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Photo by David W. Zahn

Wouldn't fit in the trunk

A Plymouth Fury parked in front of the Pi Kappa Phi fraternity house at 751 E. 11th Ave. was crushed by a 90-foot tall fir tree brought down by high winds about 3 a.m. Thursday.

The tree belonged to the neighboring Phi Kappa Psi fraternity. Mark Hallquist, Phi Psi member and Interfraternity Council president, said a Phi Psi tree also was blown down last year, but caused no damage.

The owner of the Plymouth asked not to be identified, and members of both fraternities said the damage had not been estimated Thursday afternoon.

However, Pi Kappa Phi Pres. Scott Steward already was making plans to dispense with the tree.

"If you know anybody interested in buying some firewood, we might have some for sale soon," Steward said.

Panelists view human rights 'crisis'

By PAUL TELLES
Of the Emerald

All but one of five panelists agreed Thursday night that human rights in Latin America are in crisis.

Speaking to about 800 people in the EMU Ballroom, William Wipfler, director of the National Council of Churches' Human Rights Office, traced the recent increase in Latin American human rights violations to American involvement in the region and to the concurrent emergence of military governments.

Although the Kennedy administration's Latin American policy originally was based on idealistic premises, the American government later supported repressive governments because of the "anti-Castro, anti-communist paranoia" of the early 1960s, said Wipfler, an Episcopalian priest who spent many years working as a missionary in the region.

"We are facing over the last decade in Latin America a different type of phenomenon" from earlier political instability, said Edy Kauffman, a political science professor at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem.

For example, countries like Uruguay — long considered to have positive human rights policies — have begun to practice torture and other forms of political repression, Kauffman said.

Agreeing with Wipfler and Kauffman, Rick Rolf, legislative aide to Sen. Mark Hatfield, R-Ore., said Pres. Jimmy Carter's human rights policy had many loopholes that allowed the State Department to continue to put United States'

national security above the rights of Latin Americans.

However, "without that exception, you would never have (human rights) legislation passed," Rolf said.

Consequently, he called on the "human rights community" to enter into a dialogue with national security advocates and impress them with the "long-run" view that American support of authoritarian regimes eventually has a negative impact on national security.

But State Department official John Blacken disagreed, saying Carter policy had a positive effect on human rights.

"In looking at Latin America today, the

picture is certainly not all that bad," Blacken said, drawing hisses from the otherwise well-mannered crowd.

Latin America is more developed and progressive than most underdeveloped areas, Blacken said. Two-thirds of Latin Americans live in cities, three-quarters are literate and the countries' gross national products have been rising steadily for several years, the director of the State Department's Office on Central American Affairs said.

Although the situation has improved, there are still many violations of human rights in South America, he said. But he warned against making human rights the

only point when dealing with these countries.

This could lead to the "manipulation" of the United States government and the lessening of American influence, as happened in the early 1960s, he said. Caught up in anti-communist fervor, the U.S. government was manipulated by authoritarian regimes posing as democracies.

Likewise, he added, the government should beware of being fooled by revolutionary governments now.

The crowd's mood improved after Maria Alves, an expert in Brazilian affairs, began speaking.

Saying it was important to have a dialogue with people like Blacken, Alves said the "barrage" of economic statistics Blacken used to illustrate his points are "not what we (South Americans) mean by development."

The number of people who now live in Latin American cities isn't an example of progress but of the wrong kind of development, Alves told the applauding crowd.

"We would rather have people be able to survive in the countryside" than be driven to the cities by multi-national corporations interested in producing cash instead of subsistence crops, the Brazilian native said.

Although Brazilians are hoping to change their society through peaceful means, Alves said she supports violent revolutions like the one that overthrew Anastasio Somoza in Nicaragua.

"It is the right of the people to overthrow a tyrannical government."



Photo by Erich Boekelheide

Human rights in crisis was the topic of Thursday night's panel discussion in the EMU Ballroom. About 800 people listened for two hours to the five panelists.