

Stempien Advocates Income Tax Hike

By DON HOENSHILL

LIVONIA Rep. Marvin R. Stempien (D-Livonia) will go back to the reform bill session of the Michigan Legislature for a bristling showdown over state tax reform.

Stempien has emerged as a leader among House Democrats as lawmakers zero in on answers to finance the schools.

He said the present 2.6 per cent state levy on personal incomes must go to four per cent if the present and foreseen needs of education in the state can be met.

"Most people who have evaluated the tax structure are amazed that it wasn't set at four per cent in the first place," he said.

"The fall session on 'educational reform' means more taxes, which I'm opposed to unless they are equitable and broad-based, that is based on the ability of the people to pay."

He acknowledged that a change from the present flat rate to a graduated income tax will require a change in the state constitution. Exemptions, he said, cannot adequately adjust the flat rate tax equitably.

"I'VE REPEATEDLY campaigned for a graduated income tax," Stempien said, "and unless the people wake up and support a graduated tax, the present flat rate tax will grow more inequitable until it's unbearable."

"You're not going to get a vote out of me—and a lot of others feel the same way—until it is equitable. The income tax was a step in the right direction, but with the wrong tax."

"Why should Henry Ford II pay only as much and at the same rate as struggling home owner in Livonia? At the same time I'm against ad valorem taxes on wealth only, it should be equitable."

"Twice hospitalized during the 1969 session, Stempien is now recovering from a bout with pneumonia. He will go back to Lansing for the fall session scheduled to start Oct. 6.

Stempien is happy with the record in Lansing but this year for Livonia but said that generally the session was notable for its disappointments in getting more done for the state.

Livonia shared with the Wayne Community School District a \$1 million grant to reimburse for the cost of accepting more than 3,000 students from the defunct Nankin Mills district.

STEMPEN also led fights to get \$100,000 more in state race track revenue for the city and another bill extending a School Bond Loan Act to Livonia, en-

abling the schools to continue construction without assessing more local millage.

"Overall I was disappointed because as the session dragged into the long, long days there seemed to be a narrowing parade of special interests seeking special favors," he said.

"It was a good year for the lobbyists."

"The lobby power, he said, ran through a new State Banking Code without adequate recovering and study, a small

prisoners Committee and the rest of the Legislature.

"GOV. MILLIKEN and his aides—they were never around. The governor was on the floor of the House only twice. He should do more of that," he said.

Stempien cited the Nankin Mills reimbursement fight—between the Senate Appropriations Committee and aroused suburban lawmakers.

"That was typical of other issues all session long," he said. "The governor was never in it."

Stempien said his third disappointment was the performance of department heads, Democratic as well as Republican.

"They were guilty of the same kind of inactivity that I criticize the governor for," he said. "They didn't have the facts, they didn't keep the Legislature informed on their position or why they took them."

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Eliminate Property Tax As Backbone For Schools

Use of the property tax on homes as a method of financing education is inadequate and should be eliminated, Dean Wilbur J. Cohen of The University of Michigan said at a meeting of the Governor's Commission on Educational Reform.

Dean Cohen suggested transferring the responsibility for taxation of all industrial and public utility property to the state, with assessment and tax rates to be increased year by year.

"Business is the greatest beneficiary from increased education," he commented. "It should share in the costs."

The former U.S. secretary of health, education, and welfare also advocated that the present state-aid formula for school support be scrapped and a simpler formula be substituted based upon the state financing the entire cost of a minimum foundation educational program.

HE OFFERED a sample state-aid formula which might provide school support on a scale such as this: 100 per cent of the first \$300 a year per student, 75 per cent of the next \$300, and 50 per cent of the next \$300.

The changes could be accomplished over the next six to seven years, according to Dean Cohen, who now heads the U-M School of Education. His target date of 1978 is the 200th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence.

"By the end of the decade of the 70s, Cohen said, "educational expenditures in Michigan are more likely to be double those of today than to be 50 per cent larger. In either case the method of raising the funds and deciding how to spend them wisely will be a major problem to those in charge."

Francis Resigns U-M Job

Dr. Thomas Francis, Jr., chairman of the National Center for epidemiology in the University of Michigan School of Public Health, has resigned this post effective Aug. 1 to devote full time to teaching activities during the coming year.

Francis achieved worldwide fame in 1954-55 when he headed the national fight of all Salk polio vaccine, one of the largest and most significant health research projects conducted to that time. His findings confirmed that the vaccine was an effective defense against the ravages of polio.

Throughout his career he has played a prominent role in the identification and control of influenza outbreaks. Last summer he was credited with sounding the first scientific alarm of a new "antigenic shift" in the flu virus that produced the globe-grinding wave of Hong Kong flu.

"A GOOD EDUCATIONAL system is what helps to attract and retain competent personnel for business, assures innovation and adaptation to changing technology, science, and managerial skills, and improves the quality of life.

"It enables the disadvantaged to overcome some of their economic and social difficulties, it raises the income of the community and it brings in more taxes. What other expenditure can claim so many virtues?"

Cohen said that during the past 10 years states and localities have been doing a "heroic" job of raising more money for education. But as hard as they try, he added, they fall far short of meeting the needs because of certain difficulties.

He enumerated:

- (1) The basic reliance on local property taxes on homes to finance elementary and secondary education, and the growing refusal of voters to approve millage increases on their homes.
- (2) The reluctance of states

To increase income, estate, and gift taxes to finance the growing educational needs which may put a particular state at a competitive disadvantage with surrounding or competing states.

(3) The failure of Congress to provide adequate funds for existing programs of federal aid to schools and to enact a longer-range program of financing.

(4) The failure of the states to prepare a longer-range program of their needs and their financial capacity, and finally goals over a 10-year period so both the federal government and local school districts can know what their respective roles could and should be.

COHEN SUGGESTED that some thought should be given to reducing class size in Michigan. The number of pupils per teacher in Michigan public elementary and secondary schools in 1967 was approximately 25. This compared with about 18 in the state with the lowest ratio and nearly 28 in the state with the highest ratio. Michigan ranked 37th in the nation on this indicator.

Michigan ranks 25th in the nation in the average number of school years completed by persons age 25 and over (10.6 years) and compared to 12.2 years in the state with the highest average).

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WILLIAM C. COMSTOCK of 16147 Riverside Drive, Livonia, has been promoted to sales training manager of The Foxboro Company. Prior to the appointment, Comstock was manager of the firm's Detroit branch office. A graduate of Michigan State University, he joined Foxboro as a sales engineer in 1954.

Trout Catches Good At Cooley.

Ron Spitzer, fish biologist for the Michigan Department of Natural Resources, reports good sport fishing for Rainbow trout in Cooley Lake, Oakland County.

The Department also reports bass fishing good in most of the Oakland lakes, night fishing best with surface baits.



MARVIN R. STEMPIEN

Kuhn Wants Data

State Senator George Kuhn (R-W. Bloomfield) Wednesday asked Atty. General Frank J. Kelley to release the exact state of 27 indictments issued by Oakland County one man grand juries.

Kuhn, at the same time denied Kelley's charge that he was "interfering" with the state's legal machinery, and what, if any, legal action has been taken by your office since the date of issuance," Kuhn wrote.

KUHN TOLD The Observer Thursday that he "was not out to kill the one man grand juries. Kelley is deluding the public; he's a double-talker as a crime fighter, in my judgment."

Kuhn also said he felt reputed Mafia moneyman Peter Lazzaro "would testify tomorrow. Why doesn't Kelley ask him?"

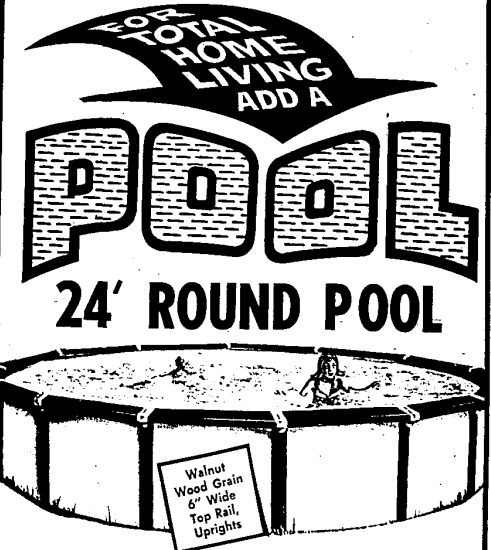
Kelley, in replying to an earlier letter on the same matter, had said that his office was trying to prosecute the cases but had been slowed by a long series of State Supreme Court orders which deny access by the prosecution to grand jury records except in contempt and perjury cases.

Kuhn said that Kelley should have asked the Legislature for special laws to alleviate that problem.

KUHN FURTHER wrote to Kelley: "It is imperative that as a result of the vast sums of public taxpayers' dollars spent in calling and conducting one man grand juries (some have cost more than \$250,000), every legal effort possible should be made to bring these cases to prosecution. Considering the new Oakland County grand jury duty to begin, we cannot continue the practice of building up a tremendous backlog of serious criminal indictments without expeditious legal action to follow."

Kuhn charged that Kelley was trying "to scuttle the one man grand jury system." Kuhn said history of Michigan one man grand juries proved them effective.

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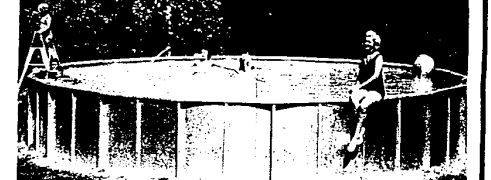
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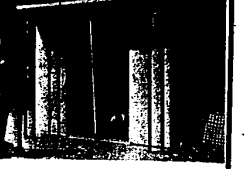
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