



Speaking at the Dec. 2 press conference on Gov. Atiyeh's statement about the Martin Luther King Holiday, are (left to right) Ron Herndon, co-chair of the

Black United Front; Herb Cawthorne, chief executive of the Urban League; Rev. John Jackson; and John Mitchell, of Margaret Carter's office.

(Photo: Richard J. Brown)

## Governor's statement rankles Blacks

by Nathaniel Scott

On Dec. 2, Governor Vic Atiyeh issued a statement, which in part said, "All state agencies will remain open on Dr. King's birthday."

The statement drew the furor of the Black community and on Wednesday, Dec. 4, at a press conference at the Urban League, Herb Cawthorne, chief executive officer of the Urban League, said, "Many members of the Black community are disappointed at the recent statement by Gov. Atiyeh."

Furthermore, Cawthorne said, "The statement, in our estimation, was premature and derailed negotiations that are still underway with community leaders and union officials."

Representatives from the Urban League, the Black United Front (BUF), NAACP, the Albina Ministerial Alliance and other agencies are meeting with state labor unions in hopes of resolving the situation.

One possible solution, already discussed, is combining Lincoln's and Washington's birthdays. And the Oregon Liquor Control Commission has voted to close stores statewide in honor of Dr. King.

Ron Herndon, co-chairman of the BUF, said, "I agree! The Governor's action is premature. His action has made a situation worse."

State Representative Margaret Carter, in a statement from her office, called the action "premature." She

said, "Recent dialogue with union representatives and community leaders has been very positive."

Carter added: "Governor Atiyeh's statement, at this time, is disappointingly distant and indifferent to community efforts, and a temporary setback to finding a solution."

In conclusion, Carter said, "I am hopeful that all of the parties will soon realize the special significance of this first holiday in 1986, and not lose sight of the contributions of this great American."

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