

EEOC Commissioner sees civil rights retreat

Equal Employment Opportunity Commissioner Dr. Armando M. Rodriguez described the plight of his organization to a Portland Community College audience Wednesday, explaining that the slow confirmation process in Washington, D.C. means they are working without a quorum. They are down to two commissioners from the normal five.

Quickly focusing on the issue, he said, "These are not good days for those of us who believe in and work hard for equal employment opportunity."

Dr. Rodriguez emphasized the progress that has been made in civil rights, human rights and discrimination in the past two decades. His records show they are receiving more charges in age discrimination and equal pay, leading to the belief that employers still deal with some employees differently than others.

"And I have the feeling that the

current administration is not sending out any strong signals suggesting a change in attitude or action," Dr. Rodriguez said.

Rodriguez was appointed by President Carter as a Commissioner of the EEOC on September 11, 1978 for a five year term ending July 1, 1983.

Stressing the language of the 1964 Civil Rights Act, which says, "It is the policy of the United States to insure equal employment opportunities for employees without discrimination because of race, color, religion, sex or national origin," Dr. Rodriguez indicated that "there is a growing resentment and a vigorous campaign mounting both within the current administration and within the private sector against affirmative action as a viable concept to carry out the legislative mandate of Title VII."

Although the rules are being tested, Dr. Rodriguez indicated the

courts continue to uphold the law. At this point, however, Senator Hatch of Utah has introduced a bill calling for a constitutional amendment to limit affirmative action.

Also an issue is the reduction in the workforce now occurring in the public sector. More often than not those with seniority on the job are not necessarily those who have been hired since affirmative action policies started, thus eliminating many of the women and minorities who have found employment in the last two decades.

Dr. Rodriguez posed a number of questions regarding enforcement by the administration as well as changes in policies. He suggested "that all of us in the business of civil rights and employment discrimination need to seek out information and develop strategy to make sure that the ultimate answers or decision support our philosophy and belief."



DR. ARMANDO M. RODRIGUEZ

Labor relations expert relieves tensions

Tensions, problems and concerns are everyday occurrences for Andrea Belcher. You have them. Doesn't everybody? But with Belcher, tensions are wholesale for tensions are her workday package. It might be better said that the reduction of tension is her business.

Andrea Belcher is manager of the department of employee and labor relations at Good Samaritan hospital with its 2800 employees. With the diversity of jobs represented in an institution of that size and nature, Belcher must understand the union contract language of five separate unions. Union members belong to either: (1) the Service Employees International Union, Local 49; or (2) Oregon Society of Radiologic Technology; or (3) Oregon Licensed Practical Nurses Association; or (4) International Union of Operating Engineers Local 87; or (5) School of Nursing (which has an informal bargaining arrangement).

Then there is management. Management has a stake in personnel actions on an individual basis as well as in periodic labor contract negotiations. Belcher must have total re-

call on management needs and requirements. She needs to be familiar with workers' compensation, both federal and state, occupational health and safety laws as well as wage and salary policies and much more.

"Sometimes only a short talk with an employee giving him, or her, a different view or interpretation of a grievance is enough to resolve the problem," says Andrea. "About 90 per cent of employee problems can be dissolved with a minimum of time and friction, but sometimes we must resort to an adjustment board to reach a decision if the hospital, the union and the employee are all involved. In that

case we call in two persons selected by the hospital (from outside, of course), two persons selected by the union, and one outside arbiter. A majority opinion decides the outcome."

A certain amount of discreet investigation is needed now and then, personal counselling is often required, and a constant flow of communication must be kept open to keep working relationships at their best and employee feedback satisfactory, Belcher noted.

A Portlander for most of her 35 years Ms. Belcher was educated at Immaculate Heart elementary school and North Catholic High School. Psychology and Industrial

Relations classwork drew her to P.C.C. and Portland State University. She lives now in Hazel Dell. Former employment includes nine years at Kaiser Permanente offices in downtown Portland where she formed her taste for intensified work in personnel services.

How does she handle her own tensions, work-produced or personal? "I have a huge yard at my house," Belcher says. "I cut the grass and I do better with the weeds. Or, I cook. I make very good bread and I knead it well. I make pans and pans of rolls and put them in my freezer. I make relishes too, and jams and jellies. I canned 200 jars this summer. And none of it goes to waste."

Federal cuts threaten HAP

The Housing Authority of Portland has warned that the Reagan Administration's proposed appropriations, to be considered by Congress by December 15th, spell disaster for public housing.

The interim budget resolution before Congress unfairly burdens public housing authorities with cuts of 38 per cent, while across-the-board cuts in other areas are in the four to five per cent range.

HAP operates 5100 units of low-income housing in which 13,000 people live. One-half of the tenants are elderly people living on fixed incomes. More than 80 per cent of the families earn less than \$5,000 per year. HAP has a waiting list of 3,500 and the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development estimates that an additional 61,000 households qualify for public housing.

HAP absorbed a 15 per cent cut in operating funds in fiscal 1981. The proposed budget would bring an additional 31 per cent cut.

Currently 53 per cent of the agency budget comes from federal subsidies, the remainder from tenants' rents. Because federal law restricts rent payments to 15 per cent of income, HAP cannot increase rents to meet its costs. Rather, it will have to curtail management, maintenance and services.

There is serious question whether costs can be saved without endangering the safety and health of tenants. During the past year utility costs increased by 20 per cent, while HUD used an estimate of 11 per cent in determining funding. Since utility costs will rise in 1982, there will not be adequate funds to meet the expense.

Maintenance on HAP's \$125 million investment will also be in danger.

Read the *Observer* every week.
Subscribe today!
Call 283-2486

CHRISTMAS TREE SALES



\$10 and down

Christmas tree stand included in all tree sales.

Corner of Alberta & Vancouver

Open 7 Days A Week 10 am-10 pm.

INTERESTING
FACTS



brought to you
every week
by

AMERICAN STATE BANK

America's first commercial oil well wasn't in Texas, as you'd expect, but in Titusville, Pa.

The U.S. Supreme Court once ruled that the income tax was unconstitutional.

It seems hard to believe, but a man continued to serve as U.S. Vice-President AFTER being indicted for murder. He was Aaron Burr, V.P. under Thomas Jefferson. Burr was indicted for killing Alexander Hamilton in a duel, but remained Vice-President.

The world's first drive-in movie opened in 1933 in Camden, N.J.



American State
Bank

AN INDEPENDENT BANK
Head Office
2737 N. E. Union
Portland, Oregon 97212

COCA-COLA AND COKE ARE REGISTERED TRADEMARKS WHICH IDENTIFY THE SAME PRODUCT OF THE COCA-COLA COMPANY BOTTLED UNDER THE AUTHORITY OF THE COCA-COLA COMPANY BY THE PEOPLE IN YOUR TOWN WHO BRING YOU COCA-COLA

**Have a Coke
and a Smile**

This holiday season, there's no end to good times, good food and good taste of Coke.

Coke® adds life.