

Easter Breakfast, Sunday, April 3, 9 a.m.-1:30 p.m. Adults \$3 and children \$1.50. Immaculate Heart School, on N.E. Stanton off Williams Ave.



Washington Hot Line

by Congressman Ron Wyden

Two weeks ago, during the consideration of the Social Security reform package in the House of Representatives, Members voted to include an amendment that would, by early in the next century, raise the normal age at which individuals can receive full Social Security benefits from 65 to 67.

I opposed this amendment and will continue to oppose it because I think it will work a hardship on several million older Americans whose health makes it virtually impossible for them to work, but who still cannot qualify for disability. Because a majority of my colleagues supported the provision to raise the retirement age, however, I recognize that there is little hope of completely reversing the action at this point.

That's why I suggested to my colleagues in a speech on the House floor Friday, that before this legislation is sent to the President, we at least take steps to alleviate some of the hardships that raising the retirement age will create.

To that end, I recommended adding a new provision—either in the Senate or during the House and Sen-

ate conference meetings on the bill—that would permit workers to receive full retirement benefits at 65 if they can show that it would endanger their health to continue working in the occupation for which they are trained. Such a provision would complement existing disability law and alleviate many of the concerns of working Americans.

This provision could serve as a failsafe mechanism that would offer a floor of protection to those who work in our mines, factories and other jobs requiring hard physical labor. Several million Americans who find it virtually impossible to keep working, but who can't qualify for disability, would be able to retire at 65 with dignity under this provision.

Such a provision also would fit within the structure of the Social Security Administration, and could be administered without undue difficulty. And the cost projections are favorable. The estimate is that less than one-tenth of one percent of payroll is all that would be needed.

Making people work longer or suffer financial penalties is one way

to eliminate Social Security's long-term deficit. But it is not a smart way. Surveys reported in articles by University of Maryland professor Dr. Eric Kingson sound that, of those who dropped out of the labor force before 65, one-half to two-thirds of them said they did so because of poor health.

Dr. Kingson also reports his own studies showed higher death rates for very early retirees, suggesting they left work because they had no other choice.

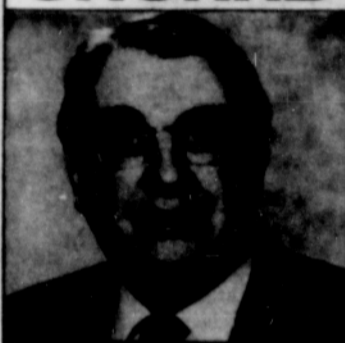
Moreover, a National Center for Health Statistics study showed that while people are living longer, the proportion of men in the 50 to 69 age segment reported as being unable to work because of illness increased between 1970 and 1980.

Building a fair, just and efficient retirement system for the long-term won't be easy. I believe we should let those people over the age of 65 who want to continue working to do so. But it is also critical that those who have worked hard all their lives and reach the age of 65 should not be penalized if they cannot continue to work because of poor health. My proposal will help that they are not.



Senator William Proxmire will speak on "The Fleeing of America," noon, April 1, PSU's Smith Center.

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BILL BERRY

Berry learns from mayor race

Edwin C. "Bill" Berry, former executive director of the Urban League of Portland, was chairman of Harold Washington's election steering committee. Berry, 72, was director of the Chicago Urban League during the 1950s and 1960s and had worked closely with the white business community.

As reported by *The Nation* (March 12), Berry soon learned that businessmen and liberals who are willing to give money to the Urban

League feel differently about giving to a black candidate for mayor.

"I have concluded sadly," Berry said, "that racism is much deeper than all my study had led me to believe. Those who said they believed in decency and democracy were lying. They were willing to help in a small way (in the 1960s), but the balked at helping to change our status." Less than 10 percent of Washington's contributions and 8 percent of his votes came from whites.

Street Beat

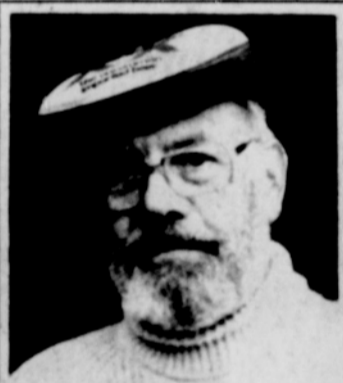
by Lanita Duke and Richard Brown

It seems like the personnel changes have stabilized within the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The *Street Beat* team asked Portlanders, "Do you feel these changes will make the EPA fulfill its responsibility to the taxpayers?"



Willie Haywood
Truck Driver

Hopefully, but I really don't know for sure. I don't think they have been doing their jobs before these personnel changes. Just like a lot of government agencies who don't do their jobs. I wasn't surprised to find out about corporate influence on a government agency. To me, large corporations tell everyone what to do. It's one of those things.



Jim Faubion
Retired

I don't think there will be a change. Nor do I believe our environment will benefit. It's all for big business.



Ed Hallinan
Store Clerk

It won't make a difference. Big corporations are running the country anyway so they just lobby to get the bills they want passed. The EPA is just a puppet.



Dave Hutchens
Unemployed

They are not going to do anything. What you have to do is to take them down on Columbia Blvd. between 5 and 7 p.m. and just inhale the air. It's enough to make your eyes water.



C. Toman
Student

I believe it will take a while for change to occur. The fact that big business had some control over the EPA just shows that large corporations run the government.



Lyn Franklin
Retail

I don't think it will make any difference at all. They need to put a new person in there who has never had any affiliation with them at all. That might make a difference.



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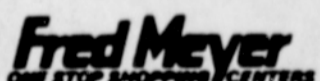
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