

Old growth battle needs solution now

Last year, environmentalists and timber industry officials reached an uneasy temporary accord over old growth stands. As part of a Department of the Interior bill, Congress governs the amount of trees harvested and what old-growth stands will be protected.

A section of the bill also delves into legal aspects of the controversy by preventing future lawsuits regarding spotted owls on congressionally approved old-growth legislation. This section was designed to put an end to the constant and numerous legal challenges environmentalists launched against the timber industry.

Now, there is a new lawsuit pending over the planned Cowboy timber sale in the Umpqua national forest. (The sale is going through despite resistance within the Forest Service.) Environmentalists found their legal weapons hadn't all been stripped away; they were able to find a contestable point in the Hatfield rider (regarding the fragmentation of existing stands) that allows them to enjoin the sale.

So the ceasefire is over; those darn environmentalists are stopping the works with their pesky lawsuits. One can hardly blame them. The environmentalists have no room to back down; they must stand firm on every issue. This philosophy leads to short accords.

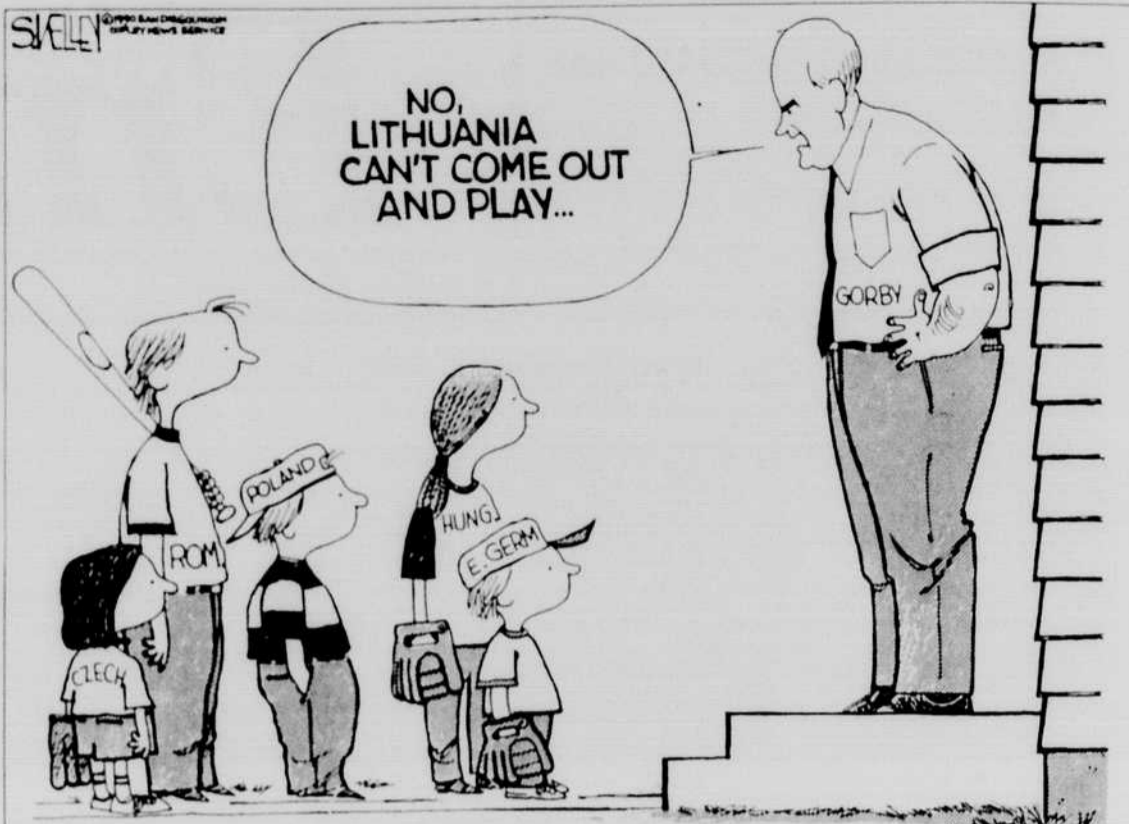
Somehow, someday, there needs to be an end to the whole controversy. That is done by sitting down and hashing the thing out, point by point. Constant lawsuits and dragging legal feet isn't the way to do it.

But when will this time happen? Ironically, there was the decision this weekend by state Democrats to reject an old growth logging ban in their gubernatorial platform. The reasons for this are many, but most boil down to just one thing — political maneuvering.

The Democrats did include in their platform a call for stricter control on how much timber would be cut but backed off from a total logging ban because of the possible loss of loggers' votes such a ban would create.

Local Democrats, particularly U.S. Rep. Peter DeFazio, have usually been connected with environmental concerns. DeFazio has used his position to protect many old growth stands. But calling for a ban on the biggest industry in Oregon was perceived as political suicide. With the party already suffering from the campaign finance debacle and other scandals, state Democrats aren't in any position to make bold proposals.

Pandering to both sides, industry and environmentalist, is never going to solve the state's old growth issue. The state's leaders, and would-be leaders, need to tackle the issue head on.



County's elections should be recalled

Recent Lane County election blunders are almost too comical to be true. Unfortunately, they weren't early April Fool's Day pranks.

The vote-by-mail election was a fiasco. Some voters didn't receive their mail ballots at all. Others who did receive ballots found pages missing. To add to the mess, the Lane County elections office misplaced 1,000 completed ballots until two days after Tuesday's election.

Officials attributed the incomplete ballots to a faulty insertion machine leased by the county. On Thursday, a box containing uncounted ballots was found on a table in a back room of the elections division office.

Lane County should hold another election to attempt to correct its errors. Voters shouldn't accept elections officials' mistakes that turned the county's elections into such a mess.

Although elections officials said the 1,000 ballots that were overlooked did not change the election results, can voters really be sure? If something as simple as getting a

box full of ballots off of a table in the elections office was forgotten, what else might have been overlooked?

The need for another election is especially crucial when one considers how close the decisions were in a couple of cases. For example, the mix-up may have cost Lane Community College more than \$700,000 that it desperately needs to repair leaky roofs and worn carpet.

Voters defeated LCC's request for a property tax levy 28,573 votes to 27,968 votes, by a margin of 605. The levy would have allowed the college to continue — without raising taxes — to receive \$725,000 a year until 1995 for building maintenance and classroom equipment.

In addition, the use of mail ballots in future elections should be suspended until elections officials can distribute and collect the ballots without error. Mail ballots too often get lost in the mail and do not reach transient groups of people, such as college students, who move from residence to residence.

Letters

On bike lanes

The new one-way street arrangement with dual bike lanes on 13th Avenue east of University Street is awful for bike riders.

The pavement along the north edge of the street is very rough. Trucks are parked in the bike lanes much of the time.

Drivers entering a one-way street often only look one way before entering the street. At both ends of this section vehicles must cross to the opposite side of the street to continue their intended course. The advantages of this design totally escape me.

It seems that the greater problem here may be that certain University officials think there is a problem with bikes on this campus that demands special rules and separate facilities for bicycles. However, as other minority groups have often found, bike riders may find that separate facilities are unequal facilities.

The current setup on 13th assigns bike riders to a ghetto on the street and must be changed. The only appropriate solution is to restore normal two-way traffic on 13th for all vehicles.

like it was before the science building construction.

Lee Young
Student

The poor

You quote Michael Parenti, a recent speaker (ODE, March 28) on behalf of *The Student Insurgent*, as stating that "the poor are the fastest growing social group in America."

In fact, figures from Table C-30 of *The Annual Report of the Council of Economic Advisers* (Feb. 1990), show that the percentage of the U.S. population having personal or family incomes that place them below the official "poverty level" was 12.3 percent in 1970, 12.9 percent in 1980, and 12.8 percent in 1988.

It should be noted that many people in this low-income category receive substantial economic assistance from family, private charities and the government (food stamps, subsidized housing, Medicare, Medicaid, veterans benefits, scholarships, etc.).

Such assistance is excluded from the earned income figures that place the recipients "be-

low the poverty line."

According to the official definition, many students at the University are below the poverty line. Yet many of these students will be earning handsome incomes 10 years from now.

If America is such a swamp of poverty presided over by an impenetrable "ruling class," how was it possible for impoverished Vietnamese families to come over here by the thousands 20 years ago, and to now have their sons and daughters receiving honors degrees from Yale, Harvard, Princeton, MIT, Cal Tech, Berkeley and UCLA in such fields as physics, medicine, accounting, computer science, engineering, and chemistry?

Just asking....

Henry Goldstein
Economics professor

Rights

On March 26, I received a letter. Evidently the purpose of this letter and its accompanying material was to educate students as to how to "establish

better relations" with the local police force. The cover letter was signed by not only University President Myles Brand, but also ASUO President Andy Clark.

I read the accompanying material, which describes the veritable cornucopia of victimless crimes that students can be arrested and cited for. The material went on to imply that police have almost godlike power when it comes to when they can arrest or cite someone.

Oddly enough, there was no mention of what a student's rights were. Indeed, for almost a whole page, there was a description of the power police have in "busting" parties at a student's home. Not once on this page were mentioned the constitutional protections against improper search and

seizure and other related legal matters.

Later in the cover letter, a paragraph asked for student input on how to better relations between the University and the Eugene Police Department. I'm not the first to suggest that a good beginning would be if the EPD stopped blatantly harassing homeless people, or stopped issuing expensive citations to poor college students for victimless (and trivial) violations.

I feel betrayed that the ASUO and Brand are so easily duped into encouraging blind obedience to authority, while at the same time neglecting and ignoring the rights of those that they are supposed to represent.

Garrett Kopping
Journalism/RHCM

Letters Policy

Letters to the editor must be limited to no more than 250 words, legible, signed and the identification of the writer must be verified when the letter is submitted.

The *Emerald* reserves the right to edit any letter for length or style.