

## Forest destruction deserves activism

For those of you who haven't seen the posters, or attended any of the meetings or rallies, this week is officially National World Rainforest Week.

As could be expected, various organizations at the University are taking part in activities designed to awaken people to the problems of the world's rain forests.

Forest destruction is one of the most horrifying environmental problems we face. Rain forests are a vital part of the earth's ecosystem, and are rapidly falling under the clear-cut and chainsaw as developing nations seek to cultivate more land.

Eugene and the University are just part of the nationwide protest against this destruction.

Locally, groups such as the Survival Center, Earth First! and Rain Forest Action Group of Eugene have been holding rallies, "human be-ins" and movie showings to get people involved in the rainforest plight.

Destruction of rainforest land is not a regional concern — it is a global one. Thinking that what is going on in Brazil or Argentina will not affect your lifestyle is akin to mimicking an ostrich and burying your head in the sand.

Rain forests not only provide much of the rainfall in Latin America, but are home to millions of species of animals, insects and plants indigenous to the area. And as local governments cut into the forests to get more agricultural land, whole species are erased with almost casual disregard.

American fast-food restaurants buy cheap, South American beef, raised on farming land cleared from what was formally tropical rainforest. The local governments see the quick payoff of American dollars, and ignore the long term realities.

Forest destruction is not limited to just tropical rain forests. In Oregon, we are facing the increased logging of old growth timber. The Opal Creek old growth forest was cleared for logging by the Legislature this session.

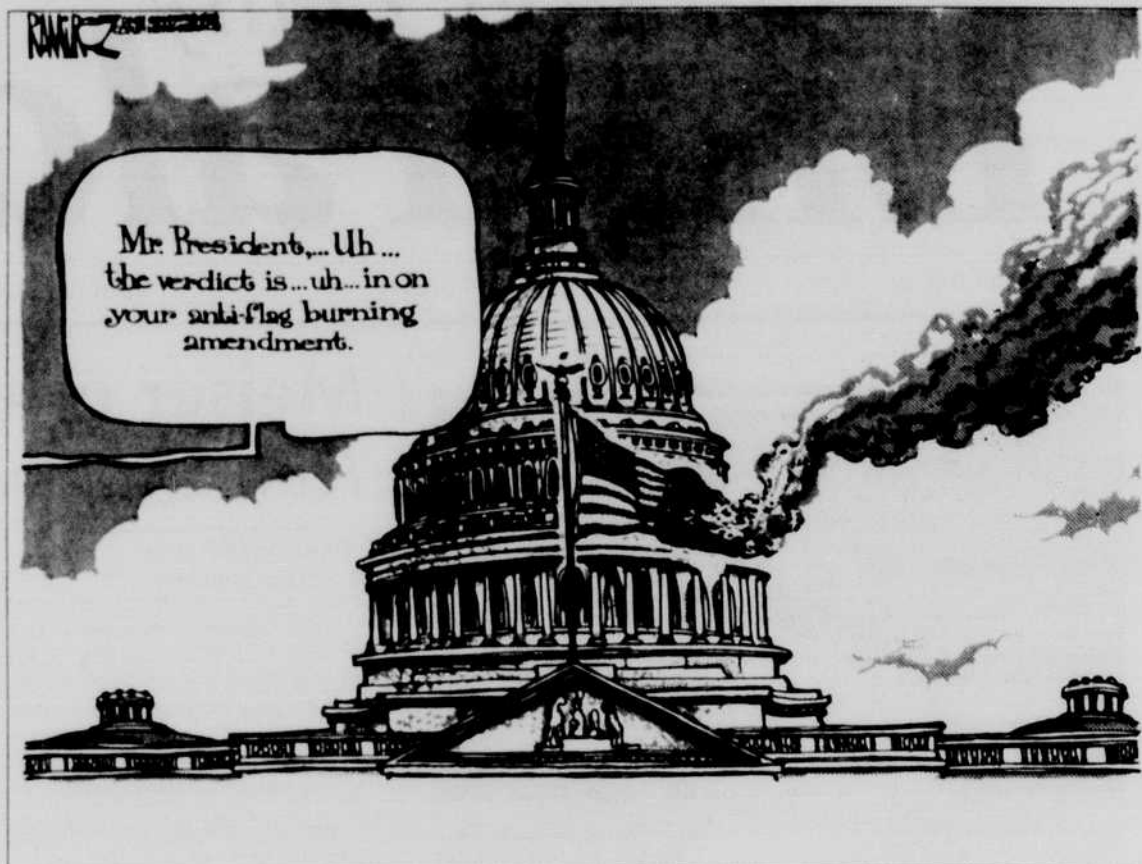
Trees literally hundreds of years old, cut down so someone can have a varnished wood end table.

That oxygen is produced by trees is common knowledge. Simple arithmetic shows that the less trees you have, the less oxygen is produced. Less oxygen, less people.

Also, as species are eradicated, there is no telling what secrets of nature are lost with them. There is no way of knowing what medicinal knowledge has already been lost.

In the time it takes you to read this piece, at least one more species of rain forest flower, fauna or animal life has become extinct.

Think about that.



## Election money another U.S. intervention

When covert military suppression fails, do the next best thing. Turn your rebel forces into a legitimate political party and dump millions of dollars into its campaign coffers.

Free elections, American style.

Last week, the U.S. Senate approved 64-35 a \$9 million appropriation to be spent on the Nicaraguan elections next February. The money, which was already approved by the House, will be used to support international observers, there to make sure the election is run fairly.

Supporters of the aid frankly admit it is a last-ditch effort to influence the Nicaraguan election. With Contra aid over, and covert help political suicide, dumping money into an election is the only thing left to do.

Supposedly, the money will be distributed to both the opposition coalition and the existing government, but the Bush Administration's intention is clear: they will shell out big bucks to ensure an opposition victory.

Critics of the money — rightly — say the election aid is just another example of United States meddling in Latin American politics. They also point out it would be illegal for Nicaragua (or for that matter, any other country) to give money to an American political party, but the U.S. is supplying cash for Nicaraguan parties. Arkansas Democrat Dale Bumpers called the aid "publicly financing an election in Nicaragua."

We agree.

The Bush Administration should let Nicaraguans decide what is best for themselves. If they want a new government, they'll elect one. If they don't, they'll vote for the one they have now.

Election aid supporters say the money will be used to ensure free elections, and international observers will be there to guarantee neither side gets away with ballot box-rigging. But money often breeds corruption, and U.S. cash is more likely to lead to election-fixing than prevent it.

Or is that what Bush and his cronies want?

It remains to be seen where the money goes exactly, and what affect it will have on the election. But either way, it amounts to another Bush blunder.

In a section of U.S. foreign policy that has consistently been prone to mistakes and miscues, the election money seems to be just another example of political ineptness. America should stay out of the election altogether, and let Nicaraguans decide their own destiny.

## Letters

### Wake up

Office of Public Safety, get a clue! Once again, we see you running in circles, trying to solve transportation problems on campus. You need to wake up and realize that every problem you have "solved" has created others.

Are you aware that increased bike use on campus is a result of your tremendous raises in parking permit prices and meter fees? I am a biker and a pedestrian. I too am annoyed when a cyclist zips by on a "walk-dismount" sidewalk, just as I am annoyed when riding a bike, dodging pedestrians slowly moving along a designated bike path.

Face it OPS, the only "solution" everyone will be happy with is two campuses — one for walkers and one for bikers.

Cyclists like myself lock their machines illegally because the agency responsible for supplying adequate bike racks has

been lax. A tree or a parking meter is much more secure, not to mention often more readily available. At peak hours at the University, finding an empty slot in a bike rack can be very difficult.

A citation is so ironic — charging people fines due to your own failure to solve transportation problems. OPS, please realize that higher meter prices, increased ticket penalties, decreasing auto parking, and limited, unsecure bicycle parking are going to increase the population of bicycles, therefore creating unnecessary tension between bikers and pedestrians.

We the taxpayers and students who pay your salaries demand real solutions, not the continuous complications that stem from the OPS office.

Pat Greenwell  
Architecture

### Get burned

I read recently in the *Emerald* (Oct. 18) how our new president has decided what is free-speech and what is disorderly conduct. Non-violent protests are also considered taboo.

If our president doesn't warm up to students and faculty (some are tax payers too), things will not just be shouting matches. They could get ugly.

The last straw was the "advertisement" for an "open forum." How can we take you seriously, sir? You are playing with fire. The fire of thousands of thinking students, not children.

Steve Epstein  
Student

### Absence of logic

In his commentary of Oct. 18, Myles Brand espouses the

sedate view that it is illogical to become emotionally aroused while expressing one's thoughts. In spite of this intellectually-advanced position of emotionless rationality, the motivation of his writing seems to be anger and retribution.

Indeed, while decrying the use of emotional blackmail and citing logic and rationality as the basis of the University, Brand's argument is full of fallacy and emotional pulls and shoves. He shames, scolds and calls names. He uses many emotion-packed cliches and phrases to both punish and ostracize the demonstrators and the *Emerald*, and to paint in the glorious university they are so unappreciative of.

He arrives at conclusions in the absence of logic. Will we really not be a university and no longer a free people "unless we together strive constantly" using only logic to resolve dif-

ferences?

Further, he states that the *Emerald* and the demonstrators are examples of those with unclear thinking, confused between emotion and thought. Then he leaps, and the demonstrators have become aggressive and violent bullies.

Brand makes no case here, just states his obviously disturbed feelings as conclusion. He continues with a fictional quote; a grating, sing-song, insanely immature chant attributed to the aforementioned bullies, whom he is desperately trying to get the newspaper to distance itself from.

Brand appears hysterical and desperate, even paranoid. The vindictive tone of the piece is very ugly, and certainly doesn't speak of respectable leadership qualities.

Joe Wayman  
Eugene