

NEWS CONFERENCE
GOVERNOR FARRIS BRYANT
TALLAHASSEE
JUNE 13, 1963

NEWSMEN PARTICIPATING: Vernon Bradford, TAMPA TRIBUNE; Robert W. Delsney, ORLANDO SENTINEL-STAR; Barbara Frye, UNITED PRESS INTERNATIONAL; David Gretsch, CAPITAL BUREAU NEWS; Maurice Harling, PENSACOLA NEWS JOURNAL; Charles Hesser, MIAMI NEWS; John McDermott, MIAMI HERALD; Allen Morris, CRACKER POLITICS; Steve Prentice, FLORIDA BROADCAST NEWS; Tom Baker, INSIDE POLITICS; Doug Starr, ASSOCIATED PRESS; Ray Starr, ABC RADIO; George Thurston, WFLA, WJXT; John Turner, WFGA, WTVJ; Glenn Tomlinson, FREELANCE.

GOVERNOR: Good morning.

SEVERAL: Good morning, Governor.

GOVERNOR: I am very pleased to tell you that I have received word from Governor Taues that they have just completed the formation of a very broadly based citizens' committee to assist in the handling of the resettlement of Cuban refugees. This is only one instance of activities that are being undertaken by governors all over the nation as a result of the impetus given through the National Governors' Conference. I am very hopeful that this one, as the others, will be effective in helping us handle that problem. I am pleased with the very wide understanding of the seriousness of the problem here and the desire to help.

R.STARR: What state is that?

GOVERNOR: Maryland.

FRYE: Governor, what is his first name?

GOVERNOR: Millard.

HESSER: Governor, the feeling upstairs is that they can't raise any 170 or 175 million dollars and perhaps they should go home for a while and think it over. What are your views on that?

GOVERNOR: I think they should stay here and think it over. Going home is not going to do anything but postpone the problem and make it more difficult. There is no reason why they cannot raise the necessary funds at this extended session without such a recess, and I anticipate that they will be able to do so.

HESSER: What do you consider the necessary funds?

GOVERNOR: If no move is made to put the educational trust fund proposal on the ballot this November, \$168 million in addition to those that were included in the estimate of existing taxes prepared by the Comptroller and Budget Director dated May 31. If we shift

situation and from 1958 down to today from state primary funds there has gone into the Jacksonville Expressway \$22 million. And this, of course, is a vast sum and this is in addition to money that had been expended as I indicated a moment ago in Duval County. We have additional plans for construction in Duval County, because of course its needs are great. It is the gateway to Florida and we want to help the people of that community to keep it that way. It has earned that reputation and we want to see that it stays that way. Right now, for instance, or as of yesterday and I suppose still, Road Board Member Ralph Powers; and Road Board Member Billy Mayo, who handles our interstate, are in Georgia conferring with Mr. Gillis, the chairman of the Georgia Road Board. Yesterday they were over on the east coast of Georgia meeting with the east coast counties there trying to promote the expenditure of large additional sums on I-95 on the east coast, which is so important to Jacksonville and the whole east coast of Florida. We are trying to get them to expedite their activities there so that we can fruitfully expedite our activities here. Now, we have already, of course, acquired right-of-way on I-95 from Jacksonville south. We are in the process of acquiring right-of-way from Jacksonville north on I-95. The engineering is underway. The money is in the budget for the next year for the acquisition of these rights-of-way. Of course, the east-west facilities have been put in good condition. North and south facilities will be by this. I really am puzzled to know the context of the discontent. I only can say that the gentleman's misinformation was so gross as to lead him to conclusions which have no contact with reality.

FRYE: Who said it?

GOVERNOR: Mr. Roger Main.

McDERMOTT: Governor, going back to Governor Tawes, does he indicate how many refugees Maryland expects to take or might be able to handle?

GOVERNOR: No. He merely called to let me know that they had organized this committee and that it was a real blue ribbon committee and that we could expect some effective action out of it. I think he would probably welcome inquiries, Mr. McDermott.

McDERMOTT: Have any other governors indicated the creation of similar committees?

GOVERNOR: I have received letters from governors and telephone calls and, of course, the literature of the National Governors' Conference indicating that they were proceeding in this direction, but I haven't gotten this affirmative a response before that I recall.

TURNER: Governor, would you comment on either the progress or any other aspect of the investigation of Judge Culbreath in Miami or the Juvenile Court down there?

GOVERNOR: I have received the newspaper reports of Judge Culbreath's activities and that of others in connection with him, but this is all that I have received up until this time. Judge Culbreath called yesterday to assure me that if I wished to investigate he would be delighted to come up and asked for the privilege of talking with me before I took any action. And this I assured him would, of course, be done.

TURNER: Hasn't your office already ordered an investigation, Governor?

GOVERNOR: It might have, but I do not know of it.

BRADFORD: Have you made any decision on an appointment for Mr. Gilkerson's post in Pinellas County?

GOVERNOR: No.

BRADFORD: Do you intend to soon?

GOVERNOR: Hope to do so today.

BRADFORD: Is Mr. Clyde Keys under consideration?

GOVERNOR: I think we have got a stack of recommendations that high (gesture) and I think Mr. Keys' name is among them.

TURNER: What is the status of the vacancy created by the temporary suspension of Judge Kelly?

GOVERNOR: I am not sure. The Constitution provides that it is incumbent upon the Governor when an officer is removed to immediately -- "shall immediately" -- appoint an "incumbent," whatever that is, as successor. There is a local statute that provides that one circuit judge must reside in Pasco County. There is a problem with 19 of the attorneys signing a petition, out of 23 in the county, for his suspension. It does not appeal to me, and no one of them has sought appointment in his place, but that narrows the field of Pasco Countians considerably. And so far as I know, the other four don't want the job. Research is being done by Mr. Moyle of my staff at this

time to find out in which direction we can move, because there is a need to do so. But I don't know how within the limits of the statute and the constitution and the equitable situation relating to, as it were, the prosecuting witnesses that I can move.

HESSE: Would you feel obligated to appoint a Republican since the people elected a Republican to that office, Governor?

GOVERNOR: No.

D.STARR: Could you appoint an outsider and make him live there for six months?

GOVERNOR: If he were willing to establish his residence there, I think that you could. But, of course, if he is going to be a judge and he says that is his residence, I want him to be honest about it. I don't want a fictitious situation and I don't want to tell somebody "how about coming in for three months and taking over and tell a story about your being a resident."

FRYE: Couldn't the slack be taken up -- I mean can't the Pinellas County circuit judges sit in Pasco County?

GOVERNOR: Yes, and there is a possibility -- well, they could but they are not residents of Pasco County.

FRYE: I mean they could hold court there?

GOVERNOR: Yes, but the law requires that we have one who is a resident of Pasco.

FRYE: What is Pasco County's recommendation on it? Do you have one from them?

GOVERNOR: No, I don't. The delegation feels that the appointed judge ought not to be one of the attorneys who are prosecuting witnesses. But they have made no affirmative recommendations in that regard.

HARLING: Can't the court system solve the problem itself by assigning one?

GOVERNOR: It can, but then I don't carry out my constitutional duty of "shall immediately appoint an incumbent."

D.STARR: Of course, you could study the problem until September, couldn't you?

GOVERNOR: Yes, sir, but that wouldn't be my usual interpretation of immediate.

D.STARR: It might take you that long to come up with a --

GOVERNOR: It could be done. The circuit judges of Pinellas County, however, have already been on the telephone and by mail imploring me to act with great speed, indicating a considerable urgency.

HESSER: Have you considered appointing a Republican?

GOVERNOR: I have in the sense that I have considered appointing any qualified man, but I haven't reached any conclusions about anybody.

FRYE: You have never appointed a Republican to office, have you?
(laughter)

GOVERNOR: Well, let me see, I would say so.

FRYE: I can't remember any.

GOVERNOR: I am still looking for a good one maybe. (laughter)

FRYE: You have appointed Democrats to succeed Republicans like on County Commissions.

GOVERNOR: Yes. I don't really recall whether I have or not.

THURSTON: Could the Pasco County legislative delegation pass a local bill perhaps giving you relief on that matter?

GOVERNOR: That is being considered. Yes, sir.

FRYE: In what form?

GOVERNOR: In the form of not requiring one of the judges to be a resident of Pasco County, and then I could appoint anyone else you see to do that.

RAKER: Would any of the members of the Pasco County delegation be eligible for or interested in the appointment?

GOVERNOR: I don't know whether they are eligible for. I do know they are not interested in.

HARLING: Governor, to get back to this tax situation -- how far along would it have to go with no decision before the administration would step in and try to bring all forces together under one plan?

GOVERNOR: It depends on the psychology of the thing, Mr. Harling. There are times when a governor can move with force and effect and there are times when he merely arouses opposition. And one of the difficult parts of this job is waiting until the moment when you can move and --

HARLING: That moment has not arrived yet?

GOVERNOR: No, I think it has not and I hope that it won't come as a matter of fact. I hope it won't be necessary, because I have spilled

enough blood already during this session. (laughter) But you know that when you are dealing with other people, sometimes you push and all you do is get a bent elbow out of it. And other times they welcome your cooperation and you can add force to what they are doing.

GRETSCH: Governor, do you know what the status of the turnpike audit is?

GOVERNOR: No, I don't. What is it?

GRETSCH: Do you know how many men they have got working on it down there?

GOVERNOR: No, I don't.

GRETSCH: Do you know how long it will be before it is completed?

GOVERNOR: No, sir, I don't.

Are there other questions?

SEVERAL: Thank you, Governor.

GOVERNOR: Thank you.

the educational trust fund proposal to the ballot in November, of course assuming that both it and the bond program are adopted by the people in November, \$158 million.

FRYE: What happens then if the people don't vote the bond program and vote down the trust fund, do you have to have a special session?

GOVERNOR: Unless other taxes produce an unprecedented amount of revenue, yes.

HESSER: You couldn't shift funds possibly to do an adequate job for less than \$158 million?

GOVERNOR: Yes, you can. That is a balanced budget. That \$158 million under the circumstances that I have indicated would allow us to meet every obligation of the state adopted by this Legislature.

HESSER: Well, what would you think would be a rock bottom figure to put in new taxes that you could get by on?

GOVERNOR: I can't give you that figure. I can give you the experience of this year. We have, in fact, expended some \$21 million less than was appropriated. Now that is a variable which we cannot entirely control -- part of it comes from a failure in this particular instance of average daily attendance to grow as rapidly as was anticipated at the time of the '61 session. Of course, it is also effected somewhat by the freeze and by the Cuban crisis and things of that kind. I would not think you have to balance it right on the head, but nobody can tell what a rock bottom figure is. I can't tell.

HESSER: Was it \$21 million for the year or for the biennium?

GOVERNOR: For the biennium.

MOCK: Did you say the failure of the ADA to grow?

GOVERNOR: As rapidly as was predicted, that's correct.

D.STARR: Governor, the Legislature is working on \$140 million in new taxes -- that's still \$18 million under the \$158 million you just mentioned. If they come up with that, then what?

GOVERNOR: Well, it all depends again. There are certain other variables. If they were to extend the permission to utilize the working capital fund of \$3 million and extend the provisions for the application of the net rather than the gross figures to the intangibles tax that would take care of \$13 million. These are other variables that will effect gross amount required.

HESSER: Now your original new tax figure was \$125 million.

GOVERNOR: That is correct.

HESSER: Do you still think that would meet the --

GOVERNOR: No, I don't.

HESSER: What has happened during the interim?

GOVERNOR: They have adopted a lot more appropriations than I indicated were necessary. The appropriations bill is significantly over the Budget Commission recommendations and significantly over the Budget Commission recommendations plus the recommendations I made in my message. That is over the combination of it.

FRYE: Are you taking any part in this fight over the auto tags licensing?

GOVERNOR: No, I have not so far been involved in that controversy.

FRYE: You did not recommend that tax?

GOVERNOR: No, I thought that the sales tax should be made three per cent on automobiles and the tag proposal apparently crept in when there seemed to be a sentiment to keep the two per cent and then the other factor was brought into play.

BRADFORD: Do you have any strong opposition to the auto tag increase that they have been talking about?

GOVERNOR: It all depends. You almost have to see the whole package, Mr. Bradford, in order to make a decision about that.

HESSER: Do you still prefer the three per cent on autos to the increase in licenses?

GOVERNOR: Yes.

FRYE: Governor, have you any prediction now, based on discussions with legislators, on when they might get through and go home?

GOVERNOR: They can get through this week very easily if they are ready to. Whether or not they will, you know as well as I. It is difficult to predict. There is no reason why they shouldn't go home this week.

R.STARR: Governor, speaking of predictions, there have been recurring predictions again as happened yesterday of an oft-told story that we have heard here in the Capital about you leaving your post before the end of your term. I believe your "no comment" statement brought more comment than was necessary yesterday. Would you like to amplify on that statement?

GOVERNOR: Well, I thought that would be fuel for the fire because certainly that adds a lot to the discussion. (laughter) I never heard of the proposal except in the press. I always enjoy reading about it and look forward to its constant recurrence during the rest of this term. (laughter)

D.STARR: Governor, have you made any decisions on how you are going to cut the appropriations in the event they don't come up with the \$158 million you asked for?

GOVERNOR: No, Mr. Starr, I have no idea yet. Again, it depends upon the overall picture. I have been as these various supplemental bills have been going through, and I am in no position to make a decision as to whether or not we have the money to finance them, I have been in many instances calling the chief sponsors of them and notifying them that although I am permitting them to become law -- usually without signature -- that this is not to be construed by them as a commitment that they will ever get the money, because if the Legislature doesn't come up with a balanced proposal some of these supplemental appropriations, as well as others, will have to be lopped off. And I just didn't want anybody unnecessarily led into a delusion of security because it becomes a law.

D.STARR: When do you intend to appoint -- on another subject -- the public defenders?

GOVERNOR: Just as soon as I have the time to sit down and work on those. They are going to be very difficult to do. We are receiving a great volume of recommendations and as soon as we can sit down and consider the whole package we will do it. I would say that within a few days at the most after the Legislature goes home.

R.STARR: You will appoint them en masse, Governor?

GOVERNOR: In all probability. I will try to.

DELANEY: Do you have any plans to make any appointments to the new offices that were created by this session, Governor, anytime soon or are you going to wait until they go home for all of them?

GOVERNOR: Well, I had originally planned to wait until they went home. Of course, the laws become effective July 1-- (laughter)

DELANEY: Can we interpret that as being an expression of pessimism on your part?

GOVERNOR: No, but I don't think with the certainty that I did at one time about that subject matter. (laughter)

FRYE: Do you plan to meet with any of the legislators and try to push them home? Aid them in their battles? (laughter)

GOVERNOR: I spoke last evening with the President of the Senate and he indicated a desire to get together with the Speaker and myself in order to arrive at some determination of when they should conclude the session. I am not initiating that, but of course I will be glad to talk with them about it.

HESSER: A move may be made upstairs today to cut off their \$25 a day expense allowance. Do you think that might urge them to go home a little sooner?

GOVERNOR: I would be the last to suggest that they would be influenced by that.

BRADFORD: Governor, there have been some comments by some legislators to the effect that they had noted you had only opposed the idea of a sales tax on groceries, but have not indicated that you would oppose it to the extent of veto. Is that a correct assumption on their part?

GOVERNOR: I have never said that I would veto it. However, I have always pointed out that I don't make preliminary threats of veto and I don't think you can conclude from that that, therefore, I wouldn't. (laughter)

D.STARR: Why did you ask that?

THURSTON: There is another rumor for you to write up, Vernon.

GOVERNOR: I really wasn't trying to be evasive, but merely to say that here is my policy -- not to make preliminary statements about "I am going to veto a bill," because it always evokes an undesirable response and, therefore, I simply don't say that.

BRADFORD: Are you strongly opposed to the grocery tax?

GOVERNOR: Yes.

McDERMOTT: Governor, if the Legislature were able to resurrect the unpledged elector bill and were to pass it, what would be your position on that?

GOVERNOR: Hot. That is something I have to take up.

McDERMOTT: Well, hot in the sense that you rather like the bill or that you don't care very much for it.

GOVERNOR: Not in the sense that it would put me on a hot spot. Of course, I live there anyway, but it would be a rather warm position to be on politically.

RAKER: Governor, have you had any word at all on the decision on the Democratic National Convention?

GOVERNOR: No, I have no official word. I continue to hear rumors -- less favorable rumors than I was previously hearing but they are all still rumors. I have no word from anybody of authority or who purports to have spoken to anybody of authority.

RAKER: Do these rumors revolve around the Cuban situation?

GOVERNOR: Yes, largely.

BRADFORD: Do you have any knowledge, Governor, from the Road Department about the report in the paper this morning about a change in designers on I-75?

GOVERNOR: I read the article this morning and this was my first knowledge of it. I want to talk to Mr. Cason about it, because we are anxious, of course, that -- and I know he is more anxious than anybody that it go ahead with all speed. I did not know it was going to be done and I don't know the reasons for it, nor do I know what its effect will be, other than as I read in the paper.

DELANEY: Governor, in your conversation last evening with the Senate President did the idea of the Legislature going home at the end of this week with the tax problem still unsolved and then coming back later come up?

GOVERNOR: No, it did not.

DELANEY: Do you think this would be a desirable move?

GOVERNOR: I think it would be very undesirable.

DELANEY: Do you think there is some sentiment for doing this?

GOVERNOR: Well, I really don't know. No legislator has mentioned this to me. I have read about it from time to time. It may be in the category of my resignation, interesting, if true. (laughter)

NORRIS: Did you discuss that at this conference?

GOVERNOR: No. As a matter of fact that was not brought up. Nobody has ever mentioned it to me, except to come up with a newspaper and ask me if it were true. Some of them wistfully and some of them otherwise. (laughter)

McDERMOTT: Have you ever discussed that situation with Senator Carraway?

GOVERNOR: Not with anybody, neither Senator Smathers, nor President Kennedy, nor Mr. Carraway, nor Mr. Horne --

D.STARR: Justice Douglas?

GOVERNOR: Justice Douglas, anyone.

BRADFORD: Governor, what is Eugene Licata's status now with the Barber Commission?

GOVERNOR: He was acquitted, I read this morning.

BRADFORD: He is still suspended, though?

GOVERNOR: He has been suspended and his suspension, as I recall, was sustained by the Senate and, therefore, he is out as of now. However, the Barber Board has been reorganized and completely new appointments will be made. So I think his status is a moot question.

FRYE: I didn't know it was ever sustained by the Senate. I thought they kept --

BRADFORD: With the recommendation, I believe, to you that you re-suspend him.

GOVERNOR: I think he was suspended, but I forget just what the semantics of it was.

D.STARR: They recommended you re-suspend after they reinstated him.

FRYE: They reinstated him two or three times.

BRADFORD: Yes.

GOVERNOR: Oh, they have?

BRADFORD: And you keep re-suspending him. But in any case they are all in a state of limbo anyway because of the reorganization of the Board.

RAKER: Any further questions, Governor?

GOVERNOR: Yes, there are. (laughter)

RAKER: Governor, I think you answered this possibly in Miami last week, but I did not get it on film. Could you explain exactly what procedure you plan to go through in promoting the sale of the constitutional amendment on the bond program?

GOVERNOR: Well, we have not worked out any campaign to do so. I, of course, expect to do all that I personally can to insure that the

voting public understands the full implications of what we are about to do -- the reasons for it -- and with the hope that at the November elections they will favorably support it. I am hopeful, however, that this burden will not be left entirely to me. I assume that it won't. I have had approaches by many individuals around the state who want to form a committee -- a citizens committee of sorts -- to promote this proposal so that we can move ahead.

DELANEY: Will you, also, promote the other two constitutional amendments?

GOVERNOR: Now, the recreational bond program certainly I will support. What is the other one you are talking about?

DELANEY: The off-year elections for cabinet officers?

GOVERNOR: I am not familiar with that one. I actually have never read that. In any event, I don't consider it in the same context that I do these first two. These first two in my judgment are truly emergency measures.

RAKER: Governor, in view of the fact that the off-year election thing could allow the cabinet next year to run for a two-year term and then run to succeed themselves for a four-year term, does this equally apply for an incumbent running to succeed himself for a two-year term?

GOVERNOR: I never read it, so I really don't know.

RAKER: If that was so, I mean could you run for a two-year term?

GOVERNOR: I wish I could tell you, but I don't know. I believe, however, that the question is largely academic.

McDERMOTT: Governor, what are the mechanics involved in getting this educational trust fund on the ballot in November?

GOVERNOR: A bill is being promoted through the Legislature now to establish an election on the first Tuesday after the first Monday in November. That is the total mechanics of it.

McDERMOTT: Can you tell whether it has been acted on in either house?

GOVERNOR: No, I don't. We just put it in the Senate on Monday, I believe.

FRYE: The House killed it once?

GOVERNOR: To set up the election? I was not aware of it.

DELANEY: The Senate passed it.

GOVERNOR: I don't think there will be any problem with it. It is just a matter of getting it through.

FRYE: No, I thought you were talking about the \$16 million.

GOVERNOR: No, we were thinking of actually setting the election in November. The other was killed.

DELANEY: You said a moment ago, Governor, that the question is largely academic about whether you could run for two more years. Does this mean that if you could you would not?

GOVERNOR: It means that at the present time, I have absolutely no thought of running for any office including that of Governor in 1954.

DELANEY: Does this mean that you are up to here right at the moment?

GOVERNOR: No. I am enjoying this job tremendously. I am focusing on this job while I have got it and believe me I've got my hands full. When this job is done, I will look and see then what next to do. I have no plans for entering any race on behalf of myself or anybody else.

THURSTON: Governor, can we interpret that to mean that you will not resign from the U. S. Senate to run for a second abbreviated term as Governor? (laughter)

GOVERNOR: I wouldn't want to go that far. (laughter) I would like to make one comment about a little matter that occurred in Duval County the other day where a good friend of mine indicated that too little money was being spent by this administration in Duval County on the road program and that this was something that had been happening for a number of years and that Duval County had been through the years consistently slighted. It was indicated that only one and a half million dollars of primary funds had been spent there during this administration. Of course, in approaching this problem I am always in the difficult situation that when you demonstrate how much has been spent here somebody hollers "well, that's more than you spent in our county." As a matter of fact, one project -- the Broad Street Viaduct -- cost one and a half million and that's underway. The contract has been let. We have spent in Duval County from our road funds some eleven millions of dollars on primary and other roads in the county -- not county money. In addition to that, I would point out that in 1958 the Jacksonville Expressway was in a bad financial