

# Life's not pastoral for Griffiths

By CORINNE ARATT

Martha and Hicks Griffiths went to see the movie, "Murder on the Orient Express" last week.

Hardly a mentionable event in the lives of most of us, but for the former U.S. congresswoman who represented Michigan's 17th District for 20 years, it was quite a treat. First time in 10 years, she estimates, that they have been free to do some of the things which are commonplace to most folks.

Since Mrs. Griffiths decided not to run again for her congressional seat, the couple have opened law offices in the large business and professional mall on Hamilton Court just west of 12 Mile and Orchard Lake in Farmington Hills. They have a permanent home in the same area and a farm in Romeo.



MARTHA GRIFFITHS

HER WELFARE reform ideas center on a permanent refundable tax credit which would include tax credits to those people who pay no taxes because they show no income.

"For instance, there would be \$3,000 credit to a family of four who show no income."

This would wipe out such programs as Aid to Dependent Children (ADC) and would completely eliminate food stamps.

One of the worst amendments to welfare legislation, she says, was one that limited the amount of rent residents in public housing have to pay.

"In many cases, we found out, people with \$2,000 a year incomes were paying \$25 a month rent including utilities."

Her refundable credit proposal would put money into the pockets of those having no reportable income to be spent, as they saw fit, with no strings attached. It would not, as the present welfare legislation does, discourage the recipients from working. Presently, persons on ADC can only keep a third of what they earn and still remain on welfare.

THESE ARE the topics Mrs. Griffiths wants to speak about and she is being offered endless opportunities. As to the business of building a pri-

vate life after 25 years as a public figure, most certainly she is out of practice. She hopes to give it a try next June, July and August. She would like to keep the calendar empty so she and her husband and large white poodle, Uki, can spend a leisurely summer at the farm.

Even if she does pull it off, there will be interruptions and occasional business trips.

She now sits on the boards of directors of a number of corporations—National Detroit Corporation (National Bank of Detroit), Burroughs Corporation, Consumers Power, and Chrysler.

She is also a member of the board of directors of the American Automobile Association and a Merry College trustee.

She is serving on several government committees or groups "which I can't reveal the nature of."

AS SHE ONCE felt obligations to constituents, she now feels certain obligations as she accepts a board of directors seat.

"Boards of directors have specific duties and can be held responsible for their actions, so I must know about the companies and understand what they are doing."

She is courteous, sometimes detached as she talks about the nation, its problems and her solutions. You know she has said many of the same words before, sometimes to a room with hundreds of listeners, sometimes to one or two.

Then, she walks to the large window in her private office. She looks across the rolling lawns to the OCC Orchard Ridge campus.

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"I love that view and it won't change because of the college campus being there. We didn't have windows and views like this in Washington."

She talks about "my flowers" on the farm in Romeo and her hopes for a peaceful summer.

Slowly....but slowly, she is moving toward becoming a private person.

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LIFE, HOWEVER, is far from pastoral. "I am swamped with requests to speak," she remarks.

Many, because of the limits of time, she has to turn down, but those which concern three topics close to heart, she feels obliged to fulfill where possible—welfare reform, the rights of women and a national health plan.

"If we had to choose one thing to do to reform welfare, it would be a health bill."

Mrs. Griffiths introduced a bill for a national health plan in Congress three years ago. She admits to being ahead of her time, but says support for such a plan is now growing.

Her proposal for funding the plan was that the employer deduct one per cent of the first \$15,000 of an employee's yearly earnings. The employer would contribute 3 1/2 per cent of his total payroll each year and the government would contribute a matching amount.

"This wipes out bookkeeping for doctors and hospitals. It would discourage what's happening now—building up the bills—building up the medical costs. Did you know America has more absolutely unnecessary surgery than any other nation in the world?"

## Board will hold 2 open study sessions

FARMINGTON—The Board of Education will hold two special study sessions on budget and millage questions Monday, Feb. 17 and Tuesday, Feb. 24. Both will begin at 8 p.m. at the Board of Education offices, 32500 Shawassee.

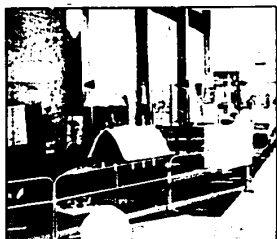
"We're trying to encourage the com-

munity to have their input," Supt. of Schools Marinus VanArmeide said. Discussion will center on budgetary options if the millage fails. Elimination of the B-1 (athletic and extracurricular events) schedule, will be considered as well as possible cuts in personnel and class hours.

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