

*Les AuCoin*

EXTENSION OF REMARKS  
BY THE HONORABLE LES AuCOIN  
IN THE U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
SEPTEMBER 14, 1982

Mr. Speaker, I want to bring to the attention of my colleagues a letter I received from one of my constituents, Mr. Joe Reinhart of Portland, Oregon, concerning the Administration's plans to sell off our public lands. The arguments made in this letter parallel exactly my own misgivings about Secretary Watt's "asset management" plan.

The concerns expressed by my constituent were repeated everywhere I went in my district during the August recess. Oregonians are proud of their heritage -- they do not want America's public lands sold off for some short-term gain.

Mr. Speaker, we would be wise to heed the advice found in Mr. Reinhart's letter so as not to be accomplices in a terrible crime against our citizens. I hope my colleagues will join me in this.

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8619 SW 37<sup>th</sup> Ave

Portland, OR 97210

Aug. 29, 1982

Dear Congressman AuCoin:

I just finished reading a Time magazine article (Aug. 23, 1982) on the Reagan Administration's plan to sell "surplus" federal lands in order to reduce the national debt. I oppose this proposal for the following reasons.

First, our short term economic problems should not dictate national policy regarding public lands. These lands should be considered part of our national heritage; a savings account. The interest from our capital investment is sustained-yield forests, national recreation and wildlife areas, and aesthetic and other intangible values. All citizens benefit from that national investment.

And considering our present economic problems, once that capital reserve is withdrawn, it will not be replaced.

Second, the health of Oregon's economy is closely linked to the vitality of the timber industry. As the Time article points out, large timber companies are in favor of the Administration's sell-off (or sell-out) because they have overcut their own lands for short term profits. Now, in the name of the "free market," they want to "manage" public lands. God help us. In the past few years, many small, locally owned mills have either folded or been taken over by large, national companies. I am opposed to a policy of letting out of state corporations dictate Oregon's economic decisions. Witness, for example, the commitment of Georgia-Pacific to Oregon. As a representative of this state, I ask you to make sure that our

resources are available for Oregon lumber companies, not put in the hands of out of state interests.

Third, the Administration's plan is another example of the rich becoming richer at the expense of the rest of us. I ask you, who can afford to buy this land? I will tell you. Neither myself, my family, nor my friends have the money. Who can pay existing mortgages, let alone borrow at today's interest rates? Land speculators, developers, and the wealthy. The Administration's proposal, in a nut shell, is a way for the federal government to take land available for everyone's use, and put it in the control of a select group of individuals: Not very democratic.

In conclusion, everyone agrees that the federal government must balance its budget, the national debt must be reduced, and the economy started on the road to good health. And, there are undoubtedly truly "surplus" federal lands. However, I do not trust Secretary of the Interior James Watt. By using executive orders without Congressional review, the Administration's proposal opens the door for abuse. If the Administration needs more money, it should reduce military spending and/or raise taxes again. At the very least, Congress should hold hearings on this important national question.

Thank you for your time and consideration.  
I eagerly await your response.

Sincerely yours,

Joe Reinhart

LES AUCOIN  
1ST DISTRICT, OREGON



CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20515

September 3, 1982

Mr. Joe Reinhart  
8619 SW 37th Ave.  
Portland, OR 97219

Dear Mr. Reinhart:

Thank you for writing me about the Administration's plans to sell surplus federal lands -- I agree completely with your views.

Your letter clearly describes the threat posed by Secretary Watt's "asset management" plan. In fact, your letter is the most articulate expression of why the Congress should carefully review this proposal before it goes any further.

Thank you again for writing.

With warm regards,

Sincerely,

LES AuCOIN  
Member of Congress

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P.S. -- Would you have any objections if I inserted your letter in the Congressional Record on this subject? If so, please contact me.