

Amnesty speaker to address torture of women

By Ellen Shaw
Emerald Contributor

Aung San Suu Kyi is a prisoner in her own home. Considered a political threat to the government of Myanmar (formerly Burma), she has been under house arrest since July of 1989.

Her crime? Speaking out peacefully against martial law in her country. She, as well as many other women who are being held as prisoners around

the world, will be the subject of Jacki Weber's speech Friday at 12:30 in the EMU Fir Room.

Weber, who received a journalism degree from San Diego State last year, works in Washington, D.C. as an intern with Amnesty International. She started volunteering in a campus Amnesty International student group in 1988, where she publicized the group and facilitated 20 high school groups.

Weber is visiting the University campus to tell students

about her organization. Her Friday lecture will focus on the Women's Campaign, which developed in response to the problem of gender-related torture.

In an interview Thursday, Weber cited a case of a military unit in Peru that held rape as a practice in military actions.

Women in prisons around the world suffer verbal and sexual abuse regularly. Prison guards often criticize male prisoners for their ideals, Weber said.

"But when (prison guards) attack the woman, they attack her person," Weber said. Women are called "whores" and "sluts"; they are often fondled and raped.

When Amnesty International learns of these cases, it investigates and works toward free-

dom for these prisoners. Amnesty International does not take a stand on political issues. Instead, it focuses on human rights and works to make governments respect those rights. It is free of government controls because it receives no funding from governments.

Weber said she hopes students will take an active part in the events occurring around them.

"There's so much out there," she said, "I want to make students realize that there is something beyond the weekend."

Unfortunately, many students are not aware of the many activities Amnesty International coordinates. Headquartered in London, Amnesty International has a worldwide network campaigning for the release of prisoners of con-

science who have not advocated violence.

The organization also campaigns for fair trials and the abolition of execution. Members gather information from hundreds of sources, embark on fact-finding missions and write thousands of letters to governments on behalf of prisoners.

Amnesty International has a long history of success.

"If it weren't effective, we wouldn't be here after 30 years," she said.

She cited the case of one prisoner who wrote to Amnesty International headquarters after his release. The man said that after the first 200 letters, he got his clothes back. After the next 200 letters, he got more attention. Finally he was released, helped by the massive letter-writing campaign.

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HOUSING

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ing foundations, porches and stairs are hazardous.

Dampness has caused mold in about 60 percent of the bathrooms and required costly replacement of bathroom fixtures and "many hot water heaters are installed with a pressure relief valve which, because of its position, could cause a scalding incident."

The report also cited "quality of life" concerns such as cramped space, lack of privacy and inadequate sound isolation — problems that are not new, but are getting worse.

Amazon Housing Area Director Frank Gaddini submitted a \$6.2 million dollar budget request for work defined as "current needs," according to the report.

"In our opinion, to put the facility in a condition which would substantially extend the usable life would be so costly that it simply is not an equitable option," Geyer wrote.

"Even if the project could magically be returned to its original, first-day condition, it would then be a construction designed to last 10 years as was the original intent."

The Amazon buildings originally served as housing for shipbuilders in Bremerton, Wash. during World War II. In 1946, the buildings were purchased from the federal government and dismantled, moved and reassembled.

The housing was used for veterans attending the University and their families after the war, and were intended to be temporary housing.

State legislators and University officials have been at odds over off-campus housing construction plans for several months. In Jan. 1991, an architect was selected to carry out a construction project using bonds approved by the 1989 Legislature.

Last November, plans were put on hold to replace and fill-in units at Amazon, and build new housing at 18th Avenue and Agate Street, and at 19th Avenue between High and Pearl streets. Administrators voiced concern that new housing would not be filled by a declining student body.

Since November, state and local politicians have pressed the University to live up to its commitment to build new housing. The \$4.4 million dollars in bonds sold must be spent by October, or the money will be taken away and applied to another state project.

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EL NINO

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years, making it difficult to distinguish between the effects of the current and other weather

patterns.

"Some strange things happen," said Professor David Greenland of the University geography department. "But we don't know precisely how and why the effects occur on a glo-

bal scale."

Eugene can expect to see temperatures cooling by Saturday, but the repercussions from El Nino are not over. Fischer said the 60-degree temperatures will return next week.

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