

emerald

Cuba not directing revolution, author says

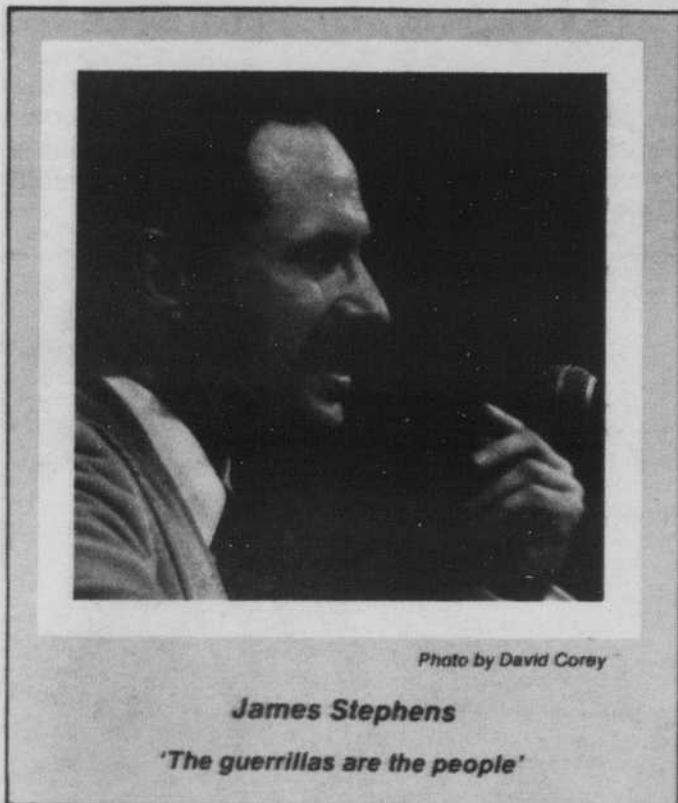


Photo by David Corey

James Stephens

'The guerrillas are the people'

"Why is it whenever the poor and downtrodden begin to ask for, not the whole pie, but a little slice of the pie we raise the boogey-man of communist subversion?"

That was the question James Stephens asked Monday night in the EMU ballroom as part of his chronological observations on "The Political Reality in El Salvador," sponsored by the EMU Cultural Forum and the Eugene Council on Human Rights in Latin America.

Stephens, co-author of a 1981 Oxfam America study on land reform in El Salvador, criticized the Reagan administration's assessment of the civil war in El Salvador. The idea of Cuban-controlled communist subversion "defies reasoning — but that is something the present Administration is short on," he said.

On Feb. 17, 1981, Secretary of State Alexander Haig said the United States would continue to support Salvadoran President Jose Napoleon Duarte to "achieve social justice and stability," Stephens recounted. Since that time human rights violations have more than doubled, he alleged.

When the Reagan administration drew the line at El Salvador, a "mechanistic understanding" was at work, Stephens said, adding that the concept of an exported revolution was "patently absurd" because each nation develops its own social change.

The Organization of American States, the United Nations human rights council, the American Civil Liberties Union, and the El Salvador human rights organization all disagreed with the Reagan administration's statement that human rights had recently improved in El Salvador.

"How is that possible? They changed the definition of a civilian casualty." The casualty numbers were down, while the actual number of killings was up, he added.

"The political reality of El Salvador is truly a burning issue," Stephens said, adding that the "ahistorical" methods of the State Department ignore the deep, turbulent roots of repression in the Central American nation.

Stephens also said the U.S. governments distinction between guerrillas and peasants is misleading. "Over 95 percent of the guerrillas are peasants themselves. The guerrillas are the people." Otherwise, he said, how would they know every nook and cranny to set up ambushes. "Do you actually think the Cubans could come in and learn those things overnight?"

Stories by Ron Hunt

Of the Emerald

Counsel denounces U.S. immigration policy

The U.S. government is returning 200 to 400 refugees to El Salvador each week, in violation of U.S. law and international agreements, says Amit Pandya, general counsel to the private National Immigration and Refugee Network.

"These people have a legal right to be here," Pandya said Monday at the University law school. Although Salvadoran refugees have been labeled "illegal aliens," the Immigration and Naturalization Service is the "biggest lawbreaker," he said.

Pandya alleges that the INS is coercing Salvadorans to waive their rights to deportation hearings and depriving them of information on applying for asylum.

Many Salvadoran refugees enter the United States without papers, but this does not make them "illegal aliens — someone who doesn't have a right to be here," said Pandya, director of the Washington, D.C., office of the National Center for Immigrants' Rights.

American law clearly specifies it is acceptable for refugees to enter the country before applying for asylum and that a "well-founded fear of persecution" is the legal basis for granting asylum, he said.

"People just aren't going to wait for papers if they're afraid of their heads being cut off," Pandya said.

The International Committee for Immigrant Rights told the Inter-American Committee on Human Rights Thursday that the United States has "violated

the right to life and personal security" of Salvadorans who have been deported, he said.

A national class action suit was filed Friday in Federal District Court in Los Angeles which challenges the "apprehension and deportation" of Salvadoran refugees, Pandya said.

"Trickery" and "widespread brutality" are INS methods, he alleges.

Pandya also charged the State Department with making information available to the Salvadoran government on those Salvadorans seeking asylum in the United States.

Pres. Ronald Reagan's proposed Omnibus Immigration Control Act also drew fire from Pandya. "Anyone with half a conscience" finds sections of the bill shocking, he said.

The bill would give the president power to declare an "immigration emergency" and the subsequent authority to impound vessels and close border roads, Pandya said, calling the bill a "dead letter."

Sen. Alan Simpson, R-Wyo., is expected to introduce a similar bill Wednesday, he said.

"There's some urgency on all these issues," Pandya said, adding that Simpson's bill might be delivered to full committee within one month and — "in the absence of any input" — might be approved by the Congress.

Pandya's visit to Oregon was sponsored by the Oregon Coalition For Immigrant and Refugee Rights.

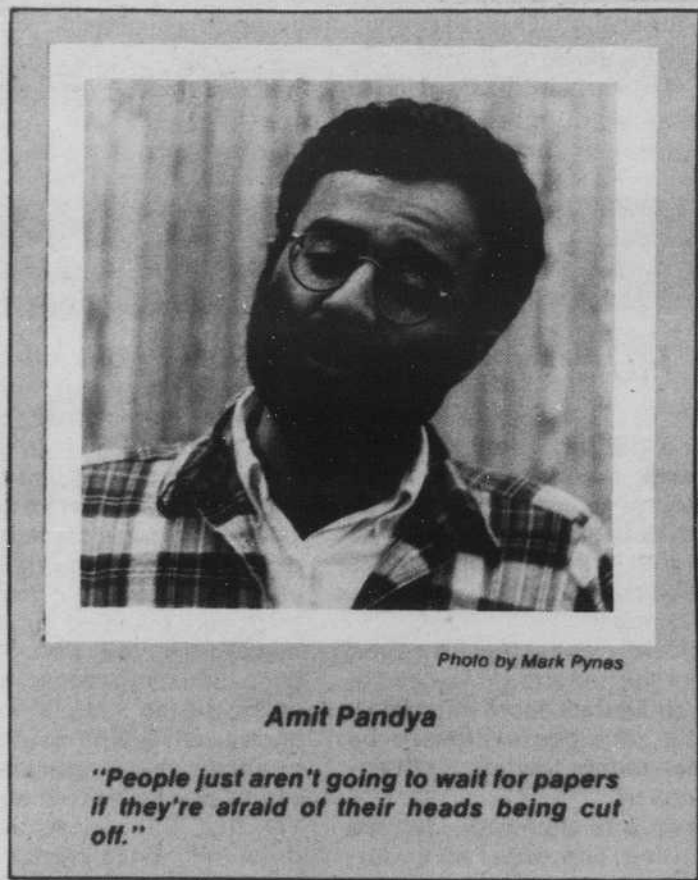


Photo by Mark Pynes

Amit Pandya

"People just aren't going to wait for papers if they're afraid of their heads being cut off."

City council approves cable TV package

By Julie Kurilo
Of the Emerald

The Eugene City Council approved amendments to the city's cable television franchise agreement in a public hearing Monday night which commits Teleprompter to spend \$410,000 on community access programming over the next three years.

The amendments to Teleprompter's agreement with the city are the result of a three-year review of the cable company's services, and follow recent one-dollar basic rate increase to \$7.95 a month.

The council approved the franchise amendments on a 5-3 vote after hearing several opposing arguments from various public access producers and other supporters, along with comments from a Teleprompter representative.

Brian Sullivan, local general manager of Teleprompter, was alone in his testimony supporting of the amendment, among nine opposing testimonials.

Sullivan stressed the importance of council approval of the amendments. "If approval is denied, the only people who will be hurt are the subscribers — your constituents," he told council members.

Sullivan said that Teleprompter and the Eugene Metropolitan Television/Translator Commission reached the package agreement in good faith and that neither party is completely satisfied.

Public access supporters claimed that service Eugene was receiving from Teleprompter was not comparable to that received in other communities served by the cable company.

"The people of Eugene and Springfield got a bad deal," said Steve Christiansen, an independent televi-

sion producer in the area.

Christiansen said that Eugene's cable commission managed to negotiate an "absolutely minimal" package along with granting the rate increase, adding that profits made in Eugene by the company may be shipped to other areas not so profitable that were receiving more services.

Diana Abernathy, producer of a public access program, stated she was "appalled" that the cable commission had approved the franchise agreement without reading it due to lack of time.

Calling the agreement an "outrageous package," community program producer Joe Weiner said it keeps Eugene in last place for cable service to subscribers.

The Lane County Board of Commissioners will make the final decision on the package at their meeting Wednesday.