



# Washington Hot Line

by Congressman Ron Wyden

**Q. What are the chances that the new law requiring the withholding of taxes on interest and dividends will be repealed before it goes into effect July 17?**

**A.** I would say they look pretty good at this point. The House of Representatives recently passed — by an overwhelming margin and with my wholehearted support — legislation that would repeal this ill-conceived idea. In addition, the Senate passed an amendment that calls for the deferral of interest and dividend withholding until July 1, 1987.

The Senate must now agree to the House repeal plan or the House must agree to the Senate deferral plan before one of the two proposals can be sent to the President for his signature. President Reagan has threatened to veto any legislation that will repeal the withholding provision, but the overwhelming support in the Congress suggests enough votes exist in both Houses to

override a Presidential veto of either measure.

I was an early and active opponent of the withholding idea. In fact, I voted against the withholding provision when it came to the floor of the House last summer as part of the 1982 tax increase bill, and I was an original cosponsor of legislation introduced in the first week of the new Congress to repeal it.

Repealing this provision makes sense. Withholding would be expensive for consumers and financial institutions alike and would take billions of dollars directly out of the flow of savings at a time when we should be building our savings pool. It also would greatly inconvenience many senior citizens who must apply to be exempt.

Proponents of the withholding provision argue that it will increase federal revenues by cracking down on the few people who cheat on their tax returns by not declaring

interest and dividend income. Everyone, of course, should pay their fair share of taxes. But we should not penalize the vast majority of taxpayers who are honest when other, far less burdensome, ways exist to stop the few who are not.

**Q. How close is Congress to enacting a new budget, and what are the chances that the one it adopts will be more equitable than those of the past two years?**

**A.** Both houses are now on record for a budget that holds the line on defense increases and removes some of the budget-cutting burden from the shoulders of low- and middle-income Americans.

By a one vote margin, the Republican-controlled Senate recently approved a fiscal 1984 budget resolution that would provide less for defense than the president is seeking and for tax increases opposed by the Administration.

And last month, the House of

Representatives passed a similar budget resolution, which I supported.

I supported this measure for two basic reasons. First, it instills in the federal budget a key component missing in the Reagan budget — fairness.

Second, it calls for a significantly lower deficit than the president's budget. The deficit under the Reagan budget is estimated at more than \$200 billion dollars, with continued unacceptably high deficits in the out years.

The two houses' plans now must be reconciled in a conference committee — made up of members from both bodies.

But, whatever the ultimate dollar figure they arrive at, it is clear that both bodies do not agree with the administration's continued attempt to place the burden of budget-cutting on the shoulders of those least able to bear it, while letting the Pentagon spend freely.

# Salem Update

by Donna B. Zajonc  
Representative, District 32

Often we hear that the quality of our educational system is declining dramatically, that we have become "mediocre." The report released by the National Commission on Excellence in Education, an "Open Letter to the American People," said "The educational foundations of our society are presently being eroded by a rising tide of mediocrity that threatens our very future as a nation and as a people." The National Assessment of Educational Progress states that 71 percent of high school seniors cannot satisfactorily solve problems in applied math, 56 percent have an inadequate understanding of the physical sciences, and 85 percent cannot write a persuasive paragraph.

I have sponsored legislation which will have a significant impact on developing excellence in education and creative programs for the future. A Council on Science and Mathematics, created by HB 2905, would be responsible for identifying problems in the existing educational system. This Council will then develop and implement programs that work to solve these problems; also, it will provide a plan for the future of science and math education. These critical areas must be addressed immediately as we are entering a technical, informational era and well-educated minds will be our most important "capital."

Equally important in a total plan

for excellence in education is developing creative, innovative programs. HB 2710 directs the Oregon Educational Coordinating Commission to study the feasibility of creating an Oregon High School for Science and Mathematics.

The goals of the Oregon High School for Science and Mathematics would be to:

- Encourage and develop the minds of uniquely talented high school children.
- Allow students with extraordinary skills to learn from each other.
- Allow an exciting and creative educational process which would attract top notch teachers.
- Provide a laboratory with the most up-to-date equipment with learning tools for talented children.
- Provide a signal to the business community that Oregon intends to be competitive by showing that our educational programs reflect our commitment.
- Provide a pool of outstanding instructors and up-to-date equipment that can further train high school science and math instructors around the state during the summer intermission. By doing this, a partnership is created between the School of Science and Mathematics and the other schools throughout Oregon, both working to upgrade curriculum.
- Set a standard for excellence.

Recent studies in many private and public schools, both in England and America have identified five factors that must be present in a school in order for its students to learn. According to the U.S. National Institute of Education survey, these critical factors are 1) high expectations, 2) strong leadership, 3) emphasis on instruction, 4) discipline, and 5) testing. The Oregon School for Science and Mathematics would allow the opportunity to apply these principles in a controlled situation. Expectations for able students would be higher since instructors would not be limited by unmotivated pupils. This alternate high school would also allow experimentation with new concepts to determine feasibility for use in Oregon's educational system. By working with a small group of students in a controlled situation, we would be able to explore new ideas and demonstrate what can be done.

I believe the Oregon High School for Science and Mathematics is a creative idea directed at demanding the best. The idea originated from North Carolina's successful program, but the "Oregon Story" may be different. For that reason I believe the existing Educational Coordinating Commission should be directed to study the feasibility of the high school: siting, funding, bal-

anced curriculum, certification of teachers and many other difficult considerations. If the ECC finds that this is not the best way to encourage excellence in our educational system, the ECC should recommend to the 1985 Legislature specific ways that will coincide with Oregon's educational system. The options might include regional programs, more talented and gifted funding, summer programs, or Saturday schools. Either way, our efforts must head in the direction of finding the best method to educate our youth.

Many people ask, "Why not fund our educational system so every school district has the same opportunity afforded this school?" Quite simply, we support education through basic school support. We do not force standards, curriculum, etc. As legislators, our ability to mandate excellence is limited. We must open our minds to provide models that look into the future and set high standards for other public schools.

Oregon has always been known for its leadership — the Oregon High School for Science and Mathematics will be an example of that leadership and Oregon's continued efforts to look to the future. Striving for excellence in education is wisely investing in Oregon's youth — the best investment we can make.

# Democratic 18 Viewpoint

by Ross Danielson

Central America is now the focus of a bewildering series of actions by the U.S. Congress, President, Reagan, and other government and military officials. Most recently the U.S. military commander in the Panama Canal Zone sought to rally support for "open-ended" U.S. military aid to the Salvadoran government, while the director of the CIA boasted that U.S.-supported counter-revolution will overthrow the revolutionary government in Nicaragua by the end of the year. But these ugly sounds were preceded by hopeful signs of Congressional opposition—cutting aid requests, calling for termination of covert activities against Nicaragua, and demanding that the Salvadoran government launch direct, unconditional talks with the opposition.

Needless to say, all of these direc-

tions taken by Congressional opposition were moderated by serious compromise.

To those who support social reform, human rights, and political democracy in Central America, recent Congressional actions have alternately been encouraging and discouraging. Taken together, current events spell crisis for U.S. foreign policy and for the broad and growing constituency for a new U.S. policy in Central America—a time of increasing opportunity and increasing peril.

The peril lies in the Reagan Administration's dangerously and childishly simplistic view of world politics—a struggle of good and evil (U.S.A. versus U.S.S.R.). The opportunity lies in the growing formulation of a coherent progressive foreign policy based on increasingly courageous Senators and Representatives and burgeoning pro-

gressive foreign policy constituencies.

The challenge to these constituencies is now to see the parts of Central America as interrelated, to mobilize around the issue of Central America, and to link this mobilization to an electoral strategy which can at once integrate progressive foreign policy issues into larger political power blocks and also bring foreign policy issues to the grass roots.

The structure of the Democratic Party, with its link to popular roots and ties to the national arena of power, is one important and open arena—and an instrument—for this effort. The promise of a Democratic role in movement toward a progressive foreign and military policy is evident in current Congressional opposition to the Reagan administration in Central America. At the same time, however, Congressional

compromises and the likelihood of a painful stalemate through 1984, makes clear how far we have yet to go.

(This column is submitted by the Democratic District 18 organization. When signed, the opinions are those of the writer.)

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Americans spend more than \$125 billion dollars a year on sneakers.

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