

CURRENT POLITICS

Unemployment Rate Lowest In 25 Years

Oregon's unemployment rate dropped to 5 percent in September, reaching its lowest level in 25 years, according to figures released by the Oregon Employment Department.

Oregon's seasonally adjusted unemployment rate has declined throughout the year. It dropped by 0.5 percentage points in September, while the national unemployment rate dropped by 0.2 percentage points. Oregon's rate has now been below the national rate for seven months.

Currently the state's unemployment rate is at its lowest level since 1969. Although the unemployment rates for 1994 are not directly comparable with those from previous years due to the U.S. Census Bureau's

redesign of the current population survey, the current level of unemployment is nonetheless quite low by historic standards, officials said.

Oregon's job market is healthy and brisk. Non-farm payroll employment has grown 3 percent since September 1993 and the total number of jobs has increased at close to this rate for 20 months now.

The numbers released by the department point to continued economic expansion and a favorable climate for Oregon's workers.

Over the month, gains in construction, certain durable goods manufacturing industries, and services were offset by an early downturn in food products manufacturing and in retail trade. These trends tended to cancel one another in the total job picture.

Juvenile Justice Gets Crime Fighting Boost

The Multnomah County Juvenile Justice Division has received a \$2.25 million grant from the Annie E. Casey Foundation to develop improved programs aimed at reducing juvenile crime.

The foundation supports innovation in juvenile programs across the nation.

Multnomah County Chair Beverly Stein said the grant plan was developed through the efforts of the county's commissioners, juvenile justice division, courts, law enforcement, district attorney, public defender, child welfare advocates and minority representatives.

"Our first priority is public safety," said commissioner Gary Hansen. "The single most important way to improve public safety is by improv-



ing accountability. We want to insure that juvenile offenders experience sure and certain consequences for their actions and that those consequences are the ones most appropriate for the offense and the risk in-

involved."

One major component of the initiative is the creation of a comprehensive system of community detention alternatives.

This system will increase the

number of options that juvenile justice workers will have in dealing with juvenile offenders. The options range from loose supervision, house arrest, electronic monitoring and finally secure detention.

The second component of the initiative is a new risk assessment instrument.

With referrals to the juvenile justice system nearly doubling between 1985 to 1992 there is a pressing need to prioritize the use of resources. The risk assessment program will provide an objective analysis of the danger to the public from each juvenile and will divert those who are low risk into appropriate treatment programs. This, in turn, will free up resources for youth who pose a greater threat to the community.

political Opinion

Lowering Of Wages Will Produce Less Tax Revenue

BY BRUCE DENNIS, PRESIDENT
OF CARPENTERS LOCAL 247,
PORTLAND

I am writing to express my concern about the Nov. 8 election, particularly Ballot Measure 12, repeal of the prevailing wage.

Being a labor leader, I have done some research on this subject. Prevailing wage laws were originally enacted because out-of-state workers were being exploited by greedy contractors. People were being imported to work at far below the community wage standards. This will happen in Oregon if this law is repealed. Profit-hungry contractors will drive wages as close to the minimum wage level as possible. Will this produce savings for Oregon taxpayers? I doubt it.

Lowering wages will certainly produce less tax revenues. Eliminating health care benefits will

impose cost-shifting to other groups who are able to maintain health care benefits. Importing low-wage low-skill workers will further burden other publicly-funded entities such as schools and the welfare system. Cutting family-wage jobs will cause the best trained to move elsewhere, where wages remain adequate.

As contractors lower their labor costs they may increase their profits, offering little or no savings to taxpayers. Finally, you get what you pay for. Using low-skilled, low-paid workers will produce a poor quality public product, which will need repair or replacement sooner. I believe there is enough evidence to substantiate that repeal, in the long run, could cost Oregonians more money.

The proponents of this measure claim to be taxpayer advocates. A

national merit shop contractors group is concerned about the taxes of Oregonians? I think not. They see bigger profit margins at the expense of the working class. An independent business association wanting to cut workers' wages to save the taxpayers? Why would small business want to cut the purchasing power of the public? The trend to cut wages will produce less activity for small business. Fewer new cars sold, fewer homes sold, fewer new TVs, less at Christmas time. The list can go on and on.

Prevailing wage laws are fair to everyone-union and non-union alike. Prevailing wage laws establish a level playing field so local contractors and taxpayers can be competitive on public projects. Stop the greed. Vote No on Measure 12.

Petition Blockade

BY ERIC ORMSBY

On June 30, 1994 Wal-Mart obtained an injunction through the courts to prevent me from circulating some petitions in front of their store. Circulating petitions has been protected by the U.S. Supreme court many times as freedom of speech, as petitions and civil war has historically been the peoples only course of action when the government ceases to represent the people.

One of the petitions failed to make it on the ballot, and I believe I can prove, that it could have been qualified had I been permitted to circulate it at the store during the time of the injunction.

My attorney filed a counter suit for \$8,000 in financial damages, \$50,000 in damages to my business reputation, and \$500,000 in punitive damages (which is to dis-

courage the same action on others not informed of their rights to circulate petitions). My attorney also indicated that he doesn't expect to get much more than the \$8,000 (based on his experience in the courts).

My attorney agreed to help start a Class Action suite, to represent the voters of Oregon, for each to receive \$2,500 in damages for their losses, since they now cannot vote on the petition that did not make the ballot. He also agreed to help start a Class action suit for all U.S. citizens, for each to receive \$250 in damages for their losses, for Wal-Mart's use of the terms "U.S.", "America first", and other patriotic sayings, as well as waving the American flag for advertising purposes. While violating the U.S. constitution in such a gross manner.

Since contact with Wal-Mart's attorneys, my attorney has been re-

fusing to take action on the class action suits, and has been trying to force me to settle out of court cheap. As far as I know he hasn't even mentioned the class action suit to Wal-Mart. Sometimes I wonder whose side he's on! I believe he thinks that I cannot afford his fees (which at present I cannot), and has used this, possibly to discourage me. He has given me til 10-20-94 to show how I will pay him some \$20,000 in attorneys fees in the next 6-8 months, or he will resign from the case. This does not seem ethical to me, but those are his conditions.

With a little financial help, a motivated attorney, and a lot of concerned citizens, We The People can protect our civil rights. Anyone interested in participating please contact me by writing to Eric Ormsby, PO Box 21385, Keizer, OR. 97303.

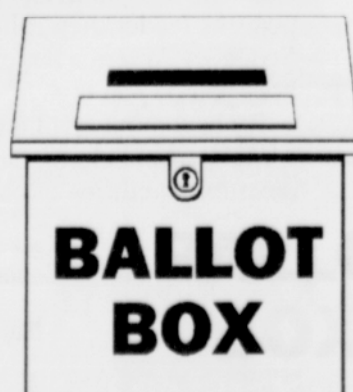
Closer Examination Of Measure 20

State Treasurer, Jim Hill and Speaker of the House Larry Campbell stated in their argument in opposition of Measure 20 in the Voters Pamphlet that you would pay taxes on the paycheck you deposit at the bank. This is not the truth and needs to be corrected Before November 8th.

You will pay two percent

Only when you spend. If they were simply opposing the Measure, I wouldn't say a thing; but when it's not the truth, it must be corrected. Don't fall for scare tactics, those who spend your tax money don't want to lose the right to raise your taxes at their discretion.

Sincerely,
Theodore D. Kelley



A Second Canvass Against Ultra-Right Ballot Measures

Freedom Rides From Seattle And Portland Join Forces

Freedom Riders from Seattle's Stonewall Committee for Lesbian and Gay Rights joined with Oregon's Bigot Busters on October 22, 1994 to canvass Hollywood and Russellville neighborhoods in opposition to the Oregon Citizens Alliance's (OCA) anti-gay Ballot Measure 13 and other rightwing ballot measures facing voters on November 8.

The first joint canvass on Saturday, October 1 was greeted eagerly by Portlanders. Door-to-door campaigner Howard Thorne said, "People grabbed the Bigot Buster brochure 'Stop Union-Busting & Bigotry in Oregon.' People were really angry at having been fooled by the right before, like with Measure 5. They appreciated getting information on how dangerous these measures really are." Oregon Education Association member Karen Gweltney said "The No On 13 and No On 8 pamphlets disappeared fast. Everyone wanted the Bigot Buster brochures because

they very clearly show that all Oregonians are being attacked by these rightwing measures as unionists, women, people of color, gays and lesbians, youth and workers. And the brochure encourages everyone to fight back together."

Measure 13 is an effort to legalize discrimination against homosexuality. Seattle's Stonewall Committee member Su Docekal said, "People were impressed that I came down from Seattle, but we in Washington have a stake in what happens here in Oregon. We don't want to see bigotry get a toe-hold anywhere."

In addition to the anti-gay Measure 13, there are eight other measures which will weaken the rights of unions, working people, women, people of color and youth. Measures 8 and 12 are designed to destroy unions and to lower the wages and working standards for Oregonian workers. Measure 8 scapegoats the public workers for the economic crisis facing the state.

Measures 5 and 20 will continue

to shift the tax burden so that large corporations receive huge tax breaks and windfalls at the expense of homeowners and working people.

Measures 10, 11 and 17 are "anti-crime" measures which would have a disproportionate impact on young people, the poor and people of color. These measures would result in tax money being used to build more prisons and hire more police instead of being used to develop social and human service programs, and to provide job training and education opportunities.

Measure 19 is based on Senator Jesse Helms' program of attempting to censor freedom of speech and dissent under the guise of concern for women's welfare and child pornography.

Bigot Busters in the past months has canvassed Portland, Albany, Cornelius, Beaverton and Gresham, handing out leaflets and talking to the public. Shoppers at the malls expressed relief to see active opposition to the OCA.

Portland's Top Two Educators Face Off In Unprecedented Debate On Measure 15

For the first time, Portland's top two educators will face off in a public debate on Ballot Measure 15, the controversial "kid's first" measure that would divert limited tax funds away from higher education and toward K-12 education.

Portland Public Schools Superintendent Jack Bierwirth and Portland State University President Judith Ramaley will debate the measure on Sunday, Oct. 30, at 7 p.m. at the Mittleman Jewish Community Center, 6651 SW Capitol Highway. The debate is free and open to the public. It is sponsored by the Jewish Federation of Port-

land.

Moderating the debate will be Arden Shenker, past chairman of the National Jewish Community Relations Advisory Council.

"In addition to understanding the positions of both sides, we want to understand how Measure 15 would affect the quality of life of our community," said Bob Horenstein, director of the Federation's Community Relations Committee. "This is the only opportunity for the public to hear directly from Portland's top two educators on this issue and we invite everyone to join us."

Measure 16 Symposium

If Ballot Measure 16 passes on November 8, Oregon will become the first city in the world to allow dying adult patients to obtain a physician's prescription to end their lives. Exactly what does this mean to the average Oregon resident? What do voters need to know in order to make an informed decision with regard to this most complex issue?

Oregon's controversial Ballot Measure 16 will be debated in a free public symposium to be held at Portland State University Thursday, Oct. 27, at 5:30 p.m. in Room 75 Lincoln Hall (corner of SW Broadway &

Market).

Thought-provoking questions regarding the medical, ethical and legal issues of this ballot measure will be discussed by panelists:

Karen Bell, R.N., M.B.A., program manager at Sisters of Providence Hospice in Portland;

Peter Goodwin, M.D., chairman of Oregon Right to Die Committee, sponsor of Measure 16;

Derek Humphry, founder and former executive director of the Hemlock Society and author of Final Exit, and

William L. Toffler, M.D., prac-

ticing family physician opposed to the initiative.

Moderating the debate will be Susan W. Tolle, director of the Center for Ethics in Health Care and professor of medicine at the School of Medicine at Oregon Health Sciences University.

The symposium is co-sponsored by the Department of Philosophy and the School of Extended Studies at Portland State University and by Oregon Health Sciences University's Center for Ethics in Health Care.

For information, call PSU's Office of Public Relations, 724-3773.