



Joining the rest of the nation, Oregonians this week and last protested U.S. involvement with South Africa at the building in which Calvin Van Pelt, Honorary South African Consul, works. In acts of civil disobedience intended to force Van Pelt to resign (left photo), Dr. Ed Ferguson, Prof. of History at O.S.U. Corvallis, Bob Baugh, Secretary/Treasurer Oregon State AFL-CIO, and Jim Draper, retired businessman, Corvallis, are led to police cars after being ar-



rested for refusing to leave the office of Van Pelt on Wednesday, December 19. On Friday, December 14, Lynn Parkinson (right photo), local attorney, and Trevor Purcell, Prof. of Anthropology, refuse to leave the offices of Martin Sales International, Corp., where Van Pelt works. They were arrested. The protests will continue every Wednesday and Friday at noon at 831 S.W. 1st (at Yamhill). (Photos: Richard J. Brown)

Wyden takes heat for South Africa views

by Lanita Duke

GRASSROOT NEWS, N.W. — Representative Ron Wyden is considered one of Congress' most progressive members. But two progressive organizations have accused Wyden of failing to exercise leadership on issues of concern to progressive people.

This observation will come as a surprise to many who saw Wyden's political maturation occur. His tenure as Director of Oregon's Gray Panthers upgraded the quality of life for senior citizens. Also, Wyden was opposed to the Simpson-Mazzoli immigration bill. He called it a "lawyer's full-employment bill."

The Oregon Rainbow Organizing Committee, the political apparatus

employed by the Jesse Jackson for president campaign, listed their concerns with Wyden in an October 30th letter.

The steering committee of the Rainbow noted, "In spite of the fact that you represent the Oregon District with the largest Black population, you have been unable to take a progressive position regarding U.S. policy in South Africa."

Elizabeth Groff, Associate Director of American Friends Service Committee's Southern African program, said, "The anti-apartheid movement has always been disappointed at Wyden's lack of commitment to support basic human rights in South Africa. He has never had a firm position on divestment."

However, Wyden responded, "I

will support anything that can produce change. I'm a strong opponent of constructive engagement. I will support cutting South Africa off from import/export loans."

When asked if he still supported the Sullivan principals (where American corporations apply an equality code but still do not address changes in the system of apartheid) Wyden replied, "I am under the impression that the Congressional Black caucus does not rule out mandatory application of those principals and I will support anything that will bring about a change."

When asked if he would participate in the current civil disobedience Wyden responded, "The bottom line is to be effective. I am not going to denounce or limit any moves that I think will be effective."

The Rainbow also took issue with Wyden's support of Israel. "Your uncritical support for Israeli govern-

ment policies which deny justice and dignity to the Palestinian people and undermine the chances to achieve peace in the region. Your co-sponsorship of a measure requiring the U.S. embassy in Israel to relocate to Jerusalem is a recent example."

But Wyden said, "It is in America's interest to have one ally in the Middle East. Over the last 20 years that ally has been Israel. This is not an abstract issue for us in Northeast Portland. In N.E. Portland an extraordinary number of households heat with oil and we need an affordable gasoline."

Wyden has been criticized by sponsors of the Citizen Utility Board for failing to lend a public endorsement during the Oregon election campaign.

Uncompromising and unapologetic Wyden points to his 100 percent voting record in support of civil rights and Affirmative Action. However, these allegations and observations hamper his progressive image.

India seeks peace

by Robert Lothian

With the death of Indira Gandhi and the breaking of the Sikh independence movement, India has been purged of violence and can look forward to a period of relative peace, according to Dr. Ravi Kalia, a native of India and professor of history at Eastern Oregon State College.

Kalia attended a forum on Indian religion and politics December 10 sponsored by the World Affairs Council of Oregon. He was joined by Kulbir Singh, a Sikh and a mechanical engineer at Bingham-Willamette Co.

According to Kalia, the longstanding differences between India's Sikh community and the majority Hindu government which led to the invasion of the Sikhs' Golden temple and Gandhi's assassination brought about "a tragedy which makes Indians look at themselves and ask where they are heading." With the Sikh leadership dead or in prison and the central government reorganizing, he said, it will likely be a long time before tensions reach the level of summer, 1984.

By all accounts, said Kalia, Gandhi wanted to avoid the assault on the Golden Temple, but she was overtaken by fastmoving events and a hard-line faction in her government.

The attack was the culmination of simmering hostilities between Sikhs and Hindus that go back to the 1800s, said Kalia. Sikhs have struggled for a homeland for at least that long but have been persecuted by the majority Hindu government which fears their powers.

The central government has been reluctant to give power to the Indian state of Punjab, where most Sikhs live. The Punjab borders on India's traditional enemy, Pakistan, and the government feared links between the Sikhs and Pakistan, further complicating the situation.

Although a minority of India's

population, the largely middle and upper middle class Sikhs are nevertheless very influential in the military, civil service and in the transportation industry, said Singh. Their militance stems from contributing taxes and other things out of proportion to their numbers, yet being neglected by the Gandhi government, he said.

In addition, said Kalia, the Sikhs had enjoyed a period of relative prosperity followed by economic stagnation. "The Sikh rising can be explained by an evolution of rising expectations," he said. "After experiencing a certain amount of prosperity, they felt politically and economically stagnated."

In such a situation, violence seemed inevitable, and a Sikh terrorist movement developed. But according to Singh, "I believe the government had no business attacking the Golden temple and killing hundreds of civilian Sikhs to cover up for its incompetence at dealing with political terrorism." Singh hinted that the attack and the anti-Sikh violence that followed the assassination of Gandhi were aimed at defeating the Sikh independence movement.

He also said that relatives in India were harassed and their houses were burned after the assassination. The violence could have been controlled properly because the government knew how the masses of India would react in such a situation, according to Singh.

"Making an assault on a religious temple was probably the biggest mistake the Indian government ever made," said Singh. "You don't do anything like that that has any religious identification, at least in a country like India."

Kalia and Singh agreed that the violence was over for the time being. But while it will be a while before tensions rise again, they said, the underlying causes of the tension remains.

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