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Major Issues of the 113th G.A., February 14, 1979

Vern Riffe

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INTER-OFFICE COMMUNICATION

TO Speaker Riffe DATE February 14, 1979

FROM: Ann

SUBJECT: Information on Committee for Democratic Elections Dinner

-- Dinner will be held at: Spring Valley Country Club
1100 Gulf Road
Elyria, Ohio

-- Cocktails at 6:30 p.m. on February 15, 1979
Dinner at 7:30 p.m.

-- Grant Keys says they expect nearly 200 people who are key contributors to local party campaigners - he says all will be friendly faces.

-- He wants you to discuss what you expect to be the major issues of the 113th.

SPEECH FOR C.O.D.E.

I AM PROUD TO BE A DEMOCRAT. DEMOCRATS HAVE ACCOMPLISHED MANY GREAT THINGS IN OHIO. YES, WE AS DEMOCRATS, HAVE MUCH TO BE PROUD OF.

EACH ONE OF YOU DESERVES MUCH CREDIT FOR OUR PARTY'S SUCCESS IN NOT ONLY THIS IMMEDIATE AREA, BUT ALSO IN THE STATE OF OHIO AND OUR NATION.

YOU ARE THE ONES WHO ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE FACT THAT OUR PRESIDENT IS A DEMOCRAT. YOUR WORK HAS RESULTED IN THE FACT THAT THE DEMOCRATS CONTROL THE STATEWIDE OFFICES OF ATTORNEY GENERAL, SECRETARY OF STATE, TREASURER OF STATE, AUDITOR OF STATE AND CHIEF JUSTICE OF THE SUPREME COURT.

BECAUSE OF YOUR EFFORTS, THE DEMOCRATIC PARTY CONTROLS BOTH HOUSES OF THE OHIO GENERAL ASSEMBLY - THE HOUSE BY A 62-37 MAJORITY AND THE SENATE BY AN 18-15 MAJORITY.

YES, THE SCOPE OF YOUR WORK IN THE LOCAL DEMOCRATIC PARTY GOES FAR BEYOND THE LOCAL REALM. I MEAN THIS SINCERELY WHEN I SAY, WITHOUT HARDWORKING, DEDICATED, LOCAL DEMOCRAT WORKERS, OUR STATE AND NATIONAL PARTY ORGANIZATION HAS NO CHANCE OF ATTAINING ANY DEGREE OF SUCCESS.

I AM PROUD TO BE THE LEADER OF THE DEMOCRATIC PARTY IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES. DURING THE PAST FEW YEARS, THE OHIO GENERAL ASSEMBLY - UNDER THE LEADERSHIP OF THE DEMOCRATS - HAS ACCOMPLISHED A GREAT DEAL IN MAKING OHIO A BETTER PLACE TO LIVE AND TO WORK.

I EXPECT THE ACTIVITY OF THE 113TH OHIO GENERAL ASSEMBLY TO ADD TO THE LIST OF MAJOR LEGISLATIVE ADVANCEMENTS OF THIS PAST FEW YEARS. WE WILL CONTINUE IN OUR EFFORTS TO MAKE OHIO A BETTER PLACE TO LIVE.

TODAY, I WOULD LIKE TO GIVE YOU MY PERSPECTIVES ON WHAT I SEE AS SOME OF THE MAJOR ISSUES WHICH FACE LAWMAKERS OF THE UPCOMING BIENNIUM.

I. BUDGET

ONE OF THE LEGISLATURE'S FIRST RESPONSIBILITIES WILL BE TO
DECIDE THE DETAILS OF THE TWO YEAR STATE BUDGET.

- NEW BUDGET TAKES EFFECT JULY 1, 1979.
- GOVERNOR HAS SUBMITTED \$17.7 BILLION PROPOSAL.
- EXTENSIVE BUDGET HEARINGS HAVE ALREADY BEGUN.

II. TAXES

MANY PEOPLE ASK THE QUESTION, "WILL ADDITIONAL TAXES BE NEEDED?"

-- DURING THE COMING BIENNIUM, THE GENERAL REVENUE FUND IS
EXPECTED TO GROW BY APPROXIMATELY \$1.5 BILLION.

- HOPE THIS GROWTH IS SUFFICIENT TO MEET THE NEEDS OF THE STATE.
- NEED FOR ADDITIONAL REVENUE WILL HAVE TO BE SHOWN TO ME.

III. EDUCATION

EDUCATION WILL BE A TOP PRIORITY OF LAWMAKERS THIS SESSION. THE

SCHOOLS MUST BE KEPT OPEN.

-- THERE ARE 616 SCHOOL DISTRICTS IN OHIO.

-- OHIO HAS OVER 2 MILLION STUDENTS.

LARGE SCALED PUBLIC EDUCATION HAS BEEN A SUCCESSFUL AMERICAN
EXPERIMENT.

-- THE EXPERIMENT IS AT A CROSSROADS.

EITHER WE KEEP OHIO'S PUBLIC SCHOOLS OPEN AND OPERATING AT A
RESPECTABLE QUALITY LEVEL, OR WE WATCH THE GREATEST ASSET A DEMOCRACY
HAS UNDERGO AN EROSION WHICH WILL LEAD TO A CASTE SYSTEM THAT FINDS
QUALITY EDUCATION AVAILABLE ONLY TO THOSE FAMILIES WITH WEALTH.

A SOUND SYSTEM OF PUBLIC EDUCATION:

-- REMAINS THE BASIS OF ECONOMIC GROWTH.

-- TRAINS CITIZENS FOR EMPLOYMENT AND CITIZENSHIP.

-- IS BASIC TO PRESERVING AN EDUCATED, DEMOCRATIC SOCIETY.

IV. OTHER LEGISLATIVE GOALS BASIC TO THE GROWTH AND QUALITY OF
LIFE IN OHIO.

- THE MAINTENANCE OF OHIO'S SYSTEM OF ROADS AND BRIDGES.
- KEEP JOB OPPORTUNITIES STRONG.
- MENTAL HEALTH AND MENTAL RETARDATION LEGISLATION.
- ASSURE THAT OUR CORRECTIONS SYSTEM MUST BE APPROPRIATE,

EFFECTIVE, AND HUMANE.

- ENSURE FAIR UTILITY RATES.
- ENSURE FAIR HEALTH CARE COSTS.
- OUR ENERGY SOURCES MUST BE CONSERVED AND DEVELOPED.

V. DEATH PENALTY LEGISLATION

A MATTER WHICH IS BEING CONSIDERED BY THE HOUSE JUDICIARY
COMMITTEE IS A PROPOSAL TO REWRITE OHIO'S CAPITAL PUNISHMENT LAW.

- SUPREME COURT DECLARED OHIO LAW UNCONSTITUTIONAL IN 1978.

-- MUST DRAFT A PROPOSAL WHICH CONFORMS TO THE U.S. SUPREME COURT GUIDELINES.

-- NEW PROPOSAL EXPANDS THE LIST OF MITIGATING FACTORS.

-- IS AN EMOTIONAL AND CONTROVERSIAL ISSUE.

-- JUST TUESDAY OF THIS WEEK, THE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE CONSIDERED 53 AMENDMENTS TO THE PROPOSAL IN ONE DAY.

VI. "BOTTLE BILL"

THIS SESSION, "BOTTLE BILL" LEGISLATION HAS BEEN PLACED ON THE LAWMAKER'S DOCKET BY INITIATIVE PETITION.

-- PROPOSAL CALLS FOR MANDATORY 10¢ DEPOSIT ON CANS AND BOTTLES.

-- INTRODUCED REPEATEDLY OVER THE LAST DECADE, BUT HAS ALWAYS DIED IN COMMITTEE.

-- THE OHIO ALLIANCE FOR RETURNABLES CIRCULATED PETITIONS.

-- THE LEGISLATURE NOW HAS FOUR MONTHS TO PASS A PROPOSAL - IN A FORM SATISFACTORY TO THE ALLIANCE.

-- AFTER FOUR MONTHS, THE OHIO ALLIANCE FOR RETURNABLES MAY SEEK TO SECURE THE SIGNATURES OF AN ADDITIONAL 92,000 VOTERS AND HAVE THE PROPOSAL PLACED ON THE NOVEMBER, 1979 GENERAL ELECTION BALLOT.

-- BILL WOULD ALSO BAN PULL TABS ON CANS.

-- WOULD TAKE EFFECT IN TWO YEARS AFTER PASSAGE.

-- NOW BEING CONSIDERED BY HOUSE ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE.

-- BOTTLERS AND THE CANNING INDUSTRY ARE STRONGLY OPPOSED TO THE PROPOSAL.

VII. OPIC PROPOSAL

PETITIONS HAVE ALSO BEEN CIRCULATED FOR A PROPOSAL WHICH WOULD DRASTICALLY INCREASE BUSINESS TAXES WHILE LOWERING THE PROPERTY TAX FOR LOWER INCOME HOMEOWNERS AND RENT PAYERS. THIS PROPOSAL HAS NOT BEEN FORMALLY INTRODUCED AS A BILL.

-- SPONSORED BY THE OHIO PUBLIC INTEREST CAMPAIGN.

-- INTRODUCTION IS AWAITING A 10TH DISTRICT COURT OF APPEALS

DECISION.

-- IF INTRODUCED, PROPOSAL WILL BEGIN THE LEGISLATIVE PROCESS
IN THE SENATE.

THESE ARE JUST A FEW OF THE ISSUES OF VITAL IMPORTANCE TO THE PEOPLE OF OHIO. THE MEMBERS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY FACE ENORMOUS CHALLENGES IN MEETING THESE ISSUES HEAD ON, BUT I AM CONFIDENT THAT WE WILL EFFECTIVELY AND FAIRLY MEET THESE CHALLENGES.

IN CLOSING, I WANT TO CHALLENGE YOU, AS DEMOCRATS, TO REMEMBER WHAT OUR PARTY STANDS FOR. REMEMBER THE IMPORTANT ROLE WHICH EACH AND EVERY ONE OF US PLAYS IN PROMOTING THE DEMOCRATIC PARTY AND ITS COMMITMENT TO MAKING OHIO A BETTER PLACE TO BE.