

From the Capitol

Congressman Ron Wyden



Agencies for young and old join forces at the Salvation Army Moore Street Center swimming pool, when senior citizens from the Rose Senior Citizens Center was invited to use the pool for weekly swim classes.



Q. Congressman Wyden, this week you said that elderly Oregonians might be forced into nursing homes if Congress approves cuts in senior programs currently proposed by the administration. Why?

A. Because many of the programs currently slated for the chopping block are the very programs which help keep seniors in their own homes - and out of nursing homes.

Medicare: Take Medicare for example. The Administration has proposed repealing Medicare amendments which would compensate senior citizens for physical therapy and home health care. Without such support, many Oregon seniors may have no alternative but to enter a nursing home.

From a fiscal standpoint, as well as a humane one, this simply does not make sense. A recent study of one Oregon county by the Oregon Department of Human Resources

showed it cost less than half as much to keep seniors at home by providing them with food stamps, SSI benefits, medical care and home maintenance services as it does to institutionalize them. Other studies, on both a local and national level, have also shown that it is far more cost-effective to keep seniors in their own homes as long as possible.

Low-Income Senior Housing: Providing seniors with decent, low-cost housing also helps keep them out of nursing homes. According to Portland housing experts, on any given day in the Portland metropolitan area, a senior may be placed in a nursing home because there is no available senior housing. Unfortunately, the Administration's public housing budget proposals will only make a bad situation worse -- at least with respect to Oregon.

The Administration has proposed cutting funding for HUD and Sec-

tion 8 assisted public housing programs by 1/3 (HUD) to 1/2 (Section 8). According to Bill Hunter of the Housing Authority of Portland (HAP), funds are already so tight that HUD did not provide money to build even one elderly public housing unit in Portland during 1981. Hunter also says HAP currently has a waiting list of more than 1,700 elderly persons who will have to wait an average of nearly two years to get a home.

The need to provide adequate, low-cost housing for seniors is again as much a fiscal concern as a social one. With the cost of nursing home care approaching \$1,100 to \$1,200 a month, we should do everything in our power to keep seniors in their own homes.

These are only two examples of what I consider to be the Administration's penny-wise, but pond-foolish fiscal policy.

The Administration has also proposed cutting low-income energy

assistance and weatherization programs that have proven successful in reducing energy consumption, lowering heating bills and allowing seniors to avoid having to choose whether to heat or eat.

Furthermore, although the Administration has proposed cutting funds for senior programs by almost 25 percent, it has proposed virtually no cuts in administrative costs for the very same programs.

I am committed to balancing the budget and stopping run-away federal spending. It is disgraceful that we spend more federal dollars each year to finance the national debt than we do for all the health care programs in this country.

But we have to cut fairly and sensibly. Cutting these senior programs may save a \$1 now, but if it results in increased institutionalization, it will cost us \$6 or \$7 down the road. And that doesn't make sense.

OSP prisoners advocate legislation

By Chuck Hein

The Legislative Committee for Corrections, of Oregon State Penitentiary, a prisoner group working with legislative members, is seeking the passage of five main bills that will improve the quality of life within the state institutions, and better prepare us for the transition back to the community. These five legislative bills, are as follows:

Bills submitted by the Legislative Committee for Corrections, for Oregon State Penitentiary are:

1. The Family Visiting Bills which will provide for an area within the institution where a prisoner may visit with family members in a home like setting, spending up to 22 hours with these members and reestablishing ties that the present visiting system does not allow for. This bill is proposed so the prisoners and their families will provide the funding for purchase and maintenance of the units within the family visiting area.

2. Meritorious Good Time Bill which will make meritorious good time earned through institutional work or school assignments applicable to parole date sets. As the good time now stands, it only applies to some 12% of the prison population who do not take parole, but instead discharge their sentences. This good time is earned thru prisoners in industry, and efforts should have application to the parole date set.

3. A bill to allow an inmate to be accompanied by an attorney, and or a medical or psychiatric doctor, when appearing before the parole board. In many cases there is evidence only a professional can properly present that which will help the board reach a proper and just decision.

4. The Pay Increase Bill which will provide an increase in the maximum daily pay for industries and institutional workers from the present \$3.00 a day, to \$6.00 a day. There has not been an increase in this area since 1969 and it is badly needed to help the prisoner better prepare for release thru a saving incentive plan, and/or better maintain their family responsibility by enabling them to send money home. Industries prisoner pay comes out of industries profits.

5. The Gate Money Increase

Bill which will provide an increase in the money persons receive when discharged or paroled. The gate money for many decades now, has remained at \$100, hardly sufficient for a person starting again, especially for those without close friends or family. The bill proposes that a matching fund be set by the state, whereby the state would match the money a person has saved upon the time of his parole or discharge, to a maximum of \$250.00.

OUR PRESENT VISITING SYSTEM

If you are married, you are allowed four visits in a one month period. If single, you are allowed two visits a month with any one person. The visits are between 3 and 3 1/2 hours in length that includes the time taken to get both visitor and inmate into the visiting room area.

When you receive a weekend visit, visits are often terminated after only 1 1/2 hours because of the overcrowded conditions of the visiting room and other visitors waiting to get in.

When your visitors first arrives, the two of them are allowed "a three second embrace." After the initial embrace you escort your visitor to a specific area assigned to you for the duration of your visit. You are separated by a coffee table between you. This insures that no emotional or physical contact is maintained. You are only allowed to reach across this area to hold hands, period. Any deviation from this procedure constitutes an infraction of the rules, which means a loss of your visits. You are under constant visual supervision during the duration of your visit. You and your visitor are restricted to your assigned area. The only expectation is being permitted to use the restroom, or to purchase refreshments, "alone."

Visiting room officers periodically roam throughout the visiting room area to insure that the "no physical contact policy" is being enforced. To assist the officers in enforcing this policy, the visiting rooms have video tape television cameras strategically arranged to guarantee that the no contact policy is enforced to the fullest. These cameras can also

record all visiting room activities.

At the termination of your visit, you are allowed to escort your visitor to a designated "Exit area" at which time they allow you to embrace your visitor for a period of five seconds. During this period of time, couples, family and children are crowded together in groups of about 30 people. All are under the visual supervision of one correctional officer, one Sergeant, one Captain, and one executive assistant. The above mentioned personnel are constantly insisting that your embrace last no longer than the five seconds allotted time. They continuously intermingle with the various couples to see that the policy is being enforced. Then, you also have the visitors who have completed their embrace, or not involved with embracing, supervising the others who are yet embracing.

Along with the visual supervision of officers present in the visiting room at termination of visiting hours, to maintain a strict policy of the five second embrace, they humiliate you by herding you and your visitor through the exit area as fast as possible, with remarks such as "move it along," "come on Smith, move it!" These remarks are usually in harsh, demanding tones, all doing this at once, it makes for a very unpleasant, upsetting atmosphere for you and your loved ones to be forced to depart under.

WHAT IS A FAMILY VISIT?

It is a visit under normal relaxed family setting where your wife, children, or other family members are able to spend a period of time together as a family. This visit would be in private accommodations with a yard area for outside activities. (Such mobile units which are being used in various states at this time)

This gives the inmate, spouse, and children an opportunity to communicate as a family, and show emotions they otherwise have no other chance to express under our present situation. Such as not being allowed to touch your wife's face. A family visiting setting is needed to reintroduce the inmate back into a family type atmosphere. To have the opportunity to maintain the husband, wife relationship; to be able to express emotions toward one another that you now have to suppress; a private setting where the two of you are able to discuss problems such as domestic, financial, or whatever problems the spouse has to deal with while having to maintain a household.

Family visits would give the incarcerated parent the chance to maintain the parent image to the children; to become involved with their problems, and to assist them in dealing with them; to just be allowed to hold and play with your children and hear them laugh as you cannot now experience, and not have to disturb other visitors who are crowded up on either side of you also visiting.

Progressive prison systems such as California, New York, Mississippi, and others, have found the one very important benefit generally overlooked. It is the rehabilitative

function of family visits. This is accomplished through the strengthening and maintenance of the inmate's family ties. You can incarcerate a person for just so long, as approximately 97% of the people that are sent to prison by society, will be returning to that same society... a fact that cannot be changed. So, the inmate can re-enter society as a bitter, depressed, angry, frustrated, unwelcomed individual without friends, family, a home, a positive attitude or finances. I should not have to explain the outcome of a person in that frame of mind, or the ex-offender can re-enter society with a positive attitude, friends, family, a home, job, community acceptance, and who is no future tax burden on society, because the people of that community held out their hands to help a fellow human being who made a mistake.

Bill Nickleberry and Max Pittman practice what we preach...conservation. And save PGE customers about \$110,000 a year.

This year, Bill, Willamette Center building Manager, and Max, the Center's Superintendent, along with the rest of the PGE Watt Watching staff will help save about \$110,000 through conservation measures being practiced at the Willamette Center building complex, PGE's headquarters. Bill and his co-workers are putting to use many of the conservation techniques we've been advising customers about for more than eight years. The conservation techniques in use include thermopane glass windows, insulation and weatherstripping. Since the Center

was first occupied, the air in the building has been heated mainly by body heat, office machine heat and the heat from overhead lights.

As a result of their efforts and by making more efficient use of construction pre-planning, Bill, Max and fellow employees and tenants have been able to reduce the energy use at the Willamette Center by 12 percent, or almost 3 million kilowatt-hours. At today's rates, that's a savings of almost \$110,000 a year. Savings that are more important now than ever before.

Electricity costs are going up everywhere, it's not just here. Both private and public utilities throughout the country are facing soaring costs. Higher equipment costs, fuel costs and interest rates have everyone on a tight budget. And the rapid increase of new residential and business customers in the region is another strain on existing supply.

But, at PGE, we are fortunate to have people like Bill and Max working hard to keep costs down for customers wherever they can. People who care.

PGE
People with cost-saving ideas for you.



Jordan discusses police activity

(Continued from page 1 col. 6)

trator's decision would be more credible if the public had the opportunity to observe the process. Jordan agreed, but said he was unsure of the requirements of the state's Open Meeting Law, however, he said he would seek legal clarification.

Citing the responsibility that public officials have to the City, Jordan said he did not feel he needed the approval of Mayor Frank Ivancie before he made the decision. "But," he said, "the Mayor needs to let the public know what he will and will not tolerate in this City."

After hearing Jordan's explanations, the Northeast Coalition of Neighborhoods voted to support him.

Houses in Georgetown, the capital of Guyana, are built on piles since the city is below the high-tide mark.

THE HERB-INN

3405 N.E. Rodney
Medicinal & Culinary Herbs
Fresh & Dried Herb seeds
Low cost veg. seeds
Natural body care prod.
Edgar Cayce Formulas
Sandra Williams
(503) 284-7016
Portland, Oregon
Open 9 til 9 - 7 days a week