

## Young and Laffer Debate Reaganomics

by Bob Lothian

A debate between Reagan economic adviser Arthur Laffer and Atlanta mayor Andrew Young promised some fireworks in Forest Grove Thursday night, but it produced only a few firecrackers.

Laffer and Young debated "Reagan's Stewardship of the Economy" for the annual Tom McCall Politics and Law Forum at Pacific University.

Laffer, one of the architects of "supply side economics", otherwise known as Reaganomics, beamingly described what he termed unprecedented prosperity brought to the country through the "Reagan revolution."

By cutting taxes, the Reagan administration has provided an incentive to business on the "supply side" that has fueled an economic recovery, according to Laffer, that reduced inflation to 3 percent, cut unemployment from 10.7 percent to 6.7 percent and created 9.6 million new jobs, "more than the entire free world combined." Even SAT scores for high school students have increased, said Laffer. That statement drew snickers from the audience.

"The results of the revolution, Reagan's stewardship of the economy, is nothing short of spectacular," Laffer said. "There have been enormous changes in America and the changes have all been straight up."

Young agreed that from his perspective in Atlanta, the economy is booming. Over \$30 billion in new investment, mainly from Japan and other foreign countries, has come into the city in the last four years, he said.

"Maybe it's going too well, it scares me," said Young, former U.S. representative to the United Nations and protégé of Martin Luther King. "I don't see that it's generating new jobs."

Even with all the prosperity, said Young, Atlanta still has 4,000-5,000 homeless every night that the city can't take care of, and 30-40 percent of the city's population, which is 65 percent black, lives below the poverty line. "It became a drag on the social order the likes of which we find hard to face," he said. Young said the federal government has a responsibility to provide "minimum security" for the disadvantaged.

Young worried that with massive foreign investment, Atlantans might become "sharecroppers in our own land. We'll be doing the work but the profits will be drained off."

He called for international trade agreements to help reduce the nation's trade deficit, which he said was a major problem with the economy under Reagan.

Seattle reporter Mindy Cameron, one of several panelists, asked Laffer whether there was a place in the "Reagan revolution" for the homeless, unemployed and welfare mothers.

Laffer answered by returning to his premise that fueling investment on the supply side by cutting taxes and social programs is the best way to eliminate poverty. "I don't know any way of solving that problem by putting everyone on one tier at the bottom," he said.

On military spending, Laffer repeated the Reagan line — peace through strength.

But, "I fear we've been locked into a military economy," said Young. He suggested that jobs could be created by having huge defense contractors convert to mass transit or housing instead of weapons.

"Our economy, our culture and religious values can also serve to make us strong and that should not be neglected," Young said.



Atlanta, Georgia Mayor Andrew Young addresses statements by economist Arthur Laffer during their debate at Pacific University.

Photo by Richard J. Brown

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## Child Abuse Up Again

On the heels of the alleged beating death of a three-year-old Jackson County girl, state Children's Services Division officials today reported highlights of the 1985 child abuse statistics showing that incidents of child abuse and neglect are skyrocketing in Oregon.

And while the death February 22 of Sue Ann Joy of Talent, Oregon isn't reflected in last year's figures, the deaths of six other Oregon children are.

According to Children's Services Division, last year there were 14,616 confirmed incidents of physical, sexual and emotional abuse, and neglect, in Oregon. That compares with 11,474 incidents of harm in 1984.

Jewel Goddard, administrator of CSD, termed the upward spiral "serious," and called on Oregonians to respond by supporting programs that work to prevent abuse before it occurs.

Of the total number of 1985 incidents, 8,630 were girls and 5,986 were boys. Their ages ranged from infancy to 18 years.

Neglect posed the most common threat to children in 1985. A total of 5,283 incidents of neglect were confirmed — 2,749 boys and 2,534 girls.

These figures rose from 1984, when 2,466 boys and 2,260 girls suffered from neglect.

Sexually abused youngsters accounted for another significant portion of the overall figures. Last year, 5,162 sexual abuse incidents were verified by CSD. The vast majority involved girls — 4,020 compared with 1,142 boys.

Statistics for 1984 showed that 3,551 incidents of sexual abuse took place, with 2,800 against girls and 751 against boys.

Physical abuse cases, including head and internal injuries, burns, broken bones, bruises, and abrasions, represented 3,229 of the total abuse and neglect incidents in 1985. More incidents of physical abuse against boys are revealed; 1,661 cases involve boys and 1,568 involve girls.

In 1984, a total of 2,468 physical abuse cases were confirmed. Of them, 1,323 were boys and 1,145 were girls.

Smaller, but still significant, numbers show up in the category of emotional abuse of children. Of the 936 cases in 1985, 504 were found to be girls, and 432 were boys.

In 1984, 381 cases involving girls took place, and 345 involving boys. The total figure of emotional abuse incidents that year was 726.

Emotional abuse includes incidents of children who are, for example, habitually scapegoated or threatened, or are otherwise deprived of the minimum emotional support necessary for normal growth and development.

Finally, in 1985, six Oregon children died as a result of abuse or neglect. Four were females and two were males. Their ages ranged from infancy to 15 years.

Three girls died of abuse or neglect in 1984, but no boys.

CSD's Child Protective Services Manager, Diana Roberts, said her

agency is especially alarmed by the increases in the areas of sexual and physical abuse.

"In every month of 1985, sexual abuse was higher than in the single highest month of 1984," she pointed out.

Roberts said the physical abuse numbers concerned her because in Oregon they continue to rise, while national statistics for serious physical abuse are leveling off.

"The rise in serious physical abuse is most likely tied to increased stress in families, coupled with a scarcity of social and mental health services," Roberts concluded.

Oregon's overall abuse and neglect figures have risen each year since 1980.

"The continued rise in reports calls for immediate action," Roberts said. "Oregon must begin to identify and develop programs and initiatives which will effectively reverse these rising trends."

A detailed annual report analyzing the 1985 figures, drawing conclusions about them and noting statewide developments, will be published by CSD in May.

## Energy Assistance Dollars Available

Additional utility assistance funds are now available for low-income residents of Portland.

The Community Action Agency of Portland (CAAP) has awarded \$56,922.50 in Federal Emergency Management Administration (FEMA) funds to six neighborhood-based agencies. These monies are intended for use by CAAP service area low-income households to help pay utility costs. Other energy assistance dollars available include Emergency Fuel Assistance Fund (EFAF) and Low-Income Energy Assistance Program (LIEAP). The funding cycles and eligibility requirements of these programs are designed to have monies available for clients throughout the year.

The CAAP, which functions as a planning and contracting body, has awarded energy funds to the following agencies: Urban League (Northeast Portland), North Community Action Council (North Portland), Northwest Service Center (Northwest Portland), Neighborhood House (Southwest Portland), PACT (Southeast Portland), and Burnside Projects (Downtown Portland). Persons wishing information on these services should call their respective neighborhood agency.

## Prime Rate Reduced

PORTLAND — First Interstate Bank of Oregon today changed its prime rate from 9.5 percent to 9.0 percent. First Interstate Bank of Oregon's prime rate refers to the bank's publicly announced prime rate which is a base rate used to price some loans. It may not be the lowest rate at which the bank makes any loan.

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