

Undue emphasis on communism, he says

# Speaker blasts Reagan's foreign policy

By Henry Crumme  
Of the Emerald

Pres. Ronald Reagan thinks Latin America is long, China is big, and Africa is black — except for a little white tip.

This, in William Wipfler's words, is an excellent example of the United States' narrow-minded foreign policy.

Wipfler, director of the Human Rights Office of the National Council of the Churches of Christ, spoke at "Human Rights: Crisis in the Southern Cone (Argentina, Chile, and Uruguay)," Saturday's conference in the EMU Ballroom. The Eugene Council for Human Rights in Latin America, in cooperation with Amnesty International USA, sponsored the symposium.

Wipfler charged that human rights in Latin America are of no concern to the Reagan Administration. In general, the administration chooses to subordinate North-South affairs to the "East-West" struggle. In other words, the Reagan Administration gives top priority to its global struggle against communism. The violation of human rights by totalitarian governments in South America can only be a secondary consideration according to the new U.S. policy, Wipfler said.

The foreign policy of the Reagan Administration was generated by conservative think-tanks, such as the Hoover Institute, the Georgetown Center for Strategic Studies, and the American Enterprise Institute, Wipfler said. The think-tank's foreign policy is grounded upon three basic points. First, no independent political activity exists. Second, all political policy must be tied to diplomatic and military policy. And third, all policy must relate to the world struggle between communism and democracy.

The goals of the new U.S. foreign policy, said Wipfler, are as follows. First, American superiority in all areas must be established through military strength. Furthermore, local conflicts must be viewed as totally inferior to the worldwide conflict between communism and democracy; issues of nationalism, hunger, and injustice

must be ignored. Moreover, the U.S. must not share world leadership with anyone, including Europe or Japan. Also, because of the East-West confrontation, North-South prob-

lems must be considered secondary. The U.S. should deal bilaterally with other nations on the basis of national security, and must more narrowly protect its private invest-

ments abroad.

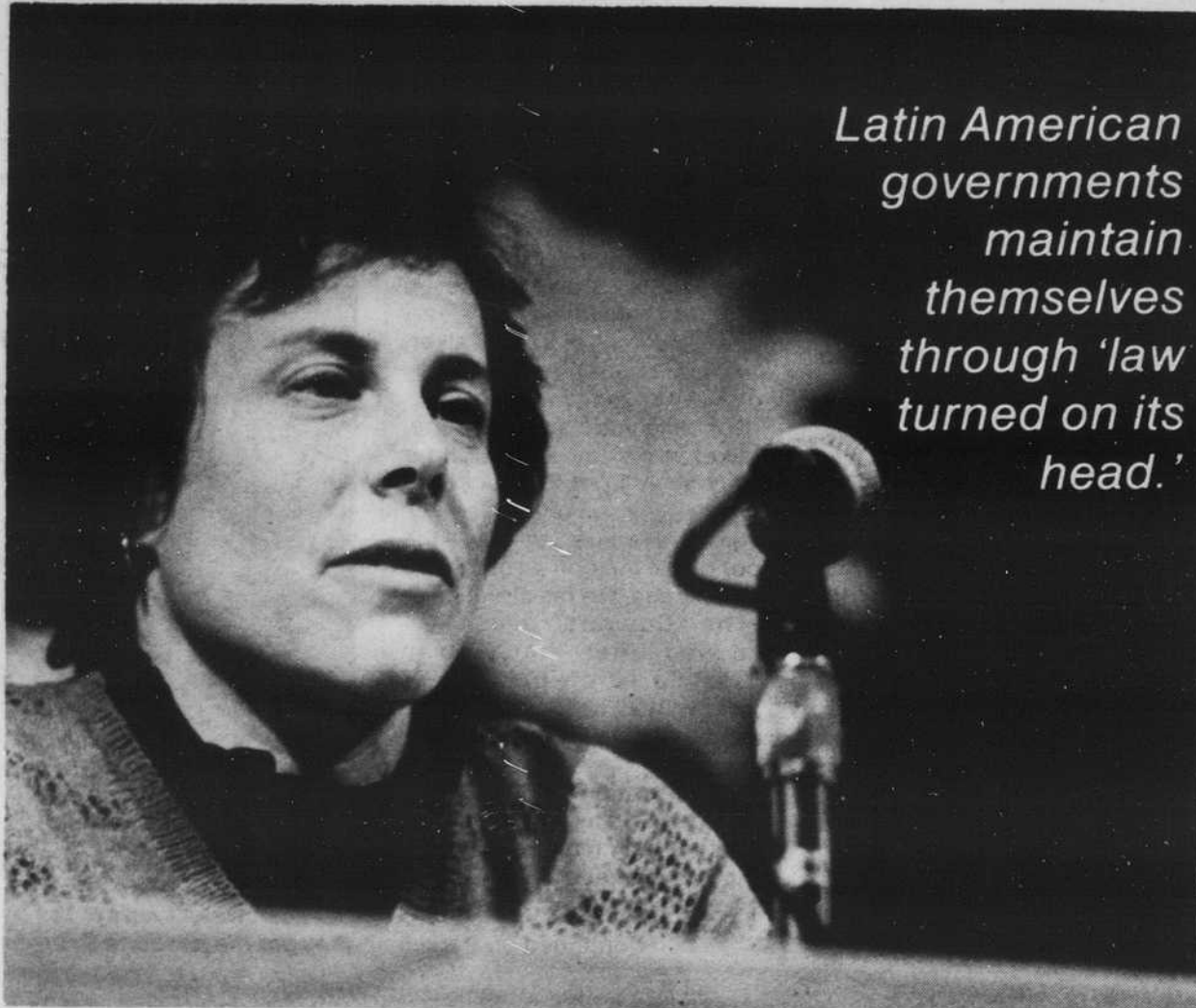
The U.S. government is concerned with "stopping certain governments from allowing Cuba and the Soviet Union from expanding in Latin America,"

Wipfler said. The Reagan Administration views Latin America as a test-case to prove that communism cannot effectively spread. Therefore, the U.S. supports — with military advisors and monetary aid — gross violations of human rights by Latin American governments, provided those governments are sufficiently anti-Marxist, Wipfler added.

The Reagan Administration has appointed policy architects who are opponents of human rights, Wipfler said. For example, when he first assumed office, Secretary of State Alexander Haig said that international terrorism would replace human rights as the basic premise of U.S. foreign policy. Almost all of Reagan's state department appointees for Latin America either have no experience in the area or have close ties with the Latin American military, Wipfler said.

Patricia Weiss-Fagen, the other main speaker at the symposium, said Southern Cone governments maintain themselves through "law turned on its head." Decrees made by military governments have overturned the constitutions of Chile, Argentina, and Uruguay, declaring those constitutions "unconstitutional," she said. The military governments employ terror to maintain their power, routinely torturing their prisoners and detainees, added the associate history professor from San Jose State University.

But the most frightening use of terror, she said, is the sudden disappearances of political dissidents, social workers, or anyone who "makes demands on the government." Between 1973 and 1977, an estimated 1,500 persons "disappeared" in Chile. A UN task force reported that it had information on between 7,000 and 9,000 "disappearances" in Argentina. The military governments of the Southern Cone prefer to make their opponents "disappear" because it releases the governments from accountability, Weiss-Fagen said. Since these governments regard themselves as the saviors of civilized culture, they must make themselves appear innocent, she added.



Patricia Weiss-Fagen related foreign policy to human rights.

Photo by Mark Pynes

Latin American governments maintain themselves through 'law turned on its head.'

## 3 recent coups squelch democracies

There has been a fascist revolution in the "southern zone" countries of South America, including Chile, Argentina, and Uruguay. In these three countries military coups have transformed their societies from democratic to near-totalitarian.

Uruguay was once known as "the Switzerland of South America." Before 1970, Uruguay had the highest per capita income, highest literacy rate, and the highest gold reserves in Latin America.

But, since 1973, when the military seized political power and installed their own president, political parties have been banned. During the eight or nine years of military rule, one out of every 50 Uruguayans have been

detained or imprisoned. One in 90 have been tortured. Nearly one-sixth of the population has left the country within the last 10 years.

With a labor law modelled on a similar statute in Mussolini's Italy, the Uruguayan government has outlawed labor unions and prohibited strikes. In Uruguay it is now a crime to read any newspaper that is less than 100 years old.

Chileans used to pride themselves on their democratic traditions. But since 1973, all political parties have been banned and thousands of Chileans have been arrested and tortured.

Meanwhile, in Argentina, a state of siege enforced since 1974, has enabled the military to indiscriminately arrest, imprison, and torture Argentine citizens.

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