

The World

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Time to go 'to war'

GOOD for Wilbur Ternyik!

He says he wants to go to war against those state agencies — particularly the Fish and Wildlife Department — which are obstructing efforts by the Port of Siuslaw to secure adequate dredge disposal sites. He says the department is guilty of nitpicking.

Ternyik's outburst runs somewhat contrary to his usual tenure — a man who believes in working within the system, even where others have found the system to be too strict, too filled with nitpickers, and those who would mandate the future of local governments.

Disposal sites are, of course, essential to the economic well-being of any port district. Without an adequate number of them, dredging the channel to maintain proper depth for commercial transportation becomes next to impossible.

AS TERNYIK points out: "As far as I'm concerned, if this dredge spoils plan is adopted the way it is, the people of Florence can expect the two biggest industries in town to pack up and move."

And so it goes, local officials along the coast wringing their hands in despair under the autocratic nitpicking of the Fish and Wildlife Department. Nitpicking, if you will, that slowly but surely eats away at economic stability.

The Port of Coos Bay recently felt the bite of Fish and Wildlife when assistant to director Jack Donaldson, Rollie Rousseau, spoke at a recent meeting in Coos Bay. A discussion of the port's plan to expand at the Charleston Small Boat Basin prompted Rousseau to say that "piecemeal development in estuaries will no longer fly." The fact is, there is nothing piecemeal about the expansion plan; it is a logical extension of the existing basin complex, the land in question being immediately south of present moorage facilities.

The department more and more these days seems to have a lot of Rousseaus — men who would define the very existence of any coastal community based on their own prejudicial views and supported by their own self-serving "documentation."

TERNYIK is disturbed and our own port officials are disturbed. Maybe, if more of the ports along the coast raise enough of a ruckus, some of the "experts" in the Fish and Wildlife Department will begin to see the world as it must be.

If nothing else, Ternyik's "war cries" should be a signal to port commissioners along the coast to unite once again on the threshold of still another Oregon legislative session. There are different folks holding the reins in Salem this year, chief among them a new governor who may be more sensitive to the economic survival of Oregon's coastal port districts.

Ternyik's "war" is everybody's war on the coast, and we strongly urge a reaffirmation of purpose by the Coastal Ports Federation. This body — comprised of port district commissioners and staff members — might well serve to forge new gains in '79. Federation President Larry Qualman of the Port of Coos Bay tells us the group "plans to be active this go-around of the legislature." We're glad to hear it.

A meeting of the Federation will be held, Qualman says, later this month or in early February. The sooner the better, we say.