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CLARK FORK Currents

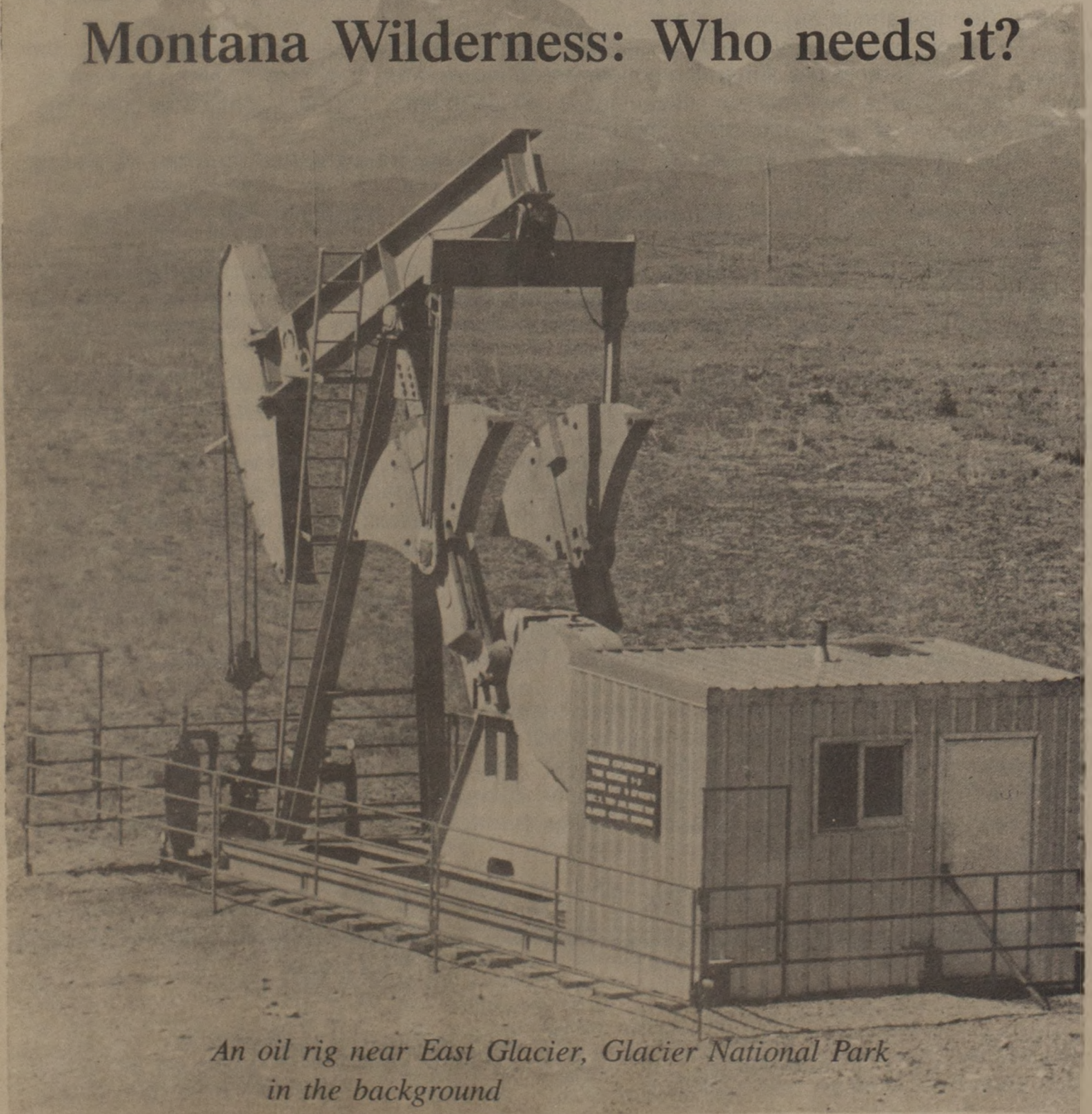
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Montana Wilderness: Who needs it?



*An oil rig near East Glacier, Glacier National Park
in the background*

It was Strasbourg, near the German border, on a bleak mid-December day. Nominally, Strasbourg is French, but the houses speak of the nearness of Germany. The darker browns, blues and reds of the traditional French houses give way to the brighter pastels, gold and turquoise favored by their northern neighbors. The rococo architecture is also replaced by more simple squares, crisscrosses and straight lines.

After boarding the train, we clack ahead a mere 500 meters and stop. The French conductors, with their pillbox caps and black-and-red waist-length capes, leave the train. For a few moments voices outside call out in both French and German. Then there is silence. I begin to wonder how long we'll sit there.

A loud crash from the front of the train precedes a violent jolt. The engine of the SNCF (Societe Nationale des Chemins de fer Francaise) is removed and an engine for the Deutschland Bundesbahn is put in its place.

The doors open and two huffing German conductors enter, rapidly passing through the car. They look more like American policemen. Minutes later, they return, and begin calling out for passports. An American citizen needs no visa to enter Germany, once they check that the document is up-to-date they hand it back.

After another ten minutes we are ready to go, and the train crosses the wide, icy Rhine. We are in Germany.

The distance from the French border to Frankfurt, my destination, is a little over one hundred miles.

As I watch out the train windows, I am first perplexed and then awed. It seems as though we never left the city. Houses and businesses line the track virtually the entire way. It is only then that you appreciate that Germany is one of the most densely populated countries in the world.

The Federal Republic of Germany — the good Germany — has an area of 95,815 square miles. It has a population (in 1982) of over 61 million. Density per square mile is over 640 people.

Montana has an area of 145,587 square miles. Our 1983 population was 786,690.

There is no wilderness in Germany. There is no place you can go where you won't eventually meet other people in the same day, often in the same hour. While there are thick woods all over the country, you can generally walk for half an hour in any direction and emerge at a population center. Convenient if you want a glass of beer after a hike, inconvenient if you're trying to get away from it all. Except for wild boars, there is no wildlife to speak of, having long since been hunted down and eradicated.

Who needs Montana wilderness? Not just Montanans and their descendents. The world needs it.

We hope this issue of Clark Fork Currents helps to re-acquaint the reader with the greatest treasure of the Treasure State. We hope you will become involved in the fight to maintain our threatened national resource of free land, and perhaps even join groups actively engaged in the battle, such as the Rocky Mountain Front Advisory Council.

Freedom is more than an idea, it is a state. It is the state of Montana. Help keep it that way.

Clark Fork Currents

Cover photo by Ron Seldon

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'Folks, we have a problem here . . .'

Montana Wilderness: Who needs it?

by John Zelazny

It is the middle of winter, 1985. Deep in the heart of the northern Rocky Mountains, somewhere in west-central Montana, a grizzly bear stirs in its winter den. Dreaming the dreams of untold generations of bear, the grizzly kicks in its sleep at some unknown menace. Meanwhile, in the offices of congressmen in Washington, D.C., decisions are being made which will decide forever the fate of not only the grizzly, but all creatures which draw life from these beautiful and not-so-remote mountain regions. Among these creatures is a truly unique and mysterious animal. . . its Latin name is **Homo Sapiens**, and the most remarkable fact about it is that it does not even have to be near these mountains to draw this vital sustenance. Almost as remarkable is **Homo Sapien's** relentless desire to destroy the life of not only these mountains, but every other wild area which still exists on the planet this species has decided it owns.

Remarkable indeed. Who would individually admit to consciously striving towards such ecological suicide? And yet, this is exactly the process which has been going on for thousands of years (though it might be noted that someone has really romped on the accelerator the last hundred years or so). Oh yes. . . **you** do it, I do it, we all do it — by the superb virtue of being human. We are strange creatures, we **Homo Sapiens**. God has told us that we are his favorite creations, and that we should by all means be fruitful and multiply and do with the earth as we see fit. And we have seen fit to manipulate every square inch possible for the greater profit and glory of international corporations,

well-meaning suburbanite investors, your local chambers of commerce, and the ghost towns they once occupied.

Folks, we have a problem here. The once wild West is now a few ragged scraps of land. Of what was once a continent full of wilderness, we have about two percent left of the land area in the lower 48 states that could still be called wild. And that little bit is being pawed over like the frightened victim of a gang rape. Strong words? Open your eyes and see for yourself.

But let's get back to **Homo Sapiens**. These days there are many vocal groups clamoring for school prayer, making abortion illegal, and forbidding the teaching of "humanist" views. There are quite a few other, equally vocal, groups clamoring for everything from disarmament to a larger supply of cabbage patch dools at Christmas. Then there was this really oddball group a couple of hundred years ago that, horror of horrors thought of the earth as their mother and were content to live out their lives in harmony with the different regions and seasons. We called them Indians, and to show what we thought of their lifestyle, we (white **Homo Sapiens**) rubbed 'em out and took over. Something called Manifest Destiny (or, as some called it, genocide).

But that was way back when. . . or was it? How's that old Manifest Destiny doing these days? Well, let's see. . . we've dammed the rivers, we've polluted the air, earth and water, we've bulldozed and dug up and roaded and power-lined and otherwise visually altered hundreds of thousands of square miles of land in the name of "doing

with it as we see fit." And if it wasn't pretty to look at anymore, well heck, we'll just create our own comfortable realities on T.V., and in the movies, and on our state-of-the-art sound systems. Which is well and good. . . or is it?

Let's return to that sleeping grizzly bear. Might even be a sow, with a cub or two crawling feebly about the hulk of sleeping mama. Grizzlies represent what might be termed the truly wild aspects of our planet (as do free-running rivers and tropical rain forests). About 1955, Congress, prompted by the likes of a well-to-do Easterner named Robert Marshall (who died in 1939 at the age of 39), decided the federal government should set aside some of the wild places for future generations. Nine years, 65 bills and 18 hearings later, Congress passed the Wilderness Act of 1964.

The National Wilderness Preservation Systems, as modified by the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 and the Wild and Scenic River Act of 1968, includes lands within National Forests, Bureau of Land Management areas, National Parks and Monuments, wildlife refuges, game ranges, and wild and scenic rivers. The basic idea of what wilderness should be goes something like this: "In order to assure that an increasing population, accompanied by expanding settlement and growing mechanization, does not occupy and modify all areas within the United States and its possessions, leaving no lands designated for preservation and protection in their natural condition, it is hereby declared to be

(Cont'd next page)

(cont'd)

the policy of the Congress to secure for the American people of the present and future generations the benefits of an enduring resource of wilderness."

The complete text is easy to come by: the SAC has copies as does the Law Library, the School of Forestry, the Wilderness Institute, the Forestry Department at the Federal Building. Just ask around. The importance for Montanas goes like this: The U.S. Forest Service undertook a study (RARE I) of possible wilderness areas nationally from 1973 to 1977. This was termed inadequate. In 1978 the Forest Service began RARE II, studying forests individually. In a 1980 case, **California v. Bergland**, the Ninth Circuit Court held the RARE II process to be in violation of the 1970 National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). With timber operation in jeopardy, Congress undertook a system whereby each state's delegation would recommend the wilderness acreage for the National Forests within it.

Montana, in 1979, had about 3.4 million acres of designated wilderness (out of a land base of 100 million acres or so). In the 1979 Forest Service RARE II evaluation, the recommendation for additional wilderness in Montana was 628,000 acres: about 11 percent of the 5.2 million acres of National Forest roadless lands in the states, the lowest percentage recommended in the western United States (despite the unsurpassed quality and diversity of what many feel is the best that's left in the lower 48 states). In a gesture of gutless compromise during the summer of 1984, the Montana delegation submitted a bill calling for 747,000 acres of additional wilderness.

The upshot was tremendous protest from a variety of groups ranging from outfitters to ranchers to staunch defenders of wilderness like Earth First!, whose members actually occupied the Missoula office of Senator John Melcher in defiance of what was termed a "wilderness axe." The bill died.

Which brings us up to the present. A new Congress is in session, and the talk about the forthcoming bill involves the prospect of extending the battle for two years — an obvious war of attrition. Meanwhile, the Forest Service (acting on national "mandate") continues to punch roads into roadless areas, thus disqualifying them for future consideration. All in all, not a pretty picture.

What is needed is care — care for the grizzly, the wilderness and the **Homo Sapiens** not yet born who will need that wilderness to be there for the freedom it instills in the spirit. Once it is gone, it is gone for good. The rest of the United States is blindly expecting Montana to do the right thing. The right thing is to come to grips with what wilderness really means and then fight to save as much of it as we can. There are many factors to consider: economic, social, political, spiritual, ecological . . . but the ones to consider the most are our greed for what we can rake in today versus the needs of our future generations (not to mention the future grizzlies).

UNTITLED

by Edward Norman

The trail has led me upward,
it's half a mile to the end of the valley
where the pass is lost in the
greyness of raining clouds and sunset.
The pack straps press into my shoulders
and the muddy trail
(moving through my boots)
is wet against my feet.
A hundred yards more
into the clouds.
I strain my head back
and watch as I enter the mist
 woolens turn silver as the Moon
 thins the fog and lights each droplet
A small breeze cools the water on my face
The pass is clear!
I stop — blinded by a million stars
and cold white moonlight
unaware of my destination
Yet knowing that I have arrived.



Rocky Mountain Front Advisory Council

The Rocky Mountain Front is a unique and diverse ecosystem between the Bob Marshall Wilderness and the high plains, where mountain and prairie species come together. It is the year-round home of the nation's largest herd of bighorn sheep, and it provides crucial winter range for the Sun River elk herd and the nation's second largest deer herd. The only grizzly bears that still migrate to the plains in the spring live in the Front; it is one of the last strongholds of that endangered animal in the contiguous United States.

There is mounting pressure from the energy industry to allow exploratory drilling for natural gas in Montana's Rocky Mountain Front. Due to chaotic geology and the fragile nature of the surface, exploration would cause more damage than in other areas, and it would degrade the wilderness quality of this roadless National Forest land. Furthermore, it would seriously disturb the rich and varied wildlife population.

The Rocky Mountain Front Advisory Council is an organization formed by citizens concerned with the fate of this area. We question the need to explore our nation's wildest places when many other areas remain unexplored. This is especially true considering that the president of the American Gas Association has recently stated that there is an oversupply of natural gas.

The RMFAC will attempt to inform the public and demonstrate the popular support for making wise decisions about the wildlands of the Front. If you would like to receive our newsletter and join the Council, there is a minimum membership fee of one dollar to defray mailing costs. Any further contributions would be welcomed.

Name

Address:

.....
Please return to the Rocky Mountain Front Advisory Council,
P.O. Box 9113, Missoula, MT 59807
phone 728-7191 or 721-0532



Rocky Mountain Front Advisory Council

The need for Wilderness in 3 views

Arnold W. Bolle (retired Dean, School of Forestry, UM)

Mankind originated in wilderness. Our physical and spiritual being arose during the eons of co-existence with the natural world. Every past generation had ample opportunity to experience wilderness. We cannot in good conscience end this now.

We know so little about the whole of life. Natural land is the source of knowledge which we must gain as a condition for our future existence. Such land is a sublime legacy. Some remains in Montana in public ownership. It is our responsibility to preserve some and pass on the land

and the responsibility to preserve, to enjoy, to learn about it and to end the destruction of the remaining natural world and possibly life itself.

Barbara Steele

Earth First! is a no-compromise movement of people intent on defending the Earth from the special interests of mining, logging, and industrialization in general.

Already, 98 percent of this country has been compromised to development, largely because the status quo environmental groups started with compromise positions, and compromise further, ending up with little or nothing for the Earth. They have sacrificed backbone in order to be accepted into mainstream environmentalism.

Bit by bit, the natural diversity of

the planet is being destroyed. Species by species we are seeing the ecosystem of the Earth torn apart. That whole Earth, of which we are a part and on which we are totally dependent, is dying. All for short term profit to a very small minority of human beings. To change this pattern man must develop a philosophy of deep ecology. One which accepts the idea that all life forms have a right to exist for their own sake, not for the material value they have for humans.

Wilderness has a right to exist for its own sake and for the sake of the

diversity of life forms it shelters. Without wilderness, without enough wilderness, most wildlife will eventually perish. Already, man is defacing our protected wilderness areas, and still his population grows. And with his numbers grows man's need for wilderness. The need for solitude, the need to keep in touch with his natural heritage. The very basic need for freedom.

The protection of our remaining wild lands is essential to meet the needs of all life forms of the Earth. EARTH FIRST!

Tom Birch Department of Philosophy, UM

The most important meaning of wilderness is ethical. The establishment of designated wilderness areas, free from human development and exploitation, where we may visit in admiring respect but where we may not remain, is the beginning of an ethical victory for us humans in our troubled relationship with nature.

Ethically relating to others of all sorts — both human and non-human, and including natural ecosystems, requires an active, respectful acknowledgment of the self-integrity and freedom of the others with whom, and with which, we are relating.

Designated wilderness areas are,

therefore, not fundamentally a recreational resource, or any other sort of resource, but are evidence of our human ethical capacity to curb our taking everything as a resource for our own use. In so restraining our desire to manage nature only for what we believe to be our own benefit, we leave space and place for nonhuman nature to freely, wildy, discover and follow its own evolutionary destinies. We make room for nonhuman nature to "co-evolve" side by side with us, and to do this in the only manner that fosters the whole, the world of which humans are a conscious and ethical ingredient, at least to the extent that we fulfill the best of our

human potential.

The problem is tokenism. In designating so few acres as wilderness, we pay little more than lip service to the ethical knowledge that we do have, at least theoretically. We will not prove ourselves ethical in relating with natural ecosystems until we do actually preserve enough wilderness to believe what now appears only tokenism, and to make room enough on the planet for nature, together with and including our own human species, to continue to be itself.

NEWS FROM THE U.S. FOREST SERVICE

Ronald L. Mackey, check scaler on the Timber Management staff in the USDA Forest Service's Northern Region headquarters, has been awarded a Special Service cash award for developing a new, more efficient technique for scaling (measuring) logs.

"Mackey has developed a quicker and simpler method of scaling logs delivered with topwood attached," explained William H. Covey, Director of Timber Management for the Northern Region.

"In concert with the new length determination method," Covey said, "he also developed a method of applying standard taper to tree length materials. It is our conservative estimate that this new approach to timber scaling will increase scalers' output about 2 percent."

Covey said it is estimated the new technique will result in annual savings in excess of \$100,000.

Mackey received a \$3,000 cash award from the Forest Service for developing the more efficient scaling method.

Logs harvested in the National Forests are scaled to determine lumber volumes. Payments to the Forest Service are based on volume of timber harvested.

Each year, approximately 30,000 loads of National Forest logs are scaled in the National Forests of western Montana and northern Idaho. More than one-third of the loads (10,000 loads) scaled are tree-length material or second-cut logs with topwood attached.

"We are pleased with this new, efficient method, in view of the production scaling workload in the Northern Region National Forest," Covey said.

"The new measurement methods have been intensively tested for accuracy. When tested against conventional scaling methods," Covey

said, "the techniques proved to be a reliable means of increasing the Region's scaling productivity and efficiency."

As a result of the cooperation and support of the Inland Forest Resources Council subcommittee on measurements, "there has been a smooth transition to the new measurement techniques."

A native of Troy, Mont., Mackey is a veteran of 30 years with the Forest Service. Most of his work with the Forest Service has been as a timber scaler. He worked on the Kootenai NF (headquarters in Libby) and Flathead NF (headquarters in Kalispell) before he was assigned to the Northern Region headquarters Timber Management staff in Missoula in 1977. Mackey is Regional Check Scaler for the Northern Region's 15 National Forests (Montana, northern Idaho, North Dakota and western South Dakota).

BITTERROOT NATIONAL FOREST CONSIDERING HERBICIDES

by Rick Torre

An article recently published in the Ravalli Republic (Hamilton, Mont.) called for public comment on the Bitterroot National Forest's decision to prepare an environmental analysis on herbicide use in silvicultural site preparation.

The herbicide will be used to reduce competition from brush species on plantations in the Bitter-

root National Forest.

Prior consideration was stopped by the 9th Circuit Court's decision citing the lack of a "worst case" inclusion on the potential health effects in the environmental impact statement. The herbicide being considered for use is Round-Up, or glyphosate. Questions and public comment should be addressed to:

Robert Morgan
Forest Supervisor
Bitterroot National Forest
Hamilton, MT 59840

— or —

Judy Schutza — Silviculturist
Darby Ranger Station
Darby, MT 59829

For more information, contact Rick Torre, 543-4120.

Draft counseling service now available

A group of concerned students on the UM campus has recently revived a draft counseling service. Registrations and draft counseling, and referral, are now available to young men (and women) of the Missoula area — both of the university and the community.

Whether you have registered or not, you may have questions about the Selective Service or about alternative service. You are welcome to come to the Student Action Center, located in the University Center, to

talk to a counselor or to use our referral service for further clerical or legal assistance.

We would also like to invite other interested parties to contribute their services or expertise — to help us provide a wider range of assistance.

Counseling will be available on Tuesday and Thursday afternoons, 2 p.m. to 5 p.m., at the Student Action Center, or by special appointment. Call 243-5897, or stop by to see us.

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The Killing Fields of Nicaragua

A UM Student's Report

Going to pick coffee at El Dorado plantation, outside Esquipulas. 7 AM.



A 'Witness for Peace' from UM gives a chilling testimony

by Jerry Schneider

*All photos by David Knox
Elyria, Ohio*

We were in Nicaragua December 4 through 17, talking with people in Managua, visiting farm co-ops, housing projects, staying in the homes of people, working two days picking coffee with them. There were 17 in our group, from various backgrounds. This was not a government tour. We went where we chose.

In June of 1983, a group of Christians went to Jalapa in the north of the country to join with the people of Nicaragua, to show that there

were Americans from the north who sympathized with them and were against the U.S. policy of training and aiding the Contra. These Americans shared and celebrated and stood in danger with the people on the border. The action of these Americans was a non-violent intervention which has been continued for a year and a half since. Over a thousand North Americans from the U.S. have gone to Nicaragua as witnesses for peace. Our group was the 35th group to go.

The tactics of WFP have changed with the tactics of the Contra. Back in December, 1983, when the first delegation went Jalapa, the Contra had been making raids on the town. Between 300 and 400 people from the village had been killed in attacks from 1981-83. Many of these attacks were brutal. The decapitated bodies of victims were often left outside the homes. The attacks often came at night. While the first Americans were there, another invasion had been ex-

pected, but it never came. It was logical that since the Contra were backed by the CIA, while Americans stayed in the village there would be no attack. Thus began the sustained program of sending Americans into the war zone, as I said before, to intervene between the Contra and the people of Nicaragua.

Since then, there have been no attempts to take Jalapa. International attention, brought about by the presence of the WFP, discouraged attacks. Also, the town has become well fortified. The Contra decided as early as January, 1984, that they could not attack the town. If they had taken Jalapa, they could have controlled much of the rich Jalapa Valley. They might have taken control of the coffee, banana and crop production from this base in the town of Jalapa. Also, there is talk that if they had taken Jalapa, they could have set up a government which might have been considered "legitimate" by another country (such as the United States). Then that other government could conceivably support the "legitimate" government of the Contra.

The Contra changed their tactics. They began to filter into the hills. They have continued to attack busses, coffee trucks, plantations, cattle coops, health centers, day care centers and schools, focusing on teachers and on people who are leaders of the people at the local level. Instead of attacking larger towns or confronting the Sandinista military, they have become intent on attacking smaller towns and on destabilizing the economy in concert with the efforts by the Reagan administration to destabilize by using economic boycotts.

There was no way for the short term teams (which go for two weeks at a time) of witnesses to anticipate an attack on a coffee truck going to harvest, or a public transport bus going from Esteli to San Jaun de Limay. WFP had to change its tactics. So the teams since March, 1984, have been moving around, visiting towns which had been attacked recently or had people kidnapped. We have tried to share with families of the dead or wounded or missing. The impor-



Foreman of the coffee pickers blows his horn to tell people it's break time or if he's located good ripe beans.

tance has shifted from intervention directly to a gathering of information and returning to the United States to tell people the story. The Nicaraguans have told us over and over that they are powerless to stop attacks and to stop the CIA involvement. It is up to us to come back and tell the people that the Nicaraguans want peace, and that they have so much now since the revolution.

"We have our cattle now," said Enriqueza, a lady at the coop near San Jaun del Sur. "We have beans and rice and we farm together and

have our own houses. We are a little better now — the poorest class. We have always been the ones that have been exploited in the past, but now we have our pride. Now with the Triumph, we are so proud because the government has had the patience to finance us — to help us."

All this is teetering on the pinpoint of judgement and fear of the people supporting the Contra. As a group we have talked with these people, we have talked with gov-

(Cont'd next page)

(cont'd)

ernment officials and seen the work and the hope of the Nicaraguan

government. We do not fear them. We do not see the need to support the Contras and their tactics to destabilize the country. That which

is vitally supported by the CIA is slowly depriving the Nicaraguan people of the pursuits they deserve, of life, liberty and happiness.



"Most of the attacks are not against the Sandinista military but against coffee pickers . . ."

The Killing Fields, Part 2: The Testimony of a Nicaraguan Civilian

by Jerry Schneider

One of the reasons we made the trip to Nicaragua was to gather information and bring it back to the United States. The American citizen is not getting the full picture listening to the State Department. We went to intervene because the Contra are not "freedom fighters" as President Reagan calls them, but are more like bandits and rogues.

It is not often that one hears reports on the operations of the

Contra in the papers, especially the details or the motives of those attacks. Once a report is squeezed through the editing process and hits the back pages of the paper, the reader gets a paragraph or two about the attack in which so many people were killed and what kind of truck and where the incident took place. Because the article has reached the back pages, very few people read about it. Who cares? It

is usually not the full picture.

The following is a report of an attack which occurred December 4, 1984, in which 22 civilians were killed in an ambush by the Contras.

Twenty-two people killed in an ambush is news in Nicaragua, but not big news. This sort of thing happens daily. Eight, ten, thirteen people killed. It all adds up and it never or rarely reaches the American press. Perhaps if it did, the

American people would begin to object. Most of the attacks are not against the Sandinisti military but are against coffee pickers and public transport busses and cattle ranchers. The motives are not to stop the flow of communism but simply to kill and avenge. These are old Somoza guardsmen. They were booted out of the country. When they kill, they often use torture. They decapitate their victims. They want to destabilize the economy and that is one reason they have been attacking trucks on the way to the coffee harvest. It is the reason they center on teachers and schools and day care centers.

One of the members of our group called home to his wife two days after the attack and asked if this had been in the papers. She told him it hadn't and called the paper in Wooster, Ohio. They said there had been nothing on the AP or UPI wires about the incident. Therefore, it did not exist.

According to Agenor Gonzales, age 17, who escaped and was interviewed in a hospital in La Trinidad, there were about 200 Contra attackers firing M-60 machine guns, automatic rifles, "LAW" portable rockets, and hand grenades at his truck for over half an hour before they overpowered the four civilian militia members who accompanied the coffee pickers (the militia are not part of the Sandinista army but are civilians carrying guns to protect trucks, busses, their own cities and villages — we talked with one boy who was 14 and in the militia. There are many 14, 15 and 16 year old boys and girls in the militia). After taking the victims' boots, socks and personal valuables, the Contras murdered the wounded survivors scattered on the ground near the truck with bayonets and pointblank gunfire. Then the Contra splashed diesel fuel on the truck and set it afire, burning alive and beyond recognition seven of the wounded civilians who remained inside (one of these victims was a five year old child whom the Telcor workers had picked up with the parents — the three had been hitch hiking). An 18 year old woman was kidnapped by

the ambushers.

Gonzales: "There were some of us that carried guns. We have to guarantee our own defense because the way here in Nicaragua is not only against the army, but against us as well. Civilians. So we had about four guns. In the truck cab were 11 guns. Those who had guns were around the edge of the truck watching. Only two companions shot back. The rest lay down in the truck with the rest of the civilians that were in the middle.

"The Contra began to shoot at us from the front with the M-60 machine gun, and then with another from behind. They also attacked with LAW rocket launchers and hand grenades.

"For about half an hour I was in the truck, during which time the enemy was sustaining its fire and advancing along the road toward the truck. I was able to return fire, to restrain them from taking over the truck where we were. Many of us were already seriously wounded. Those in the back had the lightest wounds, while those on top were perhaps dead. Not all were dead; the majority were injured. When the M-60 had finished a band, I took advantage of the lull to jump out the right side of the truck. By this time I was wounded in the legs (Agenor shows his bandaged wounds where shrapnel had entered his left calf and two bullets had hit his right foot). I tried to head off into the mountainside, but the Contra were waiting for me and shot two rounds at me. Three or four bullets hit my right arm, and two more hit my left arm. I was able to escape, but those five or six shots hit me. I still had one clip full of shots in my gun, so I also shot at them and several of them fell. I also fell there in the ditch.

"After some fifteen minutes, two Contra who were collecting their dead came and took my gun. At that moment I didn't deny him the gun. I had to play dead in order to survive. Another man came to where I was lying down and opened my eyes to see if I was alive. It took all my effort not to groan in pain. He left me there. Then I heard the leader ask him if I was dead, and he

answered, 'Yes, he's dead.'

"Then they began to leave, and I returned to the truck to take out other wounded companions. I grabbed one who had a bullet in the left side of his ribs and dragged him to a ditch about 10 meters from the truck. The truck was burning because the Contra had punctured the tank and spread diesel on the four tires, setting them and the tank on fire. When I took him out, he was groaning loudly and I told him to be quiet because if the Contra heard him, they'd come back and kill him. But he couldn't help it, and continued groaning. So I quickly left him to search for help. Down the mountain I could see a little house about two kilometers away.

"When I returned, I saw that the Contras had seen the one I pulled from the truck was still alive. A Contra with a Chinese AKA machine gun went over and took out his bayonet and stabbed my companion in the chest. Then I left, rolling down the mountain the best I could with my injuries. In the middle of the road I saw five Contra who were following my blood stains. They opened fire on me with an M-60, hitting me in the finger. I hid behind some rocks, and they passed by, shooting at the rocks, but they didn't see me.

"After a while I continued walking. There wasn't even a path, only mountainside and forest. Eventually, I arrived at a river, where I rested a while before crossing. On the other side, I came to a small house. There was a woman there with some children. She was too scared to hide me in the house, and she had a right to be — it was frightening. I saw a cattle water trough which I lay down in to rest. Again the Contra detected me and opened fire with their M-60 machine gun. Quickly I jumped out the other side behind a rock. There I was lying behind the rock for about an hour until the owner of the house came back. He took me inside where he helped me and gave me a strong cup of coffee. Then he put me on a horse and took me to Telepaneca where they began to treat my wounds."

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Cont'd

When asked why he thought the Contra just left him and didn't come get him, Agenor said he didn't know. Maybe the truck that had made it through the ambush had gotten help. Maybe they had to get out.

The irony and tragedy is that these people are dying needlessly

and because of support provided by the CIA. In 1980 there were about a thousand Contra in the northern region, mostly in Honduras. Most of them were Somoza National Guardsmen. Since then the CIA has been aiding and training and recruiting (paying amounts up to \$100 a month to the Miskito Indians) Contra in the hills. Congress has appropriated \$80 million to help the Contra, using the

taxpayers' money, and the number has grown now to twelve or fifteen thousand Contra.

If you want information on other Contra attacks, the of the Witness-for-Peace hotline is: 202-332-9230. It is a two to three minute recording and is updated every two weeks. It is a report received from permanent Witness-for-Peace people in the war zone who interview the survivors of attacks.

I just received a letter from Jenny Atlee, a friend who was with us in Nicaragua. She has been there seven months. She is asking for help not only in the form of prayers and support, but in this case, with money as well.

In the town of Cardenas at the southern border of Nicaragua, the Contra had blown up a bridge which was the major access to Penas Blancas and Rivas for food supplies and hospital facilities and protection in case of attack by the Contra. Because the bridge was blown up, the people used an old boat to get around land by way of Lake Nicaragua. It was their only good access, and now the boat has sunk.

We are currently trying to raise money for another boat. The cost is estimated at \$3,000. According to Jenny, only \$300 has been raised so far. If you can help, it will be greatly appreciated. I am sending any donations to D.C. in three weeks.

Make checks payable to: **Witness for Peace — Cardenas boat**. I live at 514 Sherwood and am home in the morning until ten, or around suppertime until 6:30. If you are in the area of the University, you could leave any donations with the Student Action Center. The office is in the UC building.

Thank you.
Jerry Schneider
514 Sherwood
549-9679



Getting acquainted with Roberto, whose job it was to take care of the gringos.



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