

## The State Of the Nation III: Meals On Wheels -For Corporations

BY PROF. MCKINLEY BURT

As stated by Davis Sarasohn, associate editor of The Oregonian, "the Republicans have gone deeply into the catering business, but children aren't who they are catering to....Newt Gingrich was the attraction of a \$50,000-a-plate dinner (smoked salmon, rack of lamb, cappuccino tortes) to raise money for a conservative TV network."

Sarasohn continues: "The dinner was reported to bring in \$350,000, of which \$100,000 was tax deductible -- costing the government about \$40,000, or enough macaroni and cheese to fill several elementary schools or the Capitol...later that month Sen. Phil Gramm, R. Texas, held a dinner in Dallas that raised \$4.1 million, the most any American politician ever raised at a single meal -- not counting tips."

Certainly, that should gain a lot of high level tax cuts as well as expand a number of industry subsidies as the Republicans pay back these contributions to their 1996 campaign coffers. Has anyone noticed that a large part of the spending in the WIC Program (Women, Infants And Children) is on baby formula. Three drug companies had 90% of the formula market, but in 1989 Congress required open bidding.

As a result, the savings amount to \$1 billion a year or enough to feed

another million babies. But now, Sarasohn reports in the House welfare bill WIC becomes a block grant with No Competitive Bidding! In other words, they just took the wheels off the kiddies meals. And does this caper strike another familiar chord? Remember a decade ago when a big Belgian manufacturer of infant formula (who also markets in the United States) drew world-wide attention and boycotts when they began saturating the African and Asian markets with infant formula?

The World Health Organization (WHO) had to intervene because without their mothers milk and the immunizing hormones and nutrients, the babies became sickly and malnourished. It was a horrible scandal but was only highly publicized in Europe. Wonder why? We note that the plump, well-fed messrs Gingrich, Gramm and Dole seem not to have missed a meal, nutrient or hormone -- nor a single campaign contribution from these big international drug companies with their interlocking directorships.

And we have another black sitcom competing for our attention; Alan Keyes, the African American talk show host from Washington D.C. has announced candidacy for the GOP nomination for president. The far out Right-winger is author of the controversial book, "Masters Of The Dream: The strength and Betrayal of

Black America". This Harvard University graduate has pushed all the right conservative buttons ever since -- except one. His 1992 Republican Senate Campaign fizzled when it was discovered he was siphoning off \$8000 a month for himself.

However, the wheels may be running off some of the Republican campaign vehicles. The LA Times - Washington Post Service reports that a coalition of Moderate Republicans and conservative Democrats say they will block the House GOP's \$188 billion tax package unless the tax cuts are linked to progress on reducing the deficit. Also some fiscally responsible (sane) Republicans are trying to scale back the limit of \$200,000 for a proposed \$500-per-child tax credit. First we found that "Johnny can't read" -- now, we find that "he can't count."

As of Wednesday, a week ago, that ridiculous attempt to amend the constitution to require a balanced budget was defeated in the Senate. It seems unbelievable that we elect grown men and women to administer our affairs, and then they decide that they are irresponsible children and must be forbidden by law to spend money which they do not have. Perhaps such a rule should be part of all marriage contracts. Maybe the court take away the offenders credit card. For 200 years the nation has avoided class warfare, now?

## Tiernan Denies Racism

Continued from front

abled. Last week, Tiernan upset liberal Portland Democrat Rep. Avel Gordly by throwing her testimony on a bill regarding the retirement age of judges into the garbage. It ignited a heated response from the Democrats' own fire-brand, Margaret Carter. Carter represents inner north and northeast Portland.

She accused Tiernan of racism and of a rude attitude and demanded that he be censured by the Legislative body. Gordly asked for a public apology.

Tiernan Legislative Assistant Scott Tiernan, called the demands politically-motivated over the affirmative action stance.

But Carter told the Portland Observer she was only responding to Tiernan's actions she, called "outrageous, unprofessional and irresponsible."

Gordly told the Observer that Tiernan's legislative style was arrogant and abrasive, saying he needs to be held accountable for his irresponsible conduct.

"The issue here is Tiernan's behavior, a pattern of behavior that needs to be changed," Gordly said.

In another development, Tiernan has asked for a public apology from Carter, claiming her complaint was completely unfounded and questioned whether she was a racist.

He vehemently denied being a racist.

Tiernan told the Portland Observer his tough stands on the issues has make people think otherwise.

"I am sure when they find out what I have done, people will have a change of mind," Tiernan said.

Watchers of the Oregon Legislature have described Tiernan's style as too tenacious and often very offensive.

But House Assistant Majority Leader Eileen Qutub of Washington County, disagrees.

He's been "courteous, attentive and respectful," said Eileen Qutub, a Republican from Beaverton.



Senate President Gordon Smith, R-Pendleton (far left), and other lawmakers are confronted by reporters in the halls of the Capitol in Salem. The Legislature in Oregon convenes every two years. (Photo by Donn Thomas)

## Oregon Experiment in Welfare Reform Studied

A team of researchers at Portland State University is embarking on a five-year, \$2.1 million evaluation of a new state welfare program that requires persons to give up food stamps and other welfare benefits for jobs.

The Oregon Jobs Plus program, started last year, could serve as a national model for social welfare reform across the country.

"This kind of program is a model for the direction of social welfare reform in this country," said William Feyerherm, director of the Regional Research Institute at PSU.

The team will survey the program's effectiveness in four of the six Oregon counties participating in the program, Washington, Clackamas, Malheur and Lincoln counties.

They will follow about 1,000 Jobs Plus program participants, comparing the program's effectiveness with 1,000 persons who enter a totally separate, federal-and-state welfare-to-work program that emphasizes job training while allowing for continued public assistance and access to food stamps.

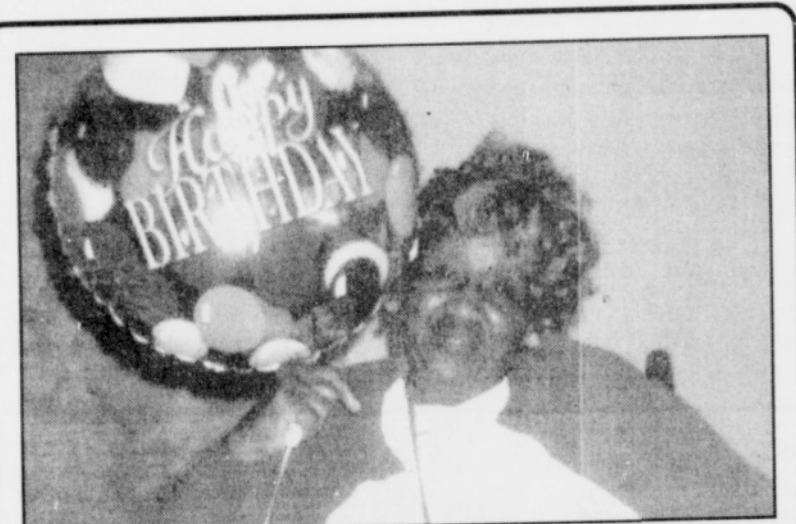
Under the Jobs Plus program, public assistance recipients are ran-

domly selected for placement into subsidized, private-sector jobs in lieu of being given food stamps and other welfare compensation. The jobs are to last six months. If a participant hasn't been given a full-time, unsubsidized job by the end of the six months, that person has another three months to continue his or her existing job and can get time off to look for unsubsidized jobs.

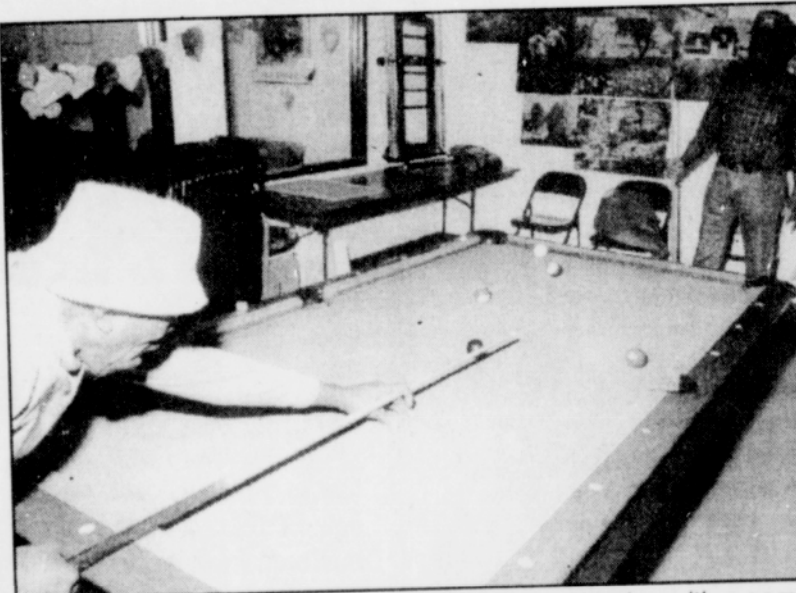
As conditions of the program, participants earn at least minimum wage and take home as least as much money as they would if they were on public assistance. In addition, each participant has a co-worker who serves as a mentor to help provide career and other long-term guidance.

Researchers want to find out what happens to participants once they are working a job and no longer receive public assistance. They also want to see if Jobs Plus members remain employed after taking part in the program.

"The whole notion of welfare reform and its impact upon citizens and taxpayers is important to all of us," said James Ward, dean of the PSU Graduate School of Social Work.



*Happy Birthday*  
to our loving Freida Murray  
from your family.



Les Allan (left) and Willie Huntington find time to relax with a game of pool at the North/Northeast Loaves and Fishes Center at 5325 N.E. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd. (Photo by Donn Thomas)

## Kitzhaber: A Shining Democrat

Continued from front

while his friends wallowed in confusion, wondering what had gone wrong.

"My medical colleagues were pretty astounded," he recalled.

But he has surprised his kin with a string of electoral successes.

Any disappointment so far?

"I guess," he said, flipping his hand through his grey-flickered moustache. "My biggest disappointment are the people who I have encountered from time to time, that are so concerned about getting re-elected that they forget what they were elected for in the first place," he said, without giving names.

Kitzhaber has been able to fulfill his dream of being governor while fully being aware how an election defeat could knock him out of politics.

But adjusting to the security and confinement of being a governor is not easy for him.

Though he agreed to the protection of state troopers, he anxiously tries to bring some semblance of a more simple accommodation, not the mansion that is his state home.

(Editor's note: The Portland Observer recently had an exclusive interview with Gov. John Kitzhaber. This is the first part of a special series.)

## Statement By Grant McElroy

"Senator Mark Hatfield and his colleagues who voted today against the Balanced Budget Amendment should be commended for their courageous action. Though the Amendment was nothing more than a gimmick designed to lead the American people into thinking that Congress was doing something about the deficit, it was still a difficult amendment to oppose.

"By casting his votes against this measure, Senator Mark Hatfield today has guaranteed that Oregonians' Social Security contributions will not be used for any other purposes than the one for which they were intended: To help senior citizens in their retirement year."

"Proponents of the Balanced Budget Amendment will probably try to use this vote for political purposes and they may also attempt to resurrect the measure time and again. But the truth is the American people have a right to know which programs will be cut.

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