

Gulf crisis subject of city forum

Eugene area residents will have the opportunity to express their views on the United States' involvement in the Persian Gulf during a town meeting Thursday night.

The impending war in the Middle East and its impact on the United States will be the topics of public discussion and presentations by a local panel of authorities.

The discussion is free and begins at 5:30 p.m. in the Eugene City Council Chambers downtown in City Hall.

Rep. Peter DeFazio will address the forum on the chang-

ing feelings of the electorate and the role of Congress in the Persian Gulf.

M. Reza Behnam, Director of the Institute for Advanced Middle Eastern Studies, will speak on strengths and weaknesses of U.S. foreign policy in the Middle East.

The vicar of the Roman Catholic Church, Rev. Joe Wood, will touch on the church's view concerning U.S. involvement in the crisis.

The concerns of Jews in the United States and the country's commitment to protecting Israel will be the focus of a presen-

tation by Alice Kinberg.

Decision research scholar Steve Johnson will address the question of whether or not the United States can pull out of the gulf without losing face.

The public will have time for questions and open discussion after the panel has given brief statements.

Moderated by KLCC radio's Alan Siporin, the program is sponsored by Lane County United Nations Association, Eugene Interreligious Committee for Peace in the Middle East and Clergy and Laity Concerned.

Guardisman rejects assignment in Gulf

ALBANY (AP) — An Oregon Army National Guardsman has rejected a possible assignment in Operation Desert Shield because he believes the troop deployment is illegal.

Sgt. David Noble was among 17 guardsmen in Company C of the 1249th Engineer Battalion in Albany who were asked to volunteer to join an equipment maintenance unit that has been activated.

The 2186th Maintenance Company left last weekend for Fort Lewis, Wash., for training that may take them to the Persian Gulf. Some members couldn't accompany the unit for various reasons, such as injuries or incomplete training,

so volunteers were sought from other companies around the state, said Maj. Mike Caldwell at Oregon National Guard headquarters in Salem.

Noble, 25, said he refused to go because he believes the Constitution gives war powers to Congress, not the president, and Desert Shield is therefore illegal.

"If the president calls out troops before Congress declares a war, it is against my oath to go; it is an unlawful act," Noble said. "I just don't want to follow unlawful orders."

None of the 17 in Company C accepted the offer, but Caldwell said nine from the 1249th volunteered, out of 72 who were asked. A guardsman from Company C did accompany another unit that was activated earlier, Caldwell said.

Noble said he was the only one in Company C to cite legal reasons for declining the offer.

Noble, a clerk in his unit, said Company C specializes in equipment maintenance, which has been a problem the desert.

He announced his stand in a Nov. 18 letter to his commander, Capt. Kenneth Coxen of Troutdale.

He said he sent more than 200 copies of the letter to soldiers in the Persian Gulf, their families, Oregon's congressional delegation, television stations and newspapers.

Oregon National Guard headquarters received a copy of Noble's letter, Caldwell said. Officials there will look into whether Noble claims conscientious objector status and is compatible with continued Guard service, he said.

The major said Noble has a right to his opinion. But of 9,700 Oregon Army and Air National Guard members, "to my knowledge this is the first one that has opted to become a sideshow," he said.


"He hasn't attacked this country and our representatives have not declared war on him," Noble said of Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein. The United States was friendly with Iraq in the recent past, he said.

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For further information contact:
 Office of International Services,
 330 Oregon Hall: 346-3206 &
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