



## From the Capitol

Congressman Ron Wyden

**(Editor's Note:** This week Congressman Wyden discusses the next step in the budgeting process and funding problems for the handicapped.)

**Q. Congressman Wyden, what happens now that the House has approved the President's budget proposal?**

A. All the House has done so far is approve the first budget resolution for fiscal year 1982. This resolution sets broad targets for federal spending and revenues for the coming year. Although this is an important first step in the budgeting process, the precise funding levels for specific programs have yet to be decided. Thus, a good deal of our work remains to be done.

As we set about making the funding decisions for specific programs, I will be guided by two major priorities. First, I am committed to ensuring that the proposed cuts are both fair and cost-effective. I will not go along with cuts that tighten the belts of senior citizens who can afford only two meals a day, but don't touch large tobacco growers who receive huge subsidies or defense contractors who can't

manage costs on big projects.

Second, I believe we must come up with a tax cut that encourages Americans to save and invest in the future of our country, while at the same time providing relief from runaway inflation. We must remove the barriers to work that are present in our current tax code, such as the marriage tax penalty, and create incentives for small businesses to grow and increase productivity.

**Q. While addressing a rally of handicapped persons this week, you said the administration is treading on shaky economic ground by proposing certain cuts in programs to the handicapped. What specific cuts do handicapped Oregonians face and why do you think those cuts are fiscally unwise?**

A. Under Administration proposals, handicapped Oregonians would be asked to sacrifice a number of programs which provide them with the modest assistance and training necessary to live independently. For example one proposal would eliminate \$869,000 from a program which supplies artificial limbs, wheelchairs and braces to the handicapped.

Proposed cuts would also lead to closure of Woodstock House, a Portland institution which serves severely disturbed deaf individuals and the loss the half-a-million dollars for two independent living programs for quadriplegics and the chronically emotionally disabled in Portland and Eugene. In addition, the cuts would mean cancellation of plans to build two mental health clinics in southeast and west Portland; severe curtailment of a University of Oregon program for multi-handicapped children; and the loss of \$153,000 for programs which serve the emotionally disabled.

It does not take a genius to figure out that it is neither equitable nor cost-effective to cut out support programs of this nature. We may save a little now, but if the result is increased institutionalized and increased dependence by handicapped individuals, we'll find ourselves in an even worse financial situation further down the road.



## From City Hall

By Mayor Frank Ivancie

Bruce Broussard, the publisher of the *Portland Observer*, has asked that I write a regular column for this paper. I welcome this opportunity. I hope to write about subjects of special concern to the readers of the *Observer* in this column, and I want to encourage you to write or call my office with suggestions for topics.

As you know, Portland city government operates a wide variety of services and programs. They range from road repair to economic development. Although very diverse, they are all funded by budget appropriations approved by the full City Council in open, public meetings.

The Council just completed work on next year's budget. I want to give you an overview of the new budget in this column and discuss specific programs of concern to the readers of the *Observer* in future columns.

Preparing and passing the new budget was the greatest challenge I have faced as Mayor. But I also look at it as my greatest opportunity.

Early estimates that city government simply would not have enough money to maintain existing programs at their current levels. This meant that I had to either propose increasing taxes or cutting programs.

I do not believe that the city should ask the voters to increase their taxes. Inflation has already forced many Portland families to tighten their belts. The last thing they need is another tax increase. I sincerely believe that government can save money while improving or maintaining services, and I designed a proposed budget to prove it.

Simple, across-the-board budget cuts were out of the question. I consider some services, like police and fire protection, too important to cut. So I concentrated my cuts on administrative overhead. My proposed budget called for a reduction of 101 general fund positions, most of them supervisory or administrative in nature, for a savings of over \$2.5 million.

I proposed to cut total general fund spending by \$5 million and overall spending by \$63 million. Many of these cuts would have occurred anyway because of reductions in federal spending. But I remained convinced that Portlanders should not be asked to increase their taxes to make up the difference.

The City Council considered my budget for over three weeks. Many City Hall observers commented that the hearings were among the most peaceful in recent memory. Some changes were made, of course, but in the end the Council approved the vast majority of my recommendations.

These include the changes in the City's economic development programs that have been discussed in the *Observer*. I am convinced that these changes will improve Portland's effort in this field and help create new jobs in coming years.

I will discuss how I believe this will happen in my next column.

## Letters

(Continued from Page 2)

### Media coverage biased

Dear Editor:

I am writing to express my anger and profound concern regarding media coverage of the April 4 March Against Racism sponsored by the Portland Black United Front (BUF).

Portland newspapers presented more or less balanced coverage, though some did not provide enough depth and prominence in their coverage. The Portland television stations, however, showed dangerous bias and extreme disrespect for the March by their coverage. They focused 90% of their coverage on a verbal and physical fight between the RCP (Revolutionary Communist Party) and the BUF. Certainly this incident, which reminded many of us of the McCarthy era, was significant. But it was allowed by the television news to completely obscure the March itself. The March was, after all, a March Against Racism, and the issues raised -- police harassment, welfare cuts, and the Atlanta murders -- warranted far better depth of coverage than

they received.

I seriously question the objectivity and the ethics of television stations that decided that it was far more important to focus on the fight with the RCP than to show the anger and concern expressed that day over the issues of racism. Not only did the television coverage contribute heavily to the McCarthy-like "red-baiting" by its emphasis on the incident, but it expressed by its lack of balanced coverage an almost complete disregard of the fact that (at that time) 22 Black children had been murdered in Atlanta!

We do not need television news that contributes to red-baiting and helps promote racism by presenting biased and sensational news. We are in difficult and dangerous times. The coming days will require the best that people can offer, and that hopefully was not evidenced by the news coverage of the March Against Racism. If that is the best we can do, we will not make it through the times ahead.

Catherine Smith  
United Feminists  
Against the Right

### Favors Jefferson/Adams merger

Dear Editors:

All of the recent emotional outrage over the possible closure and/or merger of Jefferson High School makes me wonder if the community has really tried to be rational and sensible over this issue. I would like to see some energies directed toward making this possible change have a positive impact on the community.

The following suggestion is for the consideration of both the community and the school board: keep Eliot as an early childhood center, move the new middle school (Harriet Tubman) into the Jefferson High site, and merge Jefferson with Adams on the condition that the school board leaves the magnet arts program intact and put the computer sciences magnet program at the site also.

The proposed expenditure of 1.5 to 2 million dollars to renovate Eliot School into a middle school could be used to update facilities at Jefferson as a middle school. A portion could also be used to offset installation costs of the computer sciences program and improve the arts program in the new Jefferson/Adams High School at the Adams High location.

This proposal will benefit the

community in several ways:

1. The community would then have three schools to service its student population - an early childhood center, a new middle school, and a relatively new high school.

2. The middle school at the Jefferson site will accommodate future student population growth. According to the school board's projections, the Eliot school site will be filled to capacity when opened as the Harriet Tubman Middle School. To spend 1.5 to 2 million dollars on this site is not exercising good planning or foresight and the community as taxpayers can ill afford this senseless expense.

3. The academic offerings at the Jefferson/Adams High School would equal if not exceed the programs in other parts of the city. A computer science program would really prepare our students for the technological age of the eighties. The magnet arts program could continue to offer a creative outlet for gifted students.

The above proposal has many other merits that could be beneficial to the community and the school district, therefore, I hope it is seriously considered for the possibility of study and feasibility.

Sincerely Yours,  
Grayce Kennedy

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