

Milliken To Risk Political Future On Tax Reform

By DON HOENSHILL

analysis

plan will divert \$497 million in property tax levies to a state income tax which will net \$73 million more for the schools.

Politicians look westward at Milliken's daring, a politically explosive reform package a year before he goes before the voters for the first time as a candidate for governor. Milliken said:

analysis

"I am prepared to stake my political future on a push for reform.

"And if I fail, I'd rather go down fighting for a plan I believe in completely than to accept a compromise that falls short of what is needed."

LEGISLATORS ARE far less determined despite heavy pressure from local schools. They threaten to puncture Milliken's momentum, take over the fall session and write their own plan with an eye on 1970.

Lansing-watchers anticipate a compromise plan at best probably with a cutoff date on an increased income tax. This technique would allow an assessment of school needs on

a continuing basis, rather than relying on the drift-panic-crisis to develop.

Milliken will try a big selling job this month among schoolmen, civic groups and taxpayers.

Even before the session starts, Democrats and Republicans in the Legislature will shoot at Milliken's plan and draft their own. Some individual lawmakers will disagree with

everybody and draw up others.

The important thing here is that Milliken is coming up with a framework for discussion. It was put together by his special Educational Reform Commission chaired by himself, a predecessor for governors.

THE FINANCIAL PARTS of the Milliken plan appear to be:

- Lower the average property tax by \$20 per \$1,000 (or 20

mill). The state average is \$28.05. The remaining \$8 per \$1,000 would be collected by the state.

- The property tax loss of \$497 million would be counteracted by \$570 million in higher state income taxes, leaving a net of \$73 million. Personal income taxes would rise from 2.6 to 4.5 per cent, corporations from 5 to 7.5 per cent.
- Empower districts to levy their own income taxes, abolish exemptions for churches and other organizations, establishing a basic \$3,000 homestead property tax exemption for individuals. This is a plan tried last year by Rep. Roy Spender (R-Attica) and his place in Milliken's plan displays a quick genuflection to the legislature.

The plan is expected to call for halving the number of districts, mostly by consolidation. The intermediate district would provide all bus transportation. The final result would be cutting down the present 633 school districts to 326 and establishing 2,500 students as the minimum district student population.

As the school year started in Michigan, participants in the educational reform session impending were:

- Milliken: Guardedly optimistic.
- Legislators: Worried about 1970 and the 1969 deer season.
- Schoolmen: Hopeful, but betting 2-1 that the deer season will win.

Support Parents Fighting Half-Day Classes

EDITOR: As Westland residents, who, as of 1968, paid the highest school taxes in the state of Michigan, and who have never experienced half-day sessions (3 1/2 hours) other than kindergarten for our children, we heartily endorse the efforts of the pioneer "15 residents of Livonia" who have sought court action to prevent the "arbitrary, capricious, unconstitutional" (not to mention discriminatory) efforts of the Livonia School District to put some of our children on half-day sessions.

Last spring, despite Livonia's reluctance, the state legislature distanced the Nankin Mills School District-half of the district went to the Wayne Community School District, which will allow the absorbed students to enjoy a full day's schooling; the other half (us) have become part of the "prestigious" Livonia School District.

Livonia has always presented a public image of "educational frisks" in Michigan. However, since Westland has only been part of their school system for less than two months, we haven't had time to assess the long-term damage that may result by their notification of Aug. 15, 1969 that all fifth-through-eighth graders will be put on 2 1/2-hour daily sessions. This 2 1/2-hour daily session represents less school time than the former Nankin Mills kindergarten class experienced through last June.

Despite the defeated Livonia millage issue last spring, doesn't the extra money voted by the Michigan legislature to Livonia (for their acceptance of our portion of the now-defunct Nankin Mills School District) permit the Livonia School Board to use our existing, adequate facilities and to hire extra teachers for our children in order to continue our full-time educational program for all grades?

Had we had an opportunity to vote on the millage issue in Livonia last spring, based on past performances, it is certain Westland residents would have voted for it. However, we have had no voice in the millage issue nor in the selection of the school board, yet our children are being severely penalized. It is difficult to believe that only 10 courageous Livonia res-

READERS' FORUM

Letters must be limited to 300 words. Letters must be signed, with the writer's address. Names will be withheld only at the writer's request and for good cause. Please type or write plainly. The editor reserves the right to reject unsuitable letters.

idents object to half of an education for their children and the "high-handed" tactics of their school board, and we are sure that Westland parents (especially parents of fifth-through-eighth grade pupils) will support them all the way.

(MRS.) GORDON W. DAVIS
Westland

Livonia Parents Missed Chance

EDITOR: Attorney James McCarthy may think he represents the entire citizenry of Livonia in his "class action" legal suit against half-day sessions, but he's very mistaken.

He does NOT represent this family of a good many others! We have no intention of attempting to recall our school board, fire our administration or take legal action to prevent half-days. We would hope our help could be much more constructive. Why not put all this energy into pressing the state Legislature for greater support for our schools?

The time to have taken immediate action against half-days, Livonia parents, was at the polls in April when we were asked to approve the temporary one-year millage increase. Wouldn't that have been much more economical than the price you're paying now?

MR. AND MRS. BERNARD KOZAKIEWICZ
9184 Hazel
Livonia

Raps Reinstatement Of 2 Instructors

EDITOR: It was a sad, sad, sad, sad day for the community when the state mediation board arbitrator ordered the reinstatement of the two Schoolcraft col-

left-turn lane has improved the speed and flow of traffic as planned.

But as is almost bound to happen something somewhere is not going to work out quite well enough. Try traveling west on Plymouth-say from Merriam. Plan to make a left turn onto Farmington Road at Sheldon Center. Pull into the left turn lane, which is provided for left turns, and find that, lo and behold, you'd better not do it unless you're driving a must have, beside feeling like an idiot for not knowing this a half-mile back you also find yourself in no man's land from which there's some little escape.

Now, beside feeling like an idiot for not knowing this a half-mile back you also find yourself in no man's land from which there's some little escape.

When a chance does come to swing right to avoid left-turners facing you, waiting to go north on Farmington, you announce your ideology to all who share the intersection with you. The Highway Dept. and the Wayne County Road Commission, it seems to me, must share this embarrassment for creating this trap.

To add insult to injury, one will travel west at least a half-mile to Stark Rd. before getting the chance to turn left and return to Farmington Road via residential streets south of Plymouth. I must admit I didn't

travel that far but turned into a business parking area, turned around, without buying anything, and pulled back onto Plymouth Rd. to return to Farmington Rd. I feel I must say that I did not make a U-turn on Plymouth as I believe that this is as much against the law as if I had made a left turn in the first place.

Now, will someone please do something about this or do I call Contact 10?

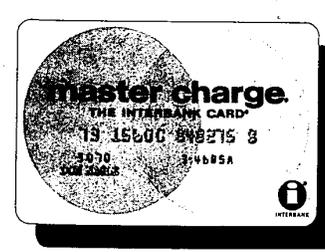
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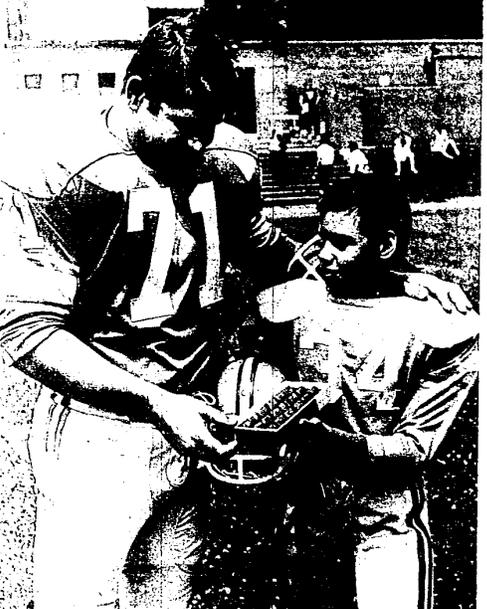
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HAPPINESS IS A young football player hobnobbing with his hero at training camp. Al Hunter, of the Plymouth Junior Lions unit of the Western Suburban Junior Football League, sells the first box of candy to Detroit Lions captain Alex Karras. Al is one of 1,500 boys of the Western Suburban Junior Football League participating in the candy sale beginning Sept. 6.