



## Dick Bogle

A recent Associated Press story out of Salem indicates some tightening up in Oregon's early release program is needed. That's the program that allows Oregon State prison inmates to get out early to search for jobs and living quarters.

This program replaces the work release program and is in effect in part because of an earlier court decision branding the prison overcrowded. More than 600 inmates were out at one time on temporary leaves. That was when the state was struggling last winter to meet the federal judge's deadline for reducing the overcrowded conditions. The pressure is off somewhat now, since the U.S. Supreme Court stayed that order.

The problem is that about 24 per cent of the inmates granted early releases escape, commit new offenses or fail because of other violations.

Multnomah County district attorney Michael Schunk says, "It's not working, a 24 per cent failure rate is about one fourth, is that what

we want? We are putting individuals back on the street and they are back committing crimes."

He says it's undermining the credibility of the system.

Corrections divisions statistics report that between September, 1980 and September, 1981, temporary leaves were granted to 2,362 inmates. Of those, 59 were sent back to prison for technical violations and 519 escaped or were charged with new crimes.

Oregon is not alone in the dilemma of prison overcrowding. Some most interesting statistics have come to light. One out of every 659 Americans is behind bars serving sentences of varying length. The U.S. prison population is growing nearly 15 times faster than that of the nation as a whole.

It's not only because of increasing crime but also stiffer sentences. But some states, 36 to be exact, have completed new facilities to house 22,823 inmates. Oregon is not among those.

Quarters for another 26,538 are

under construction in 39 states, at a cost of \$865.9 million and Oregon is not among those either.

Nationally, the number of inmates in federal and state correctional institutions increased from 328,695 to 349,118 during the first six months of 1981, according to the Bureau of Justice Statistics of the U.S. Department of Justice. This 6.2 per cent increase compares with a nationwide growth in population of 0.43 per cent over the same period.

It looks as though Oregonians are simply going to have to face up the fact that it costs money to have an effective criminal justice system and that a good portion of those funds are going to come from you and me.

There was some hope that the proposed Criminal Justice Construction Reform Act now pending in Congress would pump \$6.5 million into new prison construction. But that bill, sponsored by Kansas senator Robert Dole appears now to be facing rough times.



## Budget cuts impact counties

by Don Clark,  
Multnomah County Executive

Oregon's state and local governments have reached their most critical juncture in decades. The New Year either means cutting further into the meat and bone of vital programs, or it means the unpopular prospect of increasing taxes.

Whichever course is chosen, the fiscal waters are fraught with problems. If services continue to be cut, who will be asked to suffer the most? Will we be jeopardizing the basic qualities of life we enjoy in Oregon? If new revenues are found, how do we make certain that the tax load is distributed fairly?

Under a plan proposed by the Governor, Oregon would cut an additional \$147 million out of state programs—including \$68 million from Human Resources and a combined \$65 million from education—during the current biennium.

For Multnomah County, the impact of these cuts will be great. For the past several budget periods, the County's services to the poor, the old, the handicapped have suffered more under the fiscal scalpel than other programs. Earlier this year, cuts at the state and federal level further eroded the County's commitment to the "have nots."

We have now reached the distressing point where Oregon's bleak

economic outlook has created unemployment, devastated key Oregon industries and created whole new groups of poor people—and yet state government is cutting the very services our citizens now desperately need.

When the County first experienced tight fiscal times—back in 1975—we prepared ourselves to maintain our basic services in spite of cutbacks and inflation. We implemented millions of dollars of productivity savings, trimmed our bureaucracy and found new revenues the public could support.

We survived by careful, conscientious management. Our basic services survived; our clients—young, old, poor—got served.

This month's special legislative session, called for January 18, may be the most important in Oregon's recent history. It is a session in which the Legislature must somehow resolve the tremendous deficit with which the state—by failing to perform sound long-range fiscal planning—must now contend.

The State Department of Human Resources, under the Governor's proposal, would be cut by almost 10 per cent. A reduction that deep is

critical to the County because many of those dollars are passed on to local governments to pay for direct services.

The County's Department of Human Services lost almost \$2 million due to the earlier cuts. Additional reductions will require us to cut more services—and once again the poor will be made to pay the greatest price for poor fiscal planning and a dismal economy.

I am reminded of my budget message last March to the Board of County Commissioners in which I said:

"I do not believe that the full burden for the County's fiscal problems should fall upon any one group—especially the poor. I also do not think that the near-poor in our community—those who have paid their dues and haven't expected many services from government—should find themselves, because of our economic conditions, without a job, without resources and without assistance from local, state or federal government."

Ten months later—at the beginning of a new year—we face the same uncomfortable dilemma. We must resolve it in favor of our citizens.



Representative

## Wally Priestley

Special Legislative Report  
and Questionnaire

January, 1982

'Bankroll politics' is bankrupting Oregon. Tax giveaways to the rich are the result. Now with a downturn in the economy they are asking working people, car owners, senior citizens, women with needy children and students to sacrifice and to balance the budget. With the support of the governor, the legislature has:

- eliminated the tax on business inventories
- allowed trucking companies to crowd and overload our highways: they are not asked to pay their share of highway costs
- phased out the inheritance tax, which only hit those with estates over a quarter million dollars
- given an income tax break that only goes to those with incomes over \$35,000 per year (cost \$22 million last year, more next)
- allowed the percentage of corporation taxes to drop as the percentage of personal income taxes rise in the states general fund
- finally granted the people's demands for property tax relief, only to give the largest benefits to those with homes valued over \$130,000 (1979) and to include suburban acreage.

'Bankroll politics!' Spend unlimited money in political campaigns. Spend this money to elect governors and most legislators while working people struggle to earn a living and feed their families. That's how working people take a beating.

Please return the below *Questionnaire* or write to me your thoughts. This will, help me know you care and to continue fighting for your views. Quickly! The special legislative session begins next week.

Rep. Wally Priestley

Please Clip and Return This Questionnaire

### QUESTIONNAIRE

Cut the Budget \$250 Million or raise Taxes?

How would you cut the budget?

1. Would you cut school support? Which?

Universities and colleges  Local school districts  Community colleges   
State aid to private universities (like the University of Portland, Concordia, Reed, Lewis & Clark, and Willamette University)

2. Which state human resource budgets would you cut?

Needy children  Senior citizens  Prison funds  Job finding services   
Public health and sanitation  Mental health  Vocational rehabilitation   
Other \_\_\_\_\_

3. Would you cut:

State police  National guard  Parks   
Land use planning  Environmental controls

4. Should part  or all  of our deficit be made up with taxes? Yes No

- If yes, which taxes would you increase? Yes No
- A. Corporation taxes from 7.5% to 8%? or Yes No
  - B. Graduated corporation taxes from 5% for small businesses to 8.75% for only the very large businesses? Yes No
  - C. Increase taxes paid by out of state insurance companies? Yes No
  - D. Take back the tax break on earnings over \$35,000 per year? Yes No
  - E. 'One time' 12% increase in everyone's state income tax? Yes No
  - F. Raise minimum corporation tax from \$10 to \$100 per year? Yes No
  - G. 1% sales tax (State of Washington type) Yes No

5. If we are faced with either cutting back on property tax relief or increasing personal income taxes, which would you dislike the least?

Cut property tax relief  Increase personal income taxes

6. How do you rate me as your Representative?

Good  Bad  Like the rest

Comments \_\_\_\_\_

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