

Mostly good marks for Milliken

By Suzie Rollins Singer
and Tim Richard
staff writers

To six college political scientists and administrators, Gov. William G. Milliken has been a master public policymaker and legislative achiever in his 13 years as Michigan's chief executive.

The Oakland University, Oakland Community College and Schoolcraft College experts hope the person elected in 1982 will have the same qualities of conciliation and gentle manners. Only such a person can tackle the problems of Michigan's economic rejuvenation, they believe.

They find only a few weaknesses in the Republican from Traverse City who announced last month he seek neither a fourth four-year term nor a U.S. Senate seat.

Those weaknesses would be Milliken's failure to groom and elect other moderate-Republicans and, perhaps, his selection of politically oriented budget directors.

Several see a role for Milliken in the Reagan Administration, probably as an ambassador.

The bipartisan six were interviewed as they corrected final exams or worked in their offices the day Milliken made his announcement.

1. What was Milliken's strongest point as governor?

Roger Marz, professor of political science at Oakland University: "His strongest contribution, over time, was the effective work he did with the legislature. Both houses were controlled by Democrats. There was substantial public policy progress. Compare Michigan to New York and Illinois, where there has also been divided political control. Here there has been effective cooperation. Milliken gets the highest marks (for a governor) in the country."

Gerald Faye, professor of political science at Oakland Community College and a Democratic Washtenaw County commissioner: "His humanness. Without doubt, Milliken was able to get well meaning people of both parties to work

together. He was phenomenally successful. He could deal with diverse groups.

"He was aggressive, without appearing to be overbearing, in fighting for the things he wanted," added Faye, who was a Ford Fellow in the legislature when Milliken was a state senator. "And he gained most of them. He got his own party to accept downstate Michigan. We may never see that again."

George Montgomery, Oakland Community College's political science professor, former Democratic state representative and one-time candidate for Congress: "He was able to get broad support from moderates in both parties. He was always a fair man. When I was House floor leader in 1969-70, he was easy to work with and has done a good job throughout all of his terms."

Tom Castevens, professor and chairman of the political science at Oakland University: "The governor is a decent-minded fellow who is very experienced and competent in governmental matters. He's a fine leader who didn't show biases when making budget cuts. There was no way anyone could say they had been unfairly screwed by the cuts. The governor contributed a good deal to the relative calm in the state and legislature."

W. Kenneth Linder, vice president of business affairs at Schoolcraft College, who testified frequently before state legislative committees in Lansing: "He was a good administrator, he was a person who could call a spade a spade. He is a gentleman and articulate spokesman for the state. He made hard decisions and was a good friend to community colleges and a constant supporter of higher education."

Lawrence Gaitskill, political science instructor at Schoolcraft College: "He was an excellent campaigner, very personable, most articulate and conveyed sincerity. He's a capable politician."

2. What was Milliken's weakest point?

Marz of OU: "The politicization of the top level of Michigan's state admin-

istrative system. When he entered, the budget system was staffed with very clever, non-political specialists. That's not true any more. (Dr. Gerald) Miller and (Dr. John) Dempsey, his predecessors, have been good political point men.

"The quality of his high-level people hasn't been bad, but it's one of his weaker points."

Faye of OCC emphatically disagreed on the budget point. "The reason Michigan isn't in worse shape than it is in that Milliken, budgetarily, did a phenomenally good job," said Faye, who is a former lobbyist for OCC.

"I don't think he was very weak," said Democrat Faye, citing the recent workers compensation reform victory. "There is an apparent inability to groom a replacement who can be compared to him," he added, pointing to a lack of success in recruiting strong candidates.

Castevens of OU, a Republican: "In partisan terms, Milliken has not done as much for the GOP statewide as he could have."

Montgomery, Linder and Gaitskill didn't want to comment.

3. What kind of governor do you think Michigan needs in 1983 and for the rest of the '80s?

"Someone who's willing to suffer a lot," quipped Marz of OU.

More seriously, Marz added, "Economically, the state of the state is going to get worse. Reform of workers compensation and unemployment compensation will have no discernable effect for five to 10 years. We're still tied to that auto industry."

Faye of OCC looks for someone to continue the work on a robotics center at the University of Michigan. "We need someone who can work with the dominant Democratic Party, which will continue to control at least the House of Representatives, regardless of reappointment."

In 1983, said OCC's Montgomery, the new governor will have to be "someone who is willing to stick his neck out like Milliken. He'll have to be someone who can live up to Milliken's reputation. What we need is another Milliken who

isn't tired. He's a moderate and reasonable."

OU's Castevens looks for someone to help rebuild Michigan's economy in ways other than what's good for the Big Three automakers. "We need someone who can follow Milliken's tradition of a calm and serious individual who cooperates with the legislature."

Schoolcraft's Linder agrees: "We need a leader who can assume a role in the economic redevelopment of the state and continue to support community colleges in their role of developing a work force."

His college, said SC's Gaitskill, is looking for a governor with national interests. "We need a governor who knows how to lobby with Washington, one who can do away with the impression that Michigan is not a good state for business, and one who supports education. We can't become a conservative state. We need a progressive governor."

4. Whom would you bet on to win the executive office in 1982? Who would you personally like to see in that spot?

Marz, who works quietly on Democratic research papers and platforms, predicted that "the list will get bigger and smaller" — bigger, as Lt. Gov. James Brickley and perhaps state chamber of commerce president Richard Headlee get in, smaller as some Democrats drop out.

Faye "presumes Mr. Blanchard (U.S. Rep. James Blanchard of eastern Oakland County) will be the next governor" but personally leans to his own state senator from Ann Arbor, Edward Pierce, or Sen. Kerry Kammer of Pontiac.

Gaitskill looks to a Democrat to take the Lansing spot. "Dems would have a good chance if they got their act together."

Castevens couldn't pick a new chief executive, but said Brickley will have a tough time winning. "I doubt if Brickley will have statewide appeal as a candidate on the hustings to beat a Democratic candidate. It will be a very tough year for the Republican candidates."

OCC enrolls for winter semester

Regular registration for the winter 1982 semester at Oakland Community College will be held from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Jan. 4-5 according to alphabetical schedule.

Classes begin Jan. 6. Applications for the winter semester are still being accepted. Interested persons should contact the campus they wish to attend for information on admission procedures.

Students may register at the following OCC campus locations: the Auburn Hills Campus, 2900 Featherstone Road, Auburn Heights; the Highland Lakes Campus, 7350 Cooley Lake Road, Union Lake; the Orchard Ridge Campus, 27055 Orchard Lake Road, Farmington Hills; and the Southfield Campus, 22322 Rutland, Southfield.

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