

Fir bark disposal method feasible

By TODD MERRIMAN
Of the Emerald

A Eugene chemical engineer has transformed the Oregon timber industry's bark waste disposal problem into a potential gold mine.

Frank Trocino, technical director for Bohemia Inc., announced Friday he has developed an economically feasible method for extracting valuable by-products from Douglas Fir which will be utilized in a new Bohemia plant in the Eugene area.

The patented Bohemia process, developed by Trocino during the past four years, uses Douglas Fir bark to produce pure vegetable wax, cork and adhesive extenders. A substance derived from the process may also be used as an ingredient giving impact resistance to plastics, according to Trocino.

Trocino emphasized that the process consumes the bark entirely, leaving nothing for disposal.

Most of the 14 million tons of bark made available annually by the American timber industry is currently treated as solid waste, Trocino said. Although some bark is used for garden mulch or goes to make charcoal, the vast majority is burned or buried in land fills, he said.

"The (new) process will enable for the first time total utilization of logged fir trees," Trocino said, noting that bark represents about 10 percent of a fir tree's volume.

The fir by-products industry has the potential to become as large as the American aluminum or plastics industry, according to Trocino. Vegetable wax from the bark process has already been successfully tested by manufacturers of lipstick and shoe, furniture, floor and car polishes, he said.

Douglas Fir bark has a high natural wax content, Trocino said, adding that he believes the Bohemia process will be the first source of pure vegetable wax in North America.

Since the cost of imported vegetable wax, such as the Carnauba from Brazil, is high, Trocino said he expects the bark wax to be "very competitive."

For the past 18 months Trocino has operated a small pilot plant, testing and refining the process, at Bohemia's Cascade Fiber Laboratory in Eugene. Trocino said he has worked closely with Oregon State University's School of Forestry in developing the wax extraction technique.

Bohemia's first bark plant will extract wax and grind the spent bark into adhesive extender, a plywood adhesive, to be sold to the lumber industry.

The plant will be 1,500 times larger than the pilot plant and will be able to process 80 million lbs. of Douglas Fir bark annually. The 80 million lbs. capacity equals the bark waste from just one of Bohemia's veneer plants, Trocino said.

The new plant is scheduled to begin operation Jan. 1, 1974. It will be highly automated, employing 20 to 25 persons.

The plant will initially use only bark from Bohemia mills, but Trocino left the door open for future expansion. "At this time we are developing additional by-products which will require an increased amount of Douglas Fir bark and wood waste from other species as well," he said.



Photo by James Link

Six Indian supporters arrested leaving Eugene for Wounded Knee, S.D. on Thursday, gave a press conference Saturday morning. Five of those present were, from right, Thomas Murphy, Tom Barnum, Barbara Rohde, James Davis and John Howell. John Smith is not pictured. The group was charged under the "aiding and abetting" section of the 1968 Anti-Riot Act.

Wounded Knee rally protests 'bankrupt' blockade by U.S.

A person arrested Thursday night in connection with a caravan to Wounded Knee, S.D. charged Saturday afternoon that the blockade of that town represents the "social bankruptcy of the United States."

John Howell, one of six persons arrested Thursday night a few miles north of Eugene, told a gathering of less than 100 people in Skinner's Butte Park that the occupants of Wounded Knee were not being allowed the basic necessities of food and medicine for survival.

Howell said he believed the "domino theory" used in Viet-

nam was now being used in the United States. He said the federal government had stopped demonstrations in Watts, Chicago and other places because it was "afraid American corporations might fall, and then American capitalism might end."

Another person arrested in connection with the caravan, Barbara Gale Rohde, echoed Howell's statements. She said "all Americans have rights to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness" and those in Wounded Knee were not receiving those rights.

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Rohde suggested the crowd do three things in support of the Indians at Wounded Knee. "Find out what's happening, do something about it and listen to what the Indians have to say," she said.

Esawey Amashe, a foreign student, said the situation at nearby Rosebud, S.D. "appeared exactly as Algeria." He said there were cleaner restrooms along the highways than there were in many of the homes.

Amashe urged the crowd to act. "It's not up to Nixon. It's not up to the judge. It's up to you. Your function is to unite the people."

Another speaker, Rainbow Laloma, said the United States government was mistaken in its belief that the Indians were at war with the White people. "We're just at war with the U.S. government."

The sun-drenched crowd also listened to Peggy Brammer read a statement by the Eugene Coalition Liberation Support Movement reaffirming its support for the blockaded group. Brammer said the movement would continue its support until "imperialistic and monopolistic corporations" ended their control of the federal government.

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