

Big gun fires for Griffin

By MICHAEL MATUSZEWSKI

Former President Gerald Ford came to metropolitan Detroit this week to stump for fellow Republican U.S. Sen. Robert Griffin.

His appearance at Dearborn's Hyatt Regency Hotel and a fundraising dinner for Griffin marked a return to Michigan's political arena.

WHILE FORD politely boosted the state's senior Senator, who had hosted him in their Washington days, much of the attention was focused on Ford's presidential ambitions.

"After the congressional and gubernatorial races, we'll think that one over. I've got lots of options and lots of time," he told reporters.

He also had lots of things to say about President Jimmy Carter and his administration.

The former president was especially critical of Carter's economic policies.

"They've blown it as far as I can see," he said. "We had inflation



GERALD FORD

Time and options reduced to 4.8 per cent. Now we've got double digit inflation. "Their fiscal policy has been bad

from the very beginning," he said. Ford said Carter made a number of fundamental economic errors upon assuming the presidency.

The most important of those errors, he said, was increasing government spending. "That rekindled inflation which we almost had under control," he said.

EVEN THOUGH FORD had plenty of criticism for the Carter Administration, he also offered a few words of advice.

He advised Carter to avoid wage and price controls to control inflation.

"History shows," he said, "that wage and price controls are bad for the economy. They're counter-productive in the long run. President Nixon found that out."

He said Carter should avoid even considering voluntary wage and price guidelines.

"It's almost inevitable that when you start talking about voluntary wage and price guidelines, you're going to wind up with mandatory wage and price controls," he said.

LIT offers college warmup

High school juniors and seniors considering an art or architecture career can test their abilities this fall in a special new program at Lawrence Institute of Technology.

LIT's School of Architecture is offering a pre-college program that both explores and advances student potential prior to enrollment in a full program of college study. Successful completion also provides credit toward a bachelor of science degree.

Beginning Sept. 30 and continuing to

Jan. 27, three courses will be offered on Saturdays (except holiday week-ends). A three-hour morning course in visual communication is designed to develop basic skills in architectural drafting and sketching.

A three-hour afternoon basic design course will provide observation, analysis and application of visual imagery and basic principles and elements of design. Tuition for each is \$60.

In addition, there is a 45-minute art and architecture seminar that surveys

two-dimensional and three-dimensional expressions in art and architecture as related to both theory and history. A field trip is planned to LIT's Frank Lloyd Wright House in Bloomfield Hills. The course fee is \$20. Students will be required to furnish most of their materials and may select one, two or three courses. To be considered, students must have a B average or better and the recommendation of a high school teacher.

For more information, call the LIT admissions office at 356-0200.

Lawmakers split on gas taxes

Oakland County representatives split 4-2 in favor of two tax increases that are part of a bipartisan "transportation package."

The bills were pushed by State Rep. William Ryan (D-Detroit) and supported by Gov. William G. Milliken.

Supporting a two cents increase in the gasoline and diesel fuel taxes were Reps. W.V. Brotherton (R-Farmington), Joseph Forbes (D-Oak Park) and Ruth McNamee (R-Birmingham).

Opposed were Reps. James DeFebaugh (R-Birmingham) and Sal Rocca (D-Sterling Heights). Fessler (R-West Bloomfield).

On a companion measure, a bill to raise weight taxes (annual auto license fees), Fessler was recorded in favor. The others voted the same as on the gas tax.

PURPOSE OF the tax increases,

along with an earmarking of some sales taxes, is to raise by 25.6 per cent the funds going for state, county and local roads and to public transportation.

The nine-cent per gallon gas tax would be raised to 11 cents and would increase revenues from this source from the current \$19.9 million to \$396 million to \$486 million.

The diesel fuel tax would be raised from the current seven cents to eight cents. Revenues would be boosted from the current \$19.9 million to \$26.4 million.

An average motorist would pay about \$14 more per year.

WEIGHT TAXES on personal passenger cars would go up an average of 30 per cent. Trailers would go up 35 per cent. Commercial weight taxes would rise an average of 34 per cent.

The increase on passenger cars and

motorcycles would generate \$30 million in new revenue.

The increase for commercial vehicles would generate \$20 million in new revenue.

The bills will be taken up by the senate next week.

DEFEAUGH, No. 2 man on the GOP side of the house, called it "absolutely incredible the legislature would consider raising taxes in this climate" of tax revolt.

He said the reason for the urgency in raising taxes this year was that 1978-9 becomes the base year for calculating tax revenues if the so-called Headlee tax limitation amendment passes—as he is sure it will. The Headlee amendment would limit tax revenues to a percentage of personal income in the base year.

DeFebaugh gave several other reasons for opposing the tax increases:

"It wasn't necessary to raise taxes. There is money in the general fund. But the Democrats don't want to touch their sacrosanct general fund (for transportation) because that's where their pet programs—education and social services—are funded from."

"Our general fund revenue projections are not just good, they're superb—\$9 million to \$15 million in the next year."

DeFebaugh said a 1976 tax increase to aid public transportation was supposed to have been used as the South-eastern Michigan Transportation Authority's 20 per cent share to match a \$600 million federal grant for a rapid transit system. Instead, SEMTA used part of the funds to cover operating deficits—not illegal but a violation of the spirit of the agreement.

"There was to have been a merger of SEMTA and D-DOT (Detroit's Department of Transportation) under that bill, but there has been no progress toward merger," DeFebaugh said.

He said the Oakland County Road Commission had been able to increase its budget eight per cent this year, keeping pace with inflation, and had entered cooperative programs with communities for traffic engineering improvements—all indicating it had sufficient funds.



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