

Weaver proposes wilderness bill

Measure seeks conservation, timber interest truce

By HARRY ESTEVE
Of the Emerald

The ongoing "wilderness war" between Oregon environmentalists and the timber industry may be on the verge of a cease-fire.

Rep. Jim Weaver, D-Ore., has proposed a truce in the form of a new wilderness bill setting aside a percentage of prime forest for wilderness designation. Titled "RARE II Resolution Act of 1981," Weaver's bill seeks the compromise between land conservation and Oregon's timber harvest that previous legislation has failed to obtain.

Without naming specific areas, the new bill designates 3 percent of Oregon's estimated yearly timber harvest or 5 percent of the state's federal timber base for wilderness consideration. Weaver says he won't include specific areas until he can "develop a consensus on what is appropriate for the entire state."

"I don't want extremism on either side, timber industry or environmentalists," Weaver says. "I intend to see that compromise hammered out."

Part of the bill sure to make timber industry officials happy is a special "release" clause. Modeled after a similar California bill, the release language rules out potential lawsuits to stall timber sales in areas not recognized by the bill.

Locally, reactions to the new bill are mixed.

Andy Kerr, associate director of the Oregon Wilderness Coalition says he is "glad to see Congress is moving again" on the Oregon wilderness issue, but he would like to see the release clause omitted.

"We are unequivocally opposed to any legislation that reduces the amount of timber land available for wilderness designation," he says.

Steve Kramer of the University Survival Center also is wary of the compromise bill. A veteran of the conservationists versus loggers battle, Kramer says the percentages allowed by the bill may be unacceptable to the timber industry.

"Five percent may not seem like much, but it represents 233 million board feet," which, Kramer says, the timber industry will not give up without another fight.

Weaver, who says the percentages "are by no means final," will hold a series of hearings later this month to determine the right balance between wilderness land and commercial timber harvests.

Anyone interested in testifying should contact Weaver's Eugene District office at 687-6732.



Graphic by Sioux Anderson

Recently returned peace activist says

U.S. policy prolongs El Salvador suffering

By TOM VISOKY
Of the Emerald

The tiny strife-torn nation of El Salvador presents the most immediate foreign policy challenge to the Reagan administration, according to Terry SoRelle of the American Friends Service Committee.

The AFSC is a Quaker organization dedicated to promoting peace and justice around the world through non-violent means.

Speaking at Clergy and Laity Concerned's monthly "Peace and Justice Forum" in the Emerald Baptist Church Thursday night, SoRelle said U.S. relations with El Salvador and other Central American and Caribbean countries have reached a watershed.

SoRelle, who was part of a 17-member AFSC fact-finding group that recently returned from the area, charged the U.S. government with hypocrisy in its dealings with El Salvador.

The government and the press assure the American public that human rights are promoted as much as possible by the

government of El Salvador, SoRelle said. But "in reality that is not the case."

"The United States said that the government (of El Salvador) was moderate, but it was not."

Stories of kidnapping, torture and assassination in El Salvador have appeared almost daily in the U.S. press over the past few months. The attacks generally have been attributed to groups on either the extreme left or the extreme right of the Salvadoran political spectrum.

But SoRelle maintained most of the terrorism and killings can be traced directly or indirectly to the Salvadoran government.

The Salvadoran government is working hand in hand with right-wing paramilitary groups to terrorize and eliminate all progressive elements in the country, he said.

SoRelle said he met with Enrique Alvarez Cordoba, the leader of the Democratic Front, and Alvarez told him the government's strategy is to "annihilate the opposition, and no other."

One week later, Alvarez and five other members of the Democratic Front were kidnapped, tortured and killed.

"When that happened those words really rang in my head," SoRelle said.

SoRelle also charged that the Salvadoran government is using seemingly progressive programs such as land reform as a cover for repression.

"From what I saw, there was more repression than reform."

In a program SoRelle compared to the CIA sponsored "land-to-the-tiller" movement in Vietnam, the government used land re-distribution as the bait to lure indigenous leaders and kill them.

The extent of the U.S. government's role in El Salvador is not entirely known, but SoRelle said American weapons and combat techniques are being used by the Salvadoran government against guerrillas and civilians alike.

Salvadoran officers receive training in population and resource control and counterinsurgency warfare at the Amer-

ican-run "School of the Americas" in Panama, he said.

"(U.S.) Ambassador White said they also receive training in Human Rights."

However, SoRelle said the U.S. government's view of what constitutes human rights may be somewhat warped when it's applied to the policies of the government of El Salvador. He cited a counterinsurgency operation in the province of Morazan that left almost 3,000 people dead and another 30,000 homeless last year as an example of U.S.-approved violence.

"Ambassador White called it a 'clean respectable operation, just the type we would like the Salvadoran military to carry out.'"

With the possibility of all-out civil war in El Salvador and a more general civil war throughout Central America increasing almost daily, SoRelle said he hopes the Reagan administration reconsiders the wisdom of providing military aid to El Salvador.

"The U.S. role there can only increase and prolong the suffering."

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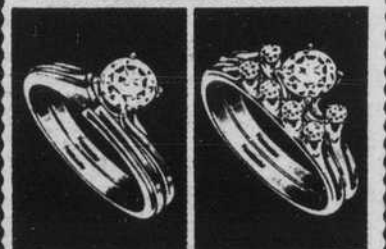
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