

**OCCASIONAL BOOK CORNER**

**'Proteus' dedicated to prisoners of conscience**

Morris West's latest novel, "Proteus," focuses on international terrorism and violence and is dedicated to "the prisoners of conscience, of whom to our shame there are too many."

West is a practiced story teller, and this one shifts back and forth between New York, Rome, Buenos Aires and other settings, his protagonist being an Italian-American industrialist, the highly successful head of a multinational corporation. But West doesn't intend to give the reader the simple vicarious pleasure of witnessing the exercise of power in a corporate board room or of visiting in a patrician Italian household.

There is prison brutality, rape and murder, related not for sensuality but to rouse one's awareness of the practiced cruelties of dictatorial regimes in South America and Europe.

John Spada's public image is that of a tycoon, at ease as a corporate executive, fluent in six languages, ruthless with enemies in the marketplace but a loving husband and father.

His secret role is that of Proteus, head of an international undercover organization that seeks to free political or religious prisoners wherever they might be.

In a sense, he becomes a modern-day Scarlet Pimpernel, although this simile isn't used by the author. The symbol of Spada's organization is an incomplete square enclosing a fish. He explains:

"The rectangular shape is one of the oldest forms of the letter P. The fish is just a fish. The whole device stands for Proteus, the sea-god, shepherd and guardian of all the creatures who live in the deep: the seals, the dolphins, the tunny and the shoaling minnows. Poseidon endowed him with knowledge of all things, past, present and

future, and with the power to change himself into a multitude of shapes: a flame of fire, a lion, a flower, a snake or snuffing boar.

"You see the relevance of the symbol to what we do. We are the guardians of those who live in an alien element, cut off from human concern. We have at our disposal knowledge, intelligence, from all over the world. We can assume many identities, many functions... When we are threatened, we can retreat into the sea caves and emerge in a different shape. If one fish is taken, there are always others to take its place. For the present I am Proteus, because I have the means to move and act more freely than most of our collaborators.

"But if anything happens to John Spada, then a new man will assume my title and function. All our codes are based on the names of sea creatures. We recognize each other by this device, which a child can draw."

Some of the horror of the story involves Spada's own daughter, who is married to an idealistic, liberal Argentine journalist, both of whom are imprisoned.

Under the cloak of Proteus, Spada utilizes an international network of assassins and secret police to free his daughter and son-in-law. Meanwhile, he is involved with corporate intrigue. The story winds up with a climactic, and perhaps improbable, ending on the podium of the United Nations.

The novel represents a different Morris West from "The Devil's Advocate" and "The Shoes of the Fisherman," nevertheless a good story. The book is new at the Heppner Public Library.

—J.F.S.  
"Haste in every business brings failures." Herodotus



Merle Cowett

**New Heppner officer**

Heppner residents will be seeing a new person in the city police uniform soon because Merle Cowett, 39, has been hired as the new officer to take the place of Don Lien, who resigned to take the position of the police chief in Condon.

Cowett is a certified police officer with a wife and three children. He was a tribal police officer on the Burns Tribal Reservation in Burns, Oregon. He has been working there since 1976-77.

The former Californian is planning on moving to Heppner in the next week or two. "I enjoy the work," he said. "It's interesting."

"Our fears do make us traitors." Shakespeare

**New policy on productivity introduced**

Earthquakes around the world kill an average of 14,000 people a year, the National Geographic Society says.

The nation will get more productivity from its 1,550 million acres of forage-producing forest lands and range, an invaluable—but often low profile—resource in the nation's goals, said Secretary of Agriculture Bob Bergland in announcing a new policy on range management.

Bergland said "the policy is designed to improve and protect the range and its resources and the social and economic well-being of people and communities that depend on range for their livelihood."

All agencies of the U.S. Department of Agriculture must work the policy into their existing policies and programs within one year, he said.

Rangeland has always been an important source of forage for livestock and wildlife. It also is becoming increasingly important as a source of recreation and minerals, he said.

There have been some excessively pampered dogs. The richest, a German shepherd, was left property worth \$312,000 by his master in Munich, West Germany, in 1971.

**Alcoholism workshop to be held in Pendleton**

A one-day workshop on alcoholism will be held Dec. 5 at the Red Lion Motor Inn, 304 Southeast Patawa Road in Pendleton, from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

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**West of Willow Thanksgiving Buffet Dinner**  
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Potato-Onion Soup  
Prime Rib  
Roast Turkey Breast  
Baked Orange Glazed Ham  
Mushroom-Sausage Dressing  
Tangerine Sweet Potato  
New Potatoes with Dill-Sour Creme  
Green Beans with fresh tomato  
Sautced Carrots with Herbs  
Individual loaf of Bread  
Mushroom Gravy

Salad Bar with  
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Green Bean Salad  
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Marinated Mushrooms  
Fruit Salad  
Ranch Dressing

Dessert Buffet  
Pumpkin Pie  
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6<sup>95</sup> Adults  
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