

# *PUD arguments made at hearing*

Differing views were heard Monday at a hearing on a measure to create a people's utility district in Washington County.

The hearing was held by the Oregon Dept. of Energy and was the second of 14 to be held in western Oregon.

Portland General Electric said a publicly operated utility would not be feasible in the county. Others said that it would.

Father Jose Jamie, of St. Alexander's Church, told of hardships facing the poor and elderly, especially in the

winter when electric bills make heat a luxury.

Judy Schilling of the CAP Energy Program told how people on fixed incomes frequently have to choose between heat and food, and Karen Caldwell, of the Emergency Fuel Program, expressed dismay at the spectacle of tax dollars set aside to relieve the poor going to PGE's shareholders.

Doris Olds, of the Grey Panthers, described how skyrocketing electrical rates are a burden to all citizens, as well as to business and agriculture. She told how the movement to form a PUD

was created in response to this burden.

Several experts in the energy field testified in favor of the PUD measure. They pointed out several available energy sources and noted the saving PUDs provide their customers, as well as the advantages of local control of electrical systems.

Charles L. Heinrich, PGE vice-president of regulation and data services, said rates paid by Washington County residents would be 56 percent higher to 129 percent higher if the PUD is approved.

He said average rates for the new

district would range from 5.67 to 8.34 cents per kilowatt-hour, depending on how much low-cost federal power the Washington County district could gain from the Bonneville Power Administration.

By comparison, Heinrich said, if two pending PGE increases are granted, county residents would pay 3.64 cents per kilowatt-hour.

PGE documents submitted indicated Washington County residents would pay \$67.3 million a year for 25 years to reimburse PGE for its existing facilities.