Cruce resignation shakes up Oakland politics



Due

Finance

Doug Cruce was all smiles in November when the election re-sults were announced and he learned that he had captured 57 percent of the vote and a third term in the 16th District seat.

The future of Oakland politics was turned upside down Tuesday when Doug Cruce stunned colleagues with his resignation from the state Sen-

ate.

Cruce, R-Troy, left to take a "lu-crative and rewarding job" — presi-dent of the Michigan Insurance Fed-

crative and rewarding joo — year dent of the Michigan Insurance Federation.

The 43-year-old lawmaker was only three months into his third Senate term at his departure. He had tell the senate term at his departure. He had refer to the senate with the sen

CRUCE, A former Marine ser-

CRUCE, A former Marine ser-geant and real estate broker, collect-ed a deskful of political chits that he could have called on in a bid for higher office. He personally had managed the 1988 campalga of prosecutor Dick Thompson, had been visible support-ing people for local offices, and had done scut work for the GOP national convention delegation to gain experi-ence and friends. Cruce wouldn't reveal the salary the 23-company insurance federa-tion is paying to induce him to leave

the \$45,200 Senate post, indicating only that "H's a good deal." But a former legislator and knowledgeable lobbytst said the job would probably pay between \$125,000 and \$150,000 a year.
"This is coming more abruptly and sooner than I expected, but it's time for me to move alone." Cruce

"This is coming more abruptly and sooner than I expected, but it's time for me to move along," Cruce said. "The timing Isn't 131 that great."

But at an 11 a.m. press conference at the state capitol Tuesday Cruce admitted, "I went to the federation. It would have been worse if they had approached me."

He has signed a four-year contract with the Lansing-based federation, and said Tuesday that he has no intention of running for higher office. When asked if his feaving had anything to do with legislative pay, he said, "I have never complained or been dissatisfied chairs of two key See words and the said of the said the

IN THE INSURANCE post, Cruce will do public affairs, lobbying and education work for a trade group serving properly and casualty companies, including all auto insurers except AAA.

"They needed a good war horse to do battle," he said, anticipating major fights over the causes of auto insurance increases.

Cruce said he decided two weeks ago — at the Senate's Easter break — to take the fost and spent the time "mulling it over."

He announced his resignation minutes after the Senate began its 10 a.m. session Tuesday. It took effect at 5 n.m. Tuesday.

ENGLER WILL call a special pri-mary and general election to fill the vacancy. Staff writer Amy Rosa contrib-uted to this report.

Colleagues view his exit

By Tim Richard staff writer

As Doug Cruce left through the state Senate door, most ex-col-leagues gave him pats on the back. But a few gave him kicks in the pants.

pants.
Complained Sen. Lana Pollack, D-Complained Sen. Lana Pollack, DAnn Arbor: "He did a better job even
than Joe Mack... in putting down
women. It was only Sen. Cruce who
were called me to task as an errant
child... who said he would send me
to my room-ill spoke up for my values
"He is so committed, so sure of
himself, that he came from his side
of the chamber to my side and
smiled as if he owed me no apology,"
said Pollack, a pro-choice voter on
the abortion issue.
Pollack reterred to Cruce as "that

Pollack referred to Cruce as "that romack referred to Cruce as "that man — that handsome, tall and charming man," in an apparent attempt to mimic male chauvinists who think of women only in terms of beauty. At a news conference later, Cruce,

now a lobbyist, smiled and quipped, "I have a fence to mend."
"On behalf of minimum wage carners, feminists, women, organized labor," said Sen, John Kelly, Deforses Pointe, 'I would like to sing, 'Happy Days Are Here Again."
The song is a Democratic favorite used in the campaign of Franklin D. Roosevelt and Humbert Humphrey, Kelly tangled with Cruce on labor, 'women's' itsues and Job Corps funding.

SEN. JACK Faxon, D-Farmington Hills, emphasized his agreement with Cruce on home base issues. "There's not an issue in Oakland County where we haven't been in agreement, On education, we've never differed," Faxon said, citing their fight against cutting school aid. "What he got done for Big Beaver. Road I couldn't get done for Twelve Mile," he added with both admiration and envy.

Recycle and Savel

Hopefuls line up for seat

By Amy Rosa staff writer

State lawmakers haven't had this much to gossip about since John Englet tounced Jim Blanchard in the governor's race last fall.

But with word that state Sen. Doug Cruce was vacating his Idintification of the state of the stat

A FIFTH, John Pappageorge, indi-cated mild interest, while other ru-mored contenders took their names out of the hat. Anyone living in Cruce's district is eligible for the seat.

"I'm gathering my thoughts as we speak, but I would describe myself as seriously interested," said Gordon Sparks, R-Troy, from a vacation spot in Florida.

"My office called me with the news this morning," he added, saying he was "very surprised" by the an-nouncement. nouncement.

Sparks, who is in his ninth year as representative of the 63rd district, still has some questions to ponder before committing to the upcoming race, he said. His district includes Rochester, Rochester Hills and northern and western Troy.

Shirley Johnson, R-Hoyal Oak, said Tuesday she was "absolutely" Interested in Cruce's post, but also hasn't made a definite decision yet.

hasn't made a definite decision yet.

Johnson, who is serving her sixthterm as the 68th district-toprosontative, estimated candidates will have
to spend "six figures" on the "short
and intense" campaign.

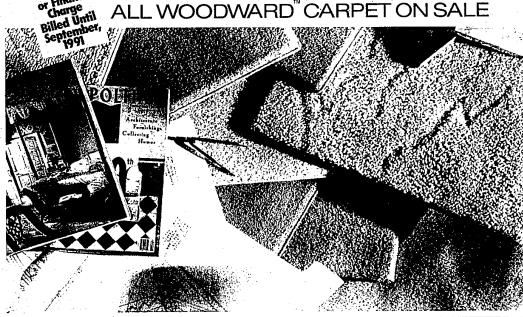
and intense" campaign

STATE REP, Michael Boüchard,
R-Birmingham — whose 65th district includes Bloomfield Township,
Bloomfield Milks and Birmingham —
also is "very interested" in the post.
"Based on the encouragement of
local elected officials and state legislators, I'm thinking about running.
I'll probably decide within the next
couple of day," he said.

On the Democratic front, Royal
Okt resident Freeeman is expected
to make a try for Cruce's seat. He
lest his bid for the position last full.

Another Democrat runnered considering a try for Cruce's seat is former Michigan (first lady Paula
Blanchard, according to Donald
Tocker, chairman of the Oakalnd
county Democratic Party.

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