

More farm water?

By KATHLEEN MONJE
Of the Emerald

A U.S. Senate bill rescinding the 160-acre per person limit on federally irrigated land was introduced Tuesday by Senators Mark Hatfield, R-Ore. and Frank Church, D-Idaho.

Cecil Andrus, secretary of the interior, whose decision last fall to enforce the 1902 Reclamation Act kindled angry opposition from western family farmers, claimed the limit was far too small for them to make a living.

The proposed bill, called the Reclamation Reform Act of 1978, would increase the acreage limit to 1,280 for farms receiving water from federal irrigation projects.

"I believe the reform act will go a long way in both preserving and protecting the family farm, a tradition that's well established in Oregon, against arbitrary limits fashioned quite literally in the horse-and-buggy days," Hatfield says.

He adds that the act would keep the family farm from being replaced by the absentee, corporate landlord, "whose closest contact with the land is a potted plant in a Beverly Hills office."

Both Hatfield and Church are members of the Senate Subcommittee on Public Lands, which is considering the issue. Hatfield says the federal Bureau of Reclamation estimates there are more than

1.8 million farm acres in excess of the 160-acre limit; 16,979 of these are in Oregon.

Under the 1902 act, farm families received 160-acres for each family member, with a limit of four. The maximum for which any family can receive federal water for irrigation is 640 acres.

The Hatfield-Church proposal would entitle all farm families, regardless of size, to the 1,280 acre total.

The land's quality would be tested by the bureau, with tests based on soil quality, crop adaptability and costs of crop production.

The bill would also eliminate the present requirement that

farmers live within a 50-mile radius of the land they farm with federal irrigation water.

Instead, a "qualified beneficiary" of federal water would be an individual, family or legal entity benefitting 25 or fewer people. New purchasers would have to derive their income from agricultural production for 10 years before they could lease their land.

"Given the limits of information presently available to us, we must exercise extreme care so that in the process of stopping corporate abuses of federal farm subsidies, we do not disrupt Oregon's long-established pattern of family farming," Hatfield says.

Congressional hopeful pledges support to seniors

By KEVIN HARDEN
Of the Emerald

Oregon senior citizens should be allowed to choose between a dentist and a denturist when buying dentures, Jonathan Bates, candidate for the fourth district congressional seat, said.

Senior citizens should also be protected against the high cost of health care, and they should have higher maximum income earnings

after their retirement through social security, Bates said.

Bates, who is challenging incumbent Jim Weaver for the fourth district congressional seat, outlined these and other areas of concern of the senior citizens in a speech before the Lane County Gray Panthers association Monday afternoon.

Laws that presently leave senior citizens no choice but to go to a dentist for dentures should be

changed to allow denturists to provide the service for those who need them, Bates said. Such a change would cut the cost of dentures in half, he explained.

While the controversial denturist issue has received a great deal of publicity locally, Bates said, almost no attention has been paid to it on the national level.

"In the case of the denturists, I plan to introduce into legislation a bill that would make all the

changes necessary to provide this service," he said.

So far, Weaver has said he would support such legislation, but none has been introduced, Bates alleged.

"I'm the only candidate to say that I will do that. I think it ought to be done."

Social security benefits for senior citizens should also be improved, he said. The recent changes in social security payments and taxes didn't include important aspects such as realis-

tic cost of living increases and more earnings for social security recipients, Bates explained.

Although Weaver voted for the revisions of the social security laws, Bates doesn't feel they were the best changes.

"On the issue of social security, I would work closely with Congressman Al Ullman (chairman of the House Ways and Means Committee) to develop the cost of living increases and the higher earning aspects which are the most important parts of the legislation," Bates said.



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Rabbi says Jews kept autonomy during WW II

By DEBBY ABE
Of the Emerald

Amid the horrors of the World War II holocaust, the Jewish people strove to retain religious and personal autonomy by performing numerous acts of courage, according to Rabbi Yonah Geller.

Geller, a rabbi from the Temple Shaarie Torah in Portland, gave a lecture in the EMU Wednesday, focusing on important religious decisions by rabbis and acts of Jewish rebellion against the Germans during World War II. Geller took his examples from Irving Rosenbaum's "The Holocaust and the Halakah," a book portraying the courage and humanity of Jews during World War II.

Said Geller, "Most material on the holocaust is sad, remorseful and painful....But in all the bleak sadness, there was a bright spot — there were people who tried to live as dignified Jews and as dignified human beings."

Geller related the story of the Jews in one concentration camp on a Yom Kippur during the war.

"The people refused to work because they wanted to observe Yom Kippur. That morning they lined up and would not break ranks even after being repeatedly clubbed. Finally, the colonel decided to tempt them into breaking lines and set up long tables of delicious food which they could eat if they would come out of their lines. The people had been nearly starving for three years but they stood in line from 2 p.m. until dark. No one would eat."

In Buchenwald, a work camp, another act of religious defiance took place. When Jews reached Buchenwald, all their religious possessions were taken. A man offered some Jewish men a pair of tefillin (prayer objects) if they would give him part of their food rations for a week.

Because the men barely had enough to eat, the most precious and expensive commodity was food, and to miss a meal ration was to risk starvation. After the men received the tefillin, they let the entire camp use them. People would get up every morning at 3:30 a.m. stand in lines and pass the tefillin around so that everyone would get a chance to pray with them.

Geller said in closing, "In every moment, the Jews showed conviction, courage and perseverance. We take freedom too lightly. Let's enjoy our liberty and observe our tradition even more because of it."

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