

The Texas Observer

MAY 13, 1966

A Journal of Free Voices

A Window to The South

25c

BLACK HOUSTON

Houston

Black Houston reaches from the stink of the ship channel at Harrisburg, where a Negro deckhand can walk a block from his ship for a piece of heroin or a night with a whore, south and west to the shaded avenues of "Sugar Hill," where a Negro dentist can stand on the walk of his \$50,000 home and watch a white boy weed the park across the street. The deckhand pays for his happiness by giving his hiring agent one day's pay for each week worked, and the dentist may have paid for what he has by turning white in the eyes of other Negroes. Between Harrisburg and Sugar Hill, along Lyons and the Fifth Ward and south to the middle-class ghetto just north of Brays Bayou, there is a black subcity as large as El Paso. The citizens of Black Houston are becoming restless with their enforced segregation from the wealth which the white Houstonian and the casual visitor think of when they think of the city. Some of those closest to the Negro poor contend that only luck and the weather insulate Houston from violent reaction on a massive scale.

Of 316,194 families in Houston, 18%, or 57,170, have incomes of less than \$3,000 a year. These desegregated statistics from the Office of Economic Opportunity do not show the racial make-up of Houston's poverty sector, but slightly less than half of these families are considered to be Negroes. Of men and women 14 and over in the city's civilian labor force, 4.2% are unemployed. In Houston, as elsewhere, the Negro follows a pattern that the sociologist calls high job mobility, which is to say, he moves from one poor-paying job to another. A U.S. Census map of Houston, hatchmarked to show areas in which the majority of families have \$3,000 or less a year, closely matches a map of the deepest sectors of the Houston ghetto, and when the cutoff point is extended to \$4,000 a year, includes virtually all of the ghetto tracts.

A member of Houston's white power structure—an oilman, banker, or newspaper editor—can drive from his home in Southwest Houston to the central city by way of Westheimer or the Southwest Freeway and never see black Houston. Traffic on the elevated Eastex Freeway rumbles over the dark alleys of the Fifth

Ward, and to the east, one can drive through miles of elegantly manicured industrial park without realizing that, two blocks away, families of nine are crowded into one-room "apartments" which rent for \$8 a week. Here, the invisibility of the poor, which Michael Harrington wrote of in *The Other America*, is carried to its ultimate. The white Houstonian would be as surprised by the slightly flaking elegance of "Sugar Hill," cockpit of the thin top-cream of Negro society, as by the degradation of a Harrisburg home the Observer visited one day recently. On the porch sat the wife and mother, disconsolate because her husband was headed for jail for dope-pushing: a four-year term on a "trade-out" for a guilty plea arranged by a lawyer who most likely will claim a full fee for this kind of defense. Her daughter wasn't in school that day because the child was born blind in one eye, and her classmates taunted her. Another daughter had a twisted forearm. She had broken it, and the mother had removed the cast herself because the family didn't have the \$62 which the mother said Ben Taub Hospital, the charity facility, told her would be charged for its removal. Sitting on the stoop, overseeing three of her children toss rocks into the dust, this mother could see no farther than the high railroad embankment one hundred feet from her door.

Along Rosedale and Southmore, just a few blocks from Texas Southern University, the once-white neighborhood of quiet streets and brick homes has become a different kind of ghetto. Men without work live there, too, crowded with their families into apartments partitioned off in what once were private homes, and others live there who hold two jobs so that they and their families can live in this desirable area. Near the expensive homes is a large, privately owned apartment project they call "Peyton Place," and this is the home of junkies and pimps and "pros" (prostitutes), who pay weekly rent, as do most Houston Negroes, and who move on when it seems appropriate.

Within the ghetto, which is vast, the Negro can be with his own and can speak the street argot. The downtown restaurants, theaters, and hotels are open to him now, but this means little to him, for he

remains segregated from decent wages, decent housing, and white schools, except in the most token way. The story of the maintenance of *de facto* segregation in Houston explains the plight well, for the Negro now has exhausted the sanctioned methods of local pressure and is moving on to court, in a suit which was scheduled to be filed this week, to stop a building program that the suit alleges to be a tool of continued *de facto* segregation, and to seek an order desegregating all Houston schools next September, rather than in 1967.

Clark Read, a professor of biology at Rice University who is active as a liberal in civic affairs, gave the Observer this personal evaluation of the school situation one year ago: "By careful gerrymandering and other shenanigans, the grade-a-year desegregation was proceeding as part-of-a-grade in some-of-the-schools. In the Negro schools, the usual discriminatory pattern of overcrowding, disrepair, and lower quality of teaching were and are being maintained."

Last spring the voters faced a school bond issue which, the protest's leaders said, was designed to build new segregated schools. The Negro reaction was massive. In three Negro high schools, 85% of the students staged a one-day boycott and, led by a young Baptist minister named Bill Lawson, hundreds of Negroes marched from Texas Southern University to the school administration building five miles away. Mayor Louie Welch was waiting there when they arrived, but they surged past him, singing, chanting, and ignoring him. Now, almost exactly one year later, a new fence and a guard remain at the school building, symbolic of the barrier remaining between the spokesmen of the Negro community and the white power structure.

ONE of the best informed white analysts of Houston Negro affairs was Saul Friedman, a reporter for the Houston Chronicle, who left that newspaper last year after its liberal editor, Bill Steven, was fired, and the newspaper itself delivered unto John Mecom, the oil millionaire. Under the Mecom ownership the newspaper has withheld, apparently for

'The Whole Community Is a Bomb'

good, publication of a long series which Friedman wrote on the Negro problem in Houston. But a year ago, when the Chronicle was a different sort of newspaper, Friedman analyzed the meaning of the demonstration and defined the Negro patterns of power in that city.

The key to the power situation was demonstrated, Friedman wrote, when the Negroes neared the administration building and Harrel Gordon Tillman, appointed by Welch as Houston's first Negro corporation court judge, offered to mediate between Welch and Lawson; Lawson ignored the offer and kept marching.

Friedman believed that this marked the ascendancy of a new kind of Negro leader, that exemplified by Lawson, a poetry-writing activist, and Miss Barbara Jordan, now an unchallenged Democratic nominee to the state senate, then an assistant attorney in the office of County Judge Bill Elliott.

The old guard included men like Mack H. Hannah Jr., thought to be Houston's wealthiest Negro, and the father-in-law of Judge Tillman; Hannah heads a \$5-million empire capped by a savings and loan association. Others included TSU's president, Dr. Samuel M. Nabrit, and the 81-year-old Rev. L. H. Simpson, chieftain of the Negro Baptist ministers in the city.

All of these leaders remain, and Lawson and Miss Jordan have become an educator and a politician, respectively. But there are proteges and new workers, and, according to a sociologist who has followed Negro leadership in Houston closely, there is a continuity of leadership despite changing roles.

That sociologist is Mrs. Wilhelmina Perry of Texas Southern University, who says that she sees a need for the elder statesman, such as Hannah, and the activist, such as Lawson. Mrs. Perry, acceptable to Mayor Welch and Judge Elliott for appointment to a director's seat on the Houston Harris County Economic Opportunity Organization, notes an undercurrent of danger in the Houston Negro situation. "The whole community is a bomb," she told the Observer. "Negroes are repressed, and there is this latent anxiety. It's just a matter of providing the situation that will ignite the bomb. I don't think that the Negro is really so naturally docile and submissive."

Last year's school crisis resulted in no tangible gains for the Negro community, and no major effort to establish dialogue has yet been made. The gap between Negro and white was demonstrated when Mrs. Perry compared her sociometric studies of the Negroes whom Negroes respect with a study by a University of Houston researcher of the Negroes whom whites respect. High on the list of Negroes respected by whites was an elderly Negro businessman who was unknown to and untrusted by the Negro community in general, and Mrs. Perry said that his appearance on the list (and on one compiled by Friedman) surprised her tremendously. The whites still seek this man's counsel.

Mrs. Perry, who cannot be described as a militant activist, shrugs off the charge, often heard, that those partisan to the cause of Negro rights keep bringing up the threat of street violence simply as a political lever against the white power structure. The

feeling of danger, she said, "is a feeling I had long before Watts." In her studies, Mrs. Perry said, she has discovered what she calls "two persistent themes of Negro concern." One is the continued segregation and the low quality of Negro schools, and the other is "police brutality."

"We need a dialogue in which the speakers are in equal roles," Mrs. Perry explained, adding that recent Negro-white confrontations on schools and police procedures have been a matter of power talking to the powerless.

THIS SPRING the fuse burned shorter, but was quenched by rain one Saturday.

It all happened in the Third Ward, just a few blocks from TSU. Joe Rainbolt, who operates the B&J Lounge on Rosedale, remembers that it was about two o'clock on that Thursday afternoon in late February when Eugene E. (Lucky) Hill, a 38-year-old laborer, was drinking a beer in the lounge. Rainbolt says that Hill remembered that he needed to pick up a loaf of bread and left the B&J for a moment and returned with a loaf of bread in a paper bag.

Rainbolt said Hill told him and others in the lounge that something had happened. As Hill had left the store, he told them, the white woman who operated the grocery "thought that Lucky had taken that loaf of bread," Rainbolt recalled. "It was in a bag, but he didn't have the receipt. He told her where he was going and that she could call the law if she wanted to."

Rainbolt continued: "I thought he was kidding until officer J. L. Reece showed up, collared him, took him to the table over there and searched him. Then he asked Lucky to come outside, and he started out with him and Lucky set about half a bottle of beer on the counter there. I stayed inside, and about three to five minutes later, I heard the shots and broke and ran. I was the first one to Lucky. Reece had him by the collar after he had shot him. Lucky looked at me and said, 'Tell him, Joe, I hadn't did nothing.'"

"Reece crawled on into his car and turned on a switch—I don't think the radio had been on. He laid his cap on the seat. He'd gotten blood on his hands, Lucky's blood..."

Nine witnesses went before the grand jury that looked into it. The Houston Post reported that before going into the grand jury room, Patrolman Reece said: "After I arrested him [Hill], he tried to take my pistol. There was a struggle. At one time both of us had our hands on my pistol, and it fired three times." A Negro witness, Lamar Robbins, disputed this, the Post reported. "There was no tussle. He [Hill] just went to block a lick," Robbins said. "Eight other witnesses told varying stories to the grand jury," the Post said it had learned. The grand jury declined to take action against Reece.

The early stories about the shooting said Hill had been arrested for reportedly shoplifting a barbecued chicken. If evidence

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Muslims, Nationalists Are Working There

existed that a barbecued chicken was in Hill's possession, there was no public reference to such evidence.

Rainbolt remembers that after he had run out of his lounge, "In a few minutes the people had surrounded the car, and then about five carloads of cops arrived." Within minutes after Hill was shot there was a picket line at the store—a line organized by Hill's neighbors in the community, many of them acting together for the first time. After Hill died in a hospital the protest intensified until, on Saturday, Feb. 26, hundreds of Negroes were milling through the shopping plaza. The Rev. John Stevens, an Episcopal priest whose ministry is to the poor in the streets, said that it was the weather which prevented massive rioting from beginning just three blocks from his church. "The alternative of violence is very close," he said. "If it hadn't rained that Saturday, that would have been it." With the neighborhood aroused, two very different kinds of Negro organizations made their presence felt. Stevens has been advised that Black Muslims and Black Nationalists were on hand that Saturday. One of Stevens' field workers told the Observer, "The Muslims were there telling them, 'The white man is a devil. Don't you know he can walk into your house and rape your wife and throw you in jail for not liking it?'" Also on hand were representatives of the NAACP.

"I'm fed up with the NAACP," said Stevens. "They tried to kill the school protest, and they like to take over any protest they can find about this time of year, because it's time for their fund-raising drive."

The Negroes in Hill's neighborhood, who were not drawn into the NAACP, succeeded in their protest. Donald Nixon, the man who owned the market, closed it, and then he sold it. The anger remains, and Hill's death has brought a kind of unity to the Negroes along Rosedale. Their leader is Joe Rainbolt, who said he had never thought of organizing until Hill was shot.

"I don't believe in movements. I don't believe in nonviolent marches," he said. "Somebody hits me, and I'll hit them back." Although he is shy and slow to speak up as he leads his embryonic neighborhood group, Rainbolt is an articulate advocate of police reform.

"One of the things they could do is have a 'buddy-buddy' system, with two men in a car. In order to give fair police coverage, we should help the police department by upgrading salaries, and then that would help getting better policemen. If the qualifications were higher, qualifying for the force would be a little tougher. With the present administration, the Negro doesn't get his mandate recognized by the police department.

"All the fault does not lie with the city, but I'd say that 85% of it does."

AS RAINBOLT'S GROUP began to organize, the NAACP, with a 40-man delegation led by the Rev. D. Leon Everett, II, a Negro Baptist minister, took their

grievance to Mayor Welch and the police.

Everett asked an end to police brutality and to derogatory remarks directed against Negroes by policemen, for upgrading of Negro policemen, for the "buddy system" under which one white policeman and one Negro would patrol the streets in the same car, a court of inquiry for every allegation of police brutality, and psychological training to improve the attitudes of white policemen toward Negroes. This is also what Rainbolt wants but Everett was admitted to the chambers of the mighty.

At the meeting, police chief H. B. Short is said to have cleared up specific claims of police brutality made by the Negroes as rumors, and he cited 43 cases in which officers were disciplined for mishandling Negro cases. The police chief said that his men are adequately trained in how to deal with Negroes, that the white-Negro buddy system would be of little use, and that the police department investigates police brutality complaints itself.

Welch, admitting that the police had "failed miserably" in communicating with the Negroes, promised to look for a solution, but declined to set up a civilian review board, just as he has in the past declined to create a city human relations council. No tangible change resulted from the meeting.

Now, in May, Rainbolt, a man who discounts the usefulness of confrontations with the structure, is prepared to act again. The man who bought Nixon's market and reopened it had sought the counsel of Negro leaders, such as Rainbolt, before going ahead. The new owner agreed to hire Negroes, and even offered an errand boy job to the young son of the late Lucky Hill; the boy turned it down. Last month, though, a Negro butcher at the store was replaced with a white butcher, and when the Observer last saw Rainbolt, he was trying to decide whether this, too, was grounds for protest. He was confident. "I may just close them up again," he said.

Rainbolt said that he believes in political action, and it is such action which many—Fr. Stevens and Mrs. Perry included—feel may prove to the Negroes of the Houston ghettos that progress is possible, with Miss Jordan's victory as a turning point.

RAINBOLT and some other Houston Negroes are being advised in their work by Oliver O'Conner, 36, a Negro who has been a salesman, boxer, writer, actor, and ship deckhand. During his travels as a youth he was converted to Islam in Egypt by a man he calls "the beautifullest cat I ever saw." "I'm black and I'm a Moslem, but I'm not a Black Muslim," explained O'Conner, who said he believes in the usefulness of political action. He is paid by a religious denomination to seek out Negro trouble spots and to help the Negroes organize to fight these problems on a highly localized basis.

As O'Conner makes his rounds through the ghettos, he encounters what he calls "the living dead."

Pointing at a block of dilapidated rent housing, he said, "It's a graveyard here. The people in it have no future, a forgettable past, and a lousy, stinking present." Driving past the Houston Post Building, O'Conner saw a teen-age Negro girl passing the newspaper and its giant motto, "Let facts be submitted to a candid world." "This neighborhood is the prostitute's breeding ground," he told the Observer. "That girl'll be a pro in a few months. This is really a graveyard."

White and Negro apathy are not O'Conner's only enemies. There are the Black Muslims, who advocate the violence which O'Conner rebukes, and whose headquarters is a green-and-white Tudor-style building at the corner of Sampson and Polk. The building, which used to be the office of a lumberyard, and the open space behind it is used, O'Conner said, for training in hand-to-hand combat and in fighting police dogs.

O'Conner also knows of the presence of Black Nationalists, who sent a five-man recruiting team to Houston three months ago and whose strength there he now estimates at 250 to 300. "You can't get the Justice Department to believe that," he said, noting that his lines of communication to the Nationalists have been cut in recent days. "They've just gone underground."

O'Conner knows that some of the people he tries to help live outside the law. He tells of a man who pushes dope who told him, "I make \$50 a day on the corner, so why should I work?" O'Conner continued, "I told him, 'You pay \$35 a day to stay out there,' and he said, 'Yeah, but I don't really work.'"

One day as O'Conner worked the streets, a Negro and a Latin in a white car pulled up and asked him to join them for conversation. He knew whom they represented, so he went quietly with them to the home of the men's employer, a white man who told him to stop his activities with the Negro pushers or, "You're not going to be able to walk or drive, either one." O'Conner said he convinced the man that he had no links with the police, and he has remained unmolested since.

O'Conner's technique of organization is simple. "All I try to do is try to make a cat angry enough to change his way of living." His dissatisfaction with the Houston situation extends to the NAACP ("The same as the Klan, except they're black") to the War on Poverty, which, to his people, is the Houston-Harris County Economic Opportunity Organization.

One recent week, O'Conner arranged for the Rev. Charles Kelley, director of HHCEO, to talk with Joe Rainbolt and his friends in a night meeting at the B&J. Kelley came, and he stayed until 1 a.m. O'Conner remained off the scene, but he chastised Rainbolt and his associates for failing to give Kelley a stiff enough questioning. "You should have told him, 'I say you're giving money to money.' You've got to keep tight on them. You've got to push.

You've got to get ready to spit: ah-ptoo, right at them. What they need running this is a guy who's *hungry*, whether he's white, black, green, or brown."

Negroes who were at the meeting described Kelley's performance as "grass-rooting." O'Conner explained the term: "When a white cat eliminates his white diction, he's grassrootin'." They said that Kelley had spent \$8 on beer ("It wasn't his money," O'Conner said) and that the language he had substituted for white diction had been rather too coarse for use before the ladies who were present. From the Negro point of view, the meeting had not been a success; it was viewed as a beads-to-the-natives venture.

ALTHOUGH, by this writing, neither of Houston's dailies had made the matter public, the regional Office of Economic Opportunity in Austin is considering a request from Kelley's group for \$5.3 million in federal funds for the year ahead, and this sum is aside from the \$1.9 million asked to run Project Head Start in Houston this summer.

When the Economic Opportunity Act became law in 1964, Mayor Welch dispatched aides to Washington to talk things over. The city's first plan was to redevelop the Acres Homes area outside the city limits. This work was to be done by private contractors utilizing workers whose salaries would be paid by the OEO in exchange for on-the-job training. The federal government said no. The matter of poverty planning was dropped until the winter of 1965, when Welch declined to join Elliott in naming a city-wide planning committee because he viewed the EOA as "a mass of utter confusion. Perhaps the confusion is due to a lack of communication, but whatever it is, it's there."

Finally, the committee was set up with lawyer Leon Jaworski appointed as its head. That committee of 60 proposed to spend \$1.3 million over a ten-month period on development, research, small business development, rehabilitation of families receiving aid to dependent children, day care centers for 175 children of needy mothers, and to fund the Houston Council on Human Relations, an independent group still in operation, in training volunteers for service projects to the poor. The proposal was rejected by the Austin regional office of the OEO, which said that the poor didn't have enough voice in the planning and that the program did not establish cooperation between the social agencies involved.

Jaworski was displeased. The Houston Post ran an editorial cartoon depicting an Austin OEO administrator as an ape rejecting Houston's request because the little figure of John Q. Public before his desk was wearing a clean shirt. Mayor Welch said he had no intention of naming a new committee, but two days later, he added the names of 14 representatives of poor neighborhoods, and eight Negroes were on the list.

The plan which this group has drawn seeks \$2.2 million for conduct and administration of programs, \$1.3 million for year-

round child development, \$1.2 million for child day care, and \$751,982 for legal services to the poor to be administered through the Houston Legal Foundation, the group of lawyers which asked for money only when it seemed that another group, headed by the Negro dean of TSU's law school, was about to get the funds.

The OEO defends the Houston program's heavy schedule of child-help projects by explaining that the development and day-care plans will offer health help for the families of the children enrolled.

Mrs. Perry said that she has found in her studies that Negroes are much more mindful of their children's progress than the white leaders believe and that this is why school segregation, more than any other problem, has captured the interest of Negroes who might have remained aloof from organized dissent. Fr. Stevens, O'Conner, and one or two others who told the Observer they wanted their names left out have viewed the plan's emphasis on children as stemming from the relative success of Project Head Start there last summer, as a way of providing the boost to Negro education which the school board has been reluctant to supply as a matter of course,

'What they need running this is a guy who's hungry'

and, in a most critical interpretation, to supply baby-sitters for domestic help.

Additionally, the Observer has learned that a separate and ambitious job-training program may be opened in Houston this year, but the matter is not public, and is being considered in the secrecy oddly characteristic of those who wish to help the Negroes of the Houston ghetto.

FINALLY, what is the difference between the third and fifth wards of Houston and the cluster of Negro neighborhoods in Los Angeles which turned into an arena of incendiary Negro nationalism?

Mayor Welch disagrees with those who say trouble is close in Houston, although last September he reportedly placed the National Guard on ten-minute alert and cancelled all policemen's leaves against the prospect of some sort of major trouble over the Labor Day weekend.

Two months ago Welch saw for himself the ruins of last August's Los Angeles riots and, upon returning to Houston, remarked, "This is not a slum area. It had substantial, well-kept single family residences. It didn't look like and ghetto I've ever seen. It was not like Harlem or Lyons Avenue [in Houston's Fifth Ward]." In fact, although Welch did not say so, it almost certainly looked like the Third Ward, where Houston's race problem seems to be deepest and most troublesome.

"After talking to a lot of people out there, I have a distinct feeling that nobody knows what caused last August's trouble," he said. "But it was complete anarchy. There does not appear to be any movement in that direction in our community." Welch cited high unemployment in Watts as a

major cause of riots there and pointed out that Houston's unemployment rate is relatively low.

Was he right in saying that no one knew what caused Watts? What is the psychic distance between Alameda Boulevard in Los Angeles and Alameda Avenue in Houston?

Racing against a 100-day deadline imposed by political circumstances, John McCone's commission on the Watts riots decided that three things were responsible, mostly, for the Watts outbreak: unemployment and idleness, cultural and educational backwardness of Negro children, and bad relations between police and Negroes. It was, of course, the arrest of a Negro by white highway patrolmen which had catalyzed the Watts situation.

Although Houston claims a low unemployment rate, the work Negroes must take is mostly a matter of sweeping and lifting. A particular sore spot is industry which locates in the ghettos for tax benefits and then erects a barrier between itself and the deprivation across the street. An example which concerns Negro militants is a chemical company on Houston's east side. The plant has built an attractive park with a "Dixie Little League" ball-field for the use of white boys playing under the company's sponsorship. Driving past the handsome park, you can look across the street to Negro boys kicking rocks as a game.

Through the poverty committee appointed by Welch, the city has expressed its concern for the backwardness of Negro children which the McCone commission cited in its report, but, aside from Head Start, Houston has no large-scale program to remedy the situation. In fact, the city's school board has, according to a liberal member of the panel, Mrs. Howard Barnstone, chosen to turn down \$2 million a year in federal aid for use in schools white and black. This money could be used to lower the price of school lunches (to two or three cents instead of seven for a half-pint of milk); to improve science, language, history, math, geography, civics, and reading classroom equipment; to build new vocational training facilities for the teen-aged students getting ready to enter the job market without skills; and to improve, through the schools instead of through separate programs, the education of the poor.

Other factors which the McCone Commission ignored or did not discover are brought up in an article by Robert Blauner, a sociologist at the University of California at Berkeley, in the March-April issue of *Trans-action*, Washington University's journal of social science. Blauner, who advised the McCone commission, wrote that the rioters were not only nationalists bent on destroying "whitey's" property, although that happened, but included the "average" Negro whom the city of Los Angeles, as the city of Houston, had counted upon to remain quiescent. Blauner viewed the uprising as an expression of community identity, a revolt against a form of urban colonialism in which the white power structure attempted to control the Negro community through "native" leaders who

could be counted on to exchange reassurance of the white leaders for a position of some respect and influence in a shadow zone between the world of white and Negro.

Arguing that the McCone commission's viewpoint was legalistic, rather than sociological, Blauner cited the threat to the young Negro's manhood as an overlooked factor and theorized that militant rights groups, as well as spontaneous street riots, offered an affirmation of a young Negro man's "Negro-ness" as well as the manliness threatened by his subordinate role in the world of white commerce. The soldiers in wars are men, and despite the roles of women sociologists and politicians on the Houston Negro scene, the shirtsleeve or-

ganizer like Joe Rainbolt views the struggle as a man's struggle. One of the problems of Rainbolt's neighborhood civic club, he said, is that of the ladies who would like to see the meetings held in "respectable" place (a living room instead of his bar) and see those at the meeting dressed in coats and ties instead of their workaday clothes. Rainbolt, who wants a movement, not a "whist party" (as Negroes call a bridge game), is likely to have his way.

Blauner concluded that the McCone Commission, in suggesting child training and a healthy respect for the law, ignored the roots of the problem. Oliver O'Conner talks of Kelley's group's "nibbling at the edges instead of the guts."

Blauner argued that welfare colonialism and a white middle-class pattern of reform are not the answer and that what is needed is a way to link the values of the white and Negro world.

For Houston, perhaps it will come in the community organization planned for this summer, or through a heightened Negro participation in politics. It may be a matter of the child development program, which cannot begin until autumn at the earliest, or of the civilian review board which Negroes want watchdogging the policemen. Or it may be too late.

"Everybody's working. Are they working fast enough?" Fr. Stevens said. "We have to leave that in God's hands." L.L.

Observations

Liberalism's Low Ebb in Texas

Austin

Surely this May was the low ebb for liberalism in Texas in statewide elections this decade. The lead horse, Stanley Woods, never caught the eyes of the voters. The state press concluded that he was a minor entry and that Franklin Spears was the only liberal with a chance to win. Covering it that way, they helped make it so, of course.

Spears now has a very difficult task in the runoff. Crawford Martin leads him into it, five votes to four, with two who voted for the all-out conservative, Gallo-way Calhoun, available to join Martin now. Election night Martin said the problem in the runoff is getting out the vote, but, he said, he feels that he has the "advantages" in this effort. Indeed he may: the entire Connally organization, to name one. But Spears also has an opportunity. Stray voters won't vote in the runoff; just those who somewhat care. Spears did not turn the liberals on. He could have run against crime without causing as much cynicism; it was that damn whistle blowing that put them off. It was a gimmick, pure and simple, and gimmicks don't appeal to thoughtful people. To win in the runoff Spears, in my judgment, must discuss what really is involved: first, the quite desperate need for at least one powerful office-holder in the statehouse who is independent of Connally's interwoven, interlocked machine of political control, and second, the need for a man high in state government who is for the people—for the war on poverty, civil rights, Yarborough, and all that.

The things to be learned by the statewide returns are the things on the surface. This rock-bottom spring there was a protest vote of 25%. One out of four voters said no to Connally, even though Woods could not have got through to them much, appearing on TV one time early and making little impression in the dailies' roundups. This anti-Establishment vote in the Democratic primary dropped (in Monday morning's

figures) from 280 thousand for Woods to 216 thousand for Bill Hollowell for lieutenant governor and 219 thousand for Jack Willoughby for U.S. senator. That means, it appears, that one out of four of the protest voters didn't know enough about Texas politics to identify the targets of their displeasure other than Connally. Since Willoughby's campaign, well-meaning though it was, made no impression even when it was close up to you, his vote was a protest vote, and that's all. Hollowell probably lost some votes because he voted for the racist bills in 1957 and is from East Texas.

Spears was able to run this protest vote from a fourth up to a third in the first primary. Monday morning he had 426 thousand to Woods' 280. The senator from San Antonio had more money to spend than Woods and was able to turn out middling crowds interested in him as well as in the overall picture; but clearly he has to step faster to win now. Martin can be expected to increase his labor-baiting, and liberals may be permitted to hope that labor people will take sufficient offense and turn to for Spears with a will, but the crucial difficulty can be solved only by Spears: motivating the national Democrats and the minorities to vote in the runoff.

Together, Paul Haring and Puss Ervin (who is probably a real person) got 460 thousand votes against Byron Tunnell's 688 in the semi-final returns. Haring's brave campaign yielded him just 225 thousand votes; no money, no troops, just the right on his side. Railroad Commissioner Tunnell will think three times before he takes another new Cadillac from his friends; Haring helped educate those he reached—not many—in the realities of the politics of oil in Texas. But he must be terribly discouraged.

This is what we have come to: money wins. The money goes to the candidates who please the men with the money. The more truth the candidate has in him, the less money he gets.

As the Observer noted before the pri-

mary, the commonplace conjecture that the 635,000 new "free" voters would vote liberal did not hold up prospectively under analysis; in the retrospect, with Woods getting in the neighborhood of 280 thousand votes, Spears in the neighborhood of 430 thousand, it all seems, right on the surface, obvious.

The problem continues to be communication. No knowledgeable Texan would contend that the citizenry know what the issues are. They have hold of a few symbols; that's about it. Day in, day out, they get scraps and fragments in the press. Texas needs a great metropolitan daily newspaper dedicated to the public welfare, such as the St. Louis Post-Dispatch.

CONSIDER, for instance, the disgusting performance of the once half-way moderate Houston Chronicle. With an editorial misleadingly entitled "A Vote for Albert Thomas Is a Vote for Mrs. Thomas," (which would have been true only had the county Democratic committee so held,) the Chronicle literally urged citizens to vote for a dead man. Anything to stop Bob Eckhardt! But it didn't work—even with the Houston Post supporting one Larry McKaskle—and Eckhardt won handily, which is a very good thing for the country. The Chronicle, owned now by John Mecom, plummeted in the esteem of intelligent men. The President lent himself to the campaign for Mrs. Thomas.

Bill Kilgarlin, the liberal, lost to the conservative incumbent in Houston, Bob Casey. Frank Briscoe, the right-wing prosecutor, won nomination over John Wildenthal in the county's third congressional fight. It's my guess Republican George Bush will take Briscoe handily in November.

Regrettably the independent from Lufkin, State Sen. Martin Dies, Jr., lost to right-winger John Dowdy, Athens, 47 to 44 thousand. Ray Roberts knocked Lindley Beckworth out of the Congress, which is

too bad; Beckworth is quiet, but usually voted with more concern for the poor than Roberts. Sen. Abraham Kazen is the apparent winner in the new South Texas district. But Republican Omar Burleson returns to the Congress from West Texas despite a hardy challenge from Eldon Mahon.

The State Senate may be more liberal than before. The election of Miss Barbara Jordan is significant not just in that she is a Negro, but also in that she is an able and intelligent woman who will make a sensible and militantly liberal contribution to that chamber's dialogues. She is to be joined by another Houston liberal, Rep. Chet Brooks, who solidly beat Rep. John Ray Harrison, Searcy Bracewell's candidate. Over in the county's Republican territory, Mrs. David Mendel got only 20% of the vote as Reps. Don Garrison and W. H. Miller almost dead-heated into a runoff for a Senate nomination.

But if the news from Houston is thus on balance good, the news from San Antonio is calamitous. Liberal Cty. Judge Charles Grace lost to Establishmentarian Bruzzie Reeves; Representative John Alaniz did not succeed in his campaign for the county commission; liberals were winnowed out of the county's legislative delegation. The turnout in the Latin districts is reported to have been a mere 20%. "They just wouldn't move"—that in a way is the message of the spring.

Sen. Don Kennard beat back ex-Sen. Doyle Willis in the jungle, Fort Worth. Sen. Bill Patman of Ganado knocked El Campo's old-style demagogue, Culp Krueger, out of the Senate. Evidently Sen. Dorsey Hardeman, the conservative warhorse from San Angelo and the principal reason why the code of criminal procedure is now as liberal as it is, has beaten out Sen. Pete Snelson, El Paso, in their re-districting confrontation, but it's so close it's not settled. Wild Bill Moore of Bryan beat Mrs. Neveille Colson of Navasota in another senator-to-senator contest. The more liberal man, Joe Christie, is the new senator from El Paso, having defeated ex-Rep. Dudley Mann; but Oscar Mauzy, the Dallas liberal, has a runoff with Rep. David Ivy; Sen. Jack Hightower, Vernon conservative, defeated the more moderate Sen. Andy Rogers, Childress; and the governor's brother, Wayne Connally, is now, lo, a senator, having defeated an earnest liberal newcomer, Erasmo Andrade.

The late governor Jimmy Allred's son, David, won a House seat from Wichita Falls, a good portent. Rep. Ronald Bridges will be back from Corpus Christi, as will Rep. Don Gladden from Fort Worth. With Eckhardt gone from the House, there will be a vacuum in the liberal leadership there, so every old hand will be needed.

There will be an intriguing side-play in the House in 1967. Ben Lewis was the only independent member in the Dallas delegation; this year the Dallas downtowners beat him with a Negro candidate, whom they backed all-out. It happens also that a liberal Negro has been elected to the House from Houston this spring. Will we see here

a conflict of symbols—a new Establishment program to flummox the newly awaking Negro voters? It's a good thing Miss Jordan will be in the Senate.

GOV. CONNALLY'S control of the state party is not flatly disputed by liberal spokesmen, nor is it flatly conceded. Connally people carried Bexar, Dallas, Tarrant, and Travis; the liberals kept Houston, and Mrs. Jean Lee, the liberals'

key staff person on the party situation, says they also won many small and middle-sized counties. But of course with three of the biggest four counties on Connally's side, the state convention will probably be his.

So this was the spring that was, and might as well not have been. Texas plunged yet deeper into the cavern of horrors, the one-party system itself dominated by one faction of that one party. R.D.

Political Intelligence

The Presidential Frown

✓ As this issue closes the Observer does not have in hand the details that are necessary for an illuminating report on the May 7 voting. Watch for this in the next issue.

✓ Deputy presidential press secretary Robert Fleming told the national professional journalism society, Sigma Delta Chi, that he is unhappy with some members of the White House Press Corps, specifically Stewart Alsop, Andrew Tully, Frank Cormier, Malcolm Browne, and Douglas Kiker; he criticized the New York Herald Tribune's Kiker for reporting the President in a bad mood and Alsop, of the Saturday Evening Post, for talking about Bill Moyers' ulcer, which Fleming said is in abeyance. . . . A White House staffer told a reporter that one reason the President ordered the press which follows him quartered in San Antonio instead of Austin is that Mr. Johnson believes that the eastern reporters have been consorting with a liberal in Austin who is critical of him.

✓ A story in The New York Times Magazine said Alabama Gov. George C. Wallace, asked what his role would be in his wife's new administration, replied in former Texas Gov. Jim Ferguson's words, "I'm gonna draw the water, tote in the wood, wind the clock, and put out the cat." A footnote disclosed how Wallace learned of the catchy report: President Johnson told it to him at a White House Governors Conference.

✓ State and Interior reportedly have opposed, in confidential memoranda to the President, the Sea Line Corporation's proposal for a twin oil pipeline between Texas and Mexico. Sea Line said the line would ship crude south; independents fear that it may be used to ship oil from Brownsville to Mexico and back, undercutting domestic production through "the Brownsville loophole" in the oil import program. TIPRO points out that the state of Tamaulipas has no refinery.

✓ The Dallas Morning News reported Johnson weighing the need to patch up with labor against the possibility that his California appearance before the United Auto Workers this month would stir unrest in the Democratic Party there. Gov. Pat Brown is facing Democratic dissidents, and

Johnson's former chief of protocol, Lloyd Hand, is running for lieutenant governor.

✓ The Austin American reported that Austin's next city budget will include \$50,000 for straightening a street and building a bridge on residential property which the President owns on Lake Austin. The bridge will go over an inlet which reaches into Johnson's tract, leaving enough clearance for boat access to the property where the President may build a home when he isn't President any more.

✓ Cong. Patman's subcommittee on domestic finance has sent letters and detailed questionnaires to the 20 leading stockholders of every bank in the country which operates under the federal reserve system. That includes the Citizens National Bank of Austin, of which the Lyndon Johnson Foundation is eleventh largest stockholder and the LBJ Profit Sharing and Incentive Co., the twelfth. The same letter went to the Brazos-Tenth St. Co., which is third largest stockholder in Austin's Citizens National Bank and twelfth largest stockholder in the Capital National Bank in Austin. The Herald Tribune's Evans and Novak theorize that Patman's probe might show whether there is any link between the President and Brazos-Tenth St., a connection which is the object of speculation. The Johnson family's communications empire is run from the KTBC building at the corner of Brazos and Tenth in Austin. Evans and Novak theorize that the President's business advisors will ignore the Patman letters, as many other bank owners have done.

The Senate Situation

✓ A poll of Dallas high school students conducted by a Junior Achievement company showed high school students favoring U.S. Sen. John Tower over Atty. Gen. Waggoner Carr in November by 68.5%, with Tower support strongest among boys; the students said that 67% of their fathers and 62% of their mothers would vote for Tower.

✓ Tower's people hired John Kraft of New York to survey the state's voters in April. The results showed Tower leading with 44%, Carr with 39% and the remainder of the voters undecided. The poll

also showed Texans thinking a lot about inflation and the cost of living.

✓ Tower criticized McNamara for cutting back military construction requests by \$1.5 billion. He continues to stress inflation, arguing that a tax hike is a silly way to curb inflation; a tax hike would help, Tower said, only if the revenue was spent on paying off the federal debt.

✓ Tower's family will move back to Wichita Falls, and his children will enroll in schools there this September, the Dallas Times Herald reported.

✓ It was Tower who sponsored, and was successful with, the foreign aid bill amendment cutting off U.S. funds to Indonesia after Sukarno's consistent bad-mouthing of Uncle Sam. The New York Times' illuminating series on the Central Intelligence Agency revealed this month that the administration had endured Sukarno's insults because aid missions there were cover for large-scale CIA operations, and that those operations had to be curtailed when the American money was withdrawn.

✓ Waggoner-Carr-for-the-Senate billboards are sprouting out, bearing the message that Texas needs leadership, "not just a vote."

✓ David Hearne of the Long News Service reports it "definitely known" that activists will field an independent candidate, a Negro, for the U.S. Senate, and that the group expects to have to fight Texas election law limitations on independent candidates; Hearne said the activists believe that such a candidate would hurt Carr's chances.

✓ In Washington, Sen. Ralph Yarborough said federal car safety standards are needed and pointed to his support of tire quality legislation. In Texas, Gov. John Connally said that the automakers could do it better if left alone. . . . The death of Michigan Sen. Pat McNamara moved Yarborough a seniority step higher on the labor and public welfare committee, making him third-ranking Democrat. . . . Dedicating a new REA power plant at Victoria, Yarborough said the Bureau of the Budget has joined private sources in threatening co-op power. The Bureau has recommended a cut from last year's \$365 million to \$220 million for REA, despite an expected loan application backlog of \$362 million by the end of this year; the House restored the cut.

✓ Yarborough has introduced amendments to add on-the-job, on-the-farm, and flight training to the Cold War GI Act and to increase the rates of assistance to match those for Korean veterans.

✓ Yarborough said the North Texas floods should mean a re-evaluation of flood control and disaster coordination in the state, and then plunked the state administration for reluctance to seek aid from the Office of Emergency Planning.

✓ Yarborough and Tower stood together to vote against an amendment by Sen. Jacob Javits, R-N.Y., appropriating \$20 million for rent supplements, but Tower voted for, and Yarborough against, eliminating \$12 million for the program. The \$12 million sum was approved by one vote. Cong. O. C. Fisher of San Angelo said that

"arm-twisting" and Yarborough's vote saved "socialized rentals" which would allow the poor to move into middle-class neighborhoods. . . . A federal housing official in San Antonio, Phillip N. Brownstein, told mortgage bankers that builders in Texas have expressed interest in constructing 6,000 living units in 29 locations for rental under the supplements program.

✓ Sen. Ralph Yarborough was among the 38 senators who voted against, staving off by seven votes, the Dirksen amendment to change the Constitution so that the Supreme Court's one-man, one-vote ruling wouldn't apply to the state senates. Sen. Tower voted with the majority of 55. . . . Texas House members split, ten for, nine against, on rent supplements. The ten voting for the President's new program were Beckworth, Brooks, Casey, de la Garza, Gonzalez, Mahon, Patman, Pickle, Thompson, and Young; the nine against, Cabell, Fisher, Poage, Pool, Purcell, Roberts, Rogers, Teague, and White. Since the program was saved by a vote of 198-190, the Texans who voted for it can be said to have made the difference.

Dallas and de Gaulle

✓ After checking with the State Department, Dallas merchant Stanley Marcus said he would go ahead with the two-week French Fortnight at Neiman-Marcus next October. He said cancelling the event would put 5,000 to 6,000 out of jobs and might worsen relations between the United States and France. Dallasites critical of de Gaulle's NATO pull-out had protested to the store.

✓ Cong. Henry Gonzalez, in the House, repeated charges that San Antonio newspapers print racially classified help-wanted ads, pooh-poohing a denial from the San Antonio Express-News advertising director by pointing out that the newspaper executive had admitted running 18 such ads in a single issue. (The Austin American-Statesman runs property ads appealing to "COLORED" and "LATINS.")

✓ Unhappy about Supreme Court invalidation of the Arizona loyalty oath, Cong. Earle Cabell, Dallas, introduced a resolution requiring a two-thirds vote of the Supreme Court before federal or state laws could be declared unconstitutional, and the Dallas Times Herald called the idea "logical . . . a cogent answer."

✓ Cong. Kilka de la Garza, Mission, said his Latin surname was an asset when he accompanied the President to Mexico last month. Discussing a border problem with a Mexican official, he was told, "Thank you for being so enthusiastic about helping our neighbors to the north." He said, "But I am one of your neighbors to the north."

Water, Water, Where?

✓ A source in the water development board office has advised the Observer that operations there are on a day-to-day basis, despite existence of two files marked "1990" and "2020," target dates for the statewide water plan which was reserved for post-election reading. In Washington, members of the board showed the plan to Texas Democrats in Congress at a lunch-

eon, and, since Tower doesn't attend that group's functions, gave him a look at it in his office. Tower said he liked the plan, but did not comment specifically on what it said. Flak had come earlier from Cong. Wright Patman, who said he was unhappy about the plan's provisions for moving Red River water south to Dallas-Fort Worth; Patman had said East Texas water belongs in East Texas. At the luncheon, however, Patman led the hosannas, saying, "It is certainly a tribute to Gov. Connally" and "a broad, imaginative program of fantastic scope." Cong. George Mahon of Lubbock was worried about the High Plains; the plan reportedly acknowledges that the West Texas water shortage cannot be solved without bringing in out-of-state water.

✓ The President handed back to the Budget Bureau and the Corps of Engineers the complaint from Fort Worth Cong. Jim Wright and 15 others over the bureau's hostility to the Trinity River canalization project, ignoring the lawmakers' request for a meeting with him. Millionaire Fort Worth publisher-oilman Amon Carter Jr. headed a 16-man delegation to Washington to seek restoration of funds for the project. The backers reported a warm reception from the House subcommittee that has say on the project. They told the lawmakers that only a \$200,000 feasibility study, one of the smallest items in Johnson's budget, held up the canal and \$60 million in highway building which would hinge on the final decision.

✓ Cong. Bob Casey of Houston is upset because the House Appropriations Committee cut out the \$19.7 million the administration sought for Project Mohole, the Brown and Root corporation's journey to the center of the earth. He said he would try to see the funds restored, because he believes postponement now would kill the research project.

✓ Looking ahead to the 60th legislature, the Texas Research League is readying a report on needed state help for local law enforcement. . . . Public Safety Director Homer Garrison Jr. said in Houston he wants a crime control center in Austin. . . . James Saxon, U.S. comptroller of the currency, said in Houston Texas needs to lift its prohibitions on branch banking so that the state's big cities, such as Houston and Dallas, can have stronger single banks or, he said, ". . . mergers will be limited to a few downtown banks."

✓ Dr. Jack K. Williams, the new Texas higher education czar, was to arrive in Austin this month, with his family, to select the "official residence" which will be provided in addition to his salary by "private sources." Williams said that he didn't know who would be paying for the house and the \$17,500 salary supplement. In an interview with the Houston Post's Donnie Moore, Williams revealed a little of his theory of education. On tuition-free state education: ". . . Often, what's totally free is not appreciated by the person who receives it without sacrifice and effort." On federal aid: "I see no hope in the immediate future to do without federal aid." And

Williams said junior colleges offering terminal training in vocational and technical fields are the most important form of higher education for "the people at large."

✓ Attorney general candidate Crawford Martin, speaking at Texas Southern University, came out in favor of continuing the law school at the Negro university in Houston, saying that closing it would be "mischievous economy." Atty. Gen. Carr had taken the same position. But the education superboard thought differently and ordered law operations at TSU closed by 1973 and a report within a year from TSU and the University of Houston on the board's suggested plan for an earlier merger of the two schools' law divisions.

Calvert's Shillelagh

✓ In a Law Day speech in Dallas, Chief Justice Robert W. Calvert of the Texas Supreme Court vented his wrath at draft card burners, conscientious objectors reluctant to accept hospital work, Negroes who ripped up the Georgia flag, the Austin demonstrators who left Mayor Lester Palmer hospitalized for exhaustion, and the Supreme Court of the United States for reversing Louisiana convictions of a library sit-in group. "One would think that the courtroom of the Supreme Court of the United States would be off-limits to groups who have little or no respect for the law," he said.

✓ Former Railroad Cmsr. William Murray will be the moderator in Corpus Christi next week when TIPRO, the Texas oil independents association, celebrates its 20th birthday.

✓ At the Los Angeles convention of the League of the United Latin American Citizens (LULAC), Bexar County Cmsr. Albert Pena, and Judge Alfred Hernandez of Houston were among those promising demonstrations unless the federal government acts quickly to give Latinos equal chances at jobs and education. Pena spoke at a banquet for those fifty who walked out on the rancorous Albuquerque meeting held by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission this spring. He said the President knows the Latinos' situation very well, but ignores it . . . Luther Holcomb, the Dallas minister on the EEOC, told a reporter that the commission has opened Spanish-language campaigns to advise Latinos of their employment rights; an aide said no more conferences like the one in Albuquerque are planned. . . . Sen. Tower proposed including a Latin-American on the EEOC. . . . John Rogers' article in the March issue of the Progressive, "Poverty Behind the Cactus Curtain," alleged that "in most of the South Texas communities . . . not one penny has been spent" on Mexican-Americans through the War on Poverty. The Southwest regional OEO director, the Rev. William Crook, said in an unhappy letter that \$11.8 million had been spent. Rogers said he stood by his statement, since the word "most" was the key, and hinted that a \$2 million allocation for Laredo was a result of his article. OEO

told the Observer Laredo's plan was in the mill well before Rogers' article saw print.

Patriots' Patrons

■ Dan Smoot, the superconservative broadcast commentator, got a \$1 million bequest from the \$5.5 million estate of Bedford Lewis of Los Angeles, a dog and cat food manufacturer. Lewis' will also included \$1.5 million to set up a group called Defenders of Liberty, a right-wing counterpart of the American Civil Liberties Union. DOL would defend "American citizens who believe and stand for the Constitution of our United States in its entirety, as it stood up to and including the year 1950."

■ The Amarillo High School Key Club, led by Charles Szalkowski, collected 15,000 paperback books to send to American soldiers in South Vietnam, but 300 of the books were discovered in a trash can behind Szalkowski's home. Those 300 were brand-new copies of J. Evetts Haley's *A Texan Looks at Lyndon, Distortion by Design* by the Rev. Billy James Hargis, and *None Dare Call It Treason* by John Stormer. "We decided not to accept any books dealing with religion or politics or which are obscene," said Szalkowski. "If they didn't want them, they could at least have returned them," said senior student Randy Hays, the son of a Birch Society member and donor of the patriotic volumes.

■ The school trustees of the Dallas suburb of Richardson voted not to comply with a federal desegregation order, explaining that the federal guidelines had not been written yet. The move endangers \$77,000 annually which the schools were using for vocational education.

■ Homer Smith, principal of John Marshall High School in San Antonio, told the Dallas News that Students for a Democratic Society, a new-left group, is moving into the area of high school organization with a "High School Membership Newsletter" speaking out against control of hair and skirt lengths and in favor of abstention from prayer and loyalty oaths. Smith is the man who said that girls' hemlines had to hit the floor when they knelt; some of his students started a cafeteria boycott in protest.

■ The Houston Chronicle's "Watchem" feature noted that schools in that city have been swept by the "Iron Cross" fad. Junior high school and high school students who wear the copies of the decoration call it a "surfer's cross" and Watchem quoted one student who considered it an appropriate insignia for "those who master the waves."

✓ J. Evetts Haley is reportedly working on another book on Johnson.

✓ The latest mailing from John Stanford of San Antonio includes a copy of the Worker of New York City, a communist paper.

Liberal Activity

✓ Texas Liberal Democrats (TLD) will hold a statewide convention in Austin, centering at the Villa Capri, June 17-19, after the second primary.

✓ Witnesses angrily denounced discrimination against Mexican-Americans during a hearing of the U.S. Civil Rights Cmsn. in Corpus Christi . . . In San Antonio the Senate subcommittee on migratory labor headed by Sen. Harrison Williams, Jr., D-N.J., heard protests against low farm-worker wages in Texas, proposals for farm workers unionization, and Texas Farm Bureau protestation that a minimum wage for farm workers would break farmers . . . The idea of a farm workers' union continues to catch on, with J. Elro Brown of Corpus Christi, international rep of the oilworkers in South Texas, advocating one.

✓ The St. Louis Post-Dispatch reprinted Larry Lee's "Night Talk at Gary" from several issues ago . . . D. B. Harde-man, ex-Sam Rayburn aide, is quoted that he will finish his Rayburn biography this year.

✓ In recent city elections, Scott Johnson, an official in Huntsville's bi-racial committee, and a Negro who has been critical of the demonstrations there, was elected to the city council there, the first Negro in office there since Reconstruction. In Waco, a Negro dentist, not regarded as a militant, Dr. G. H. Radford, was elected to the city council over three white opponents. Mortuary owner I. W. Brown was made a city alderman in Malakoff near Dallas. In East Texas, a tailor, John Miles, went onto the city council by defeating a white incumbent.

In Austin, a Negro, Mrs. C. M. Johnston, finished third for school board, but received every vote in two East Austin precincts. In Dallas, a Negro, Dr. Charles A. Hunter, professor at Bishop College and a pastor, lost his bid for the school board to Jerry D. Wheat, an executive with Lone Star Gas Co. The vote was 11,568 to 7,172. Dr. Hunter's campaign manager was Edwin C. Washington, Jr., a member of the NAACP. Mrs. Juanita Craft, an NAACP leader, noting that Dr. Hunter got most of his

The Sweet Smell Of Success

Dr. Walter A. Quebedeaux, the official who checks pollution in Harris County, has named The Merichem Company as the area's "polluter of the month."

Merichem's president is John T. Files, one of the six men Gov. John Connally named last month to the Texas Air Control Board, which is supposed to stop pollution. Quebedeaux had complained about Files' appointment, but Files, secretary-treasurer of the Texas Chemical Council, said there had been no complaints about Merichem "in a long time."

Quebedeaux's "dishonor roll," drawn up at the behest of The Houston Post, is based upon citizen complaints. He said that five complaints on five separate days last month were traced to a ground flare at the Merichem plant in the Greens Bayou area.

vote in Negro precincts, said, "We just don't know each other. The white community had no way of knowing Dr. Hunter." Dallas has no Negroes on its school board.

Notes from the Structure

✓ John Osorio was an insurance commissioner under Gov. Allan Shivers. Shivers is now chairman of the board, and Osorio is president, of National Bankers Life Insurance Co., Dallas. This company now has almost half a billion dollars' insurance—\$450 million—in force, it has announced. . . . Shivers received an honorary doctorate from Howard Payne College in

Brownwood during its Democracy in Action week.

✓ Gov. Connally appointed, for his members of the committee that is charged with responsibility concerning the removal of judges regarded as unfit, the president of the Fort Worth National Bank, Lewis H. Bond; the publisher of the Big Spring Herald, R. W. Whipkey; and a rancher and oilman, W. B. Blakemore of Midland. The Texas Supreme Court appointed four others and the State Bar's directors, two.

✓ The Texas Manufacturers' Assn. has announced a plan to "reconstitute" the Industrial Accident Board and limit appeals from its decisions on workmen's comp to questions of law, not fact.

Giving the Game Away

Robert Sherrill

Washington

Pressure from the White House was too much for Cong. Wright Patman and all his Democratic colleagues, including Henry Gonzalez, as Patman railroaded through his banking committee a bill that will promote everything he has ever fought against. It will subsidize banks, raise interest rates, and make money tighter.

The White House lobbying effort was indeed enormous—some said greater than for any other bill this session. White House aides Henry Wilson and Marvin Watson were working Congress two days before the bill came out in committee; so was Under Secretary of the Treasury Joseph W. Barr, and so was the President. During the entire morning session of the hearing, Postmaster General Lawrence O'Brien, who used to be President Johnson's chief lobbyist, sat in—the first time anyone could remember a postmaster general taking such an interest in legislation that, ostensibly, was none of his business. It is known that the White House asked the names of all members present as soon as the hearings opened: one by one members were called out for a phone call.

The legislation that brought forth all this rampant enthusiasm from President Johnson is wordily labeled "H.R. 14544—to promote private financing of credit needs and to provide for an efficient and orderly method of liquidating financial assets held by federal credit agencies, and for other purposes."

What Johnson hopes it will do is get him out of a very tight budgetary bind. Last spring he added up his proposed budget and saw himself spending \$117 billion; he saw also, to his alarm, an income of about \$112 billion. Obviously he was going to come out with one heck of a deficit, or some gimmickry was called for.

H.R. 14544 is the latter. It gives a blank check to the Johnson Administration to lump together all the \$33 billion in government loans—Small Business Administration loans, veterans' loans, or whatever

part of the federal loan program it wants to start with—and sell this paper to private investors (as a rule this means banks). Johnson is talking now of starting off with a sale of \$8 billion worth over the next two years.

Most Democrats on Patman's banking committee were dismayed at the request, which came to them with no forewarning. This kind of gimmickry had been tried by Eisenhower and also by Kennedy, but Congress never warmed to the idea. The same chill met Johnson's request, but he has methods of persuasion not available to Eisenhower and Kennedy. The night before the hearing opened, the Democrats caucused and agreed—in the words of one Texan—that the bill "stunk." They also agreed to support it.

The next day's hearing was an amazing one. The bill was voted out after exactly two and a half hours of testimony. There were no witnesses representing private industry, no witnesses representing the public in the pure sense of the word. The only two witnesses permitted to testify, because of the brevity of the session, were spokesmen for the Administration, Barr and Director of the Bureau of the Budget Charles L. Schultze. Patman, who customarily bends over backwards to see that all viewpoints are weighed, hustled this bill through as being "kind of urgent." Seldom has urgency stirred such cooperation.

The vote, taken in secret (or, as they euphemistically call it around here, executive session), found all Democrats—including Gonzalez of San Antonio—voting for it, all Republicans voting against it.

What is there about the bill that would make the Democrats privately acknowledge its odor?

For one thing it will take from the taxpayer between \$40 million and \$120 million over the next two years and give this to the banks (or whatever private investors buy the paper) for doing absolutely nothing. The loans are guaranteed by the government; the banks will take no risk. And even the collection of the loans will continue in the hands of the government.

The government loans are made at no more than 5% interest, often for less. But to make these loans look enticing to the private investors, the rate will have to be jacked up to about 5.75%. The difference between what the government is taking in from the borrower—at most, 5%—and what it pays the private investor—probably 5.75%—is the gift interest.

Government witnesses said they think .75% is a pessimistic forecast of the difference; they estimated it would more likely be .25%. Key members of the committee, however, insisted privately that .75 is not at all an unreasonable expectation of the loss. If the government is correct, then by its own admission the loss to the taxpayer over the next two years will be \$40 million. If committee members are correct, the loss will be \$120 million. And the loss does not end after two years. Some of these loans have 40 years to run.

Aside from this, some committee Democrats fear that this will be the beginning of the end of all government loan programs—except as "guarantees" for private loans, the way FHA now operates. Their reasoning is that when the conservative appropriation committees are asked to keep forking over the \$120 million loss (and more) session after session, they will soon start demanding that the government raise its interest rate to lessen the gap, and when this happens the government will be on its way out of the lending business.

Maybe this is or isn't good, but some members resent the decision having been forced upon them solely for the purpose of making the federal budget look more acceptable in an election year. ☐

May 13, 1966

9

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This War Could Last Ten Years . . .

New York City

Ron Bailey

On the subject of Vietnam, what one needs most is protection from falling ideology and flying dogma. Here and in Vietnam, one is bombarded by easy answers, oversimplifications, and half truths and half falsities and attacked with unrealistic alternatives: we must win the war or we must withdraw. But the closer you get to the war, the more contradictory, the more confusing, the more chaotic it all seems.

There are a thousand contradictions. It is a military conflict that can only be won politically. Only the Vietnamese can win it, but without the big U.S. buildup they were losing it. It is "aggression from the north," but fully 90 per cent of the "aggressors" are South Vietnamese. The U.S. wants to contain Communist China, but it is killing Vietnamese, not Chinese. Both sides claim morality, but there is none

save in myth and in an occasional act of mercy. The Viet Cong tax and torture, kidnap and kill (more than 1,000 local officials alone last year). Government forces punish prisoners, brutalize suspects and suppress the slightest sign of dissent. U.S. artillery and airpower kill indiscriminately, not out of malice but because it is the nature of such weapons.

From this collective chaos, from the assortment of abstractions, let me sort out a few activities.

First, there are no good guys—only bad guys. At both extremes of the debate over Vietnam there is a regrettable tendency to see the cast of characters in the mawkishly moral terms of the western movie: the forces of good arrayed against the demons of the dark. I don't question the basic motives of either side in this war, but the

moral result of those motives is obscenely evident. And I am tempted to suggest that the road to Hell is paved with these good intentions which produce Viet Cong atrocities and American mass bombings. I am afraid we can no longer see the war as simply a civil conflict, which it was not long ago, or as an American attempt to defend freedom, which we might have been able to do in the days of Diem. Long wars—and this has been waged for 20 years—bring out the worst in people, whether they are patriotic peasants or misguided westerners. Thus I find it hard to sympathize with either those who flaunt Viet Cong flags in peace parades or those who shout the shopworn, chauvinistic slogans of the American jingoistic right. There are South Vietnamese—with unquestioned credentials as human beings and believers in freedom—who want no part of the Viet Cong. The struggle for power has perverted the best instincts of both sides. But the basic question here is whether in our massive belated attempt to recoup what Robert Shaplen in his excellent book has called "the lost revolution," we are willing to destroy hundreds of thousands of lives—American as well as Vietnamese.

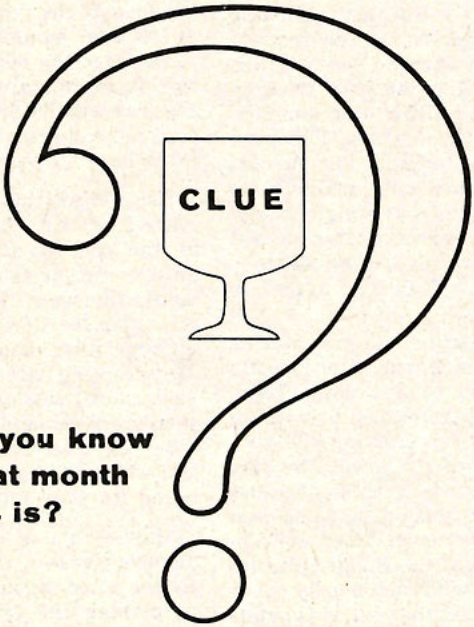
Second, this has clearly become an American war. While we debate about the dangers of being dragged into an Asian land war, we are in fact already caught up in such a conflict. The signs are as certain as the "New York laundry" establishments springing up in bamboo huts up around the new U.S. enclaves and as numerous as the American soldiers who swarm the sidewalks of Saigon. When I arrived in Vietnam, there were 200,000 troops in the country. When I left five weeks later, there were 220,000. It is common knowledge in Vietnam that the U.S. intends to have 400,000 there by the end of this year. The plans and logistical pipelines for that force were laid months ago.

The third certainty is the strength of our emotional commitment. It is difficult to divine on a sunny spring morning in New York, or even in the searing heat of Saigon, but we are at war. One hundred Americans—and countless Vietnamese—are dying every week, and when Americans die in ever-increasing numbers, as they must, the emotional pressure to do something—anything—will build to the bursting point: mine Haiphong harbor, bomb Hanoi, obliterate Peking. The consequences of this emotional commitment cannot be overestimated. In my short stay in Vietnam, I caught the disease—and didn't even know it until later. A day after leaving Saigon I sat in a cafe in the Louvre sipping red

Ron Bailey, who has written for the Observer before, worked in the bureau of a national magazine in Houston until he was reassigned to New York City. He recently spent five weeks in Vietnam and wrote, on his return, this article.

10

The Texas Observer



Do you know what month this is?

MAY IS NATIONAL TAVERN MONTH

This is National Tavern Month—the time when America's brewers pay special tribute to the friendly folk who serve the friendly brew. So why not stop by your favorite tavern, enjoy the great refreshing flavor of a nice cool beer, and mention casually to the tavern-keeper that you're glad he's there. We are.

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wine and eavesdropping on a conversation at the next table. A young American was reading an account from the New York Times to his girl friend and mocking the words of an American flyer who had rescued a buddy in a stirring act of heroism. The mocking tone made me mad and, suddenly, I found myself butting into the conversation and defending the American hero. "Whether or not it's an unjust war," I told him angrily, "this man did a brave and noble thing." The irony is that this pilot's job was dropping napalm.

JUST AS there are supposedly no atheists in foxholes, there are also no dissenters. As Donald Duncan has pointed out, war has a life of its own which moves without morality or reason. Caught up in bloody conflict, one is tempted to wage war with everything at his disposal. This is true of men and nations. And as I searched for what Hans Morgenthau has called "a transcendent purpose" which might justify our intervention, I came again and again not to abstract theories about falling dominoes or even containment of Communist China, but always finally to "face"—that all-inclusive Oriental word which encompasses our fear of fading prestige, defeat by peasants in black pajamas, our inferiority complex as an immature nation.

Despite the victory headlines of the past two months and the screeches of the hawks, we are not winning this war. We are killing a lot of Viet Cong and a lot of others—at least 1,000 a week. I asked a veteran correspondent "Who are the Viet Cong?" and he replied, "Hell, the Viet Cong are the people." That's a gross oversimplification, of course, but the fact is the "enemy" are impossible to separate from the friendlies. It is cynically said among the press corps in Saigon that bodies counted after a battle "have to be Viet Cong because they are dead."

To "win"—and the semantics of winning and losing strike me as absurdly false in this incredibly complex war—the U.S. and South Vietnam troops will have to defeat the main force enemy units, occupy every acre of countryside, and thus pave the way for political cadres to establish a basis for government. This gargantuan and bloody task may take a million American troops and ten years—no one in Vietnam possessed of any candor will make more than an honest guess at how many men and how long it will take. Even then, there is no guarantee that Prime Minister Ky's government or any other regime, unless it has a genuinely popular base among the peasants, can establish just government in the western sense.

Just how fragile is the base of the American-backed military governments is indicated by the events of my last few days in Vietnam. Coup talk was racing through Saigon and finally the military junta dismissed General Thi, the second most powerful man in the country and the only member of the regime with real links to the peasantry. He was a crafty politician and a cruel soldier. But in a nation sorely lacking in leadership he was an able leader and one who had sprung from peasant

stock. At a background briefing by a high American official we were told Thi's ouster was a good omen—a sign of the Ky regime's growing stability. Once again—as we have since the days of Diem—the U.S. was banking on stability, not quality. The official also told us that the Buddhists, long-time allies of Thi, had been pacified. Two days later, as I left Saigon, the Buddhists were in the streets again, protesting the dismissal of Thi. If administration actions are based upon such intelligence, one wonders whether big brother in Washington does indeed know best.

The Administration's contention that U.S. aims in the war are "limited" plays loosely with that word. What Secretary Rusk means is that we do not intend to destroy the North; what he does not make clear is the magnitude of destroying the opposition in the South. Certainly one can conclude—without ever setting foot in Vietnam—that every escalation has contained a kind of self-fulfilling prophecy. Each step up the ladder allegedly aimed at winning a negotiated peace has succeeded only in widening the war.

SO WHAT should we do? I am afraid there is no way out—or in—now.

We cannot win—without an overwhelming war of destruction. We cannot withdraw in any decency—without first setting the stage for the Vietnamese to choose their own government. In the enclave theory of George Kennan and others, there exists an opportunity both to stop the killing and to help ensure self-determination in South Vietnam. We should stop the bombing, cease offensive operations and declare our intention to defend territories clearly under the control of the South Vietnamese government until an international authority can conduct free elections.

A correspondent friend of mine — one who has supported administration policy in Vietnam— was slightly wounded by a sniper's bullet and had to spend a terrifying two weeks in an Army hospital. By night he awakened to the screams of the scores of freshly wounded being brought in and by day he saw the sterile statistics of war take the shape of shattered flesh and bone. When he hobbled out of the hospital on crutches, he was not a converted man, but at least a chastened one, and he told me:

"We'd better damn well know what we're doing here."

May 13, 1966

11

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Bernard Rapoport, President

A Negotiated Peace, but with the Comanches

Austin

It was a hell of a Sunday to be Easter, there under the hot afternoon sun, standing along the east side of Ranch Road 1, where it ties in with U.S. Highway 290, about ten miles east of Johnson City. Those people had guts or ideals or something, holding those signs up, wearing lapel buttons, staging a three-hour vigil to let President Lyndon B. Johnson and the general public know that they didn't like what was happening in Vietnam.

It was a pretty day with dandelions and bluebonnets and Indian paintbrushes splashing their yellows and blues and scarlets over the green fields. Birds sang in the oak trees, and it was hard to imagine anyone not wanting to go laze on a lake shore or take the kiddies out hide-and-seeking with Easter eggs. But these people — there

Don Adams

were about 50 or 60 of them under the organized leadership of the Houston Citizens for Action in Vietnam — preferred to drive about five hours to stand five miles away from the LBJ ranch with placards and slogans, then drive back home another five hours.

They couldn't get any closer to the ranch because the road was closed, and the road was closed because Johnson was at the ranch with his wife Lady Bird and their daughters Lynda and Luci. Patrolmen of the State Department of Public Safety stood squinting behind a white wooden barrier, and beside them were Secret Service agents. On the highway scores of cars were parked, their passengers watching.

There wasn't much to watch. No egg throwing, no rough language, no violence.

Just standing and waiting.

I wondered what the Johnson family were thinking over there at the ranch, entertaining their guests. Someone said the President drove by about mid-afternoon. And Lynda with George Hamilton came by in an open convertible. Neither stopped. It was hard to guess what they said at home, out of earshot of reporters.

I WAS THERE sort of by accident. I had driven Saturday night to the Easter pageant in Fredericksburg, where the historical society and fair association sponsor an annual reenactment of the settlement of the colony back in 1846, when the red-bearded Otffrid Hans Freiherr von Meusebach came there with a group of German immigrants. Meusebach and his bunch didn't want a fight on their hands, so they negotiated a peace with the Comanches on Easter of that same year, and each Easter for the next 120 years fires have burned on Cross Mountain and other surrounding hills in memory of the event. Right after the peace treaty, the Germans built Vireins Kirche, their first church, from the bell tower of which every Saturday evening to this day toll the Abendglocken, the bells of evening.

It was not to the Vireins Kirche, but to the brand new St. Barnabas Episcopal Church, pastored over by the Rev. J. W. Langford, that President Johnson and his family went for Easter services Sunday morning. I doubt if they had heard the Abendglocken the night before, but there they were, and the churchyard was full of Secret Service men and news reporters. Since I was already there, I watched them come and go, pressed by the curious throng which, growing as the word spread, made the SS men grow short tempered.

The Rev. Mr. Langford seemed both proud and a little nervous in his flowing white robes, and I suppose everyone in Fredericksburg decided it was going to be another historic event in the historic old town. The President made no important pronouncements, however, and about all he did was look at a carved replica of his ranch house which one of the parishoners had fashioned for him.

When I got to the demonstration site about 1:30 that afternoon, people from Austin and Houston already were gathering. Later, people from San Antonio and Denton joined them. Some of them wore lapel buttons with slogans like "Geneva, not Genocide," and "Make love, not war." I kept waiting for Dr. Mort Reiber, spokesman for the citizens action group from Houston. I knew that as a psychologist with the Houston State Psychiatric Institute, he had been threatened with the loss of his job last December if he participated in the Christmas peace demonstration staged in this same place by the same group. And I wondered if he would come at all. He was

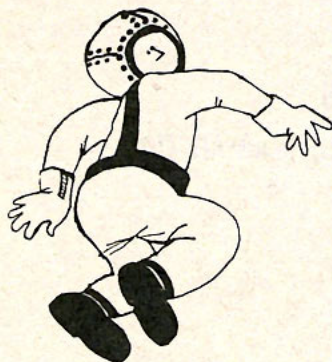
The writer, a West Texan, is now an Austin newspaperman.

12

The Texas Observer

Had Enough?

Enough of state government doing the Texas Trot . . . "a-one step forward and a-three steps back?"
Some of us have . . .



. . . so shuck the thick lead suit. Many of us — out here in the fallout — think we know how Texas must move. How about you? We call ourselves
TEXAS LIBERAL DEMOCRATS.

I'm shucking. Enclosed is \$5.00, my annual dues to Texas Liberal Democrats (Chris Dixie, temporary chairman; Latane Lambert, temporary secretary).

My name is

I get my mail at

City & State

(NOTE: Send dues to Mrs. Latane Lambert, 7046 Holly Hill Dr., Dallas, Texas)

(Pd. Adv.)

late in showing up, but he got there. He said his employers had decided his civil rights guaranteed him the privilege of doing whatever he wanted to do in his own leisure time.

Ben Levy, a Houston attorney who is an active civil rights advocate, was credited with being the backbone of the action group. Another leader there was Wilbur Clark, a Houston chemical engineer.

From Austin there was Helen Mayfield, a dedicated young woman with a gleam of idealism in her dark eyes, and Thorne Dreyer, a black-bearded University of Texas student who is a member of the Students for a Democratic Society.

There were all kinds of others. Housewives, clerks, engineers, teachers, college and high school students, office workers. Many of them had been there Christmas, and the Easter before. They formed a silent line along the shoulder of Ranch Road 1, braving the scrutiny of television and newspaper cameras, the surveillance of intelligence agents, possible derision and name-calling from the passing motorists. But there was no derision or name-calling.

The day before, in Berkeley, Calif., four persons had been injured when a bomb blast wrecked the headquarters of a Vietnam Day Committee which was planning a similar Easter protest demonstration. Most of the people standing there near the LBJ ranch must have heard of that before taking up their vigil. Most of them had probably heard leading national congressmen call them "vietniks" and "traitors" and "communists" many times over the air waves, in newspapers and in public speeches. There they were.

There was no dialogue or attempt at justification. Rules of the game said they were to stand silent. A letter to the President was to speak for them, outlining objections to the war in Southeast Asia, where even then dark clouds of death rose from napalm fires above wrecked homes and ruined rice fields. Where blood was being spilled in a serious, costly, and baffling struggle.

I thought of Christ, taking a stand against the Roman war-oriented foreign policy, being arrested by armed soldiers in the Garden of Gethsemane. There were armed representatives of the government here, but no arrests were being made yet.

AS I DROVE homeward, full of thought (wondering where all the ideals which fired the minds of Americans a century ago have flown), I saw a sign which told motorists they were on the "Devil's Backbone to Wonder Cave" in San Marcos. I wondered what our national pathway should be called, and if it will lead to any wonders. □

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A Communication

A Demonstrator Tells Why

The whole purpose of demonstrations such as the vigil we held is to keep opposition to the war alive and in the minds of the public. I get a lot of criticism from well meaning persons who are sympathetic but who see no purpose served by demonstrating. We realize the limitations of our action and have no grand illusion that marching in front of the ranch is going to change LBJ's mind. We are convinced, though, that these demonstrations keep alive opposition to the war and nag at the consciences of those who see the madness but remain silent. If we could affect the behavior of those people, it would be a tremendous achievement, because their silence is read as full support by the Administration, just as the silence of the moderates in the South is read as support of the racists.

I grow very impatient with those who claim that they must remain silent because they do not know enough about what is really going on. When a government undertakes an action which we know involves bombing villages 10,000 miles away, sending a quarter of a million troops into combat, risks a global war, and kills hundreds of people a day, the burden of proof rests squarely with that government to explain what it is doing and why it is doing it. In the absence of proof regarding the necessity or reasonableness of the action, the citizen must assume that it is unnecessary and unreasonable unless he is willing to assume a blind faith in the government—the kind of faith exercised by the citizens of the Third Reich.

I believe that it is the obligation of the government to explain to me why it is carrying out mass murder in my name. In

The writer, Mort Rieber, was threatened with dismissal from his job as a psychologist working for the state because he made public his intention to participate in a Christmas protest of the Vietnam war. He won, by threatened legal action, his right to engage in such activity on his own time, and he participated in the Easter vigil at the LBJ Ranch.

the case of Germany and Japan during World War II, the reasons were given and they made sense. They even made sense in the Korean War. Now, however, the Administration doesn't even feel obligated to give reasons other than the nonsense about "commitments" and that garbage about face-saving. It is clearly the duty of every citizen to protest mass murder in his name and with his money until reasonable explanations are forthcoming. Then the individual can decide whether or not he can accept the explanations as sufficient to justify the action. If he can't he continues protesting.

So, to the person who says, "I don't know enough about it to take a position one way or the other," I say, "You have already taken a position by way of the government. The killing is being done in your name! If you don't know why they are killing, then tell them to stop."

Mort Rieber, 435 Electra, Houston, Tex.

May 13, 1966

13



The Demopolis Project

THE DEMOPOLIS PROJECT is an attempt by a group of Southern students, teachers, clergymen, and other concerned persons to put into action their belief in human dignity and human rights by doing educational work among the deprived 62% Negro majority population in and near Demopolis, Alabama (Marengo County).

FOR THE SUMMER of 1966, a group of volunteers, believing that lasting progress will become possible only when the educational level of the community is raised, hopes to provide a start toward a remedy for the inequities of the county's segregated educational system.

SEND CONTRIBUTIONS AND INQUIRIES to:

Demopolis Project Committee, Box 7076, University Station, Austin, Tex. 78712.

(Adv.)

MEETINGS

THE THURSDAY CLUB of Dallas meets each Thursday noon for lunch (cafeteria style) at the Downtown YMCA, 605 No. Ervay St., Dallas. Good discussion. You're welcome. Informal, no dues.

The TRAVIS COUNTY LIBERAL DEMOCRATS meet at Scholz' Garten at 8 p.m. on the first Thursday. You're invited.

ITEMS for this feature cost, for the first entry, 7c a word, and for each subsequent entry, 5c a word. We must receive them one week before the date of the issue in which they are to be published.

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Sketches of Home

Elroy Bode

MOTHER

She was there on Sunday afternoons when Daddy took me fishing on the quiet Guadalupe west of town: he sat in his Sunday hat, waiting out with equal patience the fish and the afternoon and his cigar; Mother was encamped on a quilt—fused to her magazines and the shade of the tall cypress trees.

She was a different kind of mother in a way, despite all her monumental familiarity. She was Mother-in-Perspective, one who was voluntarily suspended from the business of a Sunday afternoon. She did not suppose herself to be a vital part of fishing or the river; she was a mother who was suddenly not using her motherness—who had yielded her special position in the family in order to fade into the background of the cypresses and the languid Guadalupe.

Yet whenever I returned to the car along the river bank trail—for any one of the many long-afternoon reasons—Mother would always look up from her reading and manage to indicate a portion of that approval which only she could give. It was not much in the way of words, but through a motion of her head—a slightly anticipatory, looking-up glance—or some change of expression she turned her attention away from her own private world in order to present herself fully to me not as a reader but as my mother. It was an expression indicating sheer willingness to see me once more, as if she were unashamedly glad for my being there in front of her, alive and well and able to walk up and down the river bank at will. Just in doing that—in looking up from her magazine—she revealed her sense of pride and affection and approval: she asserted with a genuine warmth which cut through all the Sunday blandness and tranquility that she was my mother and I was her son and that such a situation was a good thing all around.

BEER

After a person grows up he rarely takes time even to smell—much less ponder—a bottle of beer. For the adult, beer simply becomes a matter of opening up and drinking down. The taste and the heightening effect is what counts.

But I can remember the days when the closest I got to beer was the smell.

It was when Grandpa used to stop at a drive-in on his way back to the ranch and order himself a Falstaff or two while Gram and I had our Delaware Punch. I would only get a whiff from the top of the bottle before he poured the beer into a glass, but that smell was a beautiful thing

to consider: rich and dry and clean, it cut across our overly-sweet Delawares like an aroma from an underground garden—some secret place where small vegetations breathed in a chilled silence.

And as I remember it, even the bottles appeared more symbolic, more magical then. A darker duller brown, sitting rather austere and phallic on Grandpa's window tray, they seemed like another set of quiet spokesmen for that strange adult world which, though always surrounding me, was something constantly ahead, something perpetually and illusively *beyond*. They remained there for years on the horizon of Grandpa's car: dark obelisks luring me out of childhood.

DADDY

When I was young he belonged to cigar smoke and horseshoe pitching and family reunions in pecan groves; to funny papers read aloud in a droning, sing-song voice on Sunday morning and Hurlbut's *Story of the Bible* with the pictures of the burning bush and Jacob wrestling with an angel; to the feed store beside the railroad tracks and to a small Stetson hat and khakis that smelled of body odor and mashes; to alfalfa hay and the sun warming the big splintery boards of the loading platform and deliveries in the old truck after closing time...

I remember that first rattle of loose fenders as he turned the corner in the late afternoon: it made me drop whatever I was doing and run to the back gate and drag it open and stand beside it, waiting, as Daddy rumbled and clattered down the street. The truck came slow and black and sure: the motor would be running in a high extra whine and the fenders would be jangling at each familiar bump and dip in the street and the sideboards would be squeaking against the metal sides and it would all be like sweet music. I would see his hand raised toward me in a wave from within the cab and then he would make his last little tight swing to the opposite side of the street before turning in quickly through the gate and coming to rest beneath the clothesline.

He would usually have some kind of feed in the back of the truck. As he carried it toward the cow shed all the chickens in the sudan patch below the garden would begin running toward him in their frantic, armless way, hardly stopping long enough to squeeze under wire fences and gates. And for the rest of the afternoon, like a Pied Piper of the Back Lot, Daddy would do up the chores: carrying his pungent mashes and grains and clumps of pulled Johnson grass to all the many pens and coops while dogs and chickens and pigeons and one small boy followed peaceably in his wake.

On winter nights we would gather before the fireplace with the lights off and listen to the radio. Many times it was full of static, but no one ever jumped up to twist a knob or shake it. We indulged it as we would an infirm relative who belched and coughed and wheezed at the supper table.

It was an old Crosley with a deep tone and a sad yellow mouth, and in that darkened living room it gave us all the memorable voices of the '30's and '40's: Walter Winchell, who swept into the room with crackling authority; Gabriel Heatter, who mourned over the news as if it were a dying or disappointing friend; Helen Hayes, who mourned also but with a little spirit—who sounded as if she were trapped at the far end of a long tunnel, raising thin defiant hands to damp walls. And there was always Al Pierce and Fred Allen and Lanny Ross and Lum and Abner.

There were the Joe Louis fights too. On those rare nights Daddy would get the chores done early and his cigar lit and we would sit there together in darkness, our chairs drawn closer to the radio than usual, the whole world shrunk for a while to the size of the Yellow Crosley mouth. The announcer would say his terse, sing-song words and then the bell would sound through all the excitement and Tony Galento or Max Bear or Billy Conn would try to last out the fifteen rounds, and couldn't, and we would hear again through the final clanging: "Tha winnah . . . and . . . still . . . heavyweight . . . champ-yon . . . of . . . the world . . ." And it was like the sun going down each day and Roosevelt being the president—Joe Louis had won again. Daddy would clear his throat from the cigar juice and turn off the radio and say, "Well, son, the old Brown Bomber, he *did* it again."

I had favorite programs that came on just at bedtime—"Blondie," "Red Skelton," "I Love a Mystery"—but I rarely got to hear them, despite my begging. I went off into my own cold wintertime room and got deep under the quilts, trying to keep rigid and stoic against the cold bedsheets and also trying to ignore the rest of the family as they went about their business in the living room. But before long I would edge gingerly over to the living room wall and press my ear against the cold wallpaper. Just on the other side, the old Crosley was roaring dimly on. It was there, with my shoulder raised uncomfortably and my head cricked to one side, that I fell asleep—usually while suave and tolerant Sherlock Holmes was allaying some new fear of bumbling Dr. Watson.

BETTY LEE

Each fall afternoon she changed from her starched school dress to clean blue jeans and a flannel shirt and went outside to do the chores. She gathered eggs from the barn, watered the rabbits in their cages beside the garage, scattered corn in the woodlot for the guineas—and all the while kept whistling and scuffling rocks and listening to my uncle call "goooooatie,

goooooatie, goooooatie" down below the hill in the creek pasture.

I remember her best that way—growing up so easily at her ranch home among chickens and horses and cedar trees. She was my cousin Betty Lee: a pretty, soft-faced girl with brown hair and a small childish voice who liked to sit at dusk on the back porch and shell pecans while my uncle chopped wood for the fireplace. She was always happy in these long early years—did not once realize that life could ever be more than raising fawns and baking fudge and sewing dressing for the FHA.

Then, out of the blue, things happened to Betty Lee: she got married, moved away, had a baby, became sick. It all seemed too much, too sudden—at seventeen she

knew nothing about Los Angeles or husbands or polio. She knew quite a bit less about iron lungs and dying. She was simply not prepared.

I kept asking myself afterwards: What would you have her do—stay out there forever along that cedar ridge, whistling "Red Wing" and trailing corn to the guineas? Would you keep her permanently thirteen, prevent her from meeting her fate?

No, I would say . . . but I still find it hard to drive to her house any more. In my mind it has always stayed November along the Harper Road, and Betty Lee is always there in her blue jeans and plaid shirt—calling out in her clear, innocent, childish voice to the animals, the ranch, the world, to me. □

I didn't git to thank Pres. Johnson for the party. Bill Moyers had come runnin in with news of another Buddist Uprisin in South Vietnam. The President had Dean Rusk in a corner givin him hell. All I heard of the balling out was, "Then why the hell don't you git your damn antenna fixed?"

Yours,
Claudie

P.S. See where Jack Valenti just took over as front man for the Motion Picture Producers of America. \$125,000 a year! I knowed he had talent when LBJ chose him. And Loyalty. When he said a while back that he slept better everynight because LBJ was in the White House—that was Loyalty. When he took the movie job and said, "I've never seen a bad movie," that was Loyalty. But damn poor judgement. C.

A Party in the White House

*Piney Woods, East Texas
Dogwood Time*

Dear Ronnie,

Sorry I ain't wrote in so long. Been away. Been up at the White House—the one on the Patomac, not the Pertenales. Ain't much difference judging by the number of Texans around, though.

Really hadn't intended to go to the White House. I was of sort of enjoying my minority status—a Texan who had never been invited to the place. But how it come about was like this: I went up to Washington just to see the town. Got lost the first night I was there. Wandering around trying to find my way when I met a man.

"Scuse me, sir, could you give me directions? I'm so lost I don't know whether I'm comin or goin," I says. He grins sort of pitiful and says, "Hell, I'm in the same shape." That helped me come to my senses and see it was Hubert Humphrey. He went on to say he never give directions. Just followed them. Then he asks me if I'd like to go to party with him.

"What sort of party?" I asks.

"Democratic!" he snaps, like I'd asked him something personal.

"I mean," I says, "Where at and who's givin it?"

"At the White House. The President's givin it," he says, strikin a sort of prayerful pose.

"But I ain't invited," I says.

"I ain't either. It don't matter. Lyndon won't notice you. He never does me."

I went along with him, and they was having a real Gala. Sort of a cross between a Jake Pickle Appreciation Barbecue & The Dallas Fair. The White House was rocking and Texas Accents was echoing off the walls so thick and loud that Bobby Kennedy started grumbling that Washington's Texas Accent problem was getting worse than New York's Air Pollution problem. Senator Yarborough was just leaving as we come in. Said he was bored. "Got so damn bored that I picked up a copy of the Austin American and started to read it," he says, in a whisper on account of Marvin Watson was standin there trying to pick up his remarks with a lapel microphone.

Everybody in Washington was there, even down to some Republicans, The Cabinet, Senate & Congress. They was all doin a sort of Jig. I thought it was the Lindy Hop, but they called it the Lyndon Jump. Anyhow, the way they done it was a sight to see. The music would cut loose. And the whole business would start jiggin. Then Lyndon would yell, "Frog" and they would all jump right straight up. High as they could. Turnt out it was a game. One that jumped the highest won the prize . . . a free weekend at The LBJ Ranch. Per Diem included. Senator Fullbright wasn't playing. Just sittin watchin and shakin his head. I asked him why he didn't join the fun. He says, "I played that fool game two years ago. Sprained my back. And my conscience. Fact is, my relations is still strained."

You'll never guess who won! Not in a hunnerd years you won't. No it wasn't John Connally. He was disqualified for using a pogo stick. The winner was none other than SENATOR EV DIRKSEN!!!

SMELLS

Baytown

There was a day when the moment you walked into a grocery store, your senses were instantly alerted by the delectable smells emanating from hanging bananas, barrelled sauerkraut, and open herring kegs, yawning bins of aromatic spices and racks of fragrant hanging sausages. The village drugstore with its ceiling fans awhir was a cooling oasis and, even without the spinning fans, a blind man would know where he was the moment that tart anti-septic pharmaceutical blend struck his nostrils. There was a rich and leathery smell to the saddle shop, and the clean bay rum aroma of the barber shop took a lot of the ordeal out of getting a haircut. You could smell fresh bread from the bakery all across the square. Nobody who has felt the cinder crunch of a blacksmith shop floor underfoot will ever forget the pun-

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Give Five Friends An Observer for \$1

I would like to tell five of my friends about the Observer. I enclose \$1; use it to send an introductory copy of the paper from me to the following:

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City State Zip	City State Zip
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Mail to Sarah Payne, Business Manager, Texas Observer, 504 W. 24 St., Austin, Texas, enclosing the dollar.

gent, sooty aura of that smoke-blackened inferno of clashing metal. Half of the excitement of a train trip used to be the damp smoky effulgence that permeated every depot mantled in the black smoke of the old coal-burning locomotives. It lingered on your clothes for hours afterward.

You got a lot of pleasure out of your nose.

About the only things nowadays which smell like they ought to be small Mexican restaurants and beer joints.

There's no character in the way a modern supermarket smells. Push a wire buggy down those regimented aisles and you'll find that the delicatessen counter smells like the bakery which smells like the produce stall. All the goodies are cellophane-wrapped, foil-sealed, quick-frozen, scientifically hygienic and phony. All the smell is gone and much of the taste. Vitamins are presumably still there but the fun is gone.

There is a plaintive effort being made by odorant manufacturers to replace the natural odors with synthetic sprays. Scents have been devised to make plastic shoes smell like leather, bakery products like Grandma's kitchen, banquet halls like roast beef, and plastic buds like roses. There is even a rumor that you can make a second-hand car smell like a new one. Automated meat packers are brooding over suggestions that chemicals can be introduced to bestow fresh color, fresh smell, and even a phony sizzle upon packaged steaks.

Any day now I expect to walk into a supermarket and find gaily wrapped packages, each supplied with an individual syringe—pink ones labeled Girl, blue ones labeled Boy, and giant economy size ones labeled Twins—for do-it-yourself artificial insemination.

AL MELINGER

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The Texas Observer

Dialogue

Not Needed: Mr. Pena

A certain Mr. Pena ["Needed: A Marshall Plan for Mexican-Americans," Obs. April 15, 1966] has the gall of accusing the "power structure" of exploiting the Mexican-American population of San Antonio when he himself is its greatest offender.

Let me say at the outset that a certain amount of discrimination still exists in San Antonio, as is evident in certain areas of job advancement and in unfair wages, and positive measures must constantly be exerted to effectively eliminate discrimination at its source. But we cannot and should not blame anything and everything on discrimination. The Mexican-American has an obligation to himself and to society to make an honest effort to break out of the poverty cycle with the assurance that he has a chance of succeeding. Mr. Pena does not give him this assurance, and I resent it. Mr. Pena has so effectively overplayed the theme of discrimination in San Antonio, that many people have lost confidence in their own resourcefulness, thus remaining in economic and social isolation, relying solely on Mr. Pena, who promises them the shortest and easiest way out. Mr. Pena's primary concern is Mr. Pena, who seeks to hold the Mexican-American in a state of hopelessness and despair in order to assure himself a bloc vote . . .

Mr. Pena maliciously distorts facts by

THE NARROW CHURCH ON SIXTEENTH STREET

The narrow church on Sixteenth Street
John snapped it with his Nikon.
Amon Carter's Fort Worth money

Had bought John's time,
The Nikon, and gas for the car.
Soft Foundation money
For a Good Cause:

Publish a book
Legislate this narrow church
And its peers throughout the State
Into our Official Heritage.
The famous photographer would be called
in later

To buy sun's tricks, to yellow walls.

The city planners schemed
To fill up inaction with acts and deeds,
With concourse and interpenetration
Of friendly and autonomous gestures.
'Lunch time's chapel for the office workers
of the State!'

They argued. And as the neighborhood
tumbled down around us
We fought to build the present's Possible
In yesterday's Done. This fact accomplished
This narrow church on Sixteenth Street
Still lively pastures me
When turning right on Congress
I carry home the bread
From Navarro's Federal Bakery.

MIKE EISENSTADT

Austin

saying that of 350,000 Mexican-Americans in San Antonio, 150,000 live on the edge of poverty, while failing to state that 200,000 do not. He says that the high unemployment rate among Mexican-Americans clearly indicates a pattern of job discrimination, when in fact it is actually the lack of jobs and of necessary skills that is responsible for unemployment, and not discrimination. He complains about the economic and social isolation of the Mexican-American people, while at the same time objecting to the tens of thousands who have succeeded in breaking the poverty cycle and who have thus moved into other sections of the city. Mr. Pena objects to this geographic move because every person moving out of the West Side means one less vote that he can control. He says that San Antonio city councilmen are "puppets" of a political machine when he knows that [this is not true]. He says that the "power structure" is intentionally keeping heavy industry out of San Antonio, when in fact the city council has been spending \$200,000 annually through the San Antonio chamber of commerce to attract tourists and industry to San Antonio. He says that the "poor Mejanos" in San Antonio can expect little help from the "power structure" when in fact the city council, as well as the United Fund, March of Dimes, Goodwill Industries, Community Welfare Council, Boy Scouts of America, and many other worthy organizations have among their membership individuals that Mr. Pena has labeled as disinterested in the Mexican-American.

I believe that wages in certain areas of employment are definitely low and should be raised, but a distinction must be made between a fair wage and a living wage. The employer is obligated to pay a fair wage commensurate with the worth of the service rendered by the worker. The worker in turn has the responsibility to earn a living wage by producing a service or product that is worth a living wage. The worker who expects to get paid two dollars for one dollar's worth of work is unrealistic. In summary, paying a fair wage is the responsibility of the employer, and earning a living wage is the responsibility of the worker.

The Mexican-American people of San Antonio have the opportunity of breaking the poverty cycle if only they can regain their self-confidence with the knowledge that in spite of the discrimination that still remains, they can still elevate themselves to a better way of life with a little honest effort. I am hopeful that the Mexican-American people of San Antonio will continue to move forward toward a better and brighter tomorrow. It is unfortunate that as long as there is a Mr. Pena, there will always be a West Side in San Antonio.

Herbert Calderon, D.D.S., city councilman, City of San Antonio, Texas.