

Packwood wants more arms

By RICH BRUER
Of the Emerald

If the U.S. government does not increase its military spending, it will "waste America," said Sen. Bob Packwood, R-Ore., during a one-day visit to Eugene last week.

Packwood told members of the Eugene Active 20-30 Club he is committed to increasing the 1981 defense budget above the rate of inflation.

His stop in Eugene was part of a six-day swing through the Willamette Valley during a two-week Congressional recess. Packwood's opponents for reelection in November are State Sen. Ted Kulongoski, D-Junc-

tion City, and Libertarian Party candidate Toni Nathan.

Packwood said it is clear that "over the last 25 years we have not cut human resource spending to fund the military." He cited recent Library of Congress figures that show U.S. defense spending in 1955 totaled 58 percent of the entire budget, while its human resource spending amounted to 21 percent of the budget.

Packwood compared those figures to those of the 1980 budget, in which defense spending takes 23 percent and the human resource spending share is 52 percent.

Although the United States is clearly superior to the Soviet Union in strategic weapons,

Packwood said, it is far behind the Soviets in conventional weapons, such as tanks, artillery, ships and tactical aircraft. The Soviet Union spends 45 percent more on its military than the United States, he added.

When questioned after his presentation, Packwood said any war in the Middle East between the United States and the Soviet Union would be a conventional war.

But in a that kind of war the United States would be ill-prepared to protect its "vital interests," he said, explaining that the gap in conventional weapons must be closed.

Packwood said he supports an increase in military spending to surpass the expected 1981 inflation rate of 11 percent.

"What Oregonians know is that if we spend too much money on the military we waste money. If we spend too little money on the military we waste America."

Between these two choices, "I will do the best I can to give the military the defense spending that it needs to make sure we regain the paramount position that we are not only entitled to but that we once had," Packwood said.

But in an interview following Packwood's speech Kulongoski asked, "Where was Bob Packwood for the last 12 years?" His voting record in Congress shows "he has not been very supportive of increased military spending."

Kulongoski said Packwood is advocating increased military spending only because the polls show a majority of Americans favor the increase. "He will change his position tomorrow if the polls dictate it."



Bob Packwood

Photo by Dennis Tachibana

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