



Massachusetts Governor and presidential candidate Michael Dukakis breezed through the South Bay last week.

Massachusetts to Mars

Dukakis discusses the country, the world and outer space

By the time Massachusetts Governor Michael Dukakis' Lear jet touched down at San Jose International Airport last week, he was already running nearly two hours behind schedule. Waiting to greet him were the usual corps of paparazzi and television news crews, jostling for position in the best *Max Headroom* fashion.

Warmly welcomed to San Jose by veteran Congressman Norman Mineta—who enthusiastically endorsed Dukakis' presidential aspirations—the governor was soon inundated by those wanting to get close to him and, maybe, touch a bit of history in the making.

The smiling, small-shouldered candidate thanked Mineta for the endorsement, praised the former San Jose mayor and diplomatically failed to mention Mineta's earlier, equally enthusiastic backing for congressional colleague Richard Gephardt just a few months ago.

The two-hour delay all but eliminated his planned discussions with local news reporters. Dukakis quickly left the airport news conference to ride the new downtown trolley and make good on his promise to attend a \$15-per-person reception at the Rose Garden home of San Jose City Councilmember Susan Hammer. The event, which benefited the local Democratic party, drew nearly 300 attendees and boosted the perpetually impoverished party coffers by "about \$4000," according to Central Committee chair Andrea Leiderman.

Later in the day, a \$750 per person fundraiser for the Dukakis campaign at the San Martin Community Hall netted "in excess of \$100,000," estimates San Jose trial attorney Harry Delizonna, who serves on Dukakis' National Finance Committee.

"What made the event truly remarkable is that the governor is the only presidential candidate who

refuses to accept money from political action committees [PACs]," Delizonna notes.

"That means that there were no big special interests purchasing tables for this event.

"Even though he refuses to accept PAC money, he has set fundraising records for a presidential candidate," according to Delizonna. "He has raised over \$8 million in the first two reporting periods of the campaign. No candidate has ever done that before in this country."

For his part, Dukakis says he's pleased by his whirlwind tour here. "I've just had a wonderful two or three days in California," Dukakis told *Metro* before leaving California. "I'm very, very impressed with what people are doing on public transportation in Santa Clara County. I think that LRV [Light Rail Vehicle] is a terrific idea and I hope if I'm president I can be helpful."

Dukakis aides apologized for the governor's tight San Jose schedule and scrambled to make up for the shortened airport press conference by arranging a telephone interview at 7pm on the Sunday morning following his San Jose visit.

In that discussion, excerpts of which follow, the recently reelected Massachusetts governor discussed the themes of compassion and leadership that underlie his campaign, touched upon similarities between the high-tech economies of Massachusetts and California and endorsed the pioneering effort led by astronomer Carl Sagan to initiate a joint US/Soviet exploration of the planet Mars.

—Hal Plotkin

How do you react to the Reagan administration's new policy of requiring that in-kind contributions to the needy, such as trips to the local food bank or nights spent at emergency shelters, must be declared when determining welfare eligibility?

I'm absolutely baffled. This is one in a whole series of things that have happened in this administration that

seem to be deliberately, or maybe not so deliberately, designed to hurt people who are disabled and blind and elderly and among the most vulnerable people in our society. These are folks who are on SSI. It's a very basic kind of income, and we've been fighting this battle ever since this administration came in. At a time when we are trying to encourage volunteerism and encourage people to help people in the community who have needs and are extremely vulnerable... I'm just baffled. I don't understand it.

You often say that improved economic conditions in Massachusetts provide an indication of what you can accomplish as president. Your critics acknowledge that things have improved in Massachusetts but claim that its economic revival is primarily due to dramatically increased federal spending in your state. How do you react to those charges? In other words, is Massachusetts a model for the nation?

Well, the facts are different. Most people ask me if it is defense spending. We've added about 650,000 new jobs in the past ten years. Less than 5 percent are defense related. As a matter of fact, the number of defense related jobs went down a little bit last year. What we have been able to do is to build a very strong and a very diverse economy, and that is one of the reasons why we've got a 2.5 unemployment rate and we are doing so well.

Are you satisfied with the kinds of jobs you have been able to create in Massachusetts?

Yes. As a matter of fact, last year we had the largest average increase in personal income of any state in the country and that's what happens when you have a full employment economy, very low unemployment. It's one of the reasons why our efforts to help families get off of welfare have been so successful. Graduates from what we call our ET program [employment and training for public assistance recipients] are beginning at jobs with an average starting wage of \$13,000 a year. That's the kind of job that can help a welfare mother and her kids to get off of welfare and stay off of welfare permanently.

Now if we begin shifting some resources in this country from military to civilian research and development, then a state like Massachusetts—and I suppose California, too—would probably be doing well or better because we're high-tech states, we're technology states. And we would be participating very actively in civilian R&D as, of course, we already do.

You've said that one way you intend to reduce the federal budget deficit is by stepping up efforts to collect underpaid federal taxes. What income group will feel the most pressure from a more determined and vigorous IRS in a Dukakis administration?

Well, our experience at the state level—and this is true of states that have done very successful revenue enforcement programs—is that there is no one income group that is necessarily not paying its taxes more than another,

although you tend to get more evasion and avoidance in the upper income brackets. We found, for example, that we had an awful lot of people who were registering their yachts in other states. Obviously these were people of substantial means who were registering their boats in Delaware and other places trying to avoid Massachusetts taxes.

So I would guess that a significant percentage of the people who are not paying are people of substantial income. Remember, this also involves businesses and corporations, so that we are talking about not only individual taxpayers but business and corporate taxpayers as well.

As the Reagan administration nears an intermediate nuclear force [INF] agreement with the Soviets, it appears likely that more emphasis will be placed on the maintenance of NATO's conventional forces. As president, would you expect to increase or decrease the US conventional military presence in Europe?

That depends on whether we make progress in talks on conventional force reductions as well. The Soviet Union has indicated an interest in getting those talks going. [Soviet leader] Gorbachev has indicated that they are interested in seriously exploring conventional force reductions, including significantly greater cuts on the Soviet side than on our side, because of the obvious imbalance between conventional forces in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union as compared with NATO. Those talks are supposed to resume in late winter or early spring, so a lot of what happens on the conventional side depends on those talks, at least for the foreseeable future.

I think we've got to maintain our existing level of strength in Western Europe, especially if the INF agreement comes through. In any event, I think there are serious questions about our conventional capability, just generally. I would want to put much greater emphasis on building up and improving and strengthening our conventional capability and less on spending billions and billions more on additional nuclear weaponry when we already have 12,000 strategic nuclear warheads—which is enough to blow up the Soviet Union about 40 times over.

Is it conceivable that an increase in the budget for conventional forces would overtake any decreases you might be able to make in the nuclear force budget?

No, when you take a look at the kinds of money that people are currently talking about spending. I mean \$50 billion for the Midgetman [missile]... you could spend a third or a half of that on increased conventional forces and conventional capability and still put half back in the federal treasury and dramatically improve our conventional capability. One other thing that we ought to be exploring—rather than this Star Wars thing—is some serious research and exploration on conventional defense initiatives. Senator Nunn, among others, has

pointed out that we're much more likely to be able to make significant progress in conventional defenses of a high-tech nature—antitank, anti-weaponry on the ground—and that if a fraction of what we are spending on Star Wars is put into what is now being referred to as CDI [Conventional Defense Initiative] it probably would be a far more useful expenditure of money.

What role will the CIA play in your administration? Specifically, what is your view of the propriety of covert federal actions in a democratic society?

We need an independent intelligence agency which can give the president a good second opinion when it comes to intelligence and what is going on in the world. On the other hand, there is no place in American society for the United States involvement in assassination, in the overthrowing of governments—the kind of thing which, unfortunately, the CIA has been engaged in. Now there are obviously some areas where you do have to engage in covert operations, particularly in anti-terrorist activities. You can't fight international terrorism without undercover operations. In that area, I think covert operations are not only justified, but necessary. But I would be inclined to do so under a very strong, well-managed anti-terrorist operation. I'm not sure that the CIA is the place to do that.

Leaders of our some of our largest local semiconductor manufacturers say that they will be unable to compete internationally without federal help through programs such as the \$750 million Sematech R&D program. Is this a proper use of limited government resources?

Yes, I think it is. As a matter of fact, Massachusetts is actively engaged in the bidding for the facility and I think we are now down to the last five finalists and we are working very hard to become the host state for the facility.

I think we've got to put public resources into technology in this country. If we're going to compete in the international economy of the future, then we've got to develop public/private partnerships—not only around R&D and production of microchips, but in a whole range of both new and applied technologies.

I think the Sematech proposal makes sense and I'm strongly for it.

As you know, an important NASA facility is located nearby at Ames Air Force Base. What priority will your administration give to NASA and the exploration of outer space? Specifically, do you favor a joint US/Soviet effort to visit the planet Mars?

I'm for a strong space program but it has got to be well-managed. I think, as we all know at this point, we've got a space program that is in very serious trouble because it has not been well-managed, and this administration has not decided what our priorities are. I think we should seriously explore a joint program with the Soviet Union on Mars.