

*A Journal of Free Voices**A Window to the South**April 25, 1975*

50¢

## A death in Duval

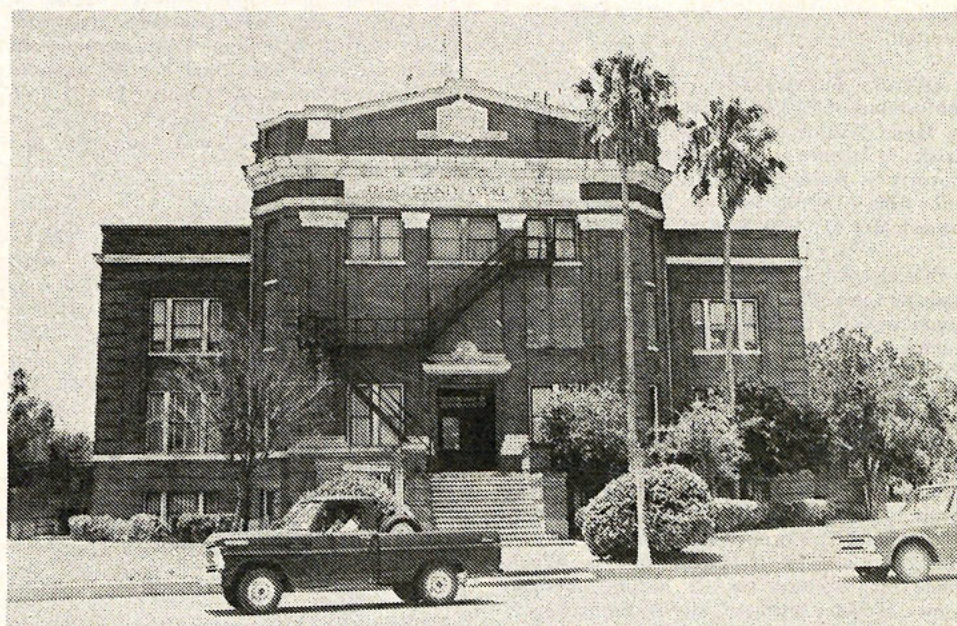
*San Diego*

The story of the Duval County Parrs reads like a cheap potboiler. It's a case of life imitating melodrama. Archer Parr and his son George, the first and second Duke of Duval, were overblown caricatures of the South Texas *patron*. If Hollywood made the Parr story into a movie, the critics would say they were unbelievably violent and corrupt, that they tore passion to tatters, to very rags . . .

In this mundane era, failing politicians are supposed to fade pathetically away, abandoned by the press and ignored by the public. Not George Parr. His political organization in shambles, faced with the possibility of returning to prison, George drove out to a lonely spot on his sister Hilda's ranch and put a bullet through his head. It was a suitably violent ending for one of the most infamous public figures of the century, and it even managed to win the old weasel one more election.

**G**EORGE PARR'S life was never what you'd call tranquil, but in the week before he committed suicide it became an outrageous tangle of political and legal crises. Last year Parr was convicted and sentenced by a federal jury to five years in prison and \$14,000 in fines for income tax evasion and perjury. It was the same old Duval County story — extortion from contractors working on county projects and diverting public funds for private gain.

George's nephew, Archer Parr, the Duval County judge, was found guilty last year of lying to a federal grand jury that was looking into his uncle's financial dealings. Archer told the grand jury that he received \$121,500 over the past few years for legal services performed on behalf of the Duval County water district. But he couldn't produce a single document to show that he had done any work for his money, so the grand jury charged him with perjury. (George Parr, at the same time, was receiving a comfortable little \$5,000 a month retainer from the water district.) Archer was sentenced to six five-year



The Duval County Courthouse

Dave McNeely

prison terms, two of which are to run concurrently, and he was ordered to pay court costs and fines of \$63,800.

Both Parrs were out on bail, awaiting the outcome of their appeals. And then, in late March, their carefully tuned political machine started throwing gears right and left. First off, the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals in New Orleans upheld George's conviction. Then the Carrillo brothers, whose family has been part of the Parrs' Old Party for 50 years, made an aggressive bid to take over political leadership of the county. State District Judge O. P. Carrillo ordered Archer to step down as county judge, since, after all, he is a convicted felon. Two Old Party county commissioners were also removed by Carrillo. Archer countered by trying to kick O. P. out of office. For a short time there were two county judges and two commissioners courts, and Texas Rangers arrived on the scene to check everyone entering the Duval County Courthouse for concealed weapons. The county judges

were narrowed down to one when the Texas Supreme Court sided with Carrillo.

At the same time he moved on Archer, Carrillo tossed four Parr people off the Benavides School Board and replaced them with his own men. Carrillo charged M. K. Bercaw, the Old Party president of the Benavides board, with misconduct and said that the board's attorney, Marvin Foster, had received a \$30,000 check from the school district for services that were not necessarily pertinent to school business.

Bercaw was replaced by Morris Ashby, executive vice president of the Duval County Ranch Co. The 100,000-acre ranch is owned by Clinton Manges, a Howard Hughes-like businessman from Freer, whose name is becoming increasingly prominent in South Texas politics. (Manges is probably best known for giving a \$15,000 cash donation to Gov. Dolph Briscoe back in 1972 [see "Funny money," *Obs.*, Nov. 29, 1974]. Briscoe never reported the gift. When it came to

*(Continued on Page 3)*



# The coming fortnight

By Suzanne Shelton

## APRIL GRAB BAG

**THREE PAINTERS** - Mark Rothko, Brice Marden and David Novros works in exhibition including four of Rothko's alternative paintings for Rothko Chapel; Sewall Gallery and Rice Museum, Institute for the Arts, Rice University, Houston.

**TEXAS SIGNPOSTS** - Collection of photographs of East Texas signs and scenes, shot by James Wilkins of Tyler, and including such classics of erronea as photo of sign reading "This property is paroled 24 hours," in conjunction with Alley Theatre run of "Tobacco Road"; through May 11, Alley Theatre, Houston

**DOLLS & STITCHERY** - Exhibition of graduate thesis works, April 30-May 17, Gallery; American dolls, through May 25, Museum; Helen Rumpel's stitchery, through May 4, Museum; Texas Tech University, Lubbock.

**SPRING FESTS** - Festivals around the state include Fiesta San Antonio, with parades and "Night in Old San Antonio," through April 27; "Buccaneer Days" with sailboat regatta, carnivals, parades, music festivals, square dancing, art jamboree in Corpus Christi through May 4; "Brazos River Festival-Pilgrimage" is Waco's fund-raising festival for its historic museum homes, includes historical tour featuring stop at old suspension bridge built in 1872 which served as pattern for Brooklyn Bridge, April 25-27.

## APRIL 25

**MI MI MI** - Opera Workshop, directed by Dr. Robert C. Scott, presents "La Boheme" with Texas A&I University cast; through April 26, 8 p.m., Jones Auditorium, Kingsville.

**HARD ROCK SOUND** - Black Oak Arkansas, in concert; 7:30 p.m., Hofheinz Pavilion, Houston.

**STUDENT SYMPHONY** - Walter Ducloux conducts University Symphony Orchestra with student soloists; 8 p.m., Hogg Auditorium, University of Texas, Austin.

**S.P.E.B.S.Q.S.A.** - That's the name of a barbershop singing group, and they're putting together "Cavalcade of Harmony," with several groups including Barbershop Quartets Tidelanders Chorus, international medalists of 1973; through April 26, 8 p.m., Jones Hall, Houston.

## APRIL 26

**BITS & PIECES** - A few of your old opera favorites, as UT Opera Theatre performs excerpts

from popular operas, with Walter Ducloux directing; 8 p.m., UTOPIA, 1900 San Jacinto, Austin.

**POTLUCK** - Hunter's stew is on the menu, cooked in a 50-gallon pot to accommodate guests who come to see Shakespeare performed in hay barn by Jim Ayres' University of Texas students; Winedale Inn, near Roundtop.

**KRISS & RITA** - Kristofferson and Coolidge, in Cultural Entertainment Committee concert, with special guest Billy Swan performing progressive rockabilly; 8 p.m., Municipal Auditorium, Austin.

**EAST TEXAS JAMBOREE** - Willie Nelson and Jerry Jeff Walker headline first annual East Texas Jamboree; 3 p.m., Huntsville.

**KING WILLIAM STREET** - In old San Antonio was named after Kaiser Wilhelm since homeowners were of German extraction, and four restored homes in area are on display in King William Fair, which includes art-in-park exhibit and backgammon tournament, crafts exhibition, garden sale, food booths, magician Claude Crowe, singers and dancers; 11 a.m. to 6 p.m., corner of Durango and St. Mary's, or corner of Guenther and South Alamo Sts., San Antonio.

## APRIL 27

**CHICANO RALLY-FAIR** - Cesar Chavez comes to town to promote efforts of United Farm Workers, with Farm Worker Fair featuring Chavez speech, arts and crafts, food, plants, 3 to 7 p.m., St. Theresa's Catholic Church auditorium; and premiere showing of "Fighting For Our Lives," cinematic record of U.F.W. struggle, 9 to 11 p.m., Houston Room, University of Houston Center, Houston.

**FREE CONCERT** - Sunday afternoon concert by Chamber Singers, with Robert H. Young conducting; 3 p.m., also 8:15 p.m. April 28, Armstrong Browning Library, Waco.

## APRIL 28

**MORE FREEBIES** - Free admission to graduate and undergraduate-directed one-act plays, which include "Miss Julie," "Sorry, Wrong Number," and others; also May 2-4, 6-7, 7:30 p.m., Laboratory and University Theatres, Texas Tech University, Lubbock.

## APRIL 29

**ALSO FOR FREE** - Festival Chorus Spring Concert conducted by Richard Robinson; 8:15 p.m., Waco Hall, Baylor University, Waco.

**HIGH SCHOOL HARRIES** - They may not be Laurence Oliviers, but student participants in University Interscholastic League one-act play competition are worth watching; through April, Hogg Auditorium, University of Texas, Austin.

**GOLDIE OLDIES** - Irving Symphony Orchestra concludes concert season in lighter vein, performing selections from "Fiddler on Roof," "Porgy and Bess," other Gershwin; MacArthur High School, Irving.

## APRIL 30

**EVENING OF JAZZ** - Michael Ewald directs Jazz Ensemble in free concert; 8:15 p.m., Waco Hall, Waco.

**BARENBOIM ABOARD** - Daniel Barenboim, one of most distinguished young conductors and

pianists of his time, performs piano works; 8:30 p.m., Jones Hall, Houston.

**BIT O' IRISH** - Sean O'Casey's "The Plough and the Stars," with drama department cast directed by Gaylan Collier; through May 4, University Theatre, Texas Tech University, Lubbock.

**GOSPEL SOUND** - Post-Easter celebration with Gospel Festival featuring Violinaires, Pilgrim Jubilees, Swan Silvertones; 3 p.m., Astrodome, Houston.

## MAY 1

**MAYDAY CONCERT** - Dick Floyd conducts Baylor Wind Ensemble, with Thomas Stidham directing Concert Band in free performance; 8:15 p.m., Waco Hall, Waco.

**AARON COPLAND** - The master musician himself conducts Dallas Symphony Orchestra; also May 3, Music Hall, Dallas.

## MAY 2

**COMING ON STRONG** - Baylor Chorale, conducted by Robert Young, in free spring concert; 8:15 p.m., Roxy Grove Hall, Baylor University, Waco.

**CHICAGO & CALIFORNIA SOUNDS** - Heavy rocker Chicago joins Beach Boys in superconcert; 7 p.m., Jeppesen Stadium, Houston.

**MOVE OVER, BEETHOVEN** - For all-Beethoven festival, with Houston Symphony Orchestra performing seven works, including five piano concertos played by Alfred Brendel; through May 4, Jones Hall, Houston.

## MAY 3

**PRIMITIVE MYTHS** - Texas Southern University Community Dance Troupe appears in conjunction with Houston Museum of Fine Arts showing of primitive masterworks, dancing interpretations of primitive myths under direction of talented Marjorie Mann Stuart; 1 p.m., Museum of Fine Arts, Houston.

## MAY 4

**AFTERNOON MUSIC** - Cedar Frost performs a little country, jazz, folk and rock in 3 p.m. concert; Laguna Gloria Art Museum, Austin.

## MAY 5

**GUEST CONDUCTOR** - Daniel Sternberg at helm of Baylor Symphony Orchestra in Performers and Composers Concert; 8:15 p.m., Waco Hall, Waco.

**YOUNG VIRTUOSO** - At only 27, Andre Watts is already a giant among pianists; performing Beethoven's "Concerto No. 3 in C Minor for Piano and Orchestra, Op. 37" with San Antonio Symphony, plus Rossini's overture to "Le Gazzo Lodra" and Shostakovich's fifth symphony; through May 6, Laurie Auditorium, Trinity University, San Antonio.

## MAY 8

**WORLD PREMIERE** - This one will attract biggies from all over the ballet world, premiere of James Clouse's "Allen's Landing," ballet commemorating founding of City of Houston, with sets by Houston artist Dorothy Hood and music by Texas-born composer Fisher Tull, performed by Houston Ballet on program which also includes new Clouser work for male dancers to music by Bartok; through May 10, Jones Hall, Houston.



## Duval . . .

(Continued from Page 1)

light two years later the governor explained that he was in the process of trying to return the money to Manges, but he just couldn't seem to reach him. Reporters could sympathize with the governor. Manges is just about as elusive as the mysterious blind salamander.)

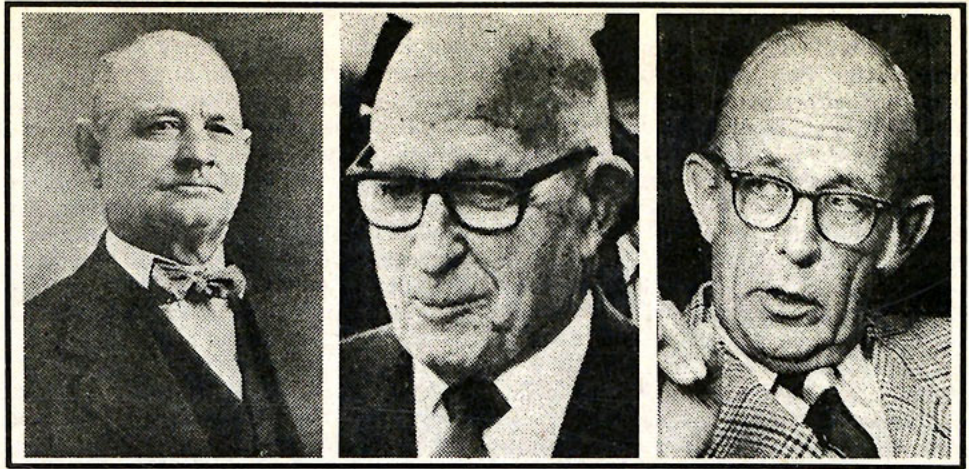
Last year, Manges appeared to be allied with the Parrs against the Carrillos. When former State Rep. Oscar Carrillo held a press conference in March of 1974 to announce that he had split with the Old Party because the Parrs refused to endorse him for state senator, Carrillo accused George Parr of allying himself with outlanders, to wit, Manges and Oscar Wyatt, Jr., the unpopular president of Coastal States Gas Producing Co. "Don't give crows wings," George responded, "because they'll pick your eyes out."

Manges further cemented his allegiance to the Parrs by paying out \$250,000 in bonds and court costs to keep George and Archer from going to jail last year. But this year Manges started snaking out on the Parrs. In addition to his ranch vice president being president of the Carrillos' school board, his ranch foreman, Jose R. Nichols, is foreman of a grand jury that is looking into irregularities in the Duval County water district. The grand jury is working with Dist. Atty. Arnulfo Guerra of Starr County, who insists that his life has been threatened. Guerra has asked Texas Atty. Gen. John Hill for help in the investigation, and none of this bodes well for the Old Party.

**T**HESE VARIOUS slings and arrows apparently prompted, on March 25, what local reporters believe was the first, and, as it turned out, the last press conference held by George Parr. George claimed that Manges was the mastermind behind the Carrillos' activities. But, he said, Manges could no more succeed in taking over Duval County "than I can go have wings and fly to heaven." George maintained that Archer was ousted because he refused to provide funds to pay former State Sen. Jim Bates as special prosecutor for the grand jury. (Bates is a story in himself. He's called "Diamond Jim" because a few years ago he was tried — but found innocent — of trafficking in stolen diamonds.) Parr insisted, "I had heard at one time that if he (Bates) was paid up to \$20,000 by the county that the rest would be taken care of by Mr. Manges."

As for Bercau's firing, Parr said that Bercau had angered Manges by refusing to increase the salary of a Freer football coach. (Manges is practically a recluse, but one of the few places where reporters have been able to track him down is at the Freer high school football games, where he goes to watch his son play.)

George Parr was quite jovial at his press conference. Asked if he was worried about



From left to right, Sen. Archie Parr, George Parr, Archer Parr

going to jail, he said, "Naw, I've been before. You know, it's just like a kid. You put him in jail one time and he's scared to death. The next time, he says, 'I'll take my lunch with me 'cause I know what's going to happen.'" A week later, however, he was summoned to a hearing in Corpus Christi to respond to charges that he had been threatening Judge Carrillo and others with a pistol. (Parr was a man of violent tempers. He was an avid hunter and he usually carried a pistol or a rifle, or both. Locals would say he was having one of his "spells" whenever he took to threatening enemies and showing off his firearms. The Rev. Antonio Arguelles, who officiated at Parr's Rosary, referred to the Duke's "mental blackouts." It was during such a "blackout," Anguelles said, that Parr killed himself.)

Parr did not appear at the hearing and Federal Judge Owen Cox ordered his arrest as a fugitive from justice. Parr had driven to Corpus that day with a friend, Duval Deputy Sheriff Rene Martinez, but they turned around and went back to San Diego rather than go to court. Martinez told Dave Montgomery of *The Dallas Times Herald* that Parr was crying when he picked Martinez up for the drive into Corpus. "He told me he wouldn't be alive, and I knew damn sure he wouldn't be," Martinez remembered. "Sometimes he would tell me something that would make tears roll down my face. He'd look at me and say, 'Don't worry about it!'" Martinez alleged that Parr threatened to take Manges and O. P. Carrillo out with him. The Carrillos were guarded that night by Texas Rangers.

The following morning, March 31, Parr apparently shot himself with a .45 caliber pistol. He was found slumped inside his Chrysler at a favorite spot on the family's Los Horcones Ranch south of Benavides. A justice of the peace ruled his death a suicide.

"I hope," Archer Parr spat out, "the goddamned sons of bitches are satisfied."

**D**UVAL COUNTY was stunned by George Parr's death. An estimated 2,000 persons attended the Rosary that was held in the courtyard of Parr's

expensive villa. No one had a mean word to say about the Parrs that day. The Carrillos stayed out of sight and the rest of Duval County went into mourning for the end of an era.

The funeral, in the Benavides cemetery, was a subdued affair. When Archie Parr died in 1942, it attracted public officials from all over Texas. Honorary pallbearers included Gov. Coke Stevenson and former Govs. Jim Ferguson, Pat Neff, Dan Moody, and Jimmy Allred. No such dignitaries attended George Parr's burial. One former South Texas congressman, John Lyle, was there, and so was Corpus Christi Mayor Jason Luby, who hails from a Duval family. Mostly it was a family funeral. A procession of about 150 cars followed the casket from the Horcones ranch house to the old cemetery, where hundreds of other Duval friends waited quietly, ringing the wrought iron fence that surrounds the mesquite-shaded Parr plot. The Reverend Arguelles said a few words in Spanish and English, ending with "Goodbye, George, Goodbye, George" and some people in the crowd quietly wept.

Everything closed down that day — the schools, the courthouse. Politics were temporarily suspended as everyone indulged in fond reminiscences of George Parr. Even reporters who had been covering the corrupt feifdom for years got a little sentimental. Joe Courdert of the *Caller Times*, Gary Garrison of the Associated Press, and Mack Sisk of the UPI all confessed to being fond of the old fellow. "I always liked George Parr," said Wallace Smith, a retired reporter for the *Alice Echo*. "He could be vicious, but you couldn't help but like him."

It seemed as if every Duval resident had a tale of George Parr's kindness. "He was a wonderful man," said Mrs. Eugenio Hinojosa. "We went to him many times for money for the hospital. He would help with all his heart and he would never say to pay him back." "George was quite a guy," his nephew Archer concluded. "He wrote his own skit. He led and decided the play. He called the shots until the end."



**R**EPORTERS who had never met George Parr were touched by the depth of affection he inspired. It's an amazing thing, considering the infamous history of the 63-year Parr regime. Archie Parr was generally considered to be the tougher of the two Duval bosses. Wallace Smith, who has written an unpublished history of Duval County, said that George was less autocratic and less vindictive than his father, which makes Archie Parr one mean *jefe*. Archie arrived in Duval County in 1882, shortly after the railroad was built. He had been hired, at the age of 21, as foreman of the Sweden Ranch south of Benavides. Archie quickly learned Spanish and the local customs. The Mexicans were considered little more than animals by many of the Republican *anglo* ranchers and farmers, but Archie virtually became a Texas-Mexican, and thus became their leader and protector.

The elder Parr's chief rival was a Republican by the name of John D. Cleary, who was elected to the Duval county commission the same year as Archie, in 1896. Cleary died an untimely death on Dec. 20, 1907, as he and a friend were eating in a cafe on the main street of San Diego. Cleary was facing away from the restaurant window and he caught a load of buckshot in the back. It had been fired from the street. No witnesses came forward and no arrests were ever made, despite the fact that the Texas Rangers were called in to investigate the killing. No one ever tied Archie Parr to Cleary's death, but Cleary was the first on a substantial list of Parr enemies whom fate singled out for violent circumstances and sometimes death.

According to the Wallace Smith

manuscript, Parr's political fortunes rose to new heights in 1912 during a hot contest to incorporate the town of San Diego. The Parr forces managed to steal the San Diego ballots, at which point there was a wild shootout between the Republicans and the Democrats, just like in the western movies. When the dust settled, three Mexicans lay dead in the street. Three Republican *anglos* were arrested and taken to jail. Archie lit out of town and took his family by train to Corpus Christi. When he returned his friends were armed and ready for another fight.

As James Rowe of the *Corpus Christi Caller* recreates the incident, Parr told them, "Put down your guns, *amigos*, and let the law take its course." Another shootout was thus avoided. The *anglos* were tried in Fort Bend County and acquitted. Historians generally concur that this incident sealed Parr's leadership of the Mexicans in Duval County. The area had teetered between Republican and Democratic control, but in 1912 Duval became solidly Democratic and solidly under the control of the Parr family.

Rowe, in a recent piece for the *Caller*, quoted from an article on the *patron* system that appeared in the August, 1930, *American Political Science Review*. The 1930 article, which is recommended by Clifton McCleskey in his textbook on Texas politics, says in part, "The cattle barons inevitably established themselves as lords protector of those Mexicans who became their tenants and ranch hands, the resulting relationship being essentially feudal. This feudalism was economic, social and political. . . . The Texas-Mexican remained a Mexican in his own eyes and in the eyes of his master. He learned little and

cared less for the state or federal commonwealth to which he had become attached. . . . Voting has little or no significance beyond returning a favor to somebody higher up to whom they owe employment, money, personal attention, or something else. . . . When election time comes around, in many instances, they receive poll tax receipts by mail or otherwise. Some kind of benefactor has paid the poll taxes. Carrying these receipts to the polling place, they are addressed in Spanish by an election judge who may have been aware ahead of time how they have been advised to vote. The ballots are printed in English. Therefore the judge kindly offers to mark the ballot properly, if indeed he has not already done so to save time."

Archie Parr could have written the script. . . as far as it goes, but the first Duke of Duval went considerably further. The first published report of missing county funds appeared in 1914 when it was alleged that \$24,000 had been paid for work not done. A number of local farmers went to court to force an audit (nary an audit had been done since the county was organized in 1876). Archie fought the suit. At one point in the court record, the plaintiff's attorney asked Parr if he was going to let the farmers look at the records.

"No, we are not going to let you see them," Parr answered.

"We will have some difficulty in obtaining proof, probably, Mr. Parr, won't we?"

"It sorta looks like it," he said.

The Texas Senate eventually ordered an audit, but on Aug. 14, 1914, there occurred one of those fortuitous incidents that distinguish the Parr career. The Duval

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A journal of free voices

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County Courthouse burned to the ground, destroying the financial records that were about to be audited. Strangely enough, most of the other county documents, birth records and such, were housed in a fireproof vault and were not even singed.

**T**HE PROVIDENTIAL blaze in the Duval County Courthouse did not hurt Archie Parr's fortunes in the least. Nor did a little indictment for paying other people's poll taxes, since the indictment was dropped. In 1915 he was elected to the Texas Senate, where he served for 20 years, all the while retaining virtually dictatorial control over Duval County and expanding his dominion over adjacent South Texas counties. Eventually Parr influenced the politics of Jim Wells, Jim Hogg, Nueces, Brooks, Starr, Cameron, Hidalgo, Webb, Willacy, and Zapata, just about every county south of the cactus curtain which divides Mexican Texas from *anglo* Texas.

As the inimitable Robert Baskin wrote in the *Dallas Morning News* last year, "Somehow Parr's benevolence waned as his despotism increased. He employed *pistoleros* to keep his subjects in line."

In Duval County, Archie Parr was king. The Parrs were partners in virtually every business venture within the county. No one got a job without Archie's approval. No one got elected without Archie's endorsement. Senator Parr treated the Duval County budget as his own personal bank account, but a lot of the money trickled back to Parr's faithful Mexican friends. Parr ran a one-man welfare department, and anyone who needed money for food or clothing or a doctor's bill could get it, with no strings attached.

Archie Parr was finally retired from politics by the voters of his district in 1934. His reputation had been damaged by a federal income tax-suit against him and his wife in 1933. It seems Parr had received \$100,000 from a Houston builder "for assistance in obtaining road contracts" in Duval County. The feds put a civil lien on his income and the publicity was enough to earn Parr a successful senatorial opponent in 1934.

Archie's son George was also having some troubles with the law. George was elected Duval County judge in 1926. By 1928 he was involved in some very questionable financial deals. A multi-million dollar road bond issue had been passed by the county, and the younger Parr had apparently taken a healthy cut of the profits. He was hauled into federal court in 1934 on the charge that he had failed to report \$42,000 on his 1928 income tax. Federal prosecutors maintained that Parr had received a "commission" of \$28,000 on the road-building contract. And, the prosecutors said, although George earned only \$2,700 in 1928 for his official duties as county judge, he received an additional \$17,000 in "protection" money from owners of various gambling houses,

whorehouses, and bootleg whiskey operations. Parr pleaded guilty, was fined \$5,000, and given a two-year suspended sentence.

Two years later the federal authorities were back in court trying to revoke George's probation. They listed six violations of the terms of his probation, including assaulting a Brownsville attorney and receiving money from gambling operations. This time Parr was sent to a federal prison in El Reno, Okla., where he served nine and a half months of his two-year sentence. It was the only time George Parr would go to prison.

As a felon, of course, George Parr could not hold office or practice law, but he continued to rule Duval County in the manner perfected by his father. The Parr-endorsed candidates during this period sometimes got majorities as large as 100-to-1.

**I**N 1943 Parr applied for a presidential pardon, but it was denied, in part because U.S. Rep. Richard M. Kleberg of the King Ranch Klebergs did not back the request. The Parrs had some other scores to settle with the Klebergs as well, so in 1944 they ran John Lyle against Kleberg. Lyle won, despite the fact that he was overseas in the Army infantry at the time of his election, and in 1945 Congressman Lyle supported Parr's second pardon request. On Feb. 20, 1946, President Harry Truman granted George a full pardon, and Parr was back in political business. The next few years were to be the most infamous of the Parr reign.

After many years of total domination of Duval and surrounding counties, George Parr was being challenged by the Freedom Party, a new party organized by World War II veterans who had gained a sense of independence during their years away from the hothouse environment of South Texas. Political opposition did not prompt George to clean up his act. It didn't come to light until the Fifties, but in 1945 George borrowed about half a million dollars from the Duval County Road Bond Account to buy a ranch. The property was in litigation for a long time, but federal authorities finally sold it in 1960 for \$1,575,000, just about triple the 1945 cost of the ranch. Most of the proceeds of the sale were subsequently turned over to Duval County, at which point Parr bragged about how well he had managed the county's money. It had, after all, tripled in value.

Despite the challenges from the Freedom Party, Parr maintained sufficient control over the counties in his domain to guarantee Lyndon Johnson a place in the Senate in 1948. The legend of Ballot Box 13 is known by every devotee of Texas politics.

It has been traditional in Parr country for a few boxes in any hotly contested election to come in very, very late, after the rest of the ballots have been counted and some reckoning has been made of the

total number of votes it will take to get a Parr-favored candidate elected. Johnson's opponent was former Gov. Coke Stevenson. The Texas Election Bureau reported on Sept. 1, 1948, that Stevenson was leading Johnson statewide by 349 votes. But in the next few days extra ballots were found in Duval and Jim Wells counties to win Johnson the election by 87 votes. Box 13 in Alice gave Johnson 202 additional votes. Stevenson got 2 votes. Stevenson and an associate managed to get a quick look at the Box 13 poll list, and they contended that the last 200 names were listed in alphabetical order, written by the same hand in the same ink. In 1949 a Jim Wells County grand jury was impaneled to look into the election, but it adjourned without ever returning any indictments for election fraud. However, the grand jury did return an indictment in another matter, the death of Bill Mason. Mason was a radio broadcaster in Alice who had been very critical of a local Old Party official. One day Mason was driving down Main Street in Alice when a Jim Wells deputy sheriff named Sam Smithwick stopped his car and asked him his name. Upon being assured that the driver was indeed the Bill Mason of radio fame, the deputy shot him dead. Smithwick was tried and sentenced to a prison term at Huntsville, where he was found hanged in his cell two years later.

In July, 1952, a border patrolman named Ed Wheeler who had had some differences with the Duval County establishment was found in a burning auto with a bullet in his head. No one was ever arrested for the murder.

**S**OUTH TEXAS' most famous political murder occurred on Sept. 8, 1952. By 1952, the Freedom Party had pretty well wrested Jim Wells County and a few others away from the Parrs and the veterans were making inroads into Duval County itself. The Old Party was fighting for its life, and, as usual, it was fighting dirty. John Ben Shepperd, the Texas attorney general, could get downright poetical about the situation in Duval County. "Parr would do anything to punish a man who opposed him, no matter how mean or little," Shepperd said. "A Freedom Party man couldn't even get his cotton ginned. At the 4-H Club shows, the little children of the Freedom Party people couldn't sell their fat lambs and calves."

The fate of Jose and Donato Serna, members of the Freedom Party, illustrate how George Parr operated. Jose owned a drive-in restaurant in San Diego and Parr's *pistoleros* would block his driveway with their cars. When his customers came out, after perhaps having a *cerveza* with their enchiladas, Parr's men would arrest them on false charges of drunkenness. Jose Serna finally had to close his restaurant.

Donato owned a drugstore that doubled



as the San Diego bus station; so Parr had the bus terminal moved to another location and then he got a taxi stand established in front of the store, effectively removing all of Serna's parking space. Freedom Party people were simply not allowed to make a living in Duval County.

Jacob S. Floyd, an Alice lawyer, was generally considered the brains behind the Freedom Party. He was a puritanical Baptist, outraged by the political excesses of the Parr clan. The *latinos* called Floyd *El Vibora Seca*, the dry snake. George Parr just happened to be the Duval County

6

*The Texas Observer*

sheriff in 1952. The regular sheriff had resigned and Parr, for the only time in his career, chose to take on the job himself. One of Parr's deputies, Nago Alaniz, called Jake Floyd in Alice on Sept. 8, 1952, and urged Floyd to meet him immediately at a lunch stand on the outskirts of town. Alaniz insisted that Floyd leave his own car at home and take a taxi instead. Floyd did as he was instructed and the two political enemies met at the Jewel Cafe, Alaniz told Floyd that he was to be assassinated that night, and that he, Alaniz, was to furnish an alibi for the leader of the killers, Mario (El Turco) Sapet. Floyd hurried home and when he arrived he found the

body of his son lying in the driveway beside the family car. Buddy, a 22-year-old law student, had been shot in the head. The gun, found in a nearby trash can, belonged to Sapet.

Sapet owned a bar in San Antonio but he also had a card from George Parr designating him a Duval deputy sheriff. He had previously been in jail for murder, armed assault, vagrancy, and drunkenness. Sapet was tried and sentenced to 99 years in prison. The actual gunman was a Mexican national, Alfredo Cervantes, who was reported to have complained on his return to Mexico that he had killed the wrong man and that the people who hired

## The capital of Parr country

### *San Diego*

San Diego, county seat of Duval County, home of the late George Berham Parr, looks like a dying town. The 1974-75 *Texas Almanac* says San Diego's population is 4,500, but it seems a whole lot smaller.

There is no industry in San Diego. The nursing home provides a few jobs and so do the filling stations, the drug store, the funeral home, the bank, Jerry's Restaurant, and the 25 or so *cantinas* that dot so many corners on the impoverished north side of town. The cotton crops that used to be ginned in San Diego have long since withered and the oil is playing out. What used to be the downtown area is full of derelict or gutted buildings. The fine brick Hoffman Bank Building is now a county welfare office.

In 1940, Duval County had a population of 20,505. By 1970 it was down to 11,772. Some say that the Parrs drained the county of its vitality. A farmer who lives 10 miles east of Duval in neighboring Jim Wells County said that 30 years ago there were many little dairies in the area. The dairies would separate the milk from the cream and the skim milk, *leche flaca* in Spanish, would be fed to the pigs. The farmer remembers, "The Mexicans used to say that Duval County was George Parr's milk cow. They said that he was keeping the cream and giving the *leche flaca* to the people."

The Parrs discouraged industry, unless they could have a share in it. Outsiders are reluctant even to buy land in Duval County, because strangers end up paying exceptionally high taxes. (Clinton Manges is one of the few newcomers who has been able to carve a niche for himself in Duval County. A few months ago, the Duval commissioners court reduced Manges' 1973 and '74 tax bills by 75 percent because Manges argued that his property was damaged and consequently overassessed.)

The biggest business in Duval County is the county itself, which has a budget of about \$3½ million a year. Until the recent challenge by Manges and the Carrillos, George Parr and his friends had exclusive control over county jobs. That's why politics has always been so important in Duval County — vote the wrong way and you might well lose your job. Those who stayed loyal to the Parrs found jobs teaching in the county schools, working on the county roads, working for the sheriff or the county auditor or the director of the water district. Some of Parr's Old Party people were rewarded very well. Many of them live in a nice middle-class housing development on the south side of town, near Archie Parr High School. The poor folks call the

development *Clavelito* or Little Carnation, but it really has a double meaning. *Clavar* in Spanish means "to take."

The sick or the hungry could always get a handout from Archie or George Parr. Alfredo S. Herrera, an Alice industrial arts teacher who grew up in Duval County, says George Parr always "helped the people who helped him. I can remember that when the Parrs were in power, the day before the election there was work for everybody, cleaning the graveyards or the roads. We'd get \$1 an hour and that was great." Citizens got paid for their votes too. Herrera said that when he went back to Duval last year to campaign for Ernestine Glossbrenner, an anti-Parr candidate for the Texas House, "people would ask how much Ernie paid for a vote."

Today most of San Diego's young people leave home. Duval citizens are proud of the number of their youngsters who go to college. Juan Zurilla, a Mexican social anthropology student who is studying San Diego as part of his PhD program at the University of Manchester in England, said that San Diego has 20 to 30 students attending the University of Texas in Austin. The Parrs helped pay for many of the local students' education. Some say it was for humanitarian reasons; others say it was to encourage the brightest young people to leave home. For those who don't get a college education, the Army offers the most attractive ticket out of town.

Zurilla, who has been studying San Diego since the first of the year, is fascinated by the degree to which San Diego has remained a Mexican community. He describes it as "intensely nationalistic." The town is about 98 percent Mexican-American. Spanish is the native language. English is used to politely address strangers, or "Americans," as visiting *anglos* are called in this isolated fiefdom. Zurilla believes that Duval County is one of the few places in the United States where newcomers are assimilated into the Mexican culture rather than the American one.

Zurilla tends to take a sympathetic view of the Parr regime, because he thinks the system enabled Mexican-Americans to retain a strong sense of cultural identity. Contrary to most of the Parrs' critics, Zurilla believes that the Parrs helped keep San Diego and the other small towns in Duval County alive. "Things could have been a lot worse for these people," Zurilla said. "In San Diego, there has been positive discrimination in favor of the local people. You have to be from Duval County to get a job with the county," he said. "By providing jobs for local people, taxes have become a way of redistributing county income." It may be *leche flaca*, but it's something. K.N.



him refused to pay his fee. Mexican police eventually turned Cervantes over to American authorities in the early Sixties. The plot was never fully explained. Some people in Alice speculate that the assassins intended to kill Buddy all along, that Floyd's enemies planned to punish Jacob Floyd by killing his son.

Nago Alaniz was tried for his part in the killing. The state asked for the death penalty, but a Waco jury turned him loose, reasoning that he had cleared himself by warning Floyd of the plot. It was generally believed at the time of the trial that Alaniz had broken with George Parr, but the two remained *compadres*. When Parr failed to appear at the Corpus bond revocation hearing last month, it was Alaniz who represented him. "The only reason he would not show up is because he is dead," Alaniz told the judge. Parr wasn't dead then, but he would take his own life a few hours later.

Despite the fact that he was sheriff, George Parr refused to help Texas Rangers with the Floyd case. Of Sapet's conviction he said, "They tried him in Brownwood. That's a big Baptist town and there used to be a lot of Ku Kluxes there. Mario Sapet was a dark Mexican and a Catholic. You can see he didn't have a chance."

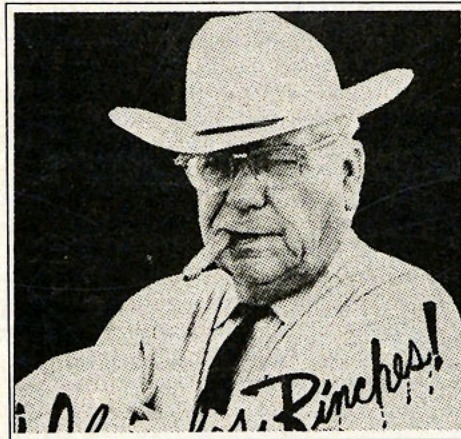
**A**FTER THE Floyd murder, Gov. Alan Shivers and Attorney General Shepperd worked hard to break Parr's control over Duval County. Shivers and Parr had been allies, but they split in the late Forties over a judicial appointment. In 1950, Shivers carried every Texas county except Duval. The governor could wax quite eloquent over the abuses in Parr's county. "The light of freedom has been snuffed out in Duval County," Shivers once said. "There is no law there, no liberty, no free elections. It is our purpose to put some of these people down there in the penitentiary."

Lawyers from the attorney general's office and the state auditor's office spent 18 months gathering evidence against George Parr's regime. Shepperd estimated that Parr diverted \$5 million from county and school funds during a ten-year period. Shepperd said he had evidence of a massive scheme of forgery and kickbacks on county and school fund disbursements. A special grand jury established by the attorney general returned a bunch of indictments, but they were dismissed by a Parr judge on the basis that the grand jury was improperly impaneled. It wasn't the first time that the Parrs' control of South Texas judges, sheriffs, and juries put the lid on a state investigation.

Information from the state grand jury was turned over to federal investigators and a federal grand jury subsequently indicted George Parr and a number of cronies, including Oscar Carrillo and his father, D.C. Chapa. The whole lot was convicted

in a federal court on charges of mail fraud, but Parr hired some high powered lawyers, including Percy Foreman and LBJ's friend Abe Fortas, and the convictions were overturned by the Supreme Court in 1960. The high court opinion said, "There can be no doubt that the indictment charged and the evidence tended strongly to show that petitioners devised and practiced a brazen scheme to defraud by misappropriating, converting, and embezzling the district's moneys and property. Counsel for the petitioners concede that this is so." But, the court ruled, they were essentially state crimes and the mail fraud statutes had been improperly used to gain a conviction.

Although the state and federal authorities failed to send Parr to jail, they managed to give him some trouble. Shepperd and Shivers sent Ranger Captain A. Y. Allee to keep the peace in Duval



Ranger Capt. A. Y. Allee.

County. Allee, who is legendary for his harsh treatment of Mexican-Americans during the Valley farm workers strike, was just as mean as George Parr. When the two got together there were bound to be fireworks. During one of Parr's many court hearings for unlawfully carrying a gun, Parr and his nephew Archer encountered Allee and another Ranger, Joe Bridge, in the Jim Wells County Courthouse. Archer Parr and Joe Bridge got into a scuffle, and the two older men intervened. Allee ended up whomping George Parr in the side of the head with his pistol. It was one of the few times that George got as good as he gave. Allee said later, "I just don't like George Parr or nothing about him. He's a dangerous man who would do anything under the sun, and I don't treat a tiger like I do a rabbit. I'm not sorry I hit Mr. Parr."

It was mis-government as usual in Duval County during the Sixties. Archer Parr came to have a stronger political role, but George was still Duval's main man. With George gone, Archer is now the nominal head of the Old Party, but many observers doubt that he can keep it all together. For one thing, Archer is going to prison, unless the Fifth Circuit overturns his perjury conviction. For another, Archer isn't all that well liked. He lacks his uncle's common touch as well as his sense of authority. Archer's reputation wasn't

helped any last year when his fourth wife, Jody Martin Parr, a former model, committed suicide. There had been a long, messy divorce proceeding (*Obs.*, March 1, 1974) during which Jody Parr's lawyers claimed that she was the victim of "judicial harrassment by Parr-controlled courts."

Oscar Carrillo, who wants to control Duval County himself, said shortly after George's death, "I feel there will not be anybody who can fill George Parr's shoes. I don't think anybody will try. . . . To think Archer is going to be the Duke of Duval is wrong. He doesn't have the stature."

The Saturday after Parr's death on Tuesday, the Old Party won a major victory over the Carrillos in the Benavides School Board election. Duval County residents treated the election like a spectator sport. In Benavides, where the vote was expected to be the closest, *Caller* reporter Joe Coudert said, "People sat in garden chairs, on the grass, or in their cars in a picnic-like atmosphere. Both political factions had little territories staked out with coolers full of soft drinks and poll watchers checking people off their vote lists as they walked into the nearby gym to vote."

Mrs. Attlee Parr and Ruben Chapa beat the closest Carrillo candidate by more than 2-1 district-wide and by 10-1 in Freer. The Carrillos dismissed the election as a sympathy vote for George Parr. As the *Observer* went to press, the votes still had not been canvassed because nobody knew for sure which was the legitimate school board — the Parr board that had been tossed out of office in March by Judge Carrillo, or the Carrillo board headed by Clinton Manges' employee. Both school boards were holding meetings, and the Texas Supreme Court was being asked to choose which one was legal. There was also a question as to which faction was in control of the county commission — the new commissioners under the leadership of Dan Tobin or the old Parr commissioners.

On April 10 it was revealed that Judge O. P. Carrillo, his brother Ramiro, and an associate, Arturo Zertuche, were indicted March 28 in Corpus Christi on 12 counts of conspiracy and filing false income tax returns. The indictments were not made public until the men turned up in Corpus to post bond. The federal complaint alleged that the men participated in a scheme to cheat the government out of taxes on merchandise sold to the Duval County water district and to a Duval school district.

More indictments may be in the works. Atty. Gen. John Hill set up two members of his staff in an office in San Diego to help Dist. Atty. Arnulfo Guerra and a grand jury investigate other allegations of dirty dealings.

If all the allegations concerning Duval County are investigated, the A.G.'s team could be down there for the next ten years.

K.N.



# Back from the dead

## Political Intelligence

They were calling it the "mini-convention," because the subject matter was so similar and the duration so much shorter. In two hours of work in the Senate and two days' worth in the House, the 1974 Constitutional Convention finally came to an end. A series of eight propositions, representing substantially the same proposed constitution as did the infamous Resolution 32 of the Con Con's closing hours, were passed by a two-thirds vote of each house. As the *Observer* went to press, the joint resolution containing the proposition still lacked Senate concurrence in House amendments, but all hands expected the Senate to accept the relatively minor changes made by the House. That means voters will get a shot at the thing in November.

In the Senate, right to work was the major sticking point, as it was last summer when the draft constitution was defeated by a three-vote margin. Senators voted to table a right to work amendment, 16-14.

In the House, only three articles (Education, Judiciary, and General Provisions) stirred real debate, and they received the necessary 100 votes by margins of three to nine votes. But neither conservatives nor liberals could muster anything like a majority to amend even the most controversial sections — "equal educational opportunity," and "local enrichment." The most significant House amendment, which represented yet another permutation of the non-UT, non-Texas A&M higher education fund (based on a continuation of the 10 cents per \$100 valuation state property tax) was worked out in advance by Speaker Billy Clayton, Rep. Ray Hutchison of Dallas, and college lobbyists. It defused the colleges' opposition to the Education article, which came closest to failing. No right to work amendment was even offered.

When the voting was over in the House, there were congratulations all around. Sponsors Hutchison and Bill Sullivant gave special credit to committee staffers who worked out an intricate "transition schedule" designed to make whatever

chunks of the draft that voters accept fit with any pieces of the old constitution left intact by rejection of other chunks of the new draft. (If that seems unclear, try imagining the transition schedule itself.) There were commendations for Clayton, Lt. Gov. Bill Hobby, Gov. Dolph Briscoe, and the new members of the House. And at the last minute, Rep. Mickey Leland reminded everyone of the credit due former Speaker Price Daniel, Jr.

There was more than a little talk that liberals might try to hold up passage of the General Provisions article as part of a plan to force utilities regulation legislation out of committee. But negotiations were successful, and State Affairs Committee Chairman Tom Uher rose to announce that his committee would kick out a bill by the end of April.

### 'Self-destruct'

A funny thing happened to the Bentsen bill on its way to Governor Briscoe's desk. The Senate amended it to include a "self-destruct" clause, under which the provisions of the bill would expire on March 1, 1977. That means that only one presidential preference primary — the 1976 one, in which U.S. Sen. Lloyd Bentsen will be a candidate — would be held under the law.

What with the House refusing to accept that amendment, the bill was packed off to conference committee for adjustment. The Senate forthwith voted 16-14 to instruct its conferees not to yield on the self-destruct clause, and that is where matters stood as the *Observer* went to press.

The self-destruct amendment was introduced by Sen. Babe Schwartz of Galveston, and was adopted by a three-vote margin. Three of the five Senate conferees voted for the amendment on the Senate floor. Dallas Rep. Jim Mattox argued that the House should accept the amendment, saying, "If he [Bentsen] wants to run again in 1980, he can come back and we'll pass it for him again."



U.S. Rep. Bob Eckhardt is getting honors right and left. In March he was elected chairman of the Democratic Study Group, which provides research and

legislative analysis for liberal House members. And Larry L. King, writing in *New Times* magazine, selected Eckhardt as one of the 10 "brightest" members of the House. King called Eckhardt a "quiet force" who is "maybe the best constitutional lawyer in a body of lawyers."

### Mixed results

It's city election time, with mixed results from all over. In Dallas, incumbent Mayor Wes Wise and incumbent council members Garry Weber and Adlene Harrison led a mini-revolt against the establishment Citizens Charter Association (see *Obs.*, Feb. 14). The three independents will be joined on the council by a fourth (former Councilman William Cothrum) and possibly a fifth (Rose Renfro, an anti-busing activist, who is in a runoff against CCA-backed incumbent Charles Storey) independent. The CCA is thus assured a continued majority, but by a smaller margin than ever before. The CCA winners were black Mayor Pro Tem George Allen, Lucy Patterson, L. A. Murr, William Nicol, John Leedom, and Richard Smith.

Wise's victory over former CCA president John Schoellkopf drew the most attention. Wise whipped Schoellkopf all over the city, which encouraged feelings that the election marked some sort of turning point for city politics. It was Dallas' first city election on a single-member district system that preserves three at-large races (two for the council and one for the mayor's place). It was the district-by-district voting that, everyone assumed, would most hurt the CCA. But the strongest independent candidates — Wise, Weber, and Harrison — were those who ran city-wide.

In San Antonio, the voting turned out to be mainly for the purpose of narrowing the field. As expected, the two slates running this year dominated a mixed bag of 53 candidates for nine places. The Good Government League, which is what the establishment in city politics calls itself, picked up one winner, one loser, and seven runoff spots. The Independent Team also had one winner, but no outright losers: its other five candidates made it past the elimination round. So the runoffs, like the first election, will be mostly a matter of slate against slate.

In the mayor's race, where no IT candidate was entered, Lila Cockrell, a GGL incumbent council member, is expected to waltz in. She came close to winning without a runoff, and other GGL candidates are probably just as glad she didn't. The GGL billed itself as "Lila's team" this year, hoping to spread her strength around, and may need a big name to attract voters in the runoffs. Two of its second-round races are against incumbent councilmen on the IT side.

In the other runoff with no IT



candidate, the GGL's Phil Pyndus faces Henry Muñoz. Muñoz is business manager of the local public employees' union.

The two clear winners were Rev. Claude Black, a black incumbent IT'er formerly associated with the GGL, and Henry Cisneros, a GGL'er. After his victory, Black was reflecting on the heavy slate-voting: "In the 20th Century, we run a campaign on the issue of [retiring mayor Charles] 'Becker's Boys' versus 'Lila's Team.' It's a joke."

The Austin campaigns were billed as a sort of plebiscite on the city's continuing leftward tilt, with "growth" and "quality of life" as the key issues and the student turnout as the big question. When the voting was over, student precincts had turned out the largest proportion of voters and progressives were looking forward to a majority of council seats. Five races were decided, with three won by libs and two by "moderate conservatives" with conservationist tendencies. Jeff Friedman, after two terms as a minority progressive on the council, was elected mayor. Libs Jimmy Snell and Dr. Emma Lou Linn took two other seats. Incumbent Lowell Lebermann (who was once called the "Green Panther" for his environmentalist votes, but has since lost favor with local progressives) and Betty Himmelblau, a member of the City Planning Commission, won outright victories. Two liberal-conservative runoffs

## An editorial

It's that time again, time to vote on a constitutional amendment to raise legislators' salaries, and once again the *Observer* urges you to vote yes.

Legislators are being fairly quiet about the proposed amendment, hoping not to stir up opposition, so maybe we'd be doing them a favor by not mentioning it. But the idea of paying them only \$400 a month (before taxes) is so absurd we can't help commenting. The play this time is to try for \$600 a month, plus \$30 *per diem* (the present level is \$12) in living expenses. As usual, there has been unpleasantness — like the threat, ostensibly from some San Antonio school teachers, that teachers will vote against the amendment if they don't get their raise by then. And Dick Hitt of *The Dallas Times Herald* reports that a state employee told him that state workers

are being quietly informed that their raises may depend on the fate of the proposition.

Let's ignore the tackiness for the time being. Get your frustrations with the Lege out of the way ahead of time (we suggest drawing up lists of those you'd like to see starved out of office as a therapeutic exercise). Fix your mind firmly on your favorite legislator and imagine how nice it would be if he or she could afford to stay in office longer. Then slip out of the house early on April 22 (so as not to alarm the "fiscal conservatives" next door) and go vote yes. As we said the last time around, "Whatever else our legislators deserve, and the *Observer* is still of the opinion that some of them deserve hanging from the nearest tree, they do deserve and should get a living wage."

J.F.

(Margret Hoffman and John Trevino vs. Bob Gray and Jay Johnson, respectively) will finally decide the council's make-up. A split would give libs a 4-3 majority.

April 25, 1975

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1973 unfunded Housing and Urban Development water and sewer requests = \$4 billion = cost excess on F-111 aircraft.

—from *The Permanent War Economy*, Seymour Melman.



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AUSTIN, TEXAS



# In which Mr. Connally is tried for tipper

Washington, D.C.

At the half-way mark in the trial of John Connally, he looked like a dead-cert to get off. And that was before the defense had even started. Connally's attorney, Edward Bennett Williams, who seemed to this reporter to fully live up to his reputation as a crackerjack defense lawyer, planned to start off his side briskly by asking U.S. District Judge George Hart for a directed verdict of "not guilty." The government's case seemed so weak that it was not just a showboat move. But although the general run of courthouse wisdom held that the government had spectacularly failed to prove its case, most observers felt Hart would not direct the jury: since the trial has gone this far, they opined, Hart will let it run its course.

The next question was whether Williams would put on a defense at all. Resting the case for the defense without calling a single witness would also not be an entirely showboat move for Williams. He doesn't have to prove that Connally is not guilty, and the prosecution doesn't seem to most folks to have proved that Connally is. There may be another reason for Williams to punt at this point. He has a superb witness in Connally. As Texans know, the former governor is an excellent, credible, and convincing speaker. However, under the rules of evidence, as soon as Connally goes on the stand, the prosecution can start to question him about his previous testimony before the Watergate grand jury and the Senate select committee. "Is it true, Mr. Connally, that you told the grand jury blah, blah, blah...?" Probably the best thing Williams ever has done or will do for Connally was to get the perjury charge against him separated from the charges of bribery and obstruction of justice. If Connally is acquitted in this case, it is highly unlikely that the perjury case against him will be pursued. And the perjury charge may well have been the government's best shot.

gratuity, a tip. Since Connally allegedly did not receive any dough from the milk folks until after he had used his stroke to get milk price supports increased, Turkheimer could hardly have called it a bribe. But there's no such thing, as far as we know, as a charge of felony by taking a tip.

Observers were divided in their judgments as to how well Jake Jacobsen, Connally's ex-friend and chief accuser, withstood cross-examination. Lots of folks thought his story looked like Swiss cheese by the time Williams got through with him. But a knowledgeable minority, including Warren Burnett of Odessa, perhaps Texas' best defense attorney, didn't think Williams had seriously shaken Jacobsen. The weakest part of Jacobsen's testimony was his tale of the cover-up of the alleged bribe. His story is that in 1971, when he was lobbying for Associated Milk Producers, Inc. of San Antonio, he delivered \$10,000 in cash to Connally in two \$5,000 chunks as thanks from a grateful dairy industry. Of the fact that Connally helped get the milk price supports increased there is no doubt.

The prosecution played a skin-crawling tape recording from March 21, 1971, of Connally, President Nixon, Ehrlichman, *et al* discussing the price supports. The problem, as Connally saw it, was that the dairy interests had enough clout to get a price support increase through Congress; if Nixon didn't move first, crummy ol' Congress would get all the credit, and the dairy lobby, which had all this money to spend on political races, not to mention all that political power in the heartland, would be left feeling grateful to Congress, not to Richard M. Nixon. All present agreed that this was a consummation they devoutly wished to avoid, so they went ahead and raised milk prices by their very own selves. Last we heard, there was still no such felony charge as making a cold-blooded political decision against the

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**T**HE GOVERNMENT'S prosecutor in the case is a turkey named Frank M. Turkheimer, a law prof from the University of Wisconsin who looks as though he hasn't combed his hair in five years and who possesses all the dramatic flair of a potato. He doesn't even come on down-home and old-shoe: he just comes on incompetent. On the first day of trial, first rat out of the trap, Turkheimer announced that he didn't have a bribery case against Connally. It was, he said, not a bribe but a



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public interest and the general weal.  
 The plot-according-to-Jacobsen thickened when Bob Lilly of AMPI spilled everything he knew about milk money going to politicians to government prosecutors in October, 1973. Jacobsen and Connally then cooked up a cover-up scheme, according to Jacobsen, and Connally gave Jacobsen \$10 thou in a cigar box with the agreement that Jacobsen was to claim the money given him by Lilly for Connally had been in a safe deposit box since 1971. The cigar box money proved to be ineligible on account of its dates, and so Connally allegedly gave Jacobsen another \$10 thou in exchange for the first, this wrapped in a newspaper. Some of this story checks out with telephone company records confirming calls on the appropriate dates from Lilly to Jacobsen and from Jacobsen to Connally. Other testimony confirmed Connally's trip to Austin and Jacobsen's to Houston on the appropriate dates to receive the alleged cover-up money. But there are a few lacunae. Lilly testified that he had given Jacobsen yet another \$5,000 intended for Connally. That, oops, had sort of slipped Jacobsen's mind. And Jacobsen wasn't clear on whether there had been one rubber glove or two in the famous cigar box. And he'd kept the cover-up money in his nightstand and he said he'd never offered to incriminate Lyndon Johnson or said he

would testify that he'd seen Connally flush the wrappers on the original \$10,000 down a toilet at the Treasury Dept. and . . . Well, who knows what a jury will make of it all.  
 They say that Dwight Chapin's trial seemed to be the same sort of thing, that the government didn't seem able to prove its case, but the jury brought in a guilty verdict anyway. But, They also said, that was early on, and maybe the Watergate blood lust is sated.  
 Williams tried to make a big deal out of the fact that 49 of the bills in the second (or newspaper) batch of cover-up money has been issued after 1971. How could John Connally, a former Secretary of the Treasury make a dumb mistake like that? Come to think of it, how could Jake Jacobsen, who has been in the banking business a lot longer than John Connally, make a mistake like that if in fact the whole tale was a self-exculpatory cock-and-bull story to cover-up his own embezzlement of AMPI funds?

**C**ONNALLY'S defenders stoutly maintain that Jacobsen is nothing but a sleazy, greasy crook who made all this up in order to plea-bargain his way out of the multiple charges against him for his own financial doings. Jacobsen may well be a sleazy, greasy crook, but are we to assume that he was an upright virgin all those years when he was so close to Gov. John Connally, and that sleazy-greasiness has only recently crept up on him? Turkheimer produced a chart (Turkheimer is very big on visual presentations) showing that Connally had spent more time with Jacobsen during the pertinent period in 1971 when the milk price supports were under debate than with any other non-government official, including such old Austin faves as Larry Temple, George Christian, and Ben Barnes. (Speaking of Barnes, he came up to visit the trial, lending moral support to Connally, he told the press. All during Jacobsen's testimony, Barnes rolled his eyes, grimaced, and heaved audible sighs of disbelief from the front row where the jury could see and hear him. Edward Bennett Williams does not need that kind of help: Barnes did not reappear after his first two days.)

Margaret Mayer of the *Dallas Times Herald*, one of Connally's more fawning admirers, was alarmed by the mostly black jury. She couldn't understand why defense had not moved to strike a female juror with an Afro "who resembles Angela Davis." (They all look alike, Ms. Mayer.) The only hanging juror we were able to spot was a white woman with a mouth like a rat trap . . . fortunately, she is only an alternate. We trust that the factor of a mostly black jury is off-set by the presence of Williams for the defense. Williams, in addition to being a fine trial lawyer, is also the owner of the Washington Redskins football team. And as nutty as the citizens of D.C. are about that team, that should be good for at least a hung jury right there. M.I.

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# Rep. Wilson's job orders

Austin

Two of eleven job orders from the office of Congressman Charles Wilson of Lufkin in 1973 specified that young, single white women were wanted for employment. One also said that the woman to be hired should be "good-looking." Wilson acknowledges his responsibility for these job orders, but he points out that instead of hiring a white receptionist, as one of the orders had specified, he hired a black woman, and that his congressional staff of 15 persons now includes three blacks and a Mexican-American.

**L**AST YEAR Wayne Johnson, a legislative intern in the office of Congressman Jack Brooks of Beaumont, noticed discriminatory specifications on a number of congressional job orders, made copies of the orders, and took them to Francie Barnard, a Washington reporter for the *Fort Worth Star-Telegram* who has since married Bob Woodward, one of the two leading Watergate reporters on the *Washington Post*. She reported in the *Star-Telegram* that 19 congressmen and one senator had discriminatory specifications on their job orders.

However, Johnson did not show the reporter the forms from Wilson's office. He said he told her about them, but did not give them to her, and her story did not refer to Wilson. "I thought he was innocent," Johnson said. Told of this remark, Wilson said, "He didn't think I was innocent, he knew I was, because the black receptionist in my office had taken Babe Schwartz and him to my apartment." In advance of the story breaking about the hiring practices, State Senator Schwartz and Johnson had called on Wilson at his office, and Wilson had them taken for a tour of his apartment by the black receptionist he had hired.

The story broke in August, 1974. In October, Johnson telephoned Wilson long distance from Austin to Washington to talk about the job orders. Johnson said that Wilson told him at this time that he, Wilson, was responsible for the job orders and defended his wish to hire a white receptionist. Johnson said that he then decided to give the job orders to the first reporter who asked, on the basis of reports circulating in Texas, whether any more of them existed. The *Observer* asked.

On Mar. 27, 1973, a Wilson job order placed with the congressional office of placement and office management for a caseworker asked for a single female 24 to 30 years old, "white." On Sept. 4, 1973, another Wilson job order, this one for a receptionist, specified that the person wanted should be a single female 23 to 30 years old, "white - good looking."

Johnson said that, when he was working in the office of placement, he saw a third discriminatory order from Wilson's office, but he did not have a copy. Wilson said he had heard there was a third one, but had not seen it.

"This is the story," Wilson told the *Observer*. "The job orders were written by someone at the placement office. I didn't write [them], and my administrative assistant didn't."

Wilson's administrative assistant is Charles Simpson. Had Simpson specified to the placement office that whites, in one case good-looking, were wanted? "If he did it," Wilson said, "he did it because he thought I wanted him to."

Had Wilson told Simpson to specify whites? "I don't recall ever saying that, although it is reasonable that I could have," Wilson said. "I have never had a black visitor from my district, and it is possible that I said to my administrative assistant that it might be preferable that our receptionist be white."

Wilson's office actually recruited not a white, but a black woman, Betty Grigsby, as his receptionist. "I changed my mind at my administrative assistant's urging," Wilson said. The black woman was hired before Wilson knew anything about the forthcoming exposure of the discriminatory job orders, he said. Grigsby told Wilson, after she had been working for him a while, that she had been working in the placement office earlier, had seen the racial specifications on the forms from his office, and had had her doubts about accepting his offer because of them. Wilson knew the forms were valid because Ms. Grigsby told him, "Wayne's right, they're there."

The two job orders from Wilson's office named Simpson as the "person to see." Johnson, assuming that Simpson was the responsible person, said that, in his October phone conversation with Wilson, he asked him to fire Simpson and that Wilson replied that he could not because Simpson was a good man and "he was following my orders. I told him that." Johnson said that he asked Wilson why he did it and that Wilson replied, "If black congressmen can hire black secretaries, why can't I hire white ones?"

**W**ILSON stated that it was his information that "there were dozens of similar applications from black congressmen in which they said 'black.' I am a white congressman with a black receptionist. I know of none of the 17 blacks [in Congress] that has a white one." He said the idea of firing Simpson, who had managed campaigns for John Kennedy

and Ralph Yarborough in Lufkin, was "ridiculous."

"I will admit all my sins ever in thinking that way," Wilson said. The fact of the forms "is there and I gotta live with it."

The members of minorities on Wilson's staff are Grigsby, Inez Tims, Wilson's black field representative in East Texas, who was also hired before the story on the other congressmen broke last August ("the first person I hired," Wilson said); a black woman lawyer on his Washington staff, hired after the story broke, but on the basis of a commitment Wilson made before it broke; and a Mexican-American woman secretary.

Late last year Wilson decided to "go public" with the existence of the job

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An open letter to liberals concerning

# BILLIE CARR REPORTS ...

April 15, 1975

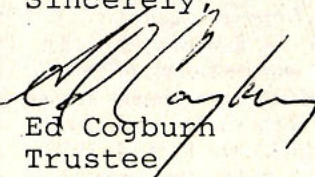
Dear fellow liberal democrats,

Billie Carr has been rendering reports on political matters to liberals of Texas in the pages of the Observer. Much has happened since her last report but her role as actor has, unfortunately, gotten in the way of her role as chronicler. She will have a complete report by the next issue, however. This will give events in Texas on SDEC meetings, Texas Democrats, and pertinent legislation. She is in Austin now working on the ERA and the Schieffer-"Bentsen" bill. On the national level she will report on the ADA, DNC, and NDC meetings (including her election as co-chairperson of the national New Democratic Coalition).

In the meantime, I hope those of you who have not yet responded may see fit to help with her expenses. Billie's travel expenses outside the state as well as in the state are, of course, costly. Also, communicating with liberals around the state in Observer ads, telephone calls, postage costs, etc. create further serious expense liabilities (not covered by the \$500 monthly salary which has been funded for her).

If you believe in what she is doing please send as much as you can (\$5-\$10-or more) to Billie Carr Expense Fund, 2418 Travis, Suite 3, Houston, Texas 77006. For your convenience a self-addressed envelope is enclosed in this edition of the Observer.

Sincerely,



Ed Cogburn  
Trustee



orders and made statements concerning them at a meeting of black political leadership arranged in Lufkin by Tims, with the press present. Stories on the matter made area papers and the AP wire.

Wilson thought that the remark about race might have been made by his staff person to the placement office only once. "Those people put down what you want," he said, and he guessed the "white" specification on the second form had been done at the placement office's own instance. "I would just bet everything it was never said twice," Wilson said. (However, the job order for the caseworker antedated the order for the receptionist.)

What about the "good-looking" specification? "Number one," Wilson said, "I prefer good-looking women to ugly ones. Number two, I don't know of anyone who doesn't want an attractive receptionist. 'Attractive' is what we said. We don't mean just physically attractive. You want an attractive person both physically and personally to be the person who greets your constituents when they come into your office and tries to make them feel important."

Wilson said "we have searched for minorities" to nominate for the military academies, but usually black youths don't want to go to them, and the one Mexican-American he had nominated changed his mind about going. His legislative interns have included "three Jews and two Arabs," but no blacks. He said he asked Wayne Johnson to take charge, at the University of Texas at Austin where Johnson is a student, of securing a black intern for him, but had not heard from him about it. ("You pick him, I'll hire him," Wilson told Johnson; but, Johnson said, he had told Wilson that he did not want to be put in that position; that Wilson had Tims as his field representative in East Texas and that he, Johnson, knew no one at UT in Wilson's district.)

"The only people under-represented in my office," Wilson said, "are rednecks like myself." In the Texas Legislature, Wilson added, he and Barbara Jordan had helped a black get into the UT law school, and Wilson was helping black students get jobs "all the time in the Legislature."

**I**NEZ TIMS has long been regarded as one of the most influential black political figures in East Texas. Wilson said that when he hired Tims, he told him that "his politics was his business." For instance, Wilson supported Ben Barnes for governor, but Tims did not.

Tims was the principal witness in a lawsuit in Lufkin designed to re-district the city to provide for the single-district election of six members of the city council (leaving the mayor elected at large). The attorney in this case, David Richards, says Tims is "the superest guy I've ever met in my life," a black who has somehow

survived in the racist system as a political activist without becoming totally cynical. The lawsuit was won and will, if successful on appeal, practically assure the election of two black members to the Lufkin city council. Wilson said he explained to incensed local officials that he left Tims free to pursue his own politics without constraints from Wilson.

"He spends all his time, when I'm not in a campaign, organizing the black community in East Texas," helping blacks with social security, old age, and veterans' problems, Wilson said. And, for good measure, Wilson threw in, "I replaced John Dowdy, the worst racist ever sent to Congress."

Asked if there were any votes on civil rights in Congress to which he might wish to call attention, Wilson said he was "one of the very few people from the rural South" who voted against the 1974 Holt amendment, which would have prohibited the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare from requiring schools to furnish statistical information on race and sex as a condition of getting federal funds. (This amendment did not become law.)

(On April 13 the *Houston Post* published various interest groups' ratings of Texas congresspersons for the 1974 session of Congress. *Congressional Quarterly* said Wilson voted "pro-Nixon" 55% of the time, "anti-Nixon" 26%, "pro-Ford" 57%, and "anti-Ford" 35%. Americans for Democratic Action said Wilson voted in accordance with ADA's views 39% of the time; Americans for Constitutional Action approved of 40% of his votes; he voted in agreement with the AFL-CIO's COPE 80% of the time. In the case of the organizations, of course, the percentage depends on the votes selected for inclusion and the views of the organization.)

The stories last August about discriminatory congressional hiring practices, based on the xeroxed job orders Wayne Johnson provided, concerned, in part, job orders for offices of two Texas congressmen. A job order dated Feb. 26, 1974, for the office of Ray Roberts of Wichita Falls, asked for a young male clerk-typist and added he should be "Ambitious - No Dummies. Driver's License - No minorities." An aide to Roberts told a reporter at the time that no blacks were employed in Roberts' Washington office. Roberts told a reporter for the *Dallas Times-Herald* that "the charges were a hoax" and that he had been told by the director of the placement office that the cards had been "tampered with" by an intern working in the office.

A form from the office of Cong. John Young of Corpus Christi asked for a female secretary aged 19 to 30, and under "special skills or requirements," (the space on the form where race was usually specified, when it was) the words were written, "No people w/hill experience. people with Spanish surname White only." (The word "white" was underlined on the form. The

punctuation and capitalization were exactly as above shown.) Young told reporters that he had made efforts to hire Mexican-American personnel, he had three such persons on his staff, and he had "absolutely no policy against hiring blacks or other minorities."

Other specifications on the forms from offices of congressmen from states other than Texas said "no blacks," "no minorities," "white only," "Only a white girl," "White or Oriental only," "white - Republican," "White - no pants suits," and so on.

Pursuant to the original story, the *New York Times* reported in late August that

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the congressional office of placement had disclosed "it had edited discriminatory job requirements from about 80% of the 150 current job orders from 410 congressional offices." Specifications referred to race, sex, age, physical attractiveness, and smoking habits.

It was realized that anti-discrimination laws passed by the Congress evidently do not apply to the Congress. No corrective legislation has been enacted.

Forms from the office of Cong. Albert Johnson, R.-Pa., turned over to Francie Barnard (now Ms. Woodward) by Johnson, said "no minorities" and "no water signs." On the bottom of one of these forms someone had noted down the dates of birth for the three water signs ("Scorpio 10/24-11/21 Pices [sic] 2/19-3/21 Cancer 6/21-7/22"). This moved congressman Bob Eckhardt of Houston to say:

"It is good to know that there are some enterprising souls here on Capitol Hill

thinking about what we can use for discrimination when black genes become diffused, immigrant tongues too fluent, and sects too flexible to any longer afford us an object of hate.

"It took a budding young Goebbels on somebody's staff to envisage chauvinism based on the zodiac, or if it were a congressman, an uncharacteristically innovative one.

"For those who have been worried about bigotry gradually fading away for failure of identifiable victims, this fresh approach gives new hope. One may escape the ghetto or even the bondage of the genes of his ancestors, but he cannot escape the stars nor alter his birthdate. Once a cancer, always a cancer."

Soon, Eckhardt concluded, it will be common to hear American congressmen saying "I like a scorpio who stays in his place," or, "Who would want his daughter to marry a pices?" R.D.

## Steelman on mining

In your Feb. 14 issue, Edward Fritz addressed the questions of when and how Texas must control strip mining. The 94th Congress has now passed legislation requiring the states to submit a plan to regulate strip mining within 18 months. This is a reasonable bill and I hope the Texas Legislature will be able to act this session. Two extreme viewpoints have been argued on the stripmining of coal, from completely prohibiting it to business-as-usual. Neither of these is acceptable. We all recognize that we face a severe crisis in our energy supplies in this country in the next decade or so, but we have also seen the ruin of the land left by stripmining in the Eastern United States. So the standards we have developed will permit the continuation of strip mining while requiring responsible conduct by the mining companies.

We have said in this bill that we will not permit dumping overburden on the downslope, and we have said we must restore the land to the approximate original contour, and we must have revegetation, and we must have water quality standards.

Not a great deal of coal is mined in Texas, relative to total United States output. However, Texas companies are already moving to compliance, recognizing

### Dialogue

the need for responsible business conduct. The Texas Legislature now knows the ground rules and can move ahead on meaningful strip mining regulations.

U.S. Rep. Alan Steelman, House of Representatives, Washington, D.C. 20515.

### A solution

After successfully assisting in the defense of three doctors in rattlesnake-bite lawsuits, I gained considerable insight into the problem of malpractice medical insurance. To begin with, I dropped mine!

I observed that the doctor's insurance is one of the CAUSES of malpractice suits. In the court room the jury is deciding not between the patient and the doctor but between the patient and the big insurance company, and its identification and sympathy is with the patient. Juries have a lot of appreciation and approval of doctors, but not of insurance companies.

How can this problem be solved? (1) Discontinue malpractice medical insurance. (2) Let Texas doctors who are members of the Texas Medical Foundation pay a sizeable annual assessment — say

### A clarification

The *Observer* misled readers in its last issue (see "Compensating crime victims," April 11) by referring to SB 338, sponsored by Sen. Ron Clower of Garland, without explaining that it is a companion to HB 833. The House bill was introduced earlier by Reps. Jim Mattox of Dallas and Frank Madla of San Antonio, who are also sponsoring another victim-compensation bill, HB 1564. A companion to the revised version of 1564 (which will speak to the criticisms described by Terry Blackwood in the *Observer*) will be sponsored in the Senate by Frank Lombardino of San Antonio.

\$250-\$300. (3) Let the Foundation retain a bevy of expert lawyers trained and experienced in medical defense organized around a well staffed office in Austin. (4) Let this office identify and keep in touch with prospective expert witnesses wherever they live and, when a Texas doctor is sued for malpractice, these expert witnesses would be paid retainers plus expenses to testify in defense of the doctor. (5) The Foundation would carry all of the expense of the trial up through the Supreme Court.

After a doctor has had this defense in court, if he loses, he must bear the brunt himself. Surely he would have been seriously at fault.

If the ambulance-chasing variety of lawyer knew that he would face this kind of legal opposition in the court room, he would think several times before advancing a case without genuine merit. That is to say 90% of malpractice suits would disappear before birth.

The Foundation lawyers could participate, expenses paid, in malpractice suits in other states so as to gain experience. The reason why the three rattlesnake cases were won for the doctors is that we had superb legal talent plus good witnesses in court. I shuddered when I realized the jury was deciding between the injured patient and the insurance company.

W. E. Lockhart, M.D., 401 North 4th St., Alpine, Tex. 79830.

### Fuzzy facts

In the Feb. 14 issue I read some statistics that seem puzzling — that U.S. citizens spend more per year on dog grooming than they do on cigarettes! This was in the article on the hunger conference. I know only a few who pay to groom their dogs, but I know hundreds who smoke. Have we really gone to the dogs?

Virginia Conkle, 510 Center Dr., Austin, Texas 78704.

We have been unable to verify the quotation that contained the statistics in question, but we agree they seem puzzling. Sloppy editing on our part, and we're sorry about the confusion. Ed.