

Area economies must diversify

As expected, Congress declared the northern spotted owl a threatened species last week. The bird will be protected under the Endangered Species Act effective July 23. Under the law, threatened species cannot be harmed nor can their habitats be destroyed without federal government approval.

A threatened species is considered likely to become extinct without protection, whereas an endangered species is most certain to become extinct.

A U.S. Forest Service study completed in April states that the northern spotted owl has lost about two-thirds of its natural habitat since 1800. The panel that completed the report recommended that more than 3 million acres of previously unprotected forests be set aside to preserve the owls' habitat.

Timber industry representatives claim that preventing logging of the old growth forests will cost the Northwest between 25-75,000 jobs. But blaming the northern spotted owl on timber industry problems ignores the real problem. Regardless of whether owls need protecting, and they do, the beauty of old growth forests is reason enough to explore alternatives to current timber company practices.

The timber industry has known for a long time that its obscene clearcutting policy could not last forever. While not always visible from the family car, the rape of our forests can clearly be seen from the air.

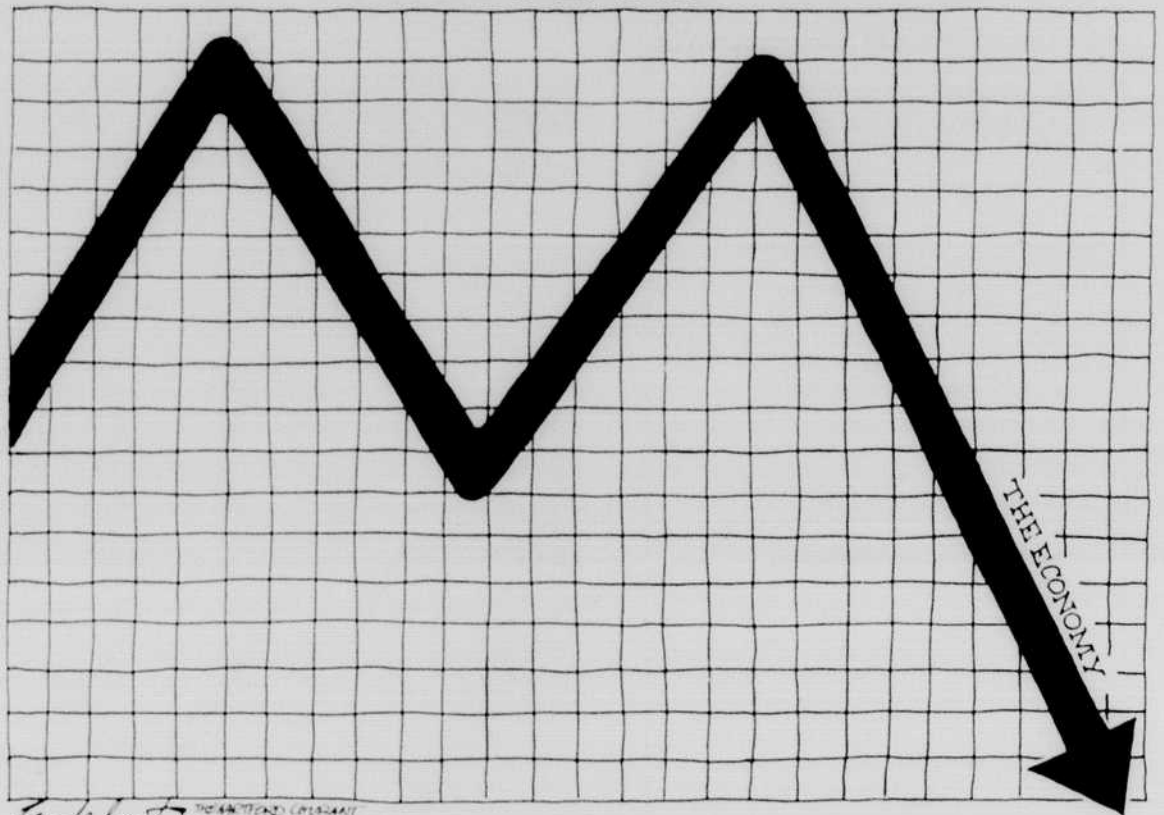
It is unfortunate that timber industry workers are suffering the most. But during the previous decade many area mills have shut down while laborers blessed enough to keep working took pay cuts. Signs that the glory days of logging are over have been evident for a long time. The increased shift to automation in mills, the rise of raw log exports, and the failure to transform to second-growth timber base are to blame for the majority of lost jobs. But to continue cutting old growth forests simply to keep people working is foolhardy and unfeasible.

If society eliminated crime, thousands of law-enforcement officials, lawyers, judges and prison workers would lose their jobs. If people became more health-conscious, thousands of doctors, nurses and hospital workers would lose their jobs. Because jobs would be lost, does this mean that a lawful, healthy populace isn't desirable? Of course not.

The benefits to society would outweigh the disadvantages. The United States has made the transition from agrarian to manufacturing to service-oriented society within the past 60 years. New jobs were created to replace the antiquated ones. Logging towns, like family farms, will soon be a page in history. Instead of fighting the inevitable, legislators must work together with timber companies and their employees to devise and implement alternative economic opportunities.

Listing the spotted owl as a threatened species is forcing the Pacific Northwest to do what should have been done a long time ago — diversify its economic base.

TWIN PEAKS



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Letters

Debatable

This is in reply to the commentary by Annette Bridges on censorship and pornography (*ODE*, June 19). I disagree with her views on several counts. First of all, I believe that the removal of the aforementioned magazines is censorship, "if it walks like a duck" The question boils down to: *if it is true* that pornography causes violence to women, do these effects outweigh the damage caused by promulgating censorship in this country? I realize this is a sensitive value judgment, but I for one believe that the potential effects of censorship far outweigh any other consideration. This is not to say I condone violence upon women, personally I don't condone violence in general.

Secondly, the issue as to whether pornography (erotica) causes violence to women is debatable. Yes, there is a correlation between the two, but correlations merely suggest a potential causal relationship. I would not at all be surprised if there are complex variables between the two.

Last, (although these are relatively unimportant), Ms. Bridges implies that pornography (erotica) is "by and for men." This is just plain naive. Believe it or not, Annette, there are plenty of women that both enjoy pornography and contribute to its publication (i.e. the publication *Yellow Silk*). Also, bondage per se is not always practiced in a violent manner.

John Bainbridge
Eugene

Respect life

Suppose a famous pianist loses two fingers in an accident and can never play again. He calls Dr. Kevorkian (maker of the infamous intravenous suicide machine) and says, "Doc, I can't bear the pain and loss of dignity and livelihood — hook me up to your machine."

Then Donald Trump calls because Ms. Maples dumped him. He has declared bankruptcy and can't take the loss of "quality of life," indignity and emotional distress. What will the criteria be to decide who may legally commit suicide? What is dignity? Quality of life? Should the thousands of terminally-ill Americans who go into remission each year have ended their struggle upon diagnosis — even before the good news? Certainly not, and neither should have Janet Adkins.

American society fails to respect the sanctity of human life before birth (abortions) and now, in the name of "dignity, quality of life," and even "love," seeks to eliminate life which fails to meet the criteria. This is a grave error. The crippled, retarded, comatose and senile elderly all lack "quality of life" by some standards. The suffering also earn our sympathy and we must ease their pain, comforting the afflicted and healing the sick. But never should we assist in the unnatural death of an innocent person, even oneself. For all the wisdom and character so many have gained through suffering and trials, how spiritually poor our world would be if we always bailed out of life at the

sight of adversity.

Brandon Shepard
Eugene

Poor planning

Millions of American basketball fans watching the Blazers-Pistons game were exposed to the raw beauty of Mt. Hood over Portland the other night. This exposure of our precious natural resource is no doubt worth millions in public relations for Oregon's tourism effort.

What Americans couldn't see from the CBS camera viewpoint is the expanse of clearcuts abutting the miniature wilderness area surrounding the base of Mt. Hood. They would be shocked.

Anybody taking off on a clear day in a jet plane heading East from Portland can see for themselves the extent of logging and clearcuts in the Cascades. Timber industry arguments that environmentalists have "locked up" the forest don't seem very persuasive at that moment.

Is there some moral imperative that Western civilization must consume and destroy the oldest and most precious of our natural resources, destroy and fragment an entire living ecosystem all for the sake of timber industry profits?

Automation, log exports, lack of planning and investment (public and private) for the transition to a second-growth timber economy are the real culprits of job loss in the forest products industry.

Resolution of this issue defines Oregon as a state committed to our long-term environmental needs or as a state where short-term thinking reigns supreme as our forests, air, water, fish and wildlife gradually deteriorate.

I say let's vote on it.

State Rep. Dave McTeague
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