

THE 1997
COMPILATION OF
COOL MOOSE PARTY
PRESS STATEMENTS
AND
OTHER RELATED DOCUMENTS

January 21, 1997

COOL MOOSE PARTY READY TO MEET THE 1997 ASSEMBLY

“As the 1997 General Assembly settles in, the Cool Moose Party will begin working to get action on its priority issues. The Party has special interest in three areas during this session; they are: education reform and funding methods, campaign finance reform and election fairness, and taxation. Additionally, the Cool Moose Party will continue its commitment to self-government through voter initiative in continuing its participation as a member of the Voter Initiative Alliance” said Robert J. Healey, Jr., Chairperson of the Cool Moose Party.

“As a political party without members in the Assembly, our efforts of reform can be easily thwarted by the powers that be, but still, we feel that our mere oversight presence and the offering of sound policy alternatives can produce a public good. We will continue in our efforts to bring government back to the people while making the process of government more participatory and understandable” Healey said.

“Last election, the Cool Moose Party had 18 candidates for the Assembly, and while none succeeded in taking a seat, several got vote totals over 20%, and, in Hopkinton, two Cool Moose were elected to the Town Council. We are a growing political force – learning to walk before we run. By maintaining a watchful presence in the Assembly, we remind the other parties that their failures will be our future successes. It is surprising how effective this can be in the operation of government” maintained Healey.

In announcing the focus of the Cool Moose Party in 1997, Healey was clear to indicate that by setting focus topics the Party was in no way limiting its agenda “We are examining all legislation, but we are giving greater scrutiny to our priorities. We will be working and, perhaps more importantly, we will not be marginalized: Healey concluded.

January 22, 1997

ONCE EMPOWERED, THE BEST USE MAY BE NONE AT ALL

During my gubernatorial campaign in 1994, I advocated the abolition of the Lieutenant Governor’s office as a waste of taxpayers’ dollars. In fact, I even recall using this issue as a part of a ‘You Paid For It’ taping expressing my outrage.

Now, the Governor, with the backing of the Supreme Court, is seeking to fill the office, one that if empty would barely be missed. I’m afraid that on this issue I agree with the Senate that this office should remain vacant, although probably for different reasons.

I, and the Cool Moose Party, have long advocated the abolition. After the 1992 changes related to the Governor’s powers in the Rhode Island Constitution, the Governor was allowed to take power outside of the boundaries of the State (say to the Cape or Jamaica).

At that time, the need for the office of Lieutenant Governor downgraded from marginal to barely substantiated.

Whatever reasons there are for the existence of the Lieutenant Governor since 1992, there are alternatives that make more sense. Have another General Officer placed second in the line of succession. Let the Senate President preside over the Senate and make the nugatory appointments previously done by the Lieutenant Governor. The savings are great.

While some argue that the Lieutenant Governor and Governor need to run as a team, what real good would this serve? Let the Governor appoint the advisors he or she may seek. To create a tag team approach to government is more appropriate to Big Time Wrestling. What's next, a No Holds Barred Match to the Death over the Budget? (That sounds too interesting, though, doesn't it?)

If anything, perhaps the use of the office as State Auditor General/Citizens Ombudsman would be more appropriate given the needs of the people of the State.

With a half million dollar budget (in a year of a projected 15 million or so deficit) is the filling of this office imperative? Or, is it political gamesmanship? Is it any wonder why people shake their heads in disgust over the continual inefficient workings of a two party mix?

While the Governor may have shown that he has the Constitutional power to nominate, I, for one, urge him to fight the urge to place another crony. I urge that in the interest of the people of Rhode Island, this matter be clarified and the office abolished. While I find the Senate's power grab objectionable, I am in agreement with the outcome of Senator Piava-Weed's recommendation that would involve returning the issue to the electorate.

Governors, given power to act, rarely practice restraint. Here, however, restraint is well warranted and is in the interest of the people as opposed to the seating of some unelected political hack being placed second in line to the highest office of the State.

January 23, 1997

PLAYING POLITICAL GAMES OR PROTECTING AGAINST COURT PACKING?

“While I've often criticized the buffoonery that occurs in the Assembly as being petty politics without governmental foundation, the recent vote not to confirm Ms. Curran as a Supreme Court justice based on age may actually be a valid exercise in maintaining the separation of powers. Without any consideration of Ms. Curran's impeccable credentials, the issue is whether or not the legislative branch of government will allow the executive branch of government to pact the court for posterity” said Robert J. Healey, Jr., Chairperson of the Cool Moose Party.

“Given the relative youthfulness of the present court and the somewhat certain additional appointments by the Governor before the end of his present term, another justice with a capability of serving four decades may be something that causes concern or distress – especially given the domination of the two party system of government” argued Healey.

“If the Governor is allowed another youthful appointment to the bench, the Governor has most likely extended his policy influence beyond the years of executive service” reasoned Healey.

“While the argument may be raised that another of similar age was recently confirmed in light of a court packing argument, such is even more reasons to allow age to be a fact. Court majorities that could last full generations deserve some consideration.

“Without a mandatory retirement age and with lifetime tenure, a Supreme Court justice has a tremendous power to be exerted over the future, for good or for bad.. While there are political games at play here, such should not cloud valid constitutional reasoning. Using separation of powers reasoning, there is some cover in using age in consideration of judicial appointments to the Supreme Court” Healey concluded.

January 27, 1997

MAKE THE BUDGET THE FIRST ITEM OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

“With all the political bickering that has marked the start of the 1997 General Assembly, can there be any expectations of not having a repeat of the budget crisis that occurred in 1996? While there will inevitably be politics played with the budget by both Republican and Democrat interests, it behooves these politicians to iron out these budget disputes early in the session so as to allow for the playing of politics without injury to the regular people living in Rhode island” said Robert J. Healey, Jr., Chairperson of the Cool Moose Party.

“The administration and the leadership have at their disposal the means to adjust the budgeting process to allow for early consideration of the budget rather than leaving it to the end of the session. This last minute fire drill does little good and much harm to the Stat’s municipalities, waiting to see what has occurred financially once the budget smoke clears. This is a terrible way to run a multi-million dollar project” continued Healey.

The Cool Moose Party has advocated the budget being considered in the first part of the session before any other legislation so as to determine in advance what can and cannot be afforded, to give communities in the Sate a better budgeting forecast (since most approve budgets for July 1 fiscal years), and to create a greater sense of fiscal awareness in the Assembly.

“We may never escape the tug of war over the budget, but at least that issue will not be compounded by its failure to address local needs. The powers have the ability to change the system, but they lack the willpower to change. Rhode Island cannot long afford to play adolescent games with its budgeting process” concluded Healey.

January 28, 1997

RIDDLE ME THIS ...

“Over the last few months several questions need addressing, whether or not they are politically correct to ask” said Robert J. Healey, Jr., Chairperson of the Cool Moose Party.

These questions are:

- As a result of the recent crack downs and closing of strip joints in the City of Providence, has Brown University reported a notable decline in tuition payments?
- Considering the office holders in Rhode Island, should a professional football team relocate to Rhode Island, could they honestly be called ‘Patriots’ or should there be a mover afoot to call them ‘Stealers’?
- Is increased ridership out of Green Airport a good thing for Rhode Island in light of recent population reports?
- Whereas age is a great concern to some Democrat members of the House Judiciary Committee, will they be attending Congressboy Kennedy’s birthday party when he turns 30 next July?
- Do we need a Lieutenant Governor to learn the ropes from the experienced hand currently in office or can we expect a newcomer to know the way to the Cape on his or her own?
- Since our public television station is backboneless in opposing demands by political office holders to appear on its news shows, should we call it ‘Public Official Television’? Or at the very least, shouldn’t it be moved up another 33 notches?
- When the Journal finally goes tabloid, will anyone notice?
- And, finally, if educators are highly represented at the General Assembly, and if, as reports indicate, our education system statewide is in grave disrepair, is it that the people in charge or restructuring education not bright enough to do it right or that we the people are too undereducated to know it?

January 29, 1997

THE VICTOR BELONGS TO THE SPOILS¹

“In the latest battle between the Executive and the Legislative branches over the fate of the Judicial branch, the Governor has been routed. My suggestion to the Governor: if he is going to continue to forego an active role in the battle, don’t complain when he loses the war” said Robert J. Healey, Jr., Chairperson of the Cool Moose Party.

“Instead of a bully pulpit, this Governor has a crying wall” maintained Healey.

“The Executive branch must fight for its policy by rallying the people in support of ideas and visions rather than in anger over failed campaigns. Political battles do not simply get announced by the Governor only to get word of casualties from the front. Active leadership is needed” said Healey.

“This Governor’s lackadaisical approach to political fisticuffs may be a learned behavior from his days in the judicial branch. If he lacks the stomach for these confrontations, why did he run for Governor? Unlike a District Attorney’s office, the job entails leadership skills as well as management ability. You must continually engage the enemy (nota bene: Buddy Cianci)” continued Healey.

“Crying over defeat and attempting to redefine lost battles is unbecoming of a true leader. Rally the people. Don’t rely on the judiciary to continually advance your territory in political wars. Take the time and expend the energy to stand for what you have advocated. High roads offer a spectacular view, but unless you get off the mountaintop you will never get to the place you are seeing” said Healey.

“By forcing the battle to be waged by surrogates, in this case Common Cause, M. Charles Bakst, the Council of Churches and John Hazen While, you have forced them to compromise their supposed neutrality for no real benefit” Healey admonished the Governor.

“While you may have been right as to this person’s ability to serve on the Court, either you political inexperience or you lethargic approach has damned this appointment. Whining will not help. So what if you were right and the legislature acted imprudently. Where were you when it counted? Take a lump, learn a lesson, and next time do your homework” Healey continued.

“Don’t get me wrong, I am not advocating your relinquishing the office to the legislature. Having been a scrappy underdog much of my political life, I enjoy a good political fight as much as anyone. I honestly believe the Executive must stand unwavering and with little or no compromise – that is your role. But it requires work to rally public support while remaining atop brewing discontent” said Healey.

¹ F. Scott Fitzgerald. The Beautiful and Damned

“Leadership has little to do with winning an elective office, but has much to do with setting goals and working hard to accomplish them” concluded Healey.

January 30, 1997

JUST SAVING THE PEOPLE THE PAIN OF GOING OUT TO VOTE

“Rhode Island stands a heartbeat away from an unelected Governor. If for no other reason, this is why the Lieutenant Governors’ office should have either remained vacant or, even better, be filled with the advice and consent of the electorate through an election” said Robert J. Healey, jr., Chairperson of the Cool Moose Party.

“While the potential of having the Speaker of the House assume the office strikes sheer terror within me, at the very least the person was elected by some set of Rhode Islanders and the people, through their elected Representative. Extremely unfortunate, but it was an election” said Healey.

“I have long advocated the abolition of this office and have spoken out against the four year term that created this nightmare. By elimination of the Lieutenant Governor’s office and placing another general officer in the succession line, we could achieve most of what an appointment would have and with less cost and through a statewide vote”

“By filling this office, the Governor has stepped on a very slippery slope. There is an inherent danger in not allowing people to participate in choosing their elected leaders” maintained Healey.

“It is not beyond reason that the Lieutenant Governor could succeed to the Governor’s office. The Governor cites Gerald Ford as an unelected President, but failed to note that Ford was then serving in an elected capacity in the House”.

“Now don’t get me wrong, I often prefer rattlesnakes to politicians, but I still feel that appointment to office lies with the voters” continued Healey.

January 31, 1997

RALLYING THE PEOPLE TO RUN OUT AND DO NOTHING

“The Governor’s lackluster State of the State failed to take his case to the people and did not do much to inspire the average working folks of Rhode Island. His address may have resonated well with bankers and business owners, but it left the average Rhode Islander empty” said Robert J. Healey, Jr., Chairperson of the Cool Moose Party.

“The speech’s highlight was an unspecified call for income tax cuts. With all the regressive taxation impacting Rhode Island and its working poor, this Governor chooses to reduce a progressive form of taxation. Unless tied to some graduation or incentive based program, such a reduction is welfare for the rich. Such is little more than cheap politics that doesn’t merit applause. Tax burdens being lifted from the well to do are not in the best interest of Rhode Island, especially when there is little relief to the poor” maintained Healey.

“Without a doubt, ask anyone if they want their income taxes reduced 10% in five years and the answer will be ‘yes’, but failing to demonstrate the inequities in such a reduction is pure chicanery” said Healey.

“The address was clearly geared to the clubhouse and not the poorhouse” continued Healey.

“Further telling was the Governor’s entry into the enemy’s camp. The Governor told of how he had resolved not to give the State of the State in the House if they gave his appointment to the Supreme Court short shrift, this Governor violated the very first rule of negotiation: don’t threaten what you are unprepared to carry out. In this fight with the Assembly, the Governor continually leads with his chin” Healey stated.

“The Governor’s enthusiasm in his delivery said it all. Rhode Island remains uninspired” concluded Healey.

February 3, 1997

“Tax reform proposal of Providence Mayor Cianci deserve serious consideration. His plan, something like old wine in new bottles, at least has new bottles. It appears as a promising cure to the fatal plague of Rhode Island taxation. Of course, knowing the Mayor as the snake oil salesman that he is, this medicine needs extensive testing to determine whether it is a social panacea or a political placebo. It all is in the dosage prescribed for Providence. Still, the suggested medicine of a payroll tax plan to alleviate the painful symptoms of the property tax appears to be timely creative research. This merits review” said Robert J. Healey, Jr., Chairperson of the Cool Moose Party.

“For years the Cool Moose Party has been advocating property tax relief via an increase in the income taxation – graduated income taxation being a progressive form of taxation. Progressive taxation policy benefits those on fixed income and working poor and middle classes.

“Cianci’s plan, for what little has been seen in the papers to date, appears to be a thinly veiled modified income tax plan. By taking the money from the top in the form of a payroll tax, it is a hybrid form of income taxation. This dog may actually hunt” said Healey.

“While Cianci’s plan presents a challenge to the Governor’s proposals the May has delicately put the Assembly at the fork in the road of whether to reward the rich or the poor in tax breaks. Bravo, Mr. Mayor” continued Healey.

“While one must always be aware of ulterior motivational forces that this Mayor holds in his doctor bag, to his credit, he has proposed something worthy of study. Once Providence’s dosage is properly regulated, this plan could spell relief statewide” concluded Healey.

February 4, 1997

A FEW MORE RHODE ISLAND RIDDLES

“Here are a few more Rhode Island questions that just couldn’t be suppressed” said Robert J. Healey, Jr., Chairperson of the Cool Moose Party.

- Given that the ‘Lieutenant Governor – Sworn-in Appointee’ has to share an office with the Governor, will there really be a problem given the fact that he is a Republican politico. Doesn’t he have experience credits meeting in a phone booth?
- With the Governor’s disposition and his delivery, shouldn’t his recent address be called the “State of the Staid”?
- Since Rhode Island is fascinated with economic gambling, is the Providence Place a win or a show? Last week the question was did it run out of the money?
- When will Little Buddy give up his USA Today paper routing?
- Will the employment given extras by Spielberg be counted next election as part of the jobs created?
- With the continuous, seemingly endless, coverage of the Patriots and the Assembly battles (and soon the soap opera social life of high level players?), when can we expect the “Dallas Sporting News” to be the banner of the local paper?
- Should the Governor have the poor of appointment of the Lieutenant Governor or should we just leave it up to Tillinghast, Licht & Seminoff?
- Is the opposition to opening the tunnel under Smith Street based on the fear that it may become infested with rats?
- If the Senate President needs more space, why not a room at the Westin? It’s close to the Senate and to the Capital (Grille).

February 5, 1997

THE PAST IS A FOREIGN COUNTRY, THEY DO THINGS DIFFERENTLY THERE²

“In January 1995, the Cool Moose Party sent a copy of a letter entitled 101 suggestions for the General Assembly to all members of that body. The ideas, much of which was at the heart of the Cool Moose Party’s platform, reflected what the people of Rhode Island seem top desire. Along with that was a 10 point letter to the newly elected Governor. They are reprinted in this to shed light on the progress and failures in getting good government reform to Rhode Islanders” said Robert J. Healey, Jr., Chairperson of the Cool Moose Party.

EXHIBITS ATTACHED – SEE APPENDIX

February 6, 1997

IF YOU GIVE TO A THIEF HE CANNOT STEAL FROM YOU AND HE IS THEN NO LONGER A THIEF³

“The more one considers it, the more calculated the approach appears. Consider this, why did the General Assembly, so adamantly opposed to the Governor appointing a Lieutenant Governor, fail to pass legislation declaring the office vacant prior to the appointment? It cleared the Senate but stalled in the House. The logic here is interesting” said Robert J. Healey, Jr., Chairperson of the Cool Moose Party.

“Had the Assembly declared the office vacant, the Court would likely uphold the vacancy. But, if the Governor fills the office, the Assembly could move to assert its power of Grand Committee to fill the slot. Thus, if the Assembly had acted prior to the Governor’s move, the office would be vacant without a possibility of a Democrat in the slot.

“With the ‘temporary’ appointment provision of the Supreme Court ruling having been exercised, the Assembly can at least argue its right to fill rather than defend the vacancy. Perhaps this explains the House’s failure to timely act on the vacancy bill.

“Surely this is all speculation, but the timing provides the motive. The House sat on the Senate bill, which had been delivered to the Speaker’s desk. Had the Court ruling not given the Assembly some squirm room wouldn’t this bill have been called for immediate consideration? This existential exercise in political politics, where inaction is action, has been played with an extreme poker face by the leadership. The Governor’s ‘check’ may be met with the Assembly’s ‘check-mate’.

² Taken from the prologues of The Go-Betweens by Lesley Poles Hartley.

³ William Saroyan. The Human Comedy

“The outright filling of the Lieutenant Governor’s office by the Assembly would have easily been characterized as political thievery. By allowing the Governor to first act, the Assembly can no longer be accused of a blatant power grab when it attempts to assert itself defensively through Grand Committee. Who blinked here?” concluded Healey.

February 7, 1997

JUDGE NOT THAT YE BE NOT JUDGED⁴

“Several states have elected judges. These states report mixed success in that all too often judges act as political animals rather than judges. For that reason, the Cool Moose Party supports review elections of judges rather than direct election. To have a judge stand to be reaffirmed by the electorate every ten years after the judge’s appointment allows for public participation without direct election” said Robert J. Healey, Jr., the Chairperson of the Cool Moose Party.

“It is interesting that in Rhode Island we have one elected judge, the Probate Judge in the Town of Tiverton. From this, we can therefore conclude that elections related to judges in Rhode Island would not be patently unconstitutional. Thus, we can achieve review elections of judges if we so desire” reasoned Healey.

The Cool Moose Party has advocated the review of judges at the next general election after ten years of their appointment. This would in no way impact on the appointing process. Also, the Supreme Court would continue its lifetime tenure exempt from review elections so as to keep the State’s highest court of last resort.

“After ten years on the bench, a judge would have a long enough track record to allow the voters to evaluate the capability of the judge. Ten years would also be long enough to allow a vesting in a pension system (which is only fair if the public is to expect someone to leave a professional practice that would languish in the person’s absence). The ten year review would allow the electorate to keep a closer eye on its judiciary” said Healey.

“It is only recent Rhode Island history that has given all judges lifetime appointment. This change, like the four year term for general officers, was shortsighted in that the changes allowed the people to relinquish control over their government. It is time to put governance back into the hands of the people who pay the tab. Review elections of judges is one of many changes that are needed in Rhode Island” concluded Healey.

⁴ The Bible, Matthew 7-1

February 10, 1997

IN POLITICS THERE IS REACTIVE AND PROACTIVE (AND THERE IS REVISIONISM)

“The question of what Attorney General Pine knew and when he decided to do something about it. Although on a recent news show, the Attorney General indicated that he took immediate action on the Strike Force matter, it was well known to those prosecuting the cases in his office long before he called for the independent investigation. I know because I was one of the attorneys bringing the matter forward: said Robert J. Healey, Jr., Chairperson of the Cool Moose Party.

“My files in the case of State v. Fortin will show that on numerous occasions I raised these issues of questionable Strike Force practices. I raised these concerns the very night of the raid in Warren. While AG Pine can hide behind his prosecutors not bringing this matter to his attention, if the buck stops at the top, the conclusion is that his office failed miserably in pursuing justice as the expense of protecting convictions rates” said Healey.

“The prosecution team, several staff attorneys that I can name, all were aware of the problematic prosecutions as a result of the Strike Forces’ actions. This was a well known matter inside the AG’s office, but was an unchallenged matter due to the power Pine had given to Silvia and the Strike Force” Healey maintained.

“While there is much blame to be spread around between the Strike Force’s members, the lax attitude toward justice on the part of the prosecutors in the AG’s office, the AG himself, and the members of the defense bar who felt it simpler to plead out clients rather than fight for them in court, the issue still remains as to allowing grave injustice to enter the Rhode Island criminal justice system. To see the AG attempt to avoid responsibility in this is most unbecoming”

“In the past I complimented the AG for turning the case over to the State Police, but I cannot sit idly while he attempts to portray his department as being pro-active in this matter. It simply is not so. He turned the matter over after it was inevitable that he had to do so” concluded Healey.

February 11, 1997

DEAD MEN RISE UP NEVER⁵

“While I expected voter initiative to get watered down in the Assembly, I didn’t expect it to be so carelessly cast off the ship of state to flounder. Question 8, having passed in almost every House and Senate district in Rhode Island is in the ocean, not waving, but

⁵ Paraphrasing Swinburne

drowning. It is up to all of us in Rhode Island to get our legislators to act on Voter Initiative now” said Robert J. Healey, Jr., Chairperson of the Cool Moose Party.

“People can complain all they want about the Assembly. What counts are two things: getting out and running for office or getting the Assembly to produce on the issue of voter initiative to allow them to take matters into their own hands if the Assembly abuses its power. Short of that, change will be minimal at best” maintained Healey.

The Cool Moose Party has long supported voter initiative. It was at the heart of the Healey for Governor 1994 campaign. The Cool Moose Party, along with dozens of other public minded organizations across the state, participates as a member of the Voter Initiative Alliance. The Alliance has been largely responsible for last year's Question 8 being approved by the voters.

“While the Governor has recently become vocal about voter initiative, he must do more lest it look like a weapon to fight a recalcitrant legislature that the Republicans failed to infiltrate in the 96 election. During the first two years of his administration, while mouthing support, there was little actual effort expended. No one even showed up at the bill's hearing to represent the Governor's office. This year, with hope and luck, things will be different. Voter initiative is the most important issue in Rhode Island. The time to act is now, not later. Afterwards, there will always be enough time to complain. Who will help me pick the corn?” asked Healey.

February 12, 1997

SHOW ME THE CUT UP CREDIT CARDS

“Choosing between tax cut and debt payment, I would normally recommend paying down debt, but this is Rhode Island. Unless we can believe that the powers that be will not just pay down debt, but also work to avoid incurring future debt, the payoff is folly. Unless the State cuts up its credit cards, all we are doing is feeding the State's habit of compulsive debt. Once the debt is paid down, the powers can again strap the harness of debt on the taxpayers of Rhode Island with its penchant of grandiose spending schemes” said Robert J. Healey, Jr., Chairperson of the Cool Moose Party.

“By paying off debt, the State would become more fiscally stable and could use the \$120 million to pay for real improvements rather than financing costs. Think about it, the third rail project could be afforded. Roads and bridges could be repaired. Education burdens of local communities could be addressed. Or, bankers could be rewarded. What choice is that?” Healey argued.

“In a downward economy, tax cuts are a possible tool for jump-starting the economy. Once programs are in place for economic development, the use of tax cuts for economic

stimulation becomes gasoline at a conflagration. If the economic development programs are already in place, then the tax cut argument is less persuasive”: claimed Healey.

“In the early 80s I felt like the lone voice in the wilderness when demanding the State use excess funds for a rainy day account rather than to wildly spend because they had bonus money in the budget. Spending was in vogue. Unrealistic commitments to state funding of education were made. Early retirement plans became ‘do-able’. The State acted as though it hit the lottery and had no experience in financial planning. It has to run out and buy as many shiny red convertibles as it could find” Healey maintained.

“Similarly, in today’s times money is around in greater tax revenue from the State’s sales tax. Let’s not suffer amnesia or dementia in looking at the issue. Paying off debt, while the most logical, is farcical if it is not coupled with responsible spending policy for the future”

“It sounds so much like Yogi Berra logic, but the truth is, that in Rhode Island, we must pay off debt so that we can owe more money. Reduce the sales tax after paying off debt is good policy. Tax cutting is good politics. It’s time for a statesman not a politician”.

“An overall review of taxation in Rhode Island is necessary, but to use tax cuts for the wealthy as incentives, the people are no better off. The focus must be on regressive taxation if it is to benefit the average folk” Healey continued.

“In short, unless the state mends its ways in terms of compulsive spending, the choice between retiring debt and tax cuts is really little more than a Hobson’s choice concluded Healey.

February 13, 1997

EDUCATION IS WHAT SURVIVES WHEN WHAT HAS BEEN LEARNED HAS BEEN FORGOTTEN⁶

“With all the talk about education reform and education funding formula changes, it is probably the best time to consider the Cool Moose Party platform position that education funding should be assumed by the State and paid for by the income tax. Additionally, all employment contracts should be negotiated by the General Assembly (or an assignee subject to the Assembly’s approval). The approval of these contracts should be required in June of the election year” said Robert J. Healey, Jr., Chairperson of the Cool Moose Party.

“By requiring the state to pay and the state to negotiate, there is much resolved. There is equitable funding through the somewhat progressive form of income taxation. Further, by taking the most onerous burden of contract negotiation off the largely inept school

⁶ B.F. Skinner

committees across the state, the Assembly would allow these school committee to focus on education policy rather than labor law” maintained Healey.

“The beauty of this proposal is that it requires the negotiation in June of an election year. This way it ensures school openings without strikes in September and makes the legislators directly responsible for their approval of the contract in that they will be standing before the voters in the election that November. What better check and balance could there be?” continued Healey.

“The Rhode Island Constitution places the burden of education on the Assembly. It is time the Assembly fairly and properly assumed its burden rather than shifting it off to the locals” said Healey.

Healey is the former Chairperson of the Warren School Committee from 1982 through 1986 and was known largely for his strict fiscal control of the local school budgets.

February 14, 1997

TAX CUT OR WATER TORTURE?

“It is great that the Governor is considering a reduction in the State’s sales tax, but his proposal is not enough. Sales taxation, while being detrimental to retail business, is most detrimental to the lower and middle classes, the poor and the elderly. The amount of revenue lost from the reduction of the sales tax could be shifted to the income tax or a possible restructuring of the estate tax – assuming the increases in sales tax revenue, spurred on by his reduction, would fall short” said Robert J. Healey, Jr., Chairperson of the Cool Moose Party.

The Cool Moose Party has long been in favor of a reduction of the sales tax rate. The Cool Moose Party has long argued that those least able to afford taxation are paying it daily in the form of sales taxation. This should be changed to allow the income earners to fund the taxation scheme.

“While the Governor’s proposal is a step, it is far too small. Besides being nightmarish to the retailers in reverting to the old chart form of tax collection at the register, it will not put a meaningful budget in either the purse of the buyer nor the ability to attract from out of state. Since it is largely symbolic, it must be treated with the proper amount of consideration it truly deserves: little” said Healey.

“If the gesture on the part of the Governor is sincere, it should be one that makes a real difference. If the Governor is interested in saying that he lowered all taxes in Rhode Island, the idea works, but it remains more political than functional” Healey concluded.

February 18, 1997

TIME TO CORRECT CORRECTIONS

“There is a need to review the way we work our criminal justice system in Rhode Island. We have pending overcrowding at our institutions and we are paying top dollar to incarcerate various offenders, but what we really need to look at is who is it that we are imprisoning, is there a less costly and equally effective way of dealing with these criminals, and can we continue to expect to build prisons to meet the needs of how we operate our criminal courts?” questioned Robert J. Healey, Jr., Chairperson of the Cool Moose Party.

“With alternative sentencing and active monitoring of those so sentenced, the state can save much on its prison bill without jeopardizing the safety of the general public. Hard core and other violent offenders deserve jail, there is no argument there. But what we are seeing is sentences being meted out for criminal activity that could be considered non-violent crime. By revamping our sentencing system we could provide for truth in sentencing and complete enforcement of realistic sentencing guidelines” maintained Healey.

“There is widespread waste in the correction system. There are safety issues for the people who work these facilities. There is questionable money being spent to incarcerate at the public’s expense when it would make much more sense to be working to pay back the society that has been offended”: said Healey.

“While law and order people make us feel good, we must remember that they are only doing this at the expense of the taxpayers. Realistic sentences and alternative program s can help reduce the costs of corrections” concluded Healey.

February 19, 1997

WHEN MAJOR PARTIES FEED

“Democrats or Republicans, they both feed from the same trough. The lobbying interests and the money thrown at candidates through fund raising efforts is questionable and is a practice that should be minimized by all candidates. The paying for power is simply un-American” said Robert J. Healey, Jr., Chairperson of the Cool Moose Party.

“It is understood that every candidate needs some funding for a campaign, but the source of these donations should always be scrutinized by the electorate. The people need to know who’s buying whom and for what cost” continued Healey.

“The shameless taking of money from the lobbying interests and the even more suspect manner of lobbying interests in giving money equally to both major parties to insure the bet is a bit too obvious for even the politically unaware. Money is power” said Healey

The Cool Moose Party has long advocated that the spending on political races be limited by the candidates to a figure that is roughly equivalent to one half of the amount the successful candidate would earn during the term in office. Healey, in his 1994 campaign for Governor, pledged not to exceed spending over \$139,800.00 in the campaign. He received over 9% of the vote with an expenditure of just under \$35,000.00.

“While I can understand fund raisers as a source of political money, the phony rhetoric of the attendees make it all seem so diabolical. Accept reasonable donations from friends and set reasonable spending goals and then take the case to the people. In the year of campaign financing problems, such payment for power reeks of corrupting forces at work”.

“There are reasons to accept donations but paying for access shouldn’t be one of them” concluded Healey. “The laws related to campaign financing need revision. Until then, even the Cool Moose Party must live in this cheap world of political welfare”.

February 20, 1997

LIMITING TERM LIMITS

“The best term limitation is the voters being able to say no. The idea that people need government to tell them who and when they can elect a person is a paternalistic argument most unbecoming the political right. It is a poor excuse for not wanting to get out and beat the bushes to prevail on the merits of the issue” said Robert J. Healey, Jr., Chairperson of the Cool Moose Party.

“By imposing term limits, there is surrender in the political debate that the people and not the government know how to run their own affairs. As a member of an alternative politics, I am all too aware of the cry in the wilderness syndrome, but I cannot use term limits to explain why my political views maybe more meritorious” said Healey.

The Cool Moose Party opposes term limits, however, it believes in the concept drawn from Cincinnatus, the Roman who, upon completion of his work in government, returned to the farm. Professional politicians are not the answer, but neither is the limitation of the people because of ineffectual leadership

“The ballot box is the terminator. Opposition should mount campaigns to educate and inform the electorate about a particular leader. The people should be required to participate actively. A passive solution to the problem leads us further into political apathy” Healey offered.

“While I am often at complete awe to understand the election of certain long-term leaders, I equally understand that the people of that particular area saw their best interested being served. In a free society, short of being unconstitutional, there is no real reason to second guess”

The Cool Moose Party understands that the people may wish to support term limits. If so, the Cool Moose Party believes that the people can do so by amending the Constitution to allow these changes, but as a party, we caution against doing so.

February 21, 1997

COOL MOOSE ON THE MOVE

“In a recent edition of the newsletter, Ballot Access News, there were projections of the support of alternative parties throughout the nation based on calculations resulting from the state Senate races. If these projections are accurate, the Cool Moose Party is enjoying over 17% support in Rhode Island. Considering that just less than 10% supported the Cool Moose Party in 1994, there is no reason to believe that we are a growing force on the Rhode Island political scene” said Robert J. Healey, Jr., Chairperson of the Cool Moose Party.

“By analyzing the various districts and projecting out the results statewide, the Cool Moose support is definitely there and growing” Healey stated.

“The outpouring of support for our candidates and the increase statewide seems to show that our efforts to limit our party to state and local races were a success. We are building but we are growing at the same time” Healey commented.

“The election of the two Council members in Hopkinton, coupled with the analysis of Ballot Access News is rather convincing. We are coming of age” maintained Healey.

The Cool Moose Party did not encourage candidates to run on its party slate for federal offices, instead it chose to focus on the Assembly. It also ran candidates for Council, School Committee, Mayor and Moderator in various cities and towns.

“The results being close to the twenty percent mark in an off year election is easy to take. If we can make similar inroads in the next two years, we are well within the reach of statewide offices” concluded Healey.

February 24, 1997

HYPOCRISY: THY NAME IS RHODE ISLAND

“In a society that uses gambling to balance its budget and has spent little resources to make the public aware of the dangers of gambling, it is sheer hypocrisy to look askance at various gaming proposals based on taking the high moral ground. While there are surely many arguments to gambling, the one that the state is presently using is outlandishly ridiculous” said Robert J. Healey, Jr., Chairperson of the Cool Moose Party.

The Cool Moose Party has taken the position that gambling, like many other social issues, is one of individual choice and responsibility. The role of government, should the people desire gaming in the state, should be limited to ensuring fairness and legality in the game and collecting any revenue due the state.

“By claiming that gambling is detrimental to the social fabric while washing those same clothes in the stream of lottery winnings, there is a governmental farce. If it is wrong, it is wrong. There is no sovereign immunity for hypocrisy” Healey commented.

“State budgets are now built upon lottery winnings. The \$100 million revenue expectations have made it too addictive to have any realistic way of going cold turkey. Thus it must come to the point where the state admits to its compulsion and begin to look at things one day at a time” said Healey.

“To maintain a do as I say and not as I do philosophy, the State is doing more harm than good. To live off of gambling money and not support gambling seems to be only a cheap way of stifling the competitive forces of the capitalist marketplace” concluded Healey.

February 25, 1997

NO KNOCKING THE GAS TAX RESTRICTIONS

“There is praise for the efforts to earmark gasoline tax funds for the purpose of transportation repair work. This is something that should have been done long ago, but it is encouraging to see it now. If it can survive future attacks by Assembly forces and the Governor in time of budgetary woes, it will well serve its purpose” said Robert J. Healey, Jr., Chairperson of the Cool Moose Party.

“Although the transportation department is the recipient of a windfall when it should have been arguing more vehemently for the roadways and bridges of our state in the past, it is an effort that has widespread support, and with good reason. People pay gasoline taxes and almost surely expect that the funds derived from the tax are going into the roads” said Healey.

“When faced with the fact that the taxes are not earmarked, the people are astounded. The very thought seems so foreign. But, it is real in Rhode Island. The need to pass a budget that makes gas tax related to road repair is now” continued Healey.

The Cool Moose Party has long supported infrastructure repair. Where there are many dollars being spent as public welfare for business endeavors under the guise that it creates employment, if we had a well planned public infrastructure scheduled, we could be providing those jobs and reaping a public benefit.

“Politicians have been astute in observing that by spending discretionary money until the budget was dry, the public would still be responsible for necessities. This misguided system of budgetary prioritization has been a bane to Rhode Island. Perhaps this earmarked tax is a sign that it will not continue. At least until the next raid on the funds” concluded Healey.

February 26, 1997

WE COULD DO BETTER, BUY WHY?

“The election system in Rhode Island is in need of overhaul, but since it has been designed primarily to support the special interests of the political parties and the people in power, the system has little hope of ever becoming workable, fair, and in the best interests of the people of Rhode Island” said Robert J. Healey, Jr., Chairperson of the Cool Moose Party.

“While this may sound like sour grapes, it is more like a view of reality. The laws governing elections are not set forth in the United States or Rhode Island Constitutions, but are merely statutory proclamations of the General Assembly and the Governor” Healey stated.

“There are so many ways that the system could be improved to allow for greater participation of the people in the election of their representatives. There are several ways that even fairer elections could be had and ones that give the elected person a majority vote as opposed to a plurality. We need only to look to find these systems” continued Healey.

“By satisfying ourselves that the present system of elections works just fine thank you, there is a sticking of the State’s head in the sand and avoiding the real reason for acute voter apathy. The fact is that people don’t voter because their vote, while it may count, does not make a difference. Until the Democrats and Republicans realize this, they will continue to lose credibility” said Healey.

“People seem tied to election systems simply because they are familiar with them. The issue of election fairness is somehow subject to the need to continue what we presently

have. If there is any true reformer in the Assembly, he or she should begin to offer suggestions for creating more equity in the election process” concluded Healey.

The Cool Moose Party is working with several other organizations to propose review and other alternative voting methods that are more people oriented.

February 27, 1997

IN THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, THERE IS AN ASS FOR EVERY SEAT

“By their recent performance, the legislature has proved the wise old words ‘There is sea made for every ass’. The Assembly has shown itself for the political entity that it is. It’s continual bickering would be acceptable if it were also tempered with some sort of acknowledgement of the electorate, but by taking the attitude of the public be damned, this body’s behavior becomes childish and intolerable” said Robert J. Healey, Jr., Chairperson of the Cool Moose Party.

“The political system calls for debate and therefore there should be tension between the various branches of government. That is the political way we the people adapted as our form of government. But that very system is predicated on the fact that these people are being elected to do our bidding while we are unable to take the time and energy to do so ourselves. By making the appointing body obsolete, except when it comes to election time, we have an Assembly gone awry” said Healey.

The Cool Moose Party supports government that is directly responsive to the people. Therefore, the Cool Moose Party supports concepts of voter initiative, judicial review, recall elections and open meetings protections.

“If the people are ever to believe these legislators are sincerely representing their constituents’ interests selflessly, then there must be a demonstration of some competence in conducting the public’s business. Otherwise, the people will never trust their government and will never believe that they can make a real change” concluded Healey.

February 28, 1997

FALLING OVER DOLLARS TO RETRIEVE DIMES

“While it is encouraging to see so many tax cuts being proposed, there is ma more responsible, albeit less political, method of viewing taxation. When a few taxes are singled out for a cut, there is a better than average chance it is political rather than a directed stimulus. Therefore, what is the more logical course of tax cutting is to review

and revamp the entire tax system” said Robert J. Healey, Jr., Chairperson of the Cool Moose Party.

The Cool Moose Party has long advocated for a more progressive taxing method to pay most if not all of Rhode Island’s expenditures. The progressive income tax is favored due to the fact that it is more favorable to the working poor and middle classes, elderly and poor.

“In our society, if you have the advantage to earn, then you have the responsibility to contribute to the society that is functioning to protect your investment. It is almost that simple. The need for the rich to protect themselves against the poor is manifested in created an egalitarian society, we must be able to allow for capitalistic growth and production and use taxation as the payment for using the system” argued Healey.

The Cool Moose Party believes in a capitalistic society based on supply and demand in both product and labor. It is up to the industry, capitalizing on the general public in earning money to pay directly for the interest it has taken or used in its accumulation of wealth. This should not be a penal amount but a reasonable amount that serves the limited needs of a government” said Healey.

“By reviewing the entire tax structure, we can certainly bring tax relief to the people who really need it, unfortunately, these very same people, although they make up the majority of the people who vote, are sorely underrepresented in the government. These are the people who will snap at a one-time-fix tax reduction and think their elected officials are really working for them” said Healey.

March 3, 1997

POLITICS EXIST TO CREATE A VOTER

“In campaign reform, you can talk the talk, but the real difference is in those willing to walk the walk. It is clear that money has a great impact on elections, but it is equally as clear that in order to raise money for elections the politician must be willing to sell his soul to the devil. It is the old question of the ends justifying the means” said Robert J. Healey, Jr., Chairperson of the Cool Moose Party.

“While there is truth in the saying that you can only change the system if you actually get elected to the office, one running for such a position must ask whether it is right to win at all costs. While the news outlets put great emphasis on the money raised by candidates as a showing of support, such treatment only goes to further complicate the problem” said Healey.

“While I ran for Governor in 94 and voluntarily limited the amount I would spend on my campaign, I was not reported by the media as doing something progressive in terms of

campaign finance reform. Instead, I was labeled a non-player for not being willing to engage in the sell out for cash to run a 'viable' campaign. What's wrong with this picture? Especially troubling is that it occurred even in light of the recent media calls for reforming campaign financing" contended Healey.

"Money talks. It is that simple. But like term limits, it is the people who vote who bear much of the responsibility. By voting for candidates on how glitzy an ad the candidate runs instead of by the issue presented, the electorate is allowing this to happen. Think about it, why should anyone ever consider voting for a candidate who can waste money to be in charge of the public purse? It is pure insanity. It is American politics. It can be changed if politicians don't sell themselves short and work to educate the people on issues not advertisements" concluded Healey.

March 4, 1997

THE EAST IS EAST AND THE WEST IS WEST AND NEVER THE TWAIN SHOULD MEET

"By blurring the lines between government projects and private investment, we are creating an extremely dangerous situation for our future. Business has a free market that supplies to the demands of the public. Government has the obligation to provide for people in a constitutionally prescribed manner that recognizes the government's role to be limited to projects that are not easily delegatable to a private firm. Thus, having two different frameworks, objectives, and visions, the two need to remain separate. By allowing the commingling of government and business we are banking our future on a hope that oil and water can be successfully mixed. This is a bad bet with our future" said Robert J. Healey, Jr., Chairperson of the Cool Moose Party.

"Government should be allowed to freely regulate. By getting involved in the world of commerce, it must then regulate in a manner that will not hurt its investments. This is not freedom, it is socialism. Compromising itself, government will not be able to abide by its Constitutional mandates" continued Healey.

"Free market business would equally suffer. Decisions in private business are made on supply and demand. The increased participation of government in these matters will skew this practice. Government can be manipulated by the rich to regulate projects to maximize governmentally sponsored projects' returns. This could be worse than the current campaign donation in return for a favor in politics" Healey argued.

"If a private company wants to build a convention center, hotel or stadium, then do it. If they want to compete with government functions, i.e. postage or education, then do it. The public role is defined rather specifically in our state and federal constitutions. Running a business is not one of those roles. Having a mutual interest in a road project is great short term, but unlike business, governments cannot go bankrupt so easily.

Government must stay where business can walk away. It would serve us well to remember that now rather than complain about it ten years from now” Healey concluded.

March 5, 1997

SELLING THE SIZZLE AND NOT THE STEAK – LIFE THROUGH RHODE COLORED GLASSES

“In politics, a promise is merely an expression of a contemporary desire and not a statement of commitment. Having been around far too long in the political realm of Rhode Island, I often spend time amusing myself with daydreams of how Rhode Island would have been – could have been- if only a few of the many promises had been kept” remarked Robert J. Healey, Jr., Chairperson of the Cool Moose Party.

“Think about it: there would be adequate inexpensive parking in downtown Providence next to a Mall that, if the present Governor were elected, would not have been built. Our children, besides being drug, alcohol and smoke free, would have the education funded by a 60-40 state share ratio. Our criminals would have largely struck out and be in jail, not in Central Falls” said Healey.

“I relaxed contemplating all the money the lottery was producing for the education of our children. I considered various initiatives I could put forth as a citizen, knowing that this Governor had vigorously pushed it through the Assembly, as he said he would on the campaign trail. I thought about the public access and getting over to read all those signed leases for Providence Place. I thought about what was happening with all the money saved by the early retirement plan” continued Healey.

“The sad truth is that political reality is an oxymoron. We have allowed our politicians to pitch woo to us only to be taken advantage of and subsequently abandoned. But, even sadder is that we continue to support these dream weavers rather than consider those who discuss the harsh reality of life” Healey said.

“As I drive through a crime-free Providence, considering how a downsizing Governor filled a useless Lieutenant Governor’s office, complete with staffing, my attention shifts to the Providence Journal’s pledge to increase local news coverage while selling out to Dallas. Trust is relative” concluded Healey.

March 6, 1997

A PAC WITH THE DEVIL

“After listening to the hearing on the Senate bill related to the use of PAC money for matching funds in statewide races, I must come down on the side of those looking to end the matching of PAC money. While there’s a valid argument that PAC money, like individual contributions, are similar to ‘bundled’ contributions of individuals, there is no reason to allow the match in that these individuals could contribute in a matching fashion as individuals if they so chose. Thus, the conclusion that PACs, with their ability to shield the identity of the donor to some extent, are not really in the best interest of campaign finance reform” said Robert J. Healey, Jr., Chairperson of the Cool Moose Party.

The Cool Moose Party has never taken any contributions from any PAC in any past election cycle. The Cool Moose Party has done so on principle and has urged others to reject PAC money.

“While a PAC may be a legal entity comprised of individuals, there is often a question as to the voluntary nature of the contributions to the PAC itself. Additionally, with federal courts rulings that allow a degree of anonymity in the contribution, there is a potential danger of the very secret transfer of funds to campaigns of certain connected candidates.; This practice cannot be good for the election process” maintained Healey.

“Since matching funds are now applied to PAC contributions, with a 2 to 1 match of the first \$500.00, it is perhaps wiser to use this matching process to perhaps triple or quadruple the first \$50.00 rather than on the PAC money. Remember, individual donations could be done without the PAC and the PAC could still donate without being matched. For all these reasons, the prohibition against matching PAC contributions seems to be a good idea. Too bad it was shot down in the Senate Judiciary” concluded Healey.

March 7, 1997

BUDDY ON THE CASTING COUCH

“Political reality strikes again. In the very same edition of the Providence Journal there is a story about a labor union accusing the Mayor of using campaign contributions as a gauge for promotions and in that very same paper there is an article about the Mayor casting himself in the role of a Rhode Island judge that abhors evil. Some times trust is stranger than fiction” said Robert J. Healey, Jr., Chairperson of the Cool Moose Party.

“It is interesting to note that in the contribution for promotion story, the labor leaders have revealed it only now, when they are at odds with the Mayor. I have been in Rhode

Island long enough to know that there was a time when, during all those lucrative contractual raises, that the same people would be in praise of the Mayor. Memory is relative” continued Healey.

“Still, even with that bit of hypocrisy granted, there is something to be said for the interesting logic employed by the Mayor in denying the allegation. In fact of a pattern of several officers receiving promotions after paying homage to the Mayor, the Mayor cites one example of when it didn’t occur. Does the term ‘red herring’ have any meaning here? Because it didn’t happen in every circumstance but happened in every possible opportunity, the issue is the clear pattern not the exception. Good try Mr. Mayor but not all of us are fooled” said Healey.

“And as for the casting of a felon as a judge, well, yeah, maybe it can be so in Rhode Island. I guess we all have the right to dream, don’t we” concluded Healey.

March 10, 1997

SHOW ME THE MONEY

“If we are ever to get a handle on the funding mechanism for education, the state must be able to provide reliable figures for its share of the funding early on in the budgeting process. Local school committees, often lost in the budgetary process, are unable to perform the task assigned to them due to the uncertainty in state aid. This could, and should, be stopped as the State attempts to come to grips with its funding system” said Robert J. Healey, Jr., Chairperson of the Cool Moose Party.

“While the Cool Moose Party has advocated putting the budgets the first item on the General Assembly’s plate thereby getting the bulk of the business done early on in the session, even if the Assembly were to set permanent figures for state education funding, the locals could go about their budgeting process even if the State continues its ridiculous method of keeping budgets until the last days of the session” said Healey.

“Local governments, with few exceptions, run on fiscal years and have to have local budgets approved in a certain timeframe. Given the reality, the State’s inability to determine the size of its contribution is a disservice to the people of the State. The figures, usually given in June, after the locals have gone through the process” continued Healey.

“It is well known that local school committees are well meaning do-gooders w3ith little experience in the financing and political processes, but to compound this with the State’s failure to give these committees the tools to do the job, all goes to make local education funding the mess that it often is” concluded Healey.

March 11, 1997

I'M A FOOL TO DO YOUR DIRTY WORK

“In the Assembly this term is an interesting bill that would allow the collectors of taxes to be compensated for their labor involved in the collection and accounting for taxes on behalf of the State of Rhode Island. Given the nature of the tax, the sales tax, and the need for the government to use an agent for its collection, it is reasonable that the person be compensated, albeit minimally, for services performed on behalf of the State” said Robert J. Healey, Jr., Chairperson of the Cool Moose Party.

The measure, House Bill 97-H5301, allows for the collector of the taxes related to sales be allowed to retain an amount equal to two percent of the amount, not to exceed \$1,000.00 per year, to serve as compensation for the collection of tax on the part of the State.

The Cool Moose Party has traditionally opposed the sales tax in that it is a regressive form of taxation that ours poor, working middle class and fixed income Rhode Islanders disproportionately.

“If there must be a tax, it should be a progressive tax. If you require merchants to do the dirty work of the State in collection and assessment of taxation, they should enjoy a benefit. Whether a direct rebate or a tax credit against income is more appropriate, we take no position, but the fact is that they are doing work for the State and should be so recognized” said Healey.

“In the coolest of all worlds, there would be an elimination of the sales tax and thereby eliminating the need for compensation of merchants. This bill may serve as an incentive to work toward the sales tax elimination in Rhode Island. For that reason, we find it worthy of discussion in the Assembly” concluded Healey.

March 12, 1997

A RUSH TO JUDGMENT – POLITICAL POPULARITY IN RHODE ISLAND

“The DiPrete case was certainly mishandled by the staff of the Attorney General’s officer. The buck must stop at the top and therefore, politically and legally, we must take a long hard look at the management of the office by AG Pine. Having given him the benefit of the doubt on the lack of oversight in the Strike Force matter, I can no longer hold so calm. The experience I had in defending a Strike Force case demonstrated to me that the office was capable of willful actions that Judge Cresto described. Still, the AG has sought appellate review and there is a lingering question as to whether or not the dismissal itself was warranted. Those latter two matters should await the Supreme Court’s review” said Robert J. Healey, Jr., Chairperson of the Cool Moose Party.

“The dismissal may have been warranted, but that issue is up to the high court. Let us not forget that it reinstated charges previously dismissed by Judge Cresto. Granted the circumstances differ, but there is no finality until the end” said Healey.

“Perhaps the greatest question is the lingering doubt in the public since the clearing of the charges was based on incompetent handling of the matter rather than the merits. It is often difficult to balance the issue of finality based on the merits and malicious prosecution as is the case here. The most telling situation however, is whether a poor nobody would have received the same treatment. Do we really get the amount of justice we can afford? This is a troubling matter, especially if this misconduct allegation is in fact true” stated Healey.

“The case has provided no true winners and has raised several serious questions about Rhode Island justice. Perhaps we should consider how best to address these matters rather than politically addressing the ramifications” Healey continued.

“It is most ironic to think that the state officer with the highest approval rating just a few months ago is now being humbled much like the former Governor who was humbled after having attained the highest approval rating for any Governor in the history of Rhode Island. This tells much about how fleeting political success may be, but it also tells much about how foolish we can be in granting such status to our political leaders” concluded Healey.

March 13, 1997

A JOB CREATION PLAN – ALMOND STYLE

“Governor Almond is so committed to job creation that he has put his full confidence in the hiring of Dante E. Boffi, Jr., as a new executive direction with state government. This job creation gives Mr. Boffi employment at a rate of pay about five times that of the average wage earner in the State of Rhode Island. I’ve heard the Governor say that he wants only high paying jobs in Rhode Island, and so I guess he is doing his part to make his words reality” said Robert J. Healey, Jr., Chairperson of the Cool Moose Party.

“For the Governor to say that he stands behind this appointment with a straight face deserves credit. Whether or not Mr. Boffi can perform the function of this executive director is not fully explained to the public as it should be” claimed Healey.

“From the public’s perspective, we see a person who was removed for mismanagement getting a better job and higher pay with the new duties of management. Is something wrong with this picture? Has anyone in this administration read about the Peter principle?” asked Healey.

“In a period when the Governor has sought downsizing, and where the rank and file workforce in the State is being asked to bear the brunt of the budget crisis, and with services being minimized, is it really a brilliant move to do a Dante Boffi Job Creation Project? Is this Governor listening to himself?” continued Healey.

“While Mr. Boffi may have demonstrated some unusual skills to Dr. Carl that would warrant such pricey employment, such should be more fully explained to the public, you know, the people who pay this increased salary” concluded Healey.

March 14, 1997

BUYING THE PUBLIC WITH ITS OWN MONEY

“The on-line services related to bills filed in the Assembly is a step forward, but it also allows one to become keenly aware of the number of special appropriation bills that serve to clog the system and work to keep discipline in the ranks of the Assembly” said Robert J. Healey, Jr., Chairperson of the Cool Moose Party.

“There are literally hundreds of special interest bills appropriating funds for various local groups and charities. These bills, which make up about half of the number of bills introduced each year, are put in by the legislators for budget funds to go to special projects or groups within the legislator’s constituency. Not only is this process wasteful in the way it is organized, it is harmful to the general public in that it allows the Assembly leadership to hold items out for purposes of maintaining discipline” said Healey.

“It would be far more efficient if each legislator were to submit all requests for appropriations of this sort in one bill, or perhaps no more than three in each session. This would eliminate the need for printing and the need for separate filing and other labor associated with a bill” maintained Healey.

“By doing it in lump, there is no injury in that all can be placed on the single appropriation bill” Healey continued.

“But perhaps what is the most egregious conduct in relation to these appropriations is the way the leadership uses these to maintain power. An errant legislator may find in the final compromised budget no funds were directed to his or her district for these projects. For local legislators this is devastating in that this money is usually for groups essential for election success” continued Healey.

“These appropriation bills for special interests may be a long standing tradition, but such a tradition is costly and is one of the main reasons why free thinkers cannot exist in the Assembly” concluded Healey.

March 17, 1997

WORKING FOR THE YANKEE DOLLAR

“If Rhode Island is to become more dependent upon tourism, then it must take steps to be tourist friendly. Mayor Cianci has recently begun a program to do just that with those in the service industry, but that is not enough. Perhaps the Mayor should open this course up to those in politics. Tourists just aren’t interested in a place that reeks of political ineptness” said Robert J. Healey, Jr., Chairperson of the Cool Moose Party.

“In luring the tourist dollar to Rhode Island, our General Assembly needs to learn that it must straighten up and fly right. Its politics must be tempered by the fact that they will be playing on a grander stage – the world of tourism. The political clime must be constantly given great attention” continued Healey.

“The longstanding image of crime and corruption that has been a part of Rhode Island must end. Tourists do not like to consider places that, rightly or wrongly, hold a poor image. Consider how guardedly Florida maintains its tourist image. Think about the renewal of tourism in New York now that crime seems to be down and there is a ‘friendly atmosphere’” Healey continued.

“I’m sure the local Rhode Islanders will charm the dollars out of the tourists that is not my concern. My concern is that our leaders will not consider the fire they may be playing with in politics” continued Healey.

“Much like the service industry which needs to be trained to set the proper tone, so must it be with the political establishment. As Colorado or Arizona can tell you, tourism is political” concluded Healey.

March 18, 1997

STRIKE: A DEAL WHILE THE UNION IS HOT

“Teacher union President Marcia Reback has started what has long been known but rarely acknowledged. She said, ‘We’re a trade union’. For years there had been an argument as to whether public teachers belonged to a trade union or a professional association. Reback’s statement seems to end that debate” said Robert J. Healey, Jr., Chairperson of the Cool Moose Party.

“If public school teachers are members of a trade union, I actually agree with Ms. Reback that they should be given the full panoply of union rights, including the right to strike. But, since they are public employees, they are endowed with several protections not necessarily afforded trade unions in the private sector. Thus, I propose a compromise on this issue” said Healey.

“Why not allow public teachers the right to strike, provided, however, all laws protecting their employment are relinquished and/or repealed. Thus, the right to strike comes with the risk of dismissal if the struck community decides to replace its teachers. In short, strike, but do so without the public employment safety net. What could be fairer to the employees and to the taxpayers? It is simply good old supply and demand economics without governmental interference” continued Healey.

“While this approach may sound quite radical, in reality, it is quite a reasonable balance should public teachers be given the right to strike. As it is often said at many a negotiating table, What are you going to give to get what you want” Healey noted.

“By granting the right to strike contingent upon other finer points of capitalism, there is a perfect balance. Can’t we compromise on this issue so that the children aren’t at risk?” concluded Healey.

March 19, 1997

GREAT NEWS FOR THE COOL MOOSE AMONGST US

“In the course of the last decade, the Cool Moose Party’s growth would impress Malthus. The 1996 election not only saw the election of two Cool Moose to seats on the Hopkinton Town Council, but by reviewing the results statewide based on races in which Cool Moose candidates ran, there is clearly a substantial and recognizable growth in the base of the party” said Robert J. Healey, Jr., Chairperson of the Cool Moose Party.

“While it is often quite difficult to track alternative parties due to the nature of the political and media structures, in comparison with other third party movements across the nation, the Cool Moose Party has demonstrated it has one of the highest followings. This is backed up by independent research of Richard Winger, a national expert on third parties who is frequently quoted in the New York Times” continued Healey.

Attached to this press release are two documents related to the Cool Moose Party’s performance in the most recent election. These tables were published in Ballot Access News, a publication based in California that assesses the progress of various alternative parties.

“It is clear that we have a solid following. Without any federal candidates and with no statewide races in 1996, the Cool Moose Party has a 15-20 percent support base. Clearly such result, having nearly doubled since the 1994 gubernatorial race, demonstrates that the Cool Moose Party is more than a fluke” Healey stated.

“This does not bode well for the Democrats and Republicans in the next election. The people are growing more and more fed up with politics as usual and are more and more willing to consider alternative party options” maintained Healey.

“These numbers represent a long hard struggle for reform from within the system. In these numbers I find great encouragement in light of a political system that has continuously attempted to marginalize our progress and minimize our significance. We are still growing. Watch us in ‘98” concluded Healey.

EXHIBIT ATTACHED⁷

March 20, 1997

DO THEIR EARS REALLY FLAP OVER?

“Last November the voters of the State of Rhode Island, in face of strong and well monied special interests in opposition, voted to support direct voter initiative. This referendum was passed with a sizable margin statewide and in all but a minority of districts statewide. The people have been calling on the Legislature to act. When will the Assembly give the people voter initiative? Have our legislators once again failed to heed the voices of their constituents? We shall see” said Robert J. Healey, Jr., Chairperson of the Cool Moose Party.

“While the strong lobbying factions in the Assembly are fiercely guarding their turf, the people who actually elect the legislators have called on them to stop cozying up to these special interests and do what the people need. The Legislature is called on to act” continued Healey.

“The fact of the matter is that the people are disenchanted with their Legislature. They are sick and tired of the wasteful spending and the folly that is perpetrated upon them daily. They want a voice in the process. They know that they could do no worse than what is being done to them now” Healey stated.

“The people have spoken. There is a strong voter initiative bill S-200 that was the basis of what the people voted for last November. The time to pass it is now. The people have spoken. Next time they speak, it may be a bit louder or a bit stronger. Politicians not listening to their constituents is a great campaign issue in November of 98, or so we think here at the Cool Moose Party” concluded Healey.

March 23, 1997

ALMOND AND KELLY DISCOVER THEIR MIRROR IMAGES?

“It was like they walked through a mirror, standing as complete opposites of the Governor and Senate leader we had come to know. In this case, Almond and Kelly have positioned themselves to be inconsistent with their former selves on the issue of voter initiative” said Robert J. Healey, Jr., the Chairperson of the Cool Moose Party.

⁷ See the appendix to this document.

“We have a Governor, who, supposedly, is a firm supporter of voter initiative, who, supposedly, put a referendum question on the ballot to give the people a right to direct initiative (although cynical people may say that is was politically motivated to upstage the Assembly), and, who, supposedly, lends an ear to when the public speaks (except on the mall), saying that he thinks his office deserves a role in the referendum process as a check against the votes of the people when the issue involves gambling” Healey noted.

“Then we have a Senate leader, who is not known as a proponent of voter initiative, who has allowed the measure to be killed in committee, and who rules without regard to public sentiment, stating that the Governor’s suggestion on including the Governor’s office on referenda concerning gambling will thwart the will and voice of the voters. Is this high comedy or what?” questioned Healey.

“The fact of the mater is that neither of the two, Senator Kelly nor Governor Almond, is a true believer in the voters and the initiative process. They are, however, politically aware of the need to give voter initiative lip service and use it when it fits their political agenda” said Healey.

“If we are ever to give the voters their long overdue say in governance, we must do so in a way that gives them the pure freedom of exercising that right. Governor and Senator, time for a consistency check” Healey said.

March 24, 1997

WHEN LIFE IMITATES ART – EVEN BRIEFLY

“It may have been a mere coincidence but something about it may have been far more cosmic. Afterall, this was the weekend of a lunar eclipse, a comet, and Mars being in sight. But the interesting star-crossed events that caught my attention were the ground breaking of the Providence Place mall and the national release of a film call Liar Liar” said Robert J. Healey, Jr., Chairperson of the Cool Moose Party.

“This film, according to the Providence Journal, is described as “Fibbing lawyer’s life is turned inside out after his son’s wish - that he can’t lie for 24 hours’. Is this a perfect example of art imitating life or what?” asked Healey.

“As a candidate for Governor in 1994, I had the rare opportunity to sit along side the Governor during those precious 24 hours. It seems that way because, although he was under the spell to tell his real thoughts on the mall during the campaign, we find later, after his inauguration, that he really was in favor of the mall” continued Healey.

“While we can’t blame the Governor for falling under the spell of a wish that he speak the truth, it is unfortunate that we were so taken by him while under this spell of honesty.

I know, he warned us after the inauguration that we really shouldn't have listened to everything he said (perhaps knowing of this 24 hour spell thing), but the damage had been done" Healey said.

"While it would be beyond the wildest dreams of any one, even a child, to expect honesty in politicians, it can be somewhat frustrating for voters in a state that lacks general recall provisions. Voters beware" cautioned Healey.

March 25, 1997

2500 WAYS TO DOWN-JOB RHODE ISLAND

"WE hear the talk about the 2500 new jobs being brought to Rhode Island by the mall, but we must ask, what types of jobs will they be? Will they ever replace the displaced employment in the higher paying industrial sector? Will the number of service industry jobs created be used to statistically to offset the decline in the number of people employed in the manufacturing sector? And, while we're at it, where is the incline in the number of jobs for the young and aspiring white collar workers? Figures don't lie, but liars can figure" said Robert J. Healey, Jr., Chairperson of the Cool Moose Party.

"We cannot let ourselves be soothed by the numbers. People employed in manufacturing are paid differently from those in the service industry. While our people may need two jobs to keep the income of one, we must not be fooled into thinking that there is good government when it creates the two jobs needed to replace the one better one. Can we trade nickels for dimes because nickels are bigger?" Healey continued.

"While it is a nice thought to consider 2500 jobs being created in Rhode Island, it is merely a false dream when we consider the quality of that employment. The Rhode Island economy will not be so kind to those employed in lesser quality jobs. Prices will not be cut because Rhode Islanders are working for less wages" continued Healey.

In 1994 in a position paper, the Cool Moose Party outlined its vision for Rhode Island and how to get there. It considered the needs of the state, its resources, and its ability to provide all types of employment while repairing a depressed economy.

"In the area of employment, numbers count, but quality counts for more. If our leaders fail to line the two, there will be no hope for our future. Without vision, our leaders are dooming our people to stocking the shelves for others to shop" concluded Healey.

March 26, 1997

HOLDING SOME TAX FEET TO THE FIRE

“Changing the tax foreclosure laws is clearly needed, but perhaps not so sweeping a change is required. The real issue is not the sale of the property for non-payment of taxes, the issue is not the non-responsibility of the parties involved. By changing the law to require the purchaser to assume the taxation after the sale is not so onerous given the fact that the expenses are recouped if the property is redeemed and the rightful responsibility of the new owner if the new tax title is foreclosed upon” said Robert J. Healey, Jr., Chairperson of the Cool Moose Party.

“Tax sales, while not the most joyous occasions, are a part of our society. The sales can be attended by the public and bid upon by all groups. To earmark certain groups for preference, regardless of the nobility of their goals, puts too much control and power in the hands of those who may not be as noble. These groups should be encouraged to join in the process, but on the terms and conditions applicable to all. If the city or town wishes to encourage the rehabilitation of these often abandoned properties, it should do so via other types of support and/or programs” said Healey.

“There is a need for accountability from those purchasing the property, something not clear in the present law. This requires change. Mandating the taxes be assumed by the purchaser at a tax sale is an option. Redemption of the property would repay the money with interest and would not allow the purchaser to continue without paying taxes as they become due. Further, by creating a responsibility in the purchaser, it may kill the business of tax sale speculation, but it may encourage immediate rehabilitation” concluded Healey.

March 27, 1997

STALKING THE GREAT PANDERER

“With the high level of appeal to the senior citizens being the driving force behind both Senator John Chafee and Representative Patrick Kennedy, there will be intense pandering for these votes if there is in fact a Senate 2000 campaign. This is not a pretty sight in that both will be working to out do the other. It could get ugly” said Robert J. Healey, Jr., Chairperson of the Cool Moose Party.

“Both candidates know that the senior vote is a valuable one. Chafee has long played the hearts of this particular generation, having won the Governor’s office as a ‘vote the candidate not the party’ Republican. Further, the senior vote can identify with him. Also, many feel some sense of obligation due to his truthfulness in saying that Rhode Island needed an income tax and their general non-belief in him until after his successor put one in” continued Healey.

“With Kennedy, the issue is how many buss trips to Hammersmith and how many reduced fee cookouts can he have to cash in on the name. With the voters of this era declining due to factors of nature, those enamored with the Kennedy name may be few in numbers after 2000. He must strike while the photos are still on the mantle. This is his big chance” said Healey.

“Unfortunately, as these two make their way down the campaign trail, they are both in power and will use their office, somewhat shamelessly, to pander to this great voting block that they need to sustain their power. The issues will become secondary to ‘look at the new mailbox I put near your elderly housing site’. It really could get mighty ugly, fast, all at taxpayers’ expense” concluded Healey.

March 28, 1997

CORRECTIONS POLICY – PAY ME NOW OR PAY ME LATER

“All the hoopla may have settled down, but we haven’t forgotten the issue. There is still a great need to reform the corrections laws and procedures within the State of Rhode Island. This includes the revision of criminal codes, sentencing provisions, probation and parole, alternative sentencing, and truth in sentencing for violent offenders” said Robert J. Healey, Jr., Chairperson of the Cool Moose Party.

“As a society we move from crisis to crisis. Without our attention being called to a problem, there is no problem. Such is the case with the area of corrections. We must not simply focus on changing our correction policy when something has dramatically caused havoc within our society or when someone is running for office. We should seriously, sincerely, and honestly review our state correction policy and make the appropriate adjustments now” Healey stated.

“The Cool Moose Party advocates reviewing all the criminal sentencing statutes and making the appropriate adjustments for reasonableness rather than political hay making. Then, once the reasonable sentences are in place, putting in a truth in sentencing law for violent crime to mandate sentences be served with only parole going to those deserving of it rather than because we have overcrowded prisons” said Healey.

“Taxpayers fund prisons but crime and punishment can also be a business unto itself. By not reasonably setting sentences, politicians look tough on crime, but in the long run, cause the system to fail in that these hard time sentences are ignored due to their fundamental unfairness. Thus, the cycle of destruction begins. We must examine our corrections policy with a look to justice, taxation, and the future of our state” concluded Healey.

March 31, 1997

SAME DAY SERVICE STATEWIDE

“Too many different elections lead to confusion amongst the voters. For this reason we believe that all municipal elections, with the exception of those granted the right otherwise in the Rhode Island Constitution, to be statutorily required to be held in the November of an even year. The need for off-year municipal elections is not enough to justify these elections that create a patchwork pattern” said Robert J. Healey, Jr., Chairperson of the Cool Moose Party.

“It may have been a noble experiment, but it seems to be a great failure. People still must go out for the November elections, regardless of when their municipal elections are held. Thus, we have created extra work with little extra benefit. The cost of these extra elections is at the expense of the taxpayer” said Healey.

The Cool Moose Party, a strong advocate of a return to the two year term for statewide officers, believes that elections should be both orderly and cost effective.

“Something as simple as making all elections throughout the State of the same day is a simple way to save tax dollars. To refuse to do this is more proof that Rhode Island is a land of small fiefdoms. A general election system makes clear sense. It is that simple”

“The haphazard manner of municipal elections does little service to the public but allows elected officials the safety of running for other offices without having to vacate their office. This is a bad way to encourage people to seek office. Changes should be made in all except those Constitutionally guaranteed otherwise” concluded Healey.

April 1, 1997

REVISE THE JUVENILE JUSTICE SYSTEM

“Treating youths as adults in a criminal context is not a far fetched concept. Our society has begun to recognize that our youth are maturing at a faster pace and that due to that maturity, are far more involved in activities that give rise to criminal conduct. To maintain that our youth of today should be treated with the same consideration given to youth of prior generations cannot serve the needs of today’s society” said Robert J. Healey, Jr., Chairperson of the Cool Moose Party.

“Modern society, for better or worse, has robbed the innocence of youth from today’s children. The erosion of the family and social support systems has created a reality of the children walking, talking, and otherwise acting as adults, many of them barely old enough to understand their own adolescence. Still, as a society, we must not condone the action of such youth if they go on to inflict substantial harm within society” said Healey.

“Our juvenile criminal justice system, created for the deviants of a far tamer era, needs to be updated to reflect the situation as it exists. Children are no longer committing pranks; they are involved in murder and theft. We need to have our system realize this fact and take appropriate actions to protect the society” maintained Healey.

“Criminal activity, once generally speaking, the province of young adult males under 40, has spread to the youth. By failing to properly address this situation now, we are allowing the growth to invade our society and we will lose control. Youth is for learning. The lesson should be right and wrong within a society” Healey concluded.

April 2, 1997

A TEST OF LOYALTY – WILL THE VOTERS REMEMBER IN NOVEMBER?

“The House of Representatives is expected to hear Voter Initiative today in committee. It is perhaps the most important issue facing the legislature this year, yet it appears that they will dawdle and play around with the issue and once again, not do what the voters have asked them specifically to do: pass Voter Initiative” said Robert J. Healey, Jr., Chairperson of the Cool Moose Party.

“Voter Initiative was put on the ballot at the last election and received approval. 91 of 100 House districts and 47 of 50 Senate districts saw fit to advise their legislators to approve the voter initiative process as outlined in the Senator Cote proposal.; but still there is uncertainty. How can this be? Is this not the perfect argument for voter initiative itself? The reason we need it is because sometimes our legislators fail to listen to what the people are asking them for” continued Healey.

“While there should be a strong support for this measure due to the vote, there will be much trepidation because these legislators have been given the word by the lobbying interests that this is a live or die issue. Which will the legislators listen to, the people of their districts or the lobbying interests which have their ears? It should be most interesting” Healey continued.

“Next year is to be an election year. If I were a legislator, I would ask myself, should I vote with the people of my district or run against their vote next election. The choice should be a no brainer, but this is the Assembly” concluded Healey.

April 3, 1997

IT SOUNDED SO GOOD ON THE CAMPAIGN TRAIL

“Why is it that we only hear about plans for a more efficient Registry of Motor Vehicles during the campaign season? Does one have to be a candidate for Governor to have any enlightened thoughts as to how to make this establishment more consumer friendly? If so, maybe it was wrong to put the Governors’ race on a four year term” said Robert J. Healey, Jr., Chairperson of the Cool Moose Party.

“Every politician seems to have a view about the Registry. In fact, you can almost tell it is election time when people start giving speeches as to how to improve the registry. I know, I was there” said Healey.

“The point of this, however, is to call attention to the situation now and not next year (an election year). If it is so painfully obvious during campaign season, why not now? The fact of the matter is that there are several innovative ideas that could make the registry more consumer friendly” said Healey.

“This is not a berating of the people who work there. In fact, by and large, the registry offices appear understaffed by those actually interacting with clients. After all, you have to eliminate quite a few workers to keep those executive type salaries where they are. The department heads must earn private sector wages, yet escape private sector scrutiny in terms of necessity” continued Healey.

“Instead of saving innovations for the campaign, why not work now to get a use friendly system that minimizes time and waste. The next election is too far away” concluded Healey.

April 4, 1997

ALL POLITICS IS NOT LOCAL

“We speak the words of local control, but we do very little to allow local control to actually exist. In fact, there is a great deal of state level control being exerted over the objections of the locals. Let’s face it, the state enjoys making the rules and forcing the locals to pay the bills without recourse. This must change or else there will be a major uproar either in the election booths or in the streets. People cannot be continually manipulated and then be called upon them pay the bill for the manipulation” said Robert J. Healey, Jr., Chairperson of the Cool Moose Party.

“While we frequently hear arguments that the state is a prime candidate for one government to consolidate the 39 municipalities, such thoughts are inevitably followed by the disclaimer, but this is Rhode Island where there is local tradition and the need for local governments. Thus, if so, we must assume that the local government is closer to the

people and has its needs and wants in mind. Still, the state passes laws that regulate the conduct of these locals in such a manner so as to make them simply the cash cows flowing milk into the state coffers” continued Healey.

“The locals are hamstrung at almost every turn. They cannot do little to halt their tax increases, but they can be required to put their property up for payment. They can regulate in limited matters, yet they fund the entire operation. What’s wrong with this picture?” questioned Healey.

“While it may be quite awkward to allow for 39 different operations within the state, if the state is not willing to allow for this variety in existence, then it should face the matter directly and abolish the supposed power of local government. Otherwise, it should allow for it to flourish. This system that calls itself Rhode Island is not working for the people that pay the bills” concluded Healey.

April 7, 1997

WHY NOT AN UNCLAIMED WARRANT LIST?

“It was suggested over two years ago, but still there is no effort to bring it into reality. As part of the Cool Moose Party’s plan to fight crime, we had suggested the Attorney General and the court system publish an outstanding warrants listing much like the General Treasurer publishes a listing of unclaimed funds. By putting out a list, we would immediately reduce the outstanding warrants in Rhode Island by clarification, capture, and surrenders” said Robert J. Healey, Jr., Chairperson of the Cool Moose Party.

“Many warrants are outstanding in Rhode Island and the warrant squad idea has made little inroad into the problem. By using a newspaper to get at those with outstanding warrants would go to get the situation resolved. It would be far more cost effective and efficient” said Healey.

“The thousand upon thousand of outstanding warrants need to be served. By recruiting the public for information, there could be a great impact on the warrant and the people could actually feel they were participating in the war on crime. What could be better? Everyone would read this publication simply to find out about themselves, and then, those around them” maintained Healey.

“The use of an outstanding warrant publication twice a year could greatly reduce the outstanding warrant list. If we can do it for records related to unclaimed money, we can certainly do the same for irresponsible people” concluded Healey.

April 8, 1997

TAX REFORM OR TAX REFORMAULATION?

“We have had the opportunity to consider the Cianci tax plan, the Pires reevaluation tax plan, the Almond tax plan, and a host of other alternatives in the area of taxation. While all are valiant attempts, they all are deficient in that they all serve to further a small interest instead of a complete overhaul of the tax system. Taxing, unless accompanied by governmental budgetary reduction, is little more than pushing the side of a balloon. The more you push one side, the more the other sides expand. This is tax shifting, not tax reform” said Robert J. Healey, Jr., Chairperson of the Cool Moose Party.

“It is quite encouraging that all the major players in the tax game have seriously given lip service to tax reform, but in all cases, they are using the tax policy to further their personal political agenda. They are not truly reforming the system, but they are shifting the equities” continued Healey.

“The Mayor wants more money flowing into Providence, so he proposes a tax plan that appears to give something to everyone (when the Mayor made his proposal we stated that it was worthy of consideration, but watch out for the snake oil salesman); the Governor wants business to grab more cash, thus, an income tax reduction (we feel that income taxation, graduated, is at least a fair tax); and the House Finance leader wants to bring money to the cash strapped cities, so we get reevaluation to equalize property taxes (we would have preferred a better reform on the property tax itself)” said Healey.

“The need here is for an entire revamping of the tax systems in Rhode Island taking into consideration all form of taxation that are used to bring revenue into the State’s coffers. Only then can we begin talking about ‘good and fair’ tax policy in Rhode Island” concluded Healey.

April 9, 1997

HOME RULE – USE IT OR LOSE IT

“In the course of my travels throughout the state, I am growing more and more aware of a disturbing situation. That situation is the minimization of the Home Rule provisions of the Rhode Island Constitution. Clearly, in establishing home rule and allowing communities to get o a home rule situation, the Assembly has allowed for the local control of several local issues. This is a big step in that the Assembly has granted by constitutional amendment, powers that had traditionally been reserved to the Assembly. To now look at making the Home Rule provisions worthless is an assault on the people of the State” said Robert J. Healey, Jr., Chairperson of the Cool Moose Party.

The Cool Moose Party supports citizen participation in government via the Home Rule charter. Many communities, via the home rule charter, have instituted provisions for voter initiative and recall. Such lawful endeavors of self control are applauded by the Cool Moose Party.

“There is a time and place for state action. There are clearly areas that warrant state control, as outlined in the Rhode Island Constitution, but there is also a place to allow for local control on several matters, including local budgeting. The time to use the powers granted communities is now” said Healey.

“It is somewhat interesting that the Assembly has traditionally relied on the concept that all the power is derived from the Assembly, unless previously granted by the Assembly. Well, in home Rule, the Assembly has in fact granted this power and is now made a part of the Constitution. It should be used by locals to its fullest extent in order to bring forth governmental reform” concluded Healey.

April 10, 1997

YOU DON'T NEED INITIATIVE, YOU HAVE ME TO GET YOU WHAT YOU WANT. OH, YOU WANT INITIATIVE. SORRY, I CAN'T GET THAT FOR YOU. NOW WHY IS IT YOU NEED INITIATIVE?

“There were no 10s handed out for the mental gymnastics played out at the Assembly on the issue of voter initiative this session. In fact, it was downright dismal. It is hard to conceive that these people cannot perform even the simplest reasoning exercises” said Robert J. Healey, Jr., Chairperson of the Cool Moose Party.

“There were Senators and Representatives lined up stating that there was absolutely no need for initiative because they fully represent the people of their district and not the special interests. These same people, after professing their unbending loyalty to their constituents, voted against initiative, after having been reminded on countless occasions that initiative passed in 91 of the 100 House districts and 47 of the 50 Senate districts. Can someone explain that one to me?” asked Healey.

“If truly representing their districts, wouldn't they vote as the people of their districts asked them to? If they choose to bypass the people, aren't they creating the perfect example why people need initiative? Shouldn't the people be able to get a vote on an issues when their representatives fail to listen to them?” questioned Healey.

“Quite frankly, the Assembly's rejection of initiative comes as no surprise. As I sat in the hearings, especially in the Senate, I knew the lobbying interests had 'instructed' the membership. The tip off was that on an issue so important there were not many labor speakers against the bill. The conclusion is that their work was done in the corridors. Oh sure, the Assembly people will say the bill was heard fully and fairly and anyone wishing

to speak was heard before Committee, but the cold hard fact is that not many citizens have the money and votes that many lobbyist carry in their pockets. What other reason would there be to vote in direct opposition to your constituents?" reasoned Healey.

"With all honesty, I must say that I am as confused about labor's opposition to the initiative process. As Senator Coddere noted in the Committee hearing, labor, being so organized, monied, and active, the initiative process should be a godsend. Labor could do as was done historically with initiative by labor has done historically with initiative by labor, using it to its advantage. In the past, people have used initiative successfully for such labor goals as the 8 hour day and mine safety regulations long before federal laws. In expanding civil rights, initiative gave women the vote in Wyoming prior to the passage of the 19th amendment" noted Healey.

"Still, labor may not be interested in this for several reasons. First, its membership and support may have diminished to a point where initiative movements would expose the actual numbers and weakness that the present system utilizes. By having legislators believe the labor movement is stronger than it really is is just smart politics. Also, why should labor give up a system that works very well for it. They already own the Assembly, why shop for another house?" Healey pointed out.

"It is, however, worth noting that the Senate hearing yesterday, in his brief testimony, labor lobbyist George Nee, attempted to convince legislators to turn their backs on their constituents by correctly pointing out that in no district did initiative make or break an election last year, thus, concluding that initiative was no big threat politically" said Healey.

"Well, Mr. Nee, you have seemed to overlook the obvious on this one. The next election will not be made or broken on the issue of initiative. Instead, it will be made on the issue of why send representatives to the Assembly telling them how you want them to vote only to have them listen to special interests over the voters. We will see how successful it will be. Try getting elected locally on a platform of 'I really didn't care what you wanted, you'll take what I give you or what special interests tell me I should give you'. Not much of a campaign idea, eh, Mr. Nee?" asked Healey.

"Quite honestly, Mr. Nee, we at the Cool Moose Party cannot wait for the 98 elections. Maybe then we can prove your other theory correct. That is, if the people feel they aren't being adequately represented by these people, they will vote them out. Thanks for handing us an issue" concluded Healey.

April 11, 1997

REVISITING THE CONCEPT BEHIND WORKERS' COMPENSATION LAWS

“After all that shuffling in the area of Workers’ Compensation the question of whether or not any meaningful change has been made so as to enable the system to function better for both the employer and the injured employee. From our perspective, it seems that while there were many changes, those changes were largely cosmetic and with little aid in reduction of rates and/or increased benefits for workers injured during the course of employment” said Robert J. Healey, Jr., Chairperson of the Cool Moose Party.

“Workers’ Compensation insurance is a concept that may have long outlived its purpose. Designed at the turn of the century to enable workers to be insured against disabling injury, the system allowed collection of benefits without proof of liability in exchange for a waiver of tort claims against the employer. Such a system, while meaningful in the era that predated SSI, TDI, health care insurance, and disability insurance policies in the private sector, is far less meaningful in the modern society. Yet, like some sacred icon of the past, it is paid homage and allowed to remain a deterrent to business development in Rhode Island” said Healey.

“The Cool Moose Party believes that there are several alternatives to the use of workers’ compensation. Such a revamping of the concept behind the system could prove not only cost effective for those presently in Rhode Island, but could work to attract business interests into the state. There is much that could be improved without injury to either employer or employee. Such reform must be attempted now” concluded Healey.

April 14, 1997

ANOTHER SET OF RHODE ISLAND RIDDLES

“Once again, we have several Rhode Island riddles. Here they are. Answers are optional” said Robert J. Healey, Jr., Chairperson of the Cool Moose Party.

1. With the Governor out of the country, if there is a need for Lt. Governor Jackvony to take over the duties of the office, will we know which probate court to find him in?
2. Is the Governor going to be meeting with any ‘stand-by’ workers during his Portugal trip?
3. How can the Mayor of Providence aides sell fund raising tickets if they close down the strip clubs? Or better yet, will the promotion list change for officers in Providence?
4. In Rhode Island, is prison time counted as part of a state pension?
5. In Rhode Island, is reform still coupled with school? Is it really the Assembly’s education plan for the future?
6. Is it that buildings get retrofitted not when they are overused by taxpayers, but when the salaries of judges who work there are increased?
7. If Rhode Island were to get voter initiative, would there be people to attend fundraisers?

8. In Rhode Island, conflict of interest is making decisions that conflict with your own interests.
9. How public is public television if it gets its money from the General Assembly and not just 'viewers like you'?

April 15, 1997

EXPLODING THE MYTH BEHIND RHODE ISLAND'S EFFORTS IN TAX CAPS

"All too often