



Equity in apportionment

By Calvin O. L. Henry

Section 6 of Article IV of the Constitution of Oregon states that the number of Senators and Representatives shall, at the session next following an enumeration of the inhabitants by the United States government, be fixed by law and apportioned among the several counties according to the population in each."

The 1980 U.S. Census is complete and Oregon population is now 2,632,663. The Black population is 37,059. Of this number, 27,720 live in Portland.

The main issue before the 1980 Oregon Legislative session, which is following the 1980 census, is reapportionment of the state senatorial and representative districts. Because of an increase in population, Oregon will get a fifth congressional seat, and the Legislature will be drawn the boundary lines for the five congressional districts.

Approximately 523,489 people will live in each congressional district, and the average representative district population is 43,878. While the average senatorial population is 87,755.

One might wonder why should Blacks in Oregon be involved in the reapportionment process of the 1981 Legislature. And the question may also be "What will reapportionment mean to the Black community in Portland?"

One of the objectives of the Oregon Assembly For Black Affairs (OABA) is "to encourage Blacks to understand, participate, and affect the political process at all levels of government." Reapportionment is one of those political processes that decides who will be the people's representatives for the next ten years. And Blacks need to assist in the decision of who will represent them for the next ten years. This is one of the reasons why Blacks should be involved in the process.

Reapportionment was one of the main topics of discussion at OABA Third Call-To-Action Leadership Conference which was held last January 31. As a result of the reapportionment discussion at this conference, an ad hoc committee was set-up to study reapportionment and to insure that input from the Black community on the process would be given to the legislature.

Herb Golliday of Salem, Marvin Revoal of Tigard and Greg Batiste of Portland volunteered to serve on this ad hoc committee on reapportionment. And Batiste was asked to call the committee together.

In 1970, about 94.5% of the Blacks in the urban centers lived in Portland. Many Blacks felt that the Black community in Portland was divided up in the 1971 reapportionment so that there was almost no chance for a Black to be nominated or elected to a legislative office. And

only one Black, State Senator Bill McCoy, has been elected during the past ten years.

Because 80% of the Black population live today in Portland, OABA has concentrated its reapportionment efforts toward getting better representation of Blacks in Portland. Most Blacks live in North/Northeast Portland. And it is in this area that the greatest possibility of Blacks being elected to legislative office seems more reasonable.

In February, members of OABA and the ad hoc committee met in Salem to discuss proposed legislative districts for North/Northeast Portland. This group developed a reapportionment proposal for North/Northeast Portland which calls for four representative districts and two senatorial districts, in an area bounded by 42nd Avenue to the east, the Banfield Freeway to the south, the Willamette River to the west, and the Columbia River to the north.

Blacks, who attended the Republican Dorchester Conference held at Seaside in March, discussed OABA reapportionment proposal and agreed to support it. Gafe Washington, Thomas Kennedy, Bernard Richardson, Ethel Lee, and Carl Talton, all of Portland, are working for the acceptance of this proposal.

Bernie Foster, publisher of *The Skanner*, agreed to print copies of OABA reapportionment proposal and sent them to all members of the 1981 Oregon Legislature. Also, *The Skanner* printed it on March 18, 1981, as its feature story. Individuals who have not seen the proposal should get a copy of that issue.

State Representative Glen Whallon, Chairman of House Committee on Elections and Reapportionment, and State Senator Jack Ripper, Chairman of Senate Committee on Government Operation, have welcomed this input.

Both Whallon and Ripper have assured members of the OABA that the interests and concerns of the Black community will be considered when the lines of the district boundaries are drawn. Both committees have agreed to consider "race" as one of the criteria to be applied to the creation of legislative districts.

OABA is not the only one who is concerned about how North/Northeast Portland will be reapportioned. Now that OABA reapportionment proposal has been presented, opposition from Representatives Wally Priestley, Tom Mason and Rick Bauman has surfaced. Also there are some indications that the opposition is trying to drum up support from Portland prominent Blacks who may have different ideas

about Black representing themselves.

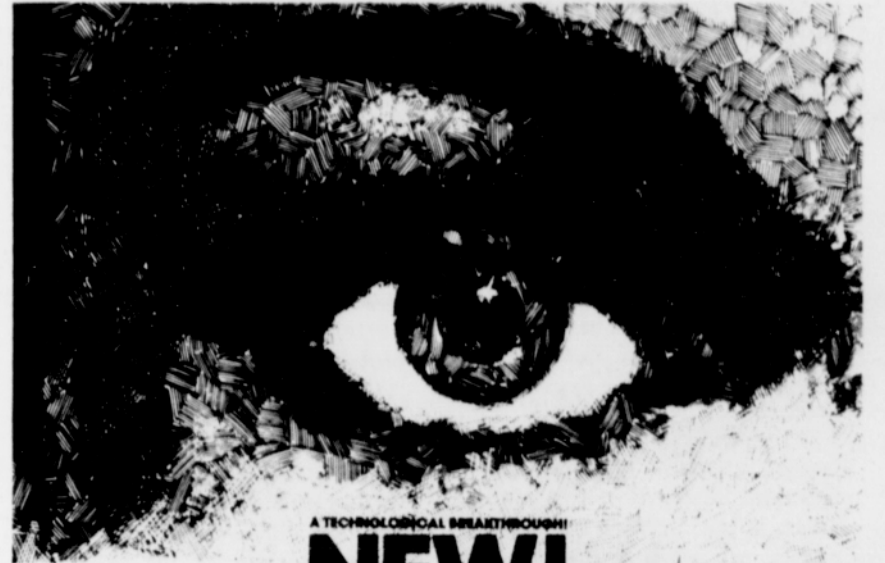
Priestley has been quoted as saying "OABA proposal does not represent the wishes of the Portland Black community," and that he is "going to take a poll of Blacks." Others want to see only one representative district to be for Blacks. Yet another wants to tie Northeast Portland with East Multnomah County for a senatorial district.

But the truth of the matter, OABA proposal was initiated, drawn, reviewed and presented by Blacks. This proposal follows closely the four criteria noted by Representative Whallon in his letter to the House Democratic Caucus, dated March 17, 1981. These criteria

are equality of population, community of interest including race, compactness, and county boundaries and physical barriers.

Blacks who feel that only whites can represent them must come into this decade. "Good will alone will not be enough to meet the challenges of the 1980s of which the Black community will confront."

Reapportionment could mean to the Black community in Portland that they can elect individuals from their community who will represent their interests in Salem. If OABA proposal or a similar one is accepted there is the possibility that the Black community could have at least four state representatives and two Senators representing it in Salem during this decade. Isn't it worth it?



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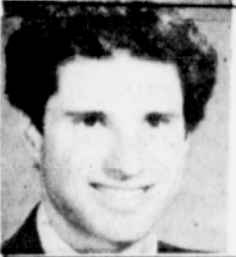
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From the Capitol

Congressman Ron Wyden

Q. Congressman Wyden, this week you testified before the Judiciary Committee to ask for continued funding of the Legal Services Corporation. You have also been quoted as favoring major cuts in federal spending. How do you reconcile the two?

A. I have said I am in full agreement with the Administration that we must stop run-away federal spending - and I am. But I also believe we must cut where it makes sense to cut - where we have

programs that are wasteful, duplicative or rife with fraud. Legal Services is anything but wasteful. During 1980, Legal Services was able to help 13,000 low-income clients in Multnomah County alone with an operating budget of only \$850,000. Only 11 percent of that budget went to cover administrative costs.

In addition, I strongly believe we should not abandon our long-standing commitment in this country to provide equal justice for all - the

poor as well as the rich. Without Legal Services to champion their causes, many poor people in this country would simply be without a champion. And that is unacceptable.

Q. Congressman Wyden, the Administration has proposed cutting all of the Amtrak runs except the one between Boston and New York. How do you feel about this?

A. I am absolutely appalled. To begin with, I am a firm believer that with energy supplies growing tighter and tighter and the cost of oil ever

on the rise, we must look to mass transit systems of all kinds to meet our present and future transportation needs. Cutting rail services simply to lower federal spending this year is penny-wise, but pound-foolish. Secondly, I am outraged that the Administration would expect Oregonians to pay with their tax dollars for an Amtrak run between Boston and New York while at the same time cutting our Northwest Pioneer just when it is beginning to get on its feet.

From the Board Room

By Gladys McCoy
Multnomah County Commissioner

Whatever happened to the "good old days" when money was easy to find? Due to the fiscal crisis our country is experiencing today, budget cuts are being made at each governmental level. There is no more evident than in the February budget that President Reagan recently submitted to Congress.

For the country to maintain its present level of services, a 9% inflationary increase to the general fund is needed. This cannot be met, leaving a hole of approximately \$15 million that must be filled by either eliminating services or increasing taxes.

These decisions need to be shared ones -- shared by the County Executive, the Board members, and the public. These decisions will effect the services provided by the county and the residents themselves. County government must decide what it sees as its mission, and how this mission should be funded.

Thus, the basis of the budget, the following questions have been raised:

1. What services should be provided?
2. How well is the county providing these services?
3. Which services should be reduced? Increased? Maintained? Eliminated?
4. What will these changes cost?

The County Executive and the Board are concerned that citizens have sufficient information to determine the services provided by the county as well as the impact of those services. Survey questions have been compiled and widely distributed.

Small groups have been exploring opportunities, and a tremendous amount of interest has been generated. The County Executive has submitted his proposal to the Board, in which he suggests revised budget cuts and sources of revenue. However, the Board was not inclined to support the revenue measures until we have completed our own budget process. The Board will begin its budget process on April 9, when the County Executive presents his proposed budget

document. There are a number of Board work sessions scheduled throughout the month of April, as well as public hearings to encourage citizen input. Citizen participation is a very vital part of this process. A balanced budget must be submitted by April 30.

While each Commissioner feels a responsibility to protect the interests of his/her District, priorities differ. It is my belief that we must:

1. Fund mandated services;
2. Remain financially secure;
3. Provide no services which can appropriately be provided by others;
4. Honor our commitment to the poor, the sick, the elderly, and the dependent.

County government is often viewed as the government of the poor, but, in fact, it serves everyone in its jurisdiction and includes such as library services, court systems, road services, health services, mental health services, and animal control to name a few. Your tax dollars support these services, and you make it all workable and worthwhile!

Washington named Kaiser VP

Alvin W. Washington, Health Plan manager, has been named a vice president of Kaiser Foundation Health Plan of Oregon and appointed associate regional manager. In addition to Health Plan responsibilities he will have general management responsibilities for information services, dental administration and risk management.

Washington joined Kaiser Permanente in 1978 as Health Plan manager after three years as executive director of the Medical Care Group of Washington University, St. Louis, Mo. He retired as a lieutenant colonel after 25 years service with the U.S. Air Force. He was one of 10 managers selected in 1975 for the first academic fellowship pro-

gram in Health Maintenance Organization management at the Wharton School, University of Pennsylvania. He holds a bachelor's degree in biology from Lincoln University, Mo., and master's degree in physiological chemistry from Ohio State University and in administration and management engineering from George Washington University, Washington, D.C.

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