

RRSC Water Crisis

'I Can't Make It Rain,' Says Secretary Bergland

4/17/77

By PAUL BEATTY

Sentinel Staff Writer

"I'll do what I can for you, but I can't make it rain," Secretary of Agriculture Bob Bergland told an audience of 200 agri-businessmen at a noon barbecue Saturday at the J. J. Crosetti Ranch, east of Watsonville.

The secretary added, "In fact I think it would be a disaster if some committee in Washington could make it rain —no, I'll leave that up to the Lord."

Bergland spent over an hour with the growers, processors, suppliers to farms and state and local farm officials, showing an easy manner of a man who spent 27 years of his own life as a Minnesota farmer.

He was accompanied by U.S. Rep. Leon Panetta, D-16th District, the man responsible for his visit.

Bergland said, "To say Leon urged me to come here is an understatement—he demanded it."

Following the meal of barbecued beef, beans, salad,



Bob Bergland

wine and apple juice, the relaxed Bergland fielded questions from the south county agricultural managers, including concerns that went far beyond the immediate problem of the drought.

Concerning the drought, SEE BACK PAGE

Bergland warned that if "the rains and snows don't come next year, it will be a true disaster in some areas of California," pointing out that San Joaquin, and other valleys, are drawing their water sources down so far this year, that next year without replenishment, they will be without water.

"I want to congratulate the farmers of this area," he said, "for handling the situation so well this far."

Bergland affirmed that he supports the federal disaster act for the "drought and other weather disasters," and that he also supports a federal-type of insurance for "weather disasters."

Opening it up for questions, the secretary said, "I'm not here with a federal checkbook, but I am here to hear from you."

Richard Shaw, a processor, and Jack Simmen, county agricultural representative, told him that farmers were having serious problems because of government regulations, and



... SINCE 1936

FRIENDLINESS

'I Can't Make It Rain,' Says Secretary Bergland

FROM PAGE 1

other government actions, banning a number of pesticides and weed control chemicals.

Shaw said that since Hercules Corporation had been closed "by environmentalists" the spinach farmers who harvest a crop of 138 million pounds a year, had lost their major weed control chemical, produced only by Hercules.

Simmen said his concern was that pesticides for minor crops "had trouble getting registered."

Bergland told him, "The federal pesticide and fungicide act is a mess."

He added, "And, Leon Panetta's going to straighten it out."

Panetta, from his seat, answered with a big grin.

Bergland pointed out that the Environmental Protection Agency had the task of clearing, or registering, up to 38,000 pesticides and chemicals and admitted that those chemicals for the larger crops were being "registered" first because of the pressure of major crop lobbyists.

He told Simmen, as he told a number of others who asked questions, "We'll look into it; we'll see what we can do about it."

A floraculturist told the secretary that California is the major producer of cut flowers in the nation and that Monterey and Santa Cruz Counties "were

the center of that industry in the state."

He said that imports, mainly carnations, from Central America were coming in at five million a day and seriously hurting the U.S. producers.

Bergland told him, "I believe that is being heard now by the Federal Trade Commission, and I'll closely watch what they're doing, as I'm sure Leon will."

He spoke in support of Panetta's recent drought legis-

3 Persons Hurt In 2 Accidents

Three persons were injured in two accidents in Santa Cruz Friday afternoon, according to police reports.

Marc Wiecher, 31, was injured when the motorcycle he was operating skidded out of control on the Laurel Street extension east of Front Street.

A passenger, Helen Petty, 29, of 209 Kaye St. No. 14, also was injured. They were taken to Dominican Hospital.

According to the report the cycle slid 25 feet after falling.

Russell Willis, 30, of 1855 Chanticleer Ave. was arrested for drunk driving after his car was involved in a collision with a bicycle.

Receiving minor injuries was James Hafertepen, 25, 3115 Paul Sweet Road, who said he would seek to his own aid. No citation was given involving the accident.

lation, in committee now, that would provide temporary assistance to individuals and families for mortgage and rental costs during drought periods; authorize loans to local agencies and individuals at one per cent; provide for a federal coordinator, and authorize the President to make grants to states when drought becomes a disaster.

Bergland said it was the first time he had been in California "and I bet that will surprise you— Californians must think that because of the number of cars here, that everybody must have been in California at least twice."

Panetta described the economic life of a farmer as being "like throwing craps every day," and Bergland agreed that "agriculture has a hard row to hoe."

Part of the hard row, he said, is the need to educate the consumer and to end the conflict between consumer interests and agriculture.

"Also, some of the problem is that a number of my colleagues believe that we don't farms and ranches as long as we have supermarkets," he said to the laughter of the crowd.

Bergland called for a cooperative approach from both farmers and consumers,

saying, "It's time to talk more softly."

"I'm not a warrior," he said, "I'm a farmer and a politician and I urge that we get along with each other—and that does not require capitulation."

As he made ready to leave for his flight to Washington, a woman told the secretary, "Thank you, I want to thank you—your warmth is tremendous."

Two Injured On East Cliff

Two people received minor injuries Saturday when a car crashed into the rear end of a second car which had slowed for traffic on East Cliff Drive.

Lee Jacobsen, 17, 463 Sea Horse Drive, and Dawn Dilfer, 17, 755 14th Ave., received minor injuries and were taken to Dominican Hospital for treatment, said the CHP.

According to reports, Jacobsen was driving near 15th Avenue and failed to see a car slowing in front of her.

Her car crashed into the car which was driven by Kathleen Ledbetter, 29, 4275 Jade St.

Jacobsen received two broken front teeth and Dilfer complained of pain to her head and knee, said the CHP.

**DIVORCE
ONLY \$85**
(plus filing fee)

It costs you nothing to dial Divorce Information Center, toll-free. Call Mon-Fri 6 am-7 pm, Sat 10 am-2 pm.
GUARANTEED! 800-352-6587

Yellow Cab 24-HOUR
SERVICE
ANYWHERE
423-1234
YELLOW CAB

Water Saving Idea!
MUSHROOM COMPOST
Retains Moisture—Requires Less Watering
4 to 6 yds.—\$4.50 yd.
7 to 12 yds.—\$3.75 yd.
13 yds. & up—\$3.25 yd.
Free Delivery — or save by picking up yourself
Saturday morning 8 a.m. to 12 noon.
SANTA CRUZ COMPOST CO. 475-0784/722-1374