



Washington Hot Line

by Congressman Ron Wyden

The 1970s was a decade of transition and progress for women. They made great strides in overcoming discrimination in pay, promotion and hiring. They also made progress in bringing other issues affecting women, such as day care, sexual harassment and spouse abuse, to the forefront of public attention.

We are now three years past this landmark decade, however, and despite the advances made during the 1970s and early 1980s, women still are fighting an uphill battle.

On February 26, I sponsored in Portland the first in a series of four forums on women's issues designed to examine economic problems, education, the family and issues of concern to older women. This first forum, as well as the subsequent ones, will not resolve all the problems overnight. But I think they will give women and those concerned about women's issues a better picture of the challenges ahead and a better idea of how to address them.

This first forum focused on economic issues facing women, and a panel of experts provided their insights on some of the problems facing women today in the workplace.

Among the issues brought to light by those experts was the fact that, contrary to common belief, the pay gap between men and women is actually widening. Women continue to be discriminated against in determining salaries—with men generally continuing to receive a higher wage than women for doing the same job.

Women and others concerned about women's issues had hoped that passage of the Equal Pay Act in the 1970s would help alleviate the pay equity problem. Unfortunately, it appears that the historic view of a woman's income—and thus less important—income still persists. The Equal Pay Act has helped many women—on a case-by-case basis—receive their due, but it has been unsuccessful so far in altering this institutional pattern of relegating women to a lower wage scale.

A brief look at labor statistics shows just how unfair this practice is. There are now more single parent households headed by women than ever before. Many times the woman's salary is not the second wage in the family, but the only wage—a wage that must cover food, clothing, heat, transportation, child care

and all other household expenses.

If we are to have a truly fair society—an equal society that embodies the principles inherent in our Constitution—we must bring an end to pay discrimination between the sexes. We must move beyond the plateau reached in the 1970s. Government can—and must—provide some of the impetus for this change. Government, however, cannot do it all. It also will take a grassroots effort by those in the workplace—by labor and management and by women and men.

This first forum was successful in bringing to light many of the problems women face in the workplace. On March 19, (9:30 a.m.-12:20 p.m. in the cafeteria of the Bonneville Power Administration Bldg., 1002 N.E. Holladay), we will turn to a discussion of education issues that concern women. And in April and May, we will move on to an examination of family and older women's issues.

These forums are open to all who are interested. Persons who would like to attend can call my Portland office (231-2300) for more information.



From the Boardroom

by Gladys McCoy
Multnomah County Commissioner

"How I wish the following information could be more pleasant, but it isn't. However, I would be remiss if I did not tell you the way it really is for Multnomah County. Multnomah County government, like other government units, faces hard times during the 1983-84 budget year. Multnomah County will not be able to continue to provide the same level of services to the public as in prior years."

Does this all sound familiar to you? Well, it should. This is the same situation as in 1981. And these are the same words from a similar article written in 1981. The only difference in 1983 is, it is twice as bad. Then, I was worried about Human Services and Justice Services, now, I am concerned about every program—departmental and non-departmental.

County Executive Dennis Buchanan has recommended a minimum of 26 percent cuts for every responsible unit in an effort to pair down the budget by \$14 million. If ever I needed your input, I need it now as no program will be exempt from this close scrutiny. However, I pledge my continued support for Project Health which, if eliminated, could

save the County \$3.5 million. Project Health serves 46 percent of total enrolled persons living in my District which equals to 4,127 people. Three hundred twenty-two are elderly persons. But the impact directly on the recipients and indirectly on the rest of the community is so devastating as to make the elimination unthinkable; that is, until and unless the Legislature passes the Medically Needy Bill currently before it. This would provide a Project Health type plan for the entire state.

While it is expected that every special interest group will come before the Board of County Commissioners and plead that its budget should not be cut, the reality is every program or service will experience some cuts. Your input will be helpful in prioritizing the resources remaining. The County is preparing to conduct a Citizens Congress at which citizens will be invited to help determine the mission of the County. However, that event may not occur in time to impact the 1983-84 budget. Meanwhile, one very critical issue affecting both the mission and the budget, is who shall provide municipal services—City or County? I have determined such municipal ser-

vices as police, parks, planning, zoning, permits, and sewers as services historically provided by cities. We have always known that, but when resources were more plentiful, it was less of an issue. Now that resources are scarce, it is appropriate and timely that local jurisdictions should determine its rolls and justify them. This means not merely as a budget device, but as a means of assuring that services shall continue and be paid for by the users.

The first step for the County is to decide as a policy matter if we shall remove resources from those urban level services or continue them at a reduced level. At any rate, you, the citizens, both within the City and the County should have an opportunity to express your opinion. Again, I urge you to do so.

If County general fund dollars are used to provide urban services in unincorporated Multnomah County, you are paying for services which you do not receive. The County Executive has proposed two resolutions which would allow the Board to make the decision regarding urban services. Each Commissioner is having a public hearing in their districts. I will use the Northeast Coalition of Neighborhoods as the forum for people in the Northeast section of my district. The North Portland Citizens Committee will be used as the forum for the North section of my district. I urge you to attend one or both meetings or call my office (248-5219) for a copy of the resolutions. Be aware of the meeting in your neighborhood. The Board of County Commissioners decision should be made by March 15. I look forward to having your input.

Bill seeks disclosure

State Senator Bill McCoy (D-Portland) has introduced Senate Bill 529 that will enable small businesses to receive credit information regarding finance charges and annual percentage rates from lending institutions. Senator McCoy states, "It's time the people of Oregon are given some sense of honesty and fairness in regards to interest rates pertaining to credit cards and mortgages." This bill is designed to do just that.

The bill as described will require a creditor who makes a small business loan or otherwise extends small business credit to disclose; due dates and periods on the amounts of credit, all charges individually itemized, the total amount financed and annual percentage rates.

The bill also proposes to disclose information regarding premiums payable for any insurance, taxes, and fees for title examinations, appraisals and preparation of deeds.

Senate Bill 529 imposes a civil penalty on creditors who fail to disclose required information on the amount up to three times of the amount of finance charge, but not less than \$5,000 and not more than one million dollars.

Street Beat

by Lanita Duke and Richard Brown

The additional request for funds to El Salvador made headlines last week, so the **Street Beat** team wondered how the public felt, with "Should the U.S. government send additional money and troops into El Salvador?"



Earl Howard
Custodian

No. The money that they are sending to El Salvador should be spent here in America. From all indications El Salvador could turn into another Vietnam."



Ken Crumble
Laborer

No. The U.S. government should clean up their own backyard before they try to clean out someone else's.



Gary Hadley
Freight Crew

I don't think so. We have already spent enough time and money over there. Any additional support would cause problems.



Duane Dau
Floor Covering

No, I don't think so. We should take care of our people in the United States.



Herm Henbrix
Unemployed

They got too many people starving over here to send anything anywhere else.



Rick Walloch
Insurance

No. Any interaction with El Salvador is a big mistake. Any trip-ups could result in another Vietnam.

TEEN DENTAL CARE



THE TEEN YEARS—when youngsters may be careless about brushing and flossing their teeth—are a critical time for dental health.

By age 13, all of the permanent teeth, except the wisdom teeth, are generally in position. These permanent teeth are meant to last a lifetime and can become severely decayed if not properly cared for.

In addition to decay, teenagers also may have problems with periodontal disease, an infection of the gums and tissues supporting the teeth. While it is so common in adults, almost one-third of all teenagers have early stages of the disease. Dental researchers have also identified a specific form of juvenile periodontal disease that usually appears at the onset of puberty and may be hereditary.

The culprit in both decay and gum disease is plaque, a sticky, colorless film that constantly forms on everyone's teeth.

Daily brushing, flossing, along with a balanced diet, can reduce plaque and help maintain healthy teeth and gums. Regular visits to the dentist also are helpful in preventing other problems or discovering them early, when they are less costly to treat.

The following dental problems can usually be successfully treated if brought promptly to a dentist's attention.

- **Malocclusion** occurs when the teeth do not fit together correctly. If left untreated, it can affect the dental and general health, leading to difficulties in chewing and further deformities of the jaw. Maloccluded teeth are generally more difficult to clean and are thus more susceptible to decay and gum disease.
- **Third molars** (wisdom teeth), which erupt anytime from 17 to 21 years of age, can develop at an awkward angle or become impacted behind the second molars if space is not available in the mouth. Periodic check-ups will help your dentist determine the best treatment for such cases.
- **Oral injuries** can result from contact sports. The permanent teeth should be protected with a mouthguard during active sports such as soccer and football. While stock mouthguards offer some protection, custom-fitted mouthguards made in the dental office are more comfortable to wear and afford maximum protection. If a tooth is accidentally broken, cracked or pushed out of alignment, the teenager should be taken immediately to the dentist. Early treatment can often prevent the unnecessary loss of a tooth.

Teeth Getting Stronger

Over a third of American school children—37% to be exact—have no tooth decay! That's the good news announced by the National Caries Program of the National Institute of Dental Research, based on their survey of 40,000 children aged 5 to 17. In the last decade, tooth decay among this age group has declined 32%. This means that the average child now has about five cavities, while his older brother or sister, who attended school in the early 1970s, would have had seven.

Nobody knows for sure why children's teeth are stronger today, but dental researchers believe the credit belongs to fluoride. Fluoride is a form of fluorine, the thirteenth most common element in the earth's crust. It can be found in soil, plants, and water. High amounts of fluoride are present in seafood and tea. All water contains some fluoride, but water from shallow wells often has much less than that of artesian wells or the ocean.

To have strong teeth, people need fluoride. The World Health Organization considers it to be an essential element for good dental health. Fluoride is of special benefit to children, because their teeth are still developing, but recent studies have shown that adults can benefit from fluoride, too.

Exactly how fluoride makes teeth stronger is not known. It may affect the crystals in the tooth enamel. It may stop the growth of bacteria on the teeth. It may somehow help the tooth enamel recover from early decay.

Wherever it does, fluoride works. If enough fluoride is in the community water supply, decay can be reduced by 50 to 70%. About 112 million people in America today drink water that contains the right amount of fluoride—one part per million. In some of these communities, the fluoride was in the water supply naturally; in others, it was added until the correct level was reached.

But what about those children who live in an area with no community water supply? Fluoride can be added to the water supply of their school, or fluoride tablets or drops may be prescribed by their dentist.

For additional protection against decay, fluoride toothpastes and mouthrinses can be used at home daily. During regular dental visits, your dentist or dental hygienist may apply a fluoride solution or gel to your child's teeth. By introducing a once-a-week fluoride mouthrinse program, many school districts have cut tooth decay among their pupils by 20 to 50%.

Inexpensive, safe, effective—all of these words can be used when talking about fluoride. It saves children's teeth and parents' dollars. No wonder every major American health organization supports the use of fluoride.

No Sugar, Please

You're at a party. On the table in front of you is a bowl of raisins, a honey cake, and a plate of apples. Earlier in the day, you saw your dentist, who told you that you had two new cavities. If you want to avoid tooth decay in the future, which of these foods should you choose? It's not an easy question to answer. In the fourth century B.C., Aristotle noticed that people who ate ripe figs had many decayed teeth, but it wasn't until the 1950s that scientists began to understand the relationship between food and tooth decay. Decay occurs because of plaque, a thin film of bacteria that forms on everyone's teeth. They produce acids that attack—and can destroy—the enamel of the teeth.

For a long time, dentists thought that the only dentally harmful element in our diet was sucrose. Although most people think sucrose is just another name for white table sugar, it is actually the most common sugar in the plant kingdom. Peaches, bananas, plums, carrots, peas and sweet corn all contain sucrose, as do many other fruits and vegetables.

Recent studies have shown, however, that other members of the sugar family can be harmful to the teeth. Foods that contain honey, molasses, corn syrup, maltose, glucose (fruit sugar), or lactose (milk sugar) can also cause the bacteria in plaque to produce acid.

It's not just the amount of sucrose or other sugars in a food that matters. How long the food stays in your mouth, what you eat with it, and when you eat it are all factors that help determine its effects on your teeth.

So what should we eat? Here are the American Dental Association's suggestions:

- Eat a balanced diet. Like the rest of your body, your teeth, jaw bones, and mouth tissues need a variety of foods for good health.

- Try not to snack. Each time you eat, acid attacks the tooth enamel for about 20 minutes. The more attacks, the more damage is done.

- Eat sweet foods only with meals. For some reason, they are less harmful if eaten along with other foods.

- Brush and floss thoroughly at least once a day, and more often if your dentist recommends. This removes the plaque that causes tooth decay.

- And about that party... The raisins, the cake, and even the apple all contain sugars. Why not look around? Maybe you'll find some cheese or peanuts in the next room.

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