



REPUBLICAN CONFERENCE — Mrs. Cecelia Phelan (left), president of the Plymouth Area Republican Women's Club; 2nd District Congressman Marvin Esch, luncheon speaker; and Mrs. Isabelle Haynes, of Farmington, president of the Republican Women's Federation of Michigan, were among the leaders at the GOP State Central Committee's meeting in Plymouth last weekend.

Esch, Elly Prod Party On Crisis In Cities

By TIM RICHARD

An intense personal, as well as governmental, interest in urban problems was urged on Michigan's Republican leadership last weekend.

The prodders were 2nd District Congressman Marvin Esch, of Ann Arbor, and GOP State Chairman Elly Peterson. Esch was luncheon keynote speaker as the GOP's top policy-making group held its weekend meeting in Plymouth. The meeting itself was devoted to unanimous approval of routine reports.

MRS. PETERSON, who is also a member of the Republican National Committee, was asked in an interview about criticism of National Chairman Ray Bliss by the Ripon Society, a group of young Republican intellectuals. The Ripon Society, in a book entitled "From Disaster to Distinction," charged a year ago that Bliss was failing to redirect GOP attention to northern, urban and racial problems and had made too few changes from Goldwaterite Dean Burch's policies of aiming

at the rural, southern and white vote.

Mrs. Peterson said that Bliss in the last six months had considerably "beefed-up" the organization's minorities division.

She also pointed to a seminar on urban problems which Republicans had conducted in Detroit.

The party's first lady state chairman added that the Ripon members seemed to have "something personal" against Bliss, who became national chairman after Barry Goldwater's massive 1964 defeat for the presidency.

ESCH FIRED UP the normally unemotional Republican leadership with his post-luncheon talk. The "social crisis in the cities," he said, is the concern not only of government but of private individuals and private industry.

The freshman lawmaker said that what would prepare poor people for jobs would be "massive make-work" programs run federally, but co-operative efforts bringing in the resources and skills of private industry.



CONGRESSMAN ESCH

GOP Goal In '68: Hold State House, Save Five Congressmen

By DOUG JOHNSON
Staff Writer

Republicans will fight to keep the five "swing" congressional districts in 1968, hopefully bolstered by Gov. George Romney leading the national ticket. That was the prediction from Republican State Chairman Elly Peterson.

The GOP State Central Committee met in Plymouth last weekend.

The meeting, held in the Mayflower Hotel and Meeting House in Plymouth, representing something of a local triumph for local Republicans Bud Weber and Carl Pursell, who had invited the party's top policy-making body here.

IN OTHER RACES, the Michigan Republicans are "building a backlog of candidates," Mrs. Peterson explained. "And we plan to put more muscle behind them than ever before because we feel the time has come that the urban areas will turn our way. Even if we don't talk about winning we can talk about gaining."

Romney broke the myth that urban areas were solid Democratic. Mrs. Peterson said, he campaigned door-to-door

for Anthony Licata, who in May 1967 won a seat in the Michigan House in an upset over James P. Hoffa in the Detroit 19th District. Licata won by a slim 168 votes.

Licata, and other state representatives, including Louis Schmidt of the 35th House District serving Livonia, face campaigns in 1968.

"We are already working on them. We picked up about 20 seats scattered all over the state in largely urban areas

and they will be rough to keep," Mrs. Peterson admitted.

The GOP will try to retain the 56-54 split in the house in 1968, Mrs. Peterson said.

OVERRIDING the entire Michigan congressional and state house campaigns will be the national election.

"There is a general disenchantment with President Johnson, and it will seep down to other areas. But I don't want to be a part of any campaign against Johnson."

Mrs. Peterson has told her party workers to avoid negativity this year. "Don't conduct a campaign against Johnson and his obvious problems."

The State Chairman forecast of possibility of the people "saying a post on both houses" if the GOP spent its energy campaigning against Johnson.

"The people today are concerned and frightened, and they want the men who can assuage their concern and dissolve their fright," she said.

THE FIVE KEY seats include two in Observerland—the 2nd District (including Redford, Livonia and Farmington) of Jack McDonald.

Other swing districts are the 3rd (Gary Brown of Kalamazoo), the 7th (Donald Riegle Jr. of Flint) and the 11th (Philip Ruppe of the Upper Peninsula). Each of the five was taken from a Democrat in the Romney sweep of 1966.

"Each of these men has kept in close touch with their districts," Mrs. Peterson said. "We will back them with money and organization, and I don't know of any primary opposition. We are determined to keep the marginal districts in 1968; I think each of the men have outstanding records."

PERHAPS ONE key to any Republican retention of the districts will be Romney's ability to personally help in the campaign. But Mrs. Peterson said he may be too busy.

"The question of how much the governor can help us hasn't been given too much thought. He covered the ground so well in 1966 the aura is still there. It will depend on how he is occupied outside. If he comes through the New Hampshire and Wisconsin primaries, he will be very busy," she said. "It looks like chances are good," she added.

However, many Republicans feel the best thing Romney can do to help in Michigan is to lead the National ticket.

Either way, Mrs. Peterson said, he will do "what he can" with letters, tapes and photographs filling the gap for personal appearances.

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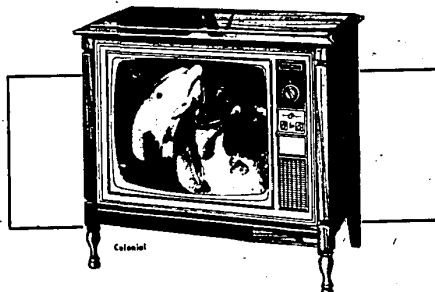
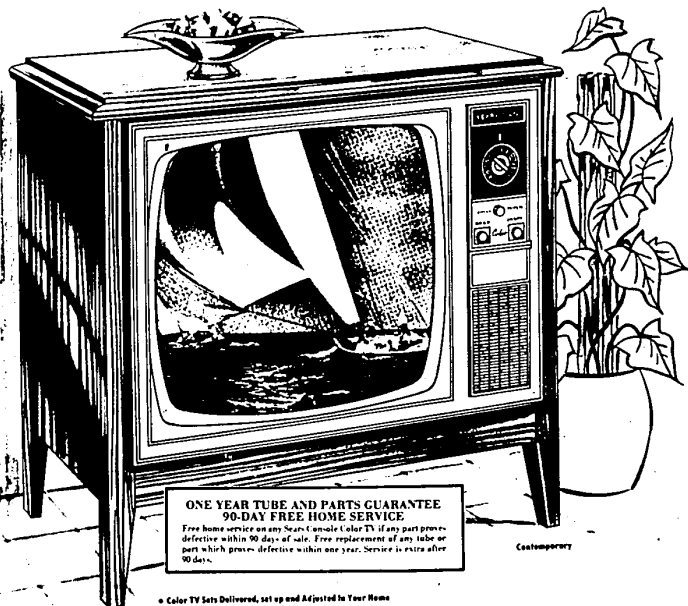
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