

Energy Utilities Make Special Arrangements for Low-Income People

Electricity and natural gas utilities regulated by the Oregon Public Utility Commission have agreed to adopt special arrangements for heating customers who will be hit by an expected cutback and delay in federal Low-Income Energy Assistance Program (LIEAP) funds.

Under the agreement announced December 10, 1987, the utilities will make it easier for persons who may be eligible for LIEAP money to maintain or restore service through mid-January.

The agreement grew out of meeting Tuesday of the state's four electricity and three natural gas companies, the PUC Consumer Assistance Division staff, a Citizens' Utility Board representative and other individuals.

The informal meeting was requested by Commission Chair Ron Eachus after CUB submitted a proposal to temporarily modify utility collection and deposit rules. The CUB proposal was made because LIEAP funds will be delayed this season until January instead of December, and because funding is expected to be much lower.

Last year, LIEAP funds averaging \$186 per household for the winter helped some 90,000 low-income Oregon customers pay their heating bills, but assistance is expected for only about 55,000 customers this season.

At the meeting, the utilities agreed to make special arrangements in an effort to maintain service through Jan. 15 for customers who received LIEAP funds during the 1986-87 heating season or may be eligible to receive LIEAP funds this season. The special arrangements will apply to customers who use electricity or gas as their primary heat source.

In the event a utility feels it is necessary to disconnect service to a customer in that category, the PUC Consumer Assistance Division will be notified and must approve the disconnection.

The utilities also agreed to restore gas or electric service to persons in

the LIEAP funding categories if the person pays 10 percent of any amount owed to the utility and agrees to negotiate a time payment agreement for the remainder owed. Also, deposits and deposit installments will be waived for those persons through Jan. 15. Again, the special provisions apply only to those who use electricity or gas as a primary source of heat.

Persons who believe they qualify for the benefits of those provisions, or who are having other payment difficulties, should contact their local utility. The special arrangements apply to customers of Portland General Electric Co., Pacific Power & Light Co., Idaho Power Co., CP National Corp. (electric and gas), Cascade Natural Gas and Northwest Natural Gas.

CUB submitted its temporary rule proposal at the commission's public meeting in Salem. Kathy Weaver, a CUB Board of Governors member, asked that several provisions of PUC rules on utility service deposit and payment arrangements be made more lenient temporarily in response to the LIEAP fund problem.

Eachus suggested instead that CUB and the utilities get together informally with the PUC staff in an effort to reach an agreeable policy that could be implemented more quickly than a change in rules.

Eachus praised CUB and the utilities for their willingness to sit down and reach an agreement. "CUB came to us with a legitimate concern over the effects the LIEAP cutbacks would have on people who relied on these funds to help pay heating bills in the winter months," he said. "The utilities deserve credit for their willingness to cooperate and take steps to help many of these people."

"Even though the PUC does not administer LIEAP funds, our staff was able to facilitate an agreement that meets CUB's concerns without the necessity of a time-consuming rule change," Eachus said.

BUFNY's Michael Spinks Day in New York

New York, NY — Over 300 families were recipients of the Black United Fund of New York (BUFNY) and heavyweight champion Michael Spinks' generous helping hands during a recent daylong celebration kicking off the season of giving. Children received T-shirts, families received Holly Farm chickens, the Harlem community received the gesture of kindness and Michael Spinks received the BUFNY "Helping Hand Award."

"The Black United Fund is an organization committed to self-help and community empowerment and because Michael Spinks is a champion both inside the ring and in the community, we felt he should receive our Helping Hands Award," said Kermit Eady, President and founder of BUFNY. "His giving spirit is reflected by the gifts he is always giving back to the community whether he's giving food or simply giving of his time."

Billed as "Michael Spinks Day," the activities sponsored by BUFNY which Spinks participated in started with an early morning visit to City Hall to meet with the mayor of New York City, Edward I. Koch. Mayor Koch presented the champion with a wool "I Love New York" scarf while Spinks presented the Mayor with a pair of boxing gloves. The



(L-R) Kermit Eady, BUFNY President, Butch Lewis, Michael Spinks and children receiving T-shirts and food.

afternoon was spent visiting Harlem-based welfare hotels, apartments for families living on welfare, where Spinks signed autographs, handed out T-shirts and Holly Farm chickens to families living in the hotels and gave advice to the children about how to be the best at what they want to be in life.

The day's activities concluded at the Harlem School of the Arts where Spinks took questions and answers from a gathering of young

people from five local youth organizations and participated in a BUFNY fundraiser to benefit the organization's building fund. The fundraiser was an opportunity for Michael Spinks to see longtime friends such as Howard Davis, one of Spinks Olympic boxing colleagues and gold medal winner, and it gave the Black United Fund a chance to acknowledge Spinks for his outstanding community service. Proclamations and pronouncements declaring No-

vember 24, 1987 as "Michael Spinks Day" came from Borough of Manhattan President David Dinkins' Office, Bronx Borough President Fernando Ferrer, New York State Senator David Paterson and Bob Law, host of the nationally radio-syndicated talkshow "Night Talk".

Over 200 people attended the fundraiser and watched as Kermit Eady presented Spinks with a plexiglass trophy engraved with the Helping Hands logo. In turn, Butch Lewis, Michael's manager and president of Butch Lewis Productions, along with Michael Spinks, gave a \$1,000.00 contribution to the BUFNY building fund and pledged their ongoing support to the numerous efforts of the organization. Another major contribution to BUFNY's building fund was presented by the Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Pi Kappa Omega chapter.

Perhaps Spinks' humble remarks at the end of the evening best sum up his sentiments, and those of BUFNY, about the day: "I simply want to say thank you to everyone for everything. When I grew up in St. Louis it wasn't easy. I didn't even know where to get a chicken from. That's why I try to give a helping hand when I can. In the end, sharing and caring is what it's all about."

An Open Letter to Oregonians from Robert Parker

The year 1987 represents the 200th anniversary of our Constitution: the document by which our democratic form of government is derived. It establishes our major institutions, sets the parameters of their authority, and provides checks and balances between one branch of government against another. Our Constitution also provides for and protects the rights and liberties of the individual. The Bill of Rights, which comprises the first ten amendments to the Constitution, was developed and ratified for the sole purpose of insuring individual rights and liberties against the tyranny of the government or its citizens. It is true, however, that at the time that these matters were under consideration, some of us were excluded from the gambit of protection that was provided for others. Recognizing the inherent problems and injustices that resulted therefrom, an additional three amendments were proposed, debated, and opposed, but eventually ratified and enacted into law. I speak here of the 13th, 14th and 15th amendments.

One of the major elements that has allowed for and, indeed, contributed to and enhanced our form of government is that those people who have been elected and appointed to hold the public trust and execute their constitutional duties, did so with both a respect for the law and an equally fervent respect for the rights of the individuals on whose behalf they function. Our history is replete with instances of the damage done to individuals and our community when elected and appointed officials, or those that they oversee, fail to adhere to a respect for the law or a respect for the rights of the individual. A clear cut case of abuse can be found in Watergate, when our nation's Chief Executive decided to disregard the law as well as the rights and liberty and privacy of certain persons.

Other examples can be found in the injustices perpetrated on Blacks and their supporters in the South during the freedom marches, pray-ins, sit-ins, and other forms of protest and civil disobedience to correct racial inequality and prejudice. Those who marched against the Vietnam War were abused; their rights to free expression snuffed out by elements in our institutions that had an agenda in conflict with our Constitution.

This year in Oregon, we have witnessed yet another example of the misuse and abuse of the public trust and power as applied to the detriment of an individual. This situation began unfolding on May 28, 1987, when Oregon Senate President John Kitzhaber placed me on leave from my job and called for an Attorney General's criminal investigation into rumors he been informed of regarding me. It appears as though Oregon Secretary of State, Barbara Roberts, went to Kitzhaber and filled him in on what she had heard and how she felt. Ms. Roberts happened to observe me having lunch with an influential chairman and CEO of a very successful Oregon corporation that she felt I had no business being with, which led, ostensibly, to her questioning my presence.

In addition, two former Senate Presidents, Jason Boe and John Burns, were furious with the fact that a piece of legislation that they and their clients had opposed had, some how or another, made it out of the Senate Business, Housing and Finance Committee. Hence they were faced with the prospect of being unable to deliver for these entities and organization that they were handsomely paid to represent. These two gentlemen were summoned by Mr. Kitzhaber. And, while neither of them could confirm that infractions of the law or violations of ethical standards had occurred, they all agreed that destroying Bob Parker was the proper thing to do, and they set out to do so, in no uncertain terms.

As you will recall, I was flashed on the six- and eleven o'clock news everyday for about a month. I could not wake up a single day when I was not confronted with more scandalous lies, rumors and accusations being levied at me.

In the process, I was forced to resign from my job. But that was not good enough. The lies continued on. Meanwhile, my wife and family were nervous wrecks. I was totally frustrated trying to figure out what was really going on and trying to ascertain how to rectify this dilemma and restructure our life. We lost our apartment, and our car was wrongfully repossessed.

The Attorney General's investigators, dead certain that I was guilty of something, combed over every detail and facet of my life, bringing to life items that bore absolutely no relevance to the price of tea in China, and definitively of no relevance to anything that was happening here in Oregon. They

went to my creditors and propounded leading questions in a further attempt to concoct some type of criminal case against me.

So finally, after the Marion County Grand Jury demonstrated the common sense, human decency and back-bone not to succumb to the political pressure, and decided not to indict me, along comes District Attorney Dale Penn who files three unnecessary misdemeanor charges for something that was, and remains to be, totally unrelated to the reasons that I was initially subjected to an investigation.

Ironically enough, it appears as though the legislative history of the statute under which I have been charged does not even apply to the conduct alleged to be criminal.

District Attorney Dale Penn then turns over his file to the Oregon State Ethics Commission, and its investigator, Bill Pick, picks up the trail and further expends time and taxpayer money in an attempt to ascertain if I have done anything wrong. His report, while not charging me with any ethical violations, lists all sorts of misinformation and other distortions of reality to continue portraying me as some type of sinister person that should be purged by the public.

Finally, State Senator Jim Hill rises to the occasion and calls for a halt to this cycle of absurdity. He files ethics charges against Jason Boe and John Burns for making false statements to legislators.

A press conference is held and Ron Blakenbaker, a member of the press, wants to know why Jim Hill is doing this. Mr. Blakenbaker feels as though this is all old hat; Bob took a beating. So what? Bob's life has been destroyed. Who cares? Bob's family has been made destitute. Big deal. Bob Parker can't get a job, even though he has a law degree. That's his problem.

Never once has it occurred to Mr. Blakenbaker that the 5th Amendment to the Constitution protects against unlawful deprivations of life, liberty, property and the pursuit of happiness without due process of law.

Furthermore, it was of no consequence to Mr. Blakenbaker that my life has been destroyed by lies, rumors, gossip and racial innuendos from what appear to be very bigoted sources. Do we live in America or is this the Republic of South Africa? I know now how the Jewish people felt at the hands of Nazi Germany, and I clearly feel the pain and anguish of my ancestors who plowed the earth of this country as slaves. When will we as a people come to grips with ourselves and realize that if this sort of thing happens to any one of us, then it is prone to happen to all of us?

I write in hopes of awakening in your hearts the desire to make America's and Oregon's bounty available to all of its people; not just the elite, not just to those in the 'good old boy' network, and not just to those whose skin is white; but to all of us that constitute America and Oregon: all races, both sexes, all national origins and religions.

What happened to me was, and continues to be, nothing less than a complete and total disaster. While my accusers and oppressors are enjoying Thanksgiving dinner with their family, friends and loved ones, my family and I are separated thousands of miles apart, because we have no job, no income, no home and no security. But I am thankful to the one true and living God that they are all still alive thus far.

I can only hope and pray that true justice comes, that the real guilty parties who produced this nightmare be made to pay. I pray that my name be cleared, and that I be blessed with employment, so that I can begin to provide for myself and my family once again. Then maybe, just maybe, next Thanksgiving my wife and I will be once again with our family and be able to enjoy the fruits of our labor. Thank you. Robert R. Parker, Jr., LL.B.

Jackson Campaign

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"Spending on the arms race and the military buildup is robbing us of money to fund social programs." — Marty Hart-Landsberg
Photo by Richard J. Brown

paign moves into high visibility, the need for more volunteer support has emerged. Several campaign workers have been identified as Jackson committee contacts: Outreach: Bot

Gross, 235-9800, and Linda Pitcher 246-8605; Literature: Jim Stuart, 244-6161, ext. 6691, Susan Jankowski, 281-8540; Fundraising: Maceo Pettis, 287-2835; Voter Registration: Terry Anderson, 282-1300; Volunteer Coordination: Ingrid Swenson, 224-2659, Bob Nash, 295-6248.

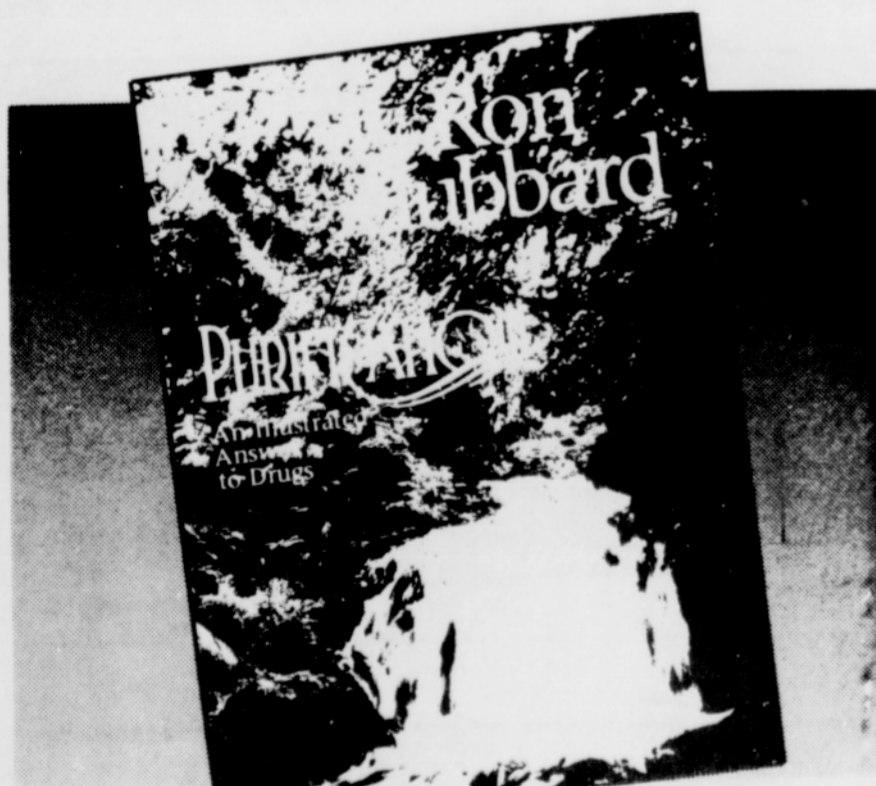
Jackson Speaks: "Straight From The Heart"

For people who want to become more familiar with Jesse Jackson's thinking on the issues, the Campaign has announced that copies of his first book, "Straight From the heart", are available by contacting Maceo Pettis at 287-2835. In the book, Jackson speaks eloquently on a variety of topics through thirty-six public speeches, sermons, eulogies, essays and interviews. His positions are clearly revealed, as well as underscoring his appeal as a human rights advocate and peace-maker.

Public Service Announcement

Your Post Office asks you to mail early in the day and be extra careful to lick and stick your envelopes. The post office reports that thousands of Christmas cards never reach their destination because people fail to seal the envelopes.

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