involves employment of obese people. They might be slower and less productive than other employees. The courts say that makes no difference in regard to employment and

pay scales.

It doesn't seem logical to try to remake everybody into average, sexless, faceless, mediocre individuals. Not even if cloning worked.

There have been allegations of unfair discrimination against people who wore long hair or beards. What about those who are bald, clean-shaven, ugly or left-handed?

Claims have been made about discrimination against short people. Studies reported in recent years found that short people live longer but taller people were likely to be paid more money.

The opening of doors of opportunity to individuals regardless of sex, race or religion may have merit, but there can be no doubt that bureaucrats have gone too far in trying to bring everybody into an average category that limits opportunities and success.

Perhaps "normal people" ought to rise up and demand their rights. Those with exceptional abilities might also claim unfair discrimination if they are being held down to average levels.

Buthe, Okla.

Aug. 27, 1981

Dear Ferdie:

Thanks for a timely, thoughtful, sensible and thought~~ful~~-provoking column in today's paper. I look forward to your column and must confess they are most interesting to me.

I am still keeping a close eye on the ERA situation. After the article in 8-26 edition, I could restrain myself ^{no} further and wrote a letter to the governor, speaker of the house and president of senate pro tem, enclosing excerpts - and others - I sent you recently.

Confidently, what is the attitude and feeling of the Oklahomans? I may not accomplish much but I'll guarantee you, before the election comes up a lot of people will have no doubt where I stand.

The article in today's issue clearly shows - to me, at least - the calibre of womanhood that are desperately fighting for ratification.

Also, I think Lange's cartoon in today's paper is superb. Congratulations to him!

Most usually all the news has a dismal view. Might I say - Today's issue - to me - contained more good news than any I have read recently.

Thanks for your indulgence. Maybe my attitude was helped this morning by a bowl of hot cereal, an egg, a good sausage patty, two hot biscuits, butter and kasses - plus 2 cups of good coffee, juice and milk. Maybe I can exist until noon!

As always
Guy