O'Neill addresses state campaign issues

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Q: Specifically, what about Boston, what is still unfolding, the bonded bill in the State Legislature?

A: Well, it's one of the sillier things I've ever seen. I don't agree with Joe.

Mayer White on the leadership designates that the chief executive officer of the state government and the executive of the city have the capacity of sitting down and ironing out what a Tregor bill or a bonding package is going to look like, in order to put their fiscal state back in place.

Q: In Cambridge there are thousands of local residents are often concerned about the growth of the universities. The Simplex Steering Committee and similar organizations propose that MIT act in the needs of local community for local jobs and for residential areas with the economic demands of high technology.

A: And I have really distanced that both our school, MIT as well as Harvard. Our government of Cambridge not only have a prolothetical but they understand what the impact of expansion means to use displacement, to fewer jobs, less economic opportunities because you're removing some of the revenue package, whether it's a portion of a residential community or an industrialized community. Okay, but there's a public policy developed around your expansion policy, so you know that whatever your expansion, however your expansion takes you, you know exactly what's going to happen to the people that are going to be displaced, what's going to happen to the jobs, what's going to happen to transportation, what's going to happen to the industrial base, and what long-term effect that's going to have on the quality like Cambridge.

But the open warfare, the canker sores, can't exist between a private higher education institution and a city like Cambridge.

In one sense, MIT and Harvard are wonderful opportunities for our future. I came from Cambridge -- North Cambridge -- and as far as I was concerned, I never knew that Harvard or MIT even existed in that city, for the lack of contribution that the institutions made to the neighborhood folks.

Q: Do think that's changed now?

A: In a moderate extent. I don't think anybody has been able to bridge the gap between the town and gown relationship, and that's because nobody has ever attempted to do always a administrative structure where one side gets pitied against the other. In one sense, you have a trysted partnership moving and moving out, and in order to do that, you have to be there for a longer term.

Q: What's the future of the campaign. How has campaign fundraising been going?

A: Well, I press both former Governor Dukakis and Governor Kennedy, I have raised somewhere around a million dollars. I've raised $150,000 of that money, and I spend all my money, which is what challengers do. Yes, know, I've campaigned in a serious way and I have raised money on Wednesday afternoon for it, but I always was able to get the money by earning it by Saturday night.

Q: With the recent situation? Are people beginning to take the campaign more seriously and, therefore, contribute more funds?

A: We've never had that type of problem of saying, "Look, we're broke, we can't go another step." There's a whole number of people out there that haven't even focused on this gubernatorial race. Most people in the state work long and hard in the course of a workday, then they go home. They eat dinner with their family, they watch the evening news and have a drink, a beer, and then I was behind by 40 points in the polls. Ed King was behind by 30 points in the polls six weeks before the primary. I ran Ted Kennedy's campaign in New England. The day he announced he was ahead of Carter by 10 points, so, the polls are applicable to the day they are taken, but don't show any movement. You can develop...

Q: The MBTA seems to be chronically plagued with financial difficulty, with labor problems, with schedule problems. What can you as governor do to make the MBTA?

A: A put of stick of dynamics under it. Look, six months I was compared to John Anderson because of the time. Last week, some newspaper came out and called me the Fred Harris of the MBTA. The current administration doesn't know. One thing is true: The service has decreased; it went when the fare was increased. There isn't another public transportation authority or system in this country that runs itself like the MBTA does. The thing has been bankrupted, and it is bankrupt right now. With cutbacks in federal monies from Washington, the deficiencies aren't going to be simply at $200 million; they're going to be more like $500 million. Now, how is that going to help you, as a member of our community, number one? We might separate our commuter rail and put it in state administration and just simply say, "No longer can we afford it to run the way it's running." Every passenger on that system of commuter rail gets subsidized $100 per round trip every single day. It's cheaper to buy each one of those commuters a used car. You'd have to be able to look at those numbers and continue to run that system. And I think that burden ought to be taken off the back of the property taxpayer; let the state run it. And after the contracts run out, give it back to the [Boston and Maine Railroad] on a leaseback basis, and let them operate it in the black.

Secondly, the bus service. Give it back to private operators. They run their bus companies in the black currently; let them take the bus service from the MBTA and let it be run in the black as well. The plans ought to be forced; my plan does lower a reduction in fares of 20 percent. And let the T continuously run the rapid transit, bit by bit into those work rules, and don't equivocate. In other words, say no to the Carson's Union, which, in my mind, is not a positive trade union movement, but it gives the trade union movement in this state a black eye. I think we ought to declare it a national historical landmark. The MBTA is the oldest system in America, it's run in an antiquated fashion, and it's silly.

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