1975

Letter from John Joseph Moakley in reply to a completed questionnaire from a Jamaica Plain constituent, 1975

John Joseph Moakley

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Moakley confers with consumer advocate Ralph Nader prior to a meeting of Moakley's committee which reported out legislation intended to block the President's plan to decontrol oil prices. During testimony Moakley and Nader contended that the President's plan could cause gasoline prices to reach $1 a gallon within a year.

WASHINGTON QUESTIONNAIRE

If you are unable to stop by Saturday, I hope you’ll take a few minutes to share your views with me on some of the following issues.

UTILITY RATES. Under the present utility rate structure, people who use a lot of electricity pay less per unit of power than people who use a small amount. Do you feel the present system should be turned upside-down to encourage careful use of electricity?

☐ Yes  ☐ No

GASOLINE CONSUMPTION. New cars that get poor gas mileage should be discouraged by fining the manufacturer.

☐ should be discouraged by taxing the purchaser

☐ should not be discriminated against by the government

RUSSIAN WHEAT DEAL. Foreign grain sales (like the Russian Wheat Deal) which raise domestic food prices:

☐ Ultimately punish American farmers and consumers alike.

☐ Is necessary to achieve a favorable balance of trade between the U.S. and foreign countries

FOOD AND OIL PRICES. America should use our agricultural exports as a bargaining tool to force down the price of foreign oil. In other words, America should sell surplus grain to oil-rich nations at double or triple current prices or trade them for their oil, barrel for bushel.

☐ I mainly agree with the above statement.

☐ I mainly disagree with the above statement.

I would especially appreciate hearing your personal thoughts on this most critical situation with regard to food and energy prices. Please feel free to attach additional correspondence. I intend to read fully each of your statements. Thanks in advance for sharing your concern with me.

Sincerely,

Joe Moakley

Your thoughts: The best public schools have been destroyed by race, poverty, poor leadership, and the inability to allocate funds to keep them better.
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Dear Joe,

Thank you for attending...
December 24, 1975

[Address]

Dear [Name],

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for taking the time to respond to my recent questionnaire sent to your home.

I noted your comments on forced busing and would like to take a few minutes of your time to detail some of my efforts in this area of concern.

I have been working with my colleague Alan Steelman of Texas, to gain additional signatures on a discharge petition to free anti-busing legislation from the Judiciary Committee.

I was one of three House Democrats to demand and organize a meeting of the Democratic Caucus of consider busing.

I personally rose to tell my Democratic colleagues about the tragedies busing has brought to the City of Boston. I was disappointed that a majority of my colleagues voted in support of busing, but at the very least, our efforts in the Caucus raised the public consciousness to the problems created by forced busing.

Additionally, I have requested Congressman Kastenmeier, Chairman of the Subcommittee on the Courts and the Administration of Justice, to look into the Garrity ruling on South Boston High.

As a graduate of "Southie" High, I am deeply disturbed by the Judge's ruling. I support efforts to bring an appeal to the Courts to overturn this ill-advised move.

--Continued--
As you may well see, it has not been easy to effect a real and dramatic shift in opposition to Forced Busing in the Congress. But I shall keep trying. I liken the Forced Busing controversy in the 70's to Vietnam in the 60's.

At the beginning of the American involvement in Vietnam, only a few legislators and government officials spoke out against the War. The same holds true for busing now. I do believe that more and more public leaders will begin to recognize that busing is resegregating our public schools and that the quality of education for blacks and whites is not improving.

I support neighborhood schools and will not let up in my fight to return the Schools to the people.

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to respond to your concern.

Sincerely yours,

JOHN JOSEPH MOAKLEY
Member of Congress