

THE TEXAS OBSERVER

January 14, 1983

A Journal of Free Voices

75¢

New Politics In Texas:



Photo by Alan Pogue

COPS Comes to Austin

By Geoffrey Rips

Austin

ON DECEMBER 21 the message of the 1982 election was delivered to the Capitol. The messenger was a coalition of community-based groups, led by Communities Organized for Public Service (COPS) of San Antonio. In case anyone had forgotten during the seven weeks since the November election, it was the votes of lower- and middle-income Texans that had swept Clements out of office and the populist-tinged Democratic slate in. The Mexican American vote alone was responsible for carrying county after

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"I'D NEVER seen anything like it," a Gib Lewis lieutenant said after his boss, along with Governor-elect Mark White and Lieutenant Governor Bill Hobby, got the COPS treatment on a recent afternoon in Austin. As Geoff Rips describes in this issue's cover story, some 300 COPS supporters — from San Antonio primarily, but also from allied groups in El Paso, Houston, Dallas, and Fort Worth — crowded into a state-office meeting room to outline their legislative agenda and to press for commitments from Lewis, White, and Hobby. It was both impressive and amusing as the three elected officials, accustomed to center stage, sat at a table off to the side and for the most part listened as COPS President Sonia Hernandez and others spoke forcefully about education needs for the children of this state. It was political theater at its best, and the point was obvious: elected officials are public servants expected to be responsive to the people's will.

White and friends were no doubt aware that the people they were listening to were the grassroots organizers who put 800 workers on the streets of San Antonio in November on behalf of Democratic candidates, the lower- and middle-income voters who sent Bill Clements back to the boardroom of SEDCO, the Mexican American voters who

gave 88.9% of their vote to Bill Hobby and 86.1% to Mark White. The COPS people were flexing their muscles, Rips writes, "testing the state political waters to see if the organization and methods used in San Antonio to change the face and some of the substance of local politics could be translated to the state level."

"Mark White got us into this," a Hobby aide commented as he stood in the hallway outside the COPS meeting. He said it jokingly, but with the knowledge that COPS won't be the only community-based group his boss will be hearing from in the coming weeks. Mark White tapped a vein when, accidentally or not, he tossed out his populist pitch. Teachers, farmers, blacks, organized labor — "everybody who pays an electric bill," White aide Dwayne Holman says — will be in Austin with an agenda this session. With an unprecedented group of progressives in office, with Republican strength down from eight to five in the Senate and from 38 to 36 in the House, will COPS and other grassroots, populist-oriented organizations be heard this time, or will they be shoved aside as usual by the entrenched special interests? Will hope springing eternal finally blossom, or, as the New Right experienced when it gave its heart to Ronnie in 1980, does the future hold heartaches by the number, troubles by the score?

There are, of course, the practical considerations. Tom Scott, an aide to Lt. Gov. Hobby, said recently that the COPS proposal will get a sympathetic hearing, but he warned that money is tight. "The recession is having more of an effect than we expected," he said. He noted that as recently as last June, state Comptroller Bob Bullock estimated lawmakers would have \$5.1 billion more to spend than they had when they last met; now Bullock is revising his figures downward. Scott estimated that the COPS proposal would add another \$200 million to the legislative budget board estimate. (COPS estimates it will cost the state \$490 million over the next three years.) This fall, state budget requests exceeded available revenue by \$10 billion, and the agencies requesting the largest increases all pleaded that their needs are urgent. Scott's boss has said that the state will need from \$1.2 billion to \$1.5 billion in new taxes, and that the demands on the treasury are worse than he has seen at any time since he took office in 1972. (Hobby also heard COPS President Sonia Hernandez say, "A tax bill put onto education will be making education a scapegoat. . . . If somebody wants a tax bill, then ask the transportation lobby to handle it. Don't put it on education.")

Those are the perennial practical concerns; they are expected. What is ex-

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pected this time as well is that COPS and similar groups will get a fair hearing, that the legislature will listen more closely than it has in the past. Dwayne Holman says it will happen and so does Tom Scott. "By virtue of the governor's office," Holman says, "they [COPS] will get a better hearing than they've had in the past." Holman also points out that COPS doesn't expect to get everything it asks for this session, but that the group is laying a groundwork for sessions to come. And in this session, Holman says, "Mark is going to do something on school equalization. COPS is prodding him to do it, and he's going to do it."

James Williamson, a spokesman for soon-to-be Speaker Gib Lewis, was non-committal about the specifics of the COPS proposal, but he said that his boss has long had populist sympathies, that he [Lewis] used to be a poor boy himself. He also warned that the influence of groups like COPS, groups with some success on the local level, "will tend to dissipate when they move into a larger arena."

That may happen, but as COPS President Hernandez told Lewis, Hobby, and White, "We are pleased by what we have heard but we are not naive. We are prepared to fight every inch of the way."

There is no effort too great or too time-consuming that will deter us from reaching our goal." J. H.

In the article about efforts to stay the execution of Charlie Brooks (TO, 12/24/81), we had former Texas Attorney General Waggoner Carr representing the Texas Trial Lawyers in testimony before the Board of Pardons and Paroles. He was actually representing the Texas Criminal Defense Lawyers Association.

Running Up the Tab on Prison Rights



By Paul Coggins

Dallas

Ruiz v. Estelle, the Texas prison lawsuit, is proving to be as resilient as Rocky Balboa. The first match, refereed by United States District Judge William Wayne Justice, was clearly won by the plaintiff-prisoners. The rematch before the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals ended, many observers believe, in a draw. Now comes the really nasty fighting, the setting of attorneys' fees for the prisoners' lawyers.

On November 20, 1982, Judge Justice awarded legal fees in excess of \$1.6 million to the plaintiffs' lawyers, the bulk of the award going to lead counsel William Bennett Turner and his associate Donna Brorby. Immediately Governor-elect Mark White expressed his intention of appealing the judge's award. Here's a ringside prediction that, unless the challenge is withdrawn, he will lose round three decisively after further bleeding the state coffers.

Unfortunately White may feel that, to save face, the litigation must be prolonged. Throughout his successful gubernatorial campaign, White had touted the *Ruiz* case as a victory for the state in general and his staff in particular. In a class action suit such as *Ruiz*, a court typically awards attorneys' fees to the

plaintiffs' counsel only if the plaintiffs have been successful to some extent. By repeatedly overstating his success on appeal, White has made it difficult to admit that the Fifth Circuit decided many issues in favor of the inmates.

Granted, the Fifth Circuit reversed several of Judge Justice's orders, including the requirement that only one prisoner be housed in a cell. The appeals court, however, accepted the district judge's general finding that Texas prisons were in violation of the cruel-and-unusual clause of the Constitution and his more specific findings that Texas prisons were dangerous and seriously overcrowded. In light of the issues won by the prisoners at the bargaining table or before the courts, White is unlikely to convince the Fifth Circuit that he was the undisputed victor. Of course, former Attorney General White may argue that, even if some award of attorneys' fees is justified, Judge Justice's order for the state to pay \$1.6 million is excessive.

As regards the reasonableness of the award, Clements may have boxed his successor into a corner. The \$1.6 million fee may sound exorbitant, but it must be remembered that the award will be shared among about a dozen lawyers, some of whom have participated in the case since 1974. The expense of the Texas prison lawsuit mounted through years of discovery, a trial of 159 days (making

Ruiz the longest prison case in United States history), and a bitter appeal.

More embarrassing for White is the \$1 million bill from Fulbright and Jaworski, a private Houston law firm, for its eight-month participation in the *Ruiz* appeal. White initially resisted the hiring of a private firm to aid on appeal, interpreting the move as an attempt by Clements to question the attorney general's competence and a vote of no-confidence by the Texas Department of Corrections in the attorney general's staff. Still, the fact remains that the state hired a private firm which has billed the state \$1 million for its limited role in the case. How can the state fight an award of \$1.6 million to the plaintiffs' attorneys, who went the distance, when the state owes \$1 million to a Houston firm which merely assisted White's staff with the appeal?

The prospect looms of another round of expensive litigation, with a purse of \$1.6 million. Before White's successor, Jim Mattox, climbs into the ring, the taxpayers should send him a message: Don't go for it. □

Paul Coggins is a Dallas writer and attorney.

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Latest Twist in Austin STNP Debate

By Nina Butts

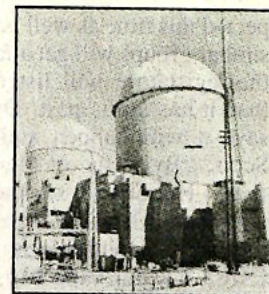


Photo by Fred Baldwin

Austin voters go to the polls January 15 to grant or deny the city council \$97 million in bonding authority to keep up payments on Austin's share of the South Texas Nuclear Project, the mammoth power plant under construction on the Gulf coast. STNP is managed by Houston Lighting and Power. It is seven years behind schedule and \$4.5 billion over budget and has been fined by the Nuclear Regulatory Commission for faulty construction. In an election 14 months ago, Austin authorized the city council to sell the city's 16% share of STNP, but no one wants to buy it; so the city council finds itself in the uncomfortable position of asking Austinites to borrow more money

to continue paying a million dollars a week for a project they want out of.

Austin's alternatives to selling the new bonds are to default on their contract with HL&P or to raise electric rates 42% to make payments. Defaulting would cost Austin its high bond rating and, some Austinites claim, devastate the city's finances. The city council, up for reelection in April, has no desire to announce an electric rate hike and ask to be reelected in the same breath.

Local response to the upcoming bond election varies. Austin Electric Utility Commissioners Shudde Fath and Peck Young, long-time liberals, vociferously favor passage of the bonds to keep Austin from defaulting and to buy time to

negotiate a way out of the project with Austin's \$400 million investment — or at least some of it — intact. Some local anti-nuclear activists are planning a stop-the-bonds campaign, based on the principle that every time citizens have a chance to vote on spending for nuclear power they should say no. Other anti-nuke activists will neither support nor oppose the bonds, but plan to use the election to begin an STNP cancellation campaign, gathering signatures on petitions and distributing literature at the polls on January 15. They plan to convince Austin and the other STNP partners — Houston, San Antonio, and Corpus Christi — that cutting their losses and canceling the project is the happiest possible ending to the protracted, grueling saga of STNP. □

Mobe Meets in Austin, Bolsheviks Not in Sight

By Jim Jones

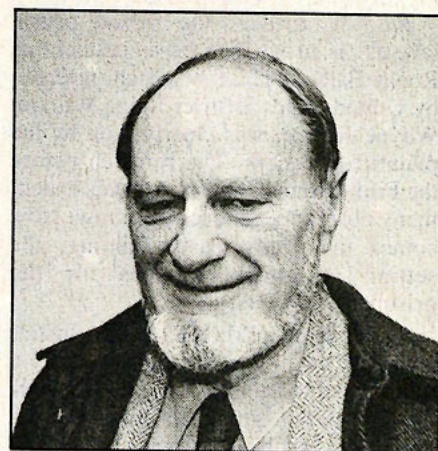


Photo by Jim Jones

Dave Dellinger in Austin

The Mobe convened in Texas this month. But *Reader's Digest* insinuations notwithstanding, hardly a Bolshevik was in sight. Mobe is the Mobilization for Survival, an umbrella peace organization and prime mover in the current U.S. wave of nuclear freeze activism. Nearly 300 Mobe supporters gathered in Austin December 10-12 for their sixth annual national conference. They rode planes and buses, drove, and backpacked from across the country to meet at UT's Stu-

dent Union for three days of speeches, workshops, and planning for 1983. The theme was "Beyond Survival." The spirit was ecumenical, with issues ranging from El Salvador to feminism to alternative sources of energy. The common cause of nuclear disarmament surfaced often enough to keep most attendees listening. But it was occasionally hard to tell which way the ship was heading, and where it might dock when it got to port.

Mobe wears a battle star that may some day be a badge of honor among peacemakers. It was among several groups cited in a November '82 *Reader's Digest* article called "The KGB's Magical War for Peace." The article

smeared the U.S. nuclear freeze movement as a Kremlin-engineered plot. Despite subsequent discrediting of the article's primary information source, it has been cited as influencing the president's distrust of the current peace movement.

If the KGB was indeed in sinister charge, it showed its slyness by remaining invisible. The only Reds in evidence were three unmenacing youngsters manning a forlorn Revolutionary Communist Party book table in the back of the literature room. They hawked their wares with fervor, but the crowd's indifference left doubt that they would net the bus fare back to Houston.

Jim Jones is an Austin freelance writer and coordinator of Austin Lutheran Peace Fellowship.

When you look for Bolsheviks, you look for foreigners with beards. Speaker Paolo Naso from Sicily, speaking against planned Cruise missile installations in Comiso, might have been a possibility. But he turned out to be secretary general of the respectable Italian Protestant Youth Federation. Often-fiery columnist Manning Marable evidenced a wholesome interest in healing the country rather than overthrowing it. Singer Holly Near would have made your grandmother beam with pride as she sang lyrics about listening to the voices of our old women. And the Heflin Lane First Baptist Church Choir soared through a hand-clapping "Peace in the Valley" that would surely make the Red Army Chorus green with envy. It was a friendly time. The shades of Joe McCarthy and Edgar Hoover must have been absolutely disgusted at wasting the trip. You got the feeling that maybe even John Tower himself would have swapped his Dewey button for one that said "QUESTION AUTHORITY" if he had just *been* there.

That was the good news. On the more sobering side, Mobe faces the same problems that plagued the '60's peace movement. One, the problem of togetherness. Two, the problem of apartness.

The togetherness arises out of the fact that the Mobe conference was mostly the converted preaching to the converted. Although the session took place on the crowded UT campus, few outsiders strayed in. Perhaps, like St. Peter after Pentecost, Mobe can convert thousands in a single day. But they'll have to draw the sinners into the revival tent before they can inspire them to see the glory.

The apartness problem is nothing new. It has handicapped every umbrella organization from Mobe to the World Council of Churches to the Democratic Party. Often it was hard to tell whether the nuke war issue was a transcendent common cause or simply the least common denominator. Or worse, a marriage of convenience to support one another's platforms for the sake of the common plank. Even after the final plenary, the question was still there. And the answer will likely not come clear unless the Texas peace movement enters into more active resistance, albeit non-violent. As any old peace soldier will tell you, the question of what you'll go to jail for is a great clarifier of loyalties.

Many Mobe boosters got their first-time exposure to veteran pacifist David Dellinger, only living American ever tried in federal court for saying "bullshit." This came out of his role as one of the Chicago Seven in their 1968 demonstrations at the Democratic National Convention. Convicted on an ar-

ray of conspiracy and contempt charges in the Seven's celebrated trial, Dellinger won reversal of the conspiracy verdict and retrial for contempt. The second trial judge deliberated gravely over his earthy comment, which Dellinger had made at the first trial in response to a prosecution witness's testimony. He finally pronounced Dellinger guilty of saying That Word. But then he refused to sentence Dellinger, setting a precedent of which Oliver Wendell Holmes and the old First Cavalry would have been proud.

For a career activist, Dellinger seems oddly like someone's hearty grandfather. Perhaps because he is, courtesy of his five grown children. He is 68 now and

GOP Warning

The State Republican Executive Committee adopted four resolutions at its meeting December 11, ranging from criticism of nuclear freeze movements to commendations to Gov. Clements for a job well done.

Although many well-meaning clergymen have supported peace movements, the resolution calls for efforts to be made to "expose the credentials, aims and allegiances of the so-called 'Peace Movements' or 'Freeze Movements.'" Many of these communist and like-minded organizations such as Clergy and Laity Concerned, Mobilization for Survival, and the U.S. Peace Council have whipped up war hysteria. Meanwhile, President Reagan works to reduce arsenals and create confidence building measures.

News Release, Republican Party of Texas

looks a decade younger. His gestalt is that of a Gloucester fishing-boat skipper or a husky old Oregon lumberjack, and his enthusiasm and good humor remind you of a happy evangelist.

A witch hunter would sink into depression at Dellinger's table talk. It tends toward human matters on an intimate level that belies his internationalist background. He delivered three of his five children personally and warms instantly to dialogue on child-raising. He reports with pride on his wife Elizabeth's progress in teaching first and second graders in a one-room village schoolhouse near their Vermont home.

The Dellingers commute to Vermont College in nearby Montpelier to teach adult classes, and Dave writes and lectures on justice and peace. He looks back to the human concerns of the '70's as more exciting than the impersonality of many global issues of the '60's. And he is "thrilled" by the vitality of groups within the churches that are at last showing boldness in speaking out for peace.

Not so in 1940. That was the year that engaging juveniles Ronald Reagan and Eddie Albert cavorted through a Hollywood groaner called "Brother Rat and the Baby." It was also the year that Dellinger, seminarian and associate pastor of a Newark church, joined seven other Christian pacifists in refusing to register for the draft. As a result he served three years at Danbury and Lewisburg federal prisons, preceding the priest brothers Berrigan there by a quarter of a century (he briefed Dan Berrigan on prison life shortly before Dan went in).

Dellinger emerged disillusioned by the church's lack of support for peace and justice but still holding his strong religious beliefs. Afterward he spent two decades with a New Jersey printing cooperative, dividing his time between working, writing, and raising a family.

Dellinger emerged as a key figure in the anti-war effort during the '60's. He organized peace demonstrations, wrote books and articles, and became chairman of the National Mobilization Committee to End the War in Vietnam, a Mobe ancestor. When South Vietnam surrendered in 1975, he shifted his non-violent concerns to disarmament, Central American problems, and other contemporary peace and justice issues. Now, after 43 years of unbroken activism, he radiates the enthusiastic energies of a young catechumen. And he needs these energies. "If the non-violent ones don't stay on the cutting edge of peace and justice," he says, "the violent ones will take it over. If the freeze people don't deal with *all* human needs, the violent people will. We can't afford to stay on narrow issues. We can't forget about, for instance, El Salvador, while we're working toward nuclear disarmament. That leaves a lot of work for non-violent people to get done."

Which brings it full circle to Mobe's strongest virtue — *and* its most perplexing dilemma.

Meanwhile, back at the literature room, the Revolutionary Communist lady in black hopefully pushed her red-covered paperbacks. But to little avail. It's hell to get a decent revolution going when peace folks act so darned American. □

Mexican Americans Jalaron la Palanca, Democrats Say Ole!

"The Democratic Party knows it has to depend on the Mexican American vote."

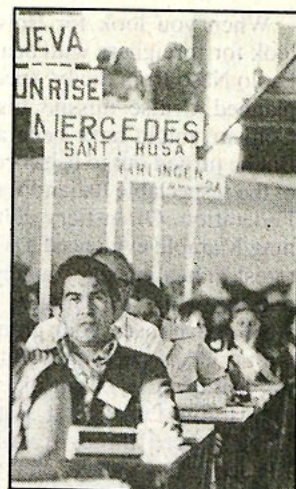


Photo by Alan Pogue

By Geoffrey Rips

People calling the governor's office better be able to speak Spanish, Mark White has been saying lately, and a report released in December by the Southwest Voter Registration Education Project shows why. It was Mexican American voters statewide who provided White's margin of victory in the gubernatorial campaign.

In the November 2 election White received an estimated 804 votes fewer than did Bill Clements among non-Mexican American voters statewide. The Mexican American vote, however, provided those 804 votes, plus the estimated 231,575 votes that were White's margin of victory.

Perhaps the most telling statistic is not the fact that White received 86.1% of the Mexican American vote (almost 11 points above John Hill's mark of 1978) but that he drew more than twice as many Mexican American votes as Hill received in '78. There was an 86.2% jump in the number of Mexican Americans voting in the 1982 governor's race as compared to the 1978 race. The 145,411 new Mexican American Democratic votes alone provided 63% of White's winning margin. Clements, meanwhile, received 8,730 more Mexican American votes than in 1978, but his portion of the overall Mexican American vote dropped by over six percentage points.

The SVREP report notes that, while 38.3% of the registered Mexican American voters turned out for this election (compared to 28.9% in 1978), this still falls far short of the 51.4% turnout by non-Mexican American voters in the state (whose numbers increased by 30.6%). It is interesting, nonetheless, that Mexican American voter percentages outdistanced non-Mexican American turnout in four South Texas counties —

Starr, Dimmit, Duval and Wilson — the first three having a sizeable Mexican American majority among registered voters. In addition, Mexican American turnout in rural areas was proportionately higher than in metropolitan counties. If these trends continue, it could mean radical changes in the South Texas political picture.

Mark White was not, of course, the only beneficiary of the Mexican American vote. In fact, of all the Democratic candidates for statewide office, he received the smallest percentage of the Mexican American vote. That vote proved to be a formidable Democratic bloc, giving 91.1% of the Mexican American vote to Garry Mauro and Jim Hightower, 90.2% to Jim Mattox, 89.9% to Ann Richards, 89.4% to Lloyd Bentsen, 88.9% to Bill Hobby, 88.5% to Bob Bullock, and 86.1% to White.

Particularly revealing is the fact that the non-Mexican American voters in San Antonio consistently favored the Republican candidates but were just as consistently outvoted when the large Mexican American Democratic vote was added to the votes of the non-Mexican American Democratic minority. (The phenomenon occurred in various races in San Angelo, El Paso, Brownsville, McAllen, and Lubbock.) In the case of Ann Richards' race for state treasurer, for example, any question of *machismo* voting must be directed toward San Antonio's non-Mexican American voters, who voted against her by one percentage point, while San Antonio Mexican American voters were giving her 93% of their vote.

The SVREP report attributes increased Mexican American voting power in large part to the 41% increase in Mexican American voting registration since 1978. Robert Brischetto, the report's

principal author, said the solid Mexican American Democratic vote "probably reflects discontent with the present state and federal administrations' policies, in particular with employment policies."

In order to analyze voting patterns, Brischetto and his co-authors studied voting and registration data from all state precincts in which at least 80% of the registered voters had Spanish surnames and from some precincts in which 70 to 80% of the voters had Spanish surnames. This encompassed 262 precincts in 36 counties, whose inhabitants make up 81% of all Spanish-surnamed registered voters in Texas.

As a companion to the report on the 1982 election, the Southwest Voter Registration Education Project published a demographic study of the Mexican American electorate, based upon populations of San Antonio and East Los Angeles. The study characterized the Mexican American most likely to vote as bilingual or English monolingual and over 45 years of age. Of this group 52% have an income below \$10,000; 68% did not graduate from high school; and 71% are foreign born. They are followed in voting probability by those with the same language abilities who are between the ages of 18 and 45 years. Of these potential voters, 29% make less than \$10,000; 39% never finished high school; and 44% are foreign born. Those who speak Spanish only are less likely to vote, and those within this group who are over 45 years old have the lowest voting probability.

The SVREP study concludes that, based upon demographic evidence (that will be submitted to further scrutiny in later SVREP studies), "language ability and age interact with socioeconomic status in determining the chances of an individual becoming politically active."

It recommends that any long-term political strategy concentrate on the 18 to 45 year bilingual or English monolingual group (which makes up 52% of the eligible Mexican American electorate), while political organizing of the older bilingual or English monolingual group might be the most effective course for immediate issues.

This demographic survey, along with subsequent reports, is designed "to assist community organizers and political leaders to understand who the Mexican American electorate is, how this electorate views the political world and what demands it makes upon the polity."

In light of the returns from the November election, does the Mexican

American electorate represent an emerging independent political power in state politics and, as SRVEP Executive Director Willie Velasquez says, an "important factor in the 1984 Presidential election?" Or will it be, by turns, courted, exploited, and ignored by state party politics?

La Salle County Judge Leodoro Martinez says the Democratic Party knows "it has to depend on the Mexican American vote. But it can only depend upon that vote if the Democratic party leadership responds to what is happening in South Texas. Two things sent people to vote Democratic: the status of the economy and the fact that it is hard for the Mexican American voter in South Texas to iden-

tify as a Republican. This time it was also easier to identify the parties with the issues than it was ten or twelve years ago. That is because we now have input into the system. Statewide officials have to respond to the fact that we are a big factor.

"I thought at the beginning of the year that there would be a low turnout for the election, but in the campaign there were definite positive commitments made. You could see a big difference in that between White's campaign and John Hill's four years earlier. Now, in order to maintain our support, there has to be action — and I don't just mean talk and promises but also legislation and appointments — during the next four years to address our problems." □

• POLITICAL INTELLIGENCE •

✓ Dallas County Criminal Court Judge Tom Price often had his foot near his mouth as a Democrat, and his Republican conversion has apparently done nothing to change him. He told reporters recently he resented having to belong to a political party and that he voted against Gov. Bill Clements because Clements was "blunt, crude . . . and always reminded me of a truck driver who inherited a lot of money."

✓ Also in Dallas, Mark White told some 300 people attending a luncheon sponsored by the Democratic Forum that he would name so many blacks and Mexican Americans to positions in state government that "if you call Austin, you better be able to speak Spanish." And if you call on Martin Luther King's birthday, he said, many people will be off work observing the day. He said his promise to name more women already has been evidenced by the appointment of Ann Arnold, Austin bureau chief of the *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, as his press secretary. He has also appointed a black, Deralyn Davis of Fort Worth, and an Hispanic, Vicki Garza of Corpus Christi, as co-chairpersons of the transition committee under soon-to-be secretary of state John Fainter.

✓ When floodwaters were driving people from their homes in Arkansas recently, Gov. Clements called Gov. Frank White and offered to take the excess water off his hands for farmers in the Texas High Plains. "He quickly reminded me we were on the wrong side of the state," Clements told a meeting of the Texas Energy and Natural Resources Advisory Council. Most rivers in Arkansas flow in an easterly direction.

Earlier last month, John Armstrong, vice chairman of Texas 2000, a key advisory board to Clements, urged planning for importing water from Canada, Mexico, and Alaska as well as from neighboring states. Clements himself told TENRAC, "I predict by the year 2000, we will be buying water from Arkansas." A water planning expert commented in private after hearing Clements' prediction, "They couldn't do that if they started tomorrow. It took 18 years just to build MOPAC [an Austin freeway.]"

✓ Agriculture Commissioner Jim Hightower appointed Crockett Camp, 37, currently director of administrative services for the Texas Alcoholic Beverage Commission, to be the TDA associate deputy for administration. An attorney, Camp formerly served as administrative assistant and staff counsel to House Speaker Bill Clayton, attorney for the Texas Water Rights Commission, and counsel to the Texas House Committee on Transportation. Earlier, Hightower appointed former state Senator Walter H. Richter deputy commissioner.

✓ Retiring House Speaker Bill Clayton told reporters in Beaumont recently that he may run against Republican U.S. Senator John Tower in 1984 or for lieutenant governor in 1986. Meanwhile he intends to operate his own Austin-based consulting firm to lobby, handle political campaigns, and advise business.

✓ Former national Democratic chairman Robert Strauss told the U.S. Chamber of Commerce recently that it was threatening to divide the nation along class lines into "a party of haves and a party of the have-nots. When you begin

that, my friends, you're beginning the destruction of the country," he said.

Strauss' comments were made during a discussion of the 1982 elections at a forum sponsored by Citizen's Choice, a lobbying arm of the U.S. Chamber. Strauss said the chamber's credibility was "pretty well destroyed" when it examined 100 key congressional races around the nation this fall and could find no Democrats worthy of receiving financial support from business. "I think it's a goddamned outrage," he said. "I say it's hogwash. That just cannot be true."

Strauss also criticized the political behavior of businessmen in Texas. He said some Dallas conservatives contributed \$30,000 to \$40,000 this year toward a hopeless effort to defeat U.S. House Speaker Tip O'Neill. "They look like saps in Dallas. They look like saps in Boston. They look like saps in Washington," he said. He also said independent oilmen in Dallas and Houston spent a fortune trying to defeat congressmen who, in general, were hospitable to their interests in Congress. He cited Democratic Congressmen Mike Sybar and James Jones of Oklahoma as examples. "That's just dumb," he repeated.

Sharing the chamber platform with Strauss was U.S. Trade Representative William Brock, a former national Republican chairman. Brock told the audience he agreed with Strauss' warning about the United States becoming polarized along economic and political lines.

✓ Ralph Nader's Congress Watch labeled Congressmen Marvin Leath of Marlin and Kent Hance of Lubbock

"profiles in cash" because they received more than \$20,000 in campaign contributions from the American Medical Association and the American Dental Association since the beginning of the 1980 election campaign and then voted for a bill that prohibits Federal Trade Commission regulation of business practices of doctors and dentists. Congress Watch applauded Cong. Phil Gramm of College Station who accepted \$21,400 in medical and dental association campaign funds for the same time period but voted against the trade commission exemption bill.

✓ Minority representatives are understandably alarmed by rumors that soon-to-be-Speaker Gib Lewis intends to rewrite rules to give himself even more power. According to our sources, Lewis wants authority to appoint all members to expanded Committees on Appropriations, Calendar, and other powerful committees.

At present, the speaker gets to appoint half of all committee members plus all committee chairs and vice-chairs. Minority reps, who have been rising in seniority, are looking at an excellent opportunity to have major impact on these committees through seniority appointments. Four of the nine seniority appointments on Appropriations, for example, are already minorities. With three seniority positions now open, minority reps will gain more influence unless House rules are changed.

✓ Bill Clements lost because he abandoned his conservative populist approach, a former assistant to state Sen. Walter "Mad Dog" Mengden contends. Writing in the December 1982 *Conservative Digest*, Art Kelly argues that Clements won in 1978 "crusading for a populist program calling for tax relief, tax limitation, and the right of initiative and referendum for the people." At some point, in Kelly's view, Clements traded "his original grass-roots base for the support of such monied establishment figures as Houston industrialist-banker Walter Mischer."

Kelly also reports that angry delegates at the 1982 Republican state convention in Austin came close to openly repudiating the governor. And in this year's election, "populists and pro-family activists didn't man the phone banks and walk the blocks for Clements," as they did in 1978. "This time," Kelly writes, "his campaign offices in Houston, Dallas, and San Antonio looked like ghost towns, almost completely devoid of volunteers. It was so bad in Houston, all of the GOP candidates for state representative and judge were called to

a meeting and told that they must provide volunteers for Clements from their own organizations or incur the Governor's wrath."

Also in *Conservative Digest*, freelance writer Mike Stallard warns Republicans that Clements' defeat could be a portent for Ronald Reagan. "No Republican in modern times has been elected president without carrying Texas," Stallard writes. "The Reagan administration is clogged with the same establishment Republicans, blunting the conservative movement with status quo 'politics as usual,' oblivious to the conservative rank and file, who's [sic] sweat and toil have built every Reagan victory over the years."

✓ According to a *Dallas Morning News* report, Dolph Briscoe supporters have mixed feelings about the former governor's chances in the U.S. Senate race, as one long-time supporter was quoted claiming that Briscoe's influence is not what it used to be. For instance, although Briscoe campaigned for both White and Bentsen in his Uvalde county area, White beat Clements by only 14 votes, and Bentsen beat Collins by only 623.

Another supporter was quoted as saying, "Fourteen votes is kind of a joke. That ought to tell you something about Dolph's influence."

Should Briscoe decide to run, Democrats fear a party split along the lines which split the party in 1978, with Briscoe driving former John Hill supporters to support Bob Krueger.

✓ Attorney General Jim Mattox has selected Austin attorney — and *Observer* landlord — David Richards to be his executive assistant. Richards, 49, is a former general counsel to the Texas AFL-CIO and an expert on voting rights and civil rights law. He is also an adjunct professor at the University of Texas law school.

Last year he represented a group of black Democrats challenging the constitutionality of a congressional redistricting plan, which was supported by Bill Clements and defended in court by the attorney general's office. The GOP-backed redistricting proposal, later redrawn by a three-judge federal panel, radically altered Mattox's East Dallas congressional district and prompted Mattox to vacate his seat and seek the attorney general's position.

Richards will be in charge of all litigation coming out of the AG's office. He predicts the office will take "a more aggressive stance," particularly in the areas of environment, civil rights, and consumer affairs. Mary Keller, a 34-year-old Texas Civil Liberties Union attorney in Austin will be Richards' assistant, and Austin attorney Clyde Farrell, author of *Buying,*

Renting and Borrowing in Texas: The Rules of the Game, will be assistant chief in charge of consumer affairs.

"The litigation of the state of Texas is very important business, and some of it, frankly, has not been handled very well," Richards says.

Taber Ward, communication director for the Republican Party in Texas, is perturbed that Mattox named a "high-profile" liberal. "The first pop out of the box and it's Dave Richards," he grumbled. "To me, it's a little bit surprising."

Also joining Mattox's administration is Arthur Mitchell, 57, who will become special counsel to the attorney general. Mitchell is a veteran defense lawyer who once represented former Duval County Judge O. P. Carrillo during impeachment proceedings. He also served as general counsel to the Dallas-based OKC Corp.

✓ Saralee Tiede, Austin bureau chief for the *Dallas Times Herald*, became the *Fort Worth Star-Telegram's* chief state capital correspondent on Dec. 31, succeeding Ann Arnold, who is leaving the newspaper to become press secretary for Gov.-elect Mark White. "The *Star-Telegram* made me a very attractive offer," Tiede told the *Observer*. "I'm pleased by the importance that they place on coverage of state government and state politics."

Longtime observers of Dallas newspaper wars note that Tiede, an award-winning reporter who has been in the *Times Herald* Austin bureau since 1974, is the latest in a growing line of experienced reporters who have left the paper in recent months. The list includes political writer Frank Clifford, investigative reporter Julia Wallace, and general assignments reporter Julie Morris. Insiders cite morale problems and a feeling on the part of reporters that their skills and experience go unappreciated.

✓ Several recent news stories about the Department of Human Resources focus on reforms in child abuse laws and regulations. Age discrimination charges concerning child placement workers, however, are likely to capture increasing attention. One case, now before the Merit System Council and the federal EEOC, charges DHR with age discrimination and harassment against a former placement worker fired for allegedly caring too much and being too emotionally involved.

Class action suits are likely to follow on the heels of this case. According to a DHR printout, only nine of over 1,200 child placement workers are over age 60. Only 38 are over age 50; only 16 percent of all workers are over 40. □

Invasion by an Alien Intelligence

The following is a condensed version of the commencement address delivered by John G. Kemeny at the 55th annual Claremont Graduate School convocation May 15, 1982. Kemeny, who received an honorary Doctor of Science degree at the ceremony, is a distinguished mathematician-philosopher and teacher. President emeritus and professor of mathematics at Dartmouth College, he is co-author of BASIC computer language and co-developer of the Dartmouth Time-Sharing System, a major "software" breakthrough facilitating the simultaneous use of the computer for educational purposes and research. He has been chairman of the Consortium on Financing Higher Education, chairman of the Presidential Commission to investigate the Three-Mile Island Accident, and vice-chairman of the National Science Foundation Advisory Committee on Computing.

There is no theme more common in science fiction than the invasion of earth by aliens. In early science-fiction stories, invariably the aliens presented some form of horror to mankind. A much more recent development has been the treatment of the aliens as not necessarily horrible, but possibly benevolent to mankind.

The purpose of my lecture is to make a prediction that your lives will indeed be invaded by an alien intelligence, but that this intelligence will be created by human beings — intelligence contained in intelligent machines. And this will not represent horror for mankind, nor will it be necessarily beneficial, but it will turn out to be extremely alien.

A great deal has been said and written about the computer age, and I believe that the next major development will be that nearly everything manufactured by man will have a computer, and therefore, intelligence built into it. Increasingly, our machines will be able to think, and think at a considerably high IQ. On the negative side, machines have absolutely no common sense, they have no judgment, and they appear to be remarkably poor at a number of tasks in which human beings excel. For example, a very strong talent of human beings is the ability to detect a general pattern or to generalize from a small number of examples.

The whole problem of the recognition of patterns — the subject broadly called artificial intelligence — is one in which enormous claims were made, that within five years there would be breakthroughs that could change the entire way machines operated. Unfortunately, that promise of a breakthrough in five years was made more than 20 years ago, and we are still waiting for the major breakthroughs.

I'm very fond of books written by Isaac Asimov on robots. But I'm afraid robots, as he visualized them, are still very, very far in the future. Not only may you not live to see Asimov's robot, but the actual robots we will see may not even approach R2D2. As a matter of fact, I have a worry about the first household robot that will be available to help mankind. I worry about the first human being who orders that robot to throw out the bathwater and forgets to tell the robot to remove the baby first.

Asimov's three laws of robotics were tremendously comforting because you could build into robots strictures that under no circumstances must the robot ever harm a human being. And I believe that you can, indeed, do that. The problem that was overlooked was how a robot recognizes a human being. In that dirty bathwater there's that little lump squealing all kinds of meaningless noises, and the robot is supposed to recognize the baby is a human thing.

We are very, very far from being able to build machines that have that capability. Yet, today, you can walk into a fairly ordinary store and take home with you, at a modest price, a decision-making tool that is more powerful than any that was available to the greatest corporations a generation ago. And the state of the art is ever increasing. Our computers continue to become more powerful, to become smaller, and to become less expensive, and therefore it is certain that the most important applications are still in the future.

In the future we will be able to build a substantial amount of intelligence into our homes for safety, for convenience, and for enlightening and entertaining us. We're going to need an entirely new kind of language or languages to be able to communicate with our household machines. Indeed, it is more than a language that is necessary. I believe a key breakthrough will be a new kind of conceptual framework that man and machine can share. And we must train ourselves at all times to realize that, even though we become used to our own little household computer, we are talking to a very alien species.

But I'm looking for more fundamental changes. I'm predicting that in the next 25 years, you're going to see a recasting of the entire social structure. The Industrial Revolution brought about the centralization that led to our huge cities, to enormous companies, and to a loss of individuality, and it is possible — not certain, but possible — that the entire trend will be reversed.

I'm not even certain that mass production as we know it is going to survive these fundamental changes. Since machines will be programmable, it would be terribly easy for each piece that they turn out to be different from every other piece, and we might see a renaissance of the individual artisan who custom-designs each piece that is manufactured.

With the powerful new communications media available to us, wherever we may be in a small office, we'll be able to access all of the information that we're entitled to — and therefore, the location of where we are will become totally irrelevant.

I believe there will be a steady shift in what human beings will do and that many mental tasks of low level will be taken over by machines. Therefore, the high premium in the future will be for those qualities that distinguish humans from machines. Among the things that will be prized will be creativity in human beings, ranging all the way from arts to mathematics, because those are the areas in which man will always exceed machines. There will also be a high premium for the ability to communicate with this new and alien intelligence, an intelligence that is in some ways very bright, but on the other hand is totally literal-minded.

I'm convinced that your generation is destined to witness enormous changes. You will have a chance to influence the outcome of these changes. I urge you not to be afraid of change in itself, nor to accept the saying that a change must always be a change for the worse. While an invasion by the alien intelligence of machines is a certainty within your lifetime, whether that invasion proves to be a disaster for mankind or the greatest boon we have yet experienced is entirely up to you.



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BERNARD RAPOPORT
Chairman of the Board and
Chief Executive Officer

COPS . . .

(Continued from Cover)

county for the Democratic ticket. Now these community organizations, representing middle- and lower-income Mexican-American, black, and Anglo residents of Houston, Fort Worth, El Paso, Austin, and San Antonio, had come to claim what was theirs. They had come to meet with Mark White and Bill Hobby to see that all those pre-election pledges and promises are honored. Specifically, they had come to call in White's outstanding promissory note which he had pledged in support of the COPS package for equalization of educational funding.

The meeting on that late December afternoon in Austin between community organization leaders and the next leaders of state government was arranged by Mark White's staff in accordance with a promise White had made to COPS at the group's November 7 annual convention. Before 5,000 convention delegates, White had agreed to hold a meeting within 45 days to discuss COPS education proposals in order to prepare a legislative education package. Forty-four days later the meeting was scheduled to get under way; White, Lieutenant Governor Hobby, and the next House speaker, Gib Lewis, were preparing to attend; and school buses filled with community activists were rolling toward Austin.

It was to be a demonstration in muscle-flexing, in testing the state political waters to see if the organization and methods COPS used in San Antonio to change the face and some of the substance of local politics could be translated to the state level. According to COPS President Sonia Hernandez, although such action had been discussed before, this was the first time that the organization had joined other community organizations around the state to address a state issue. Since COPS had designated education its first priority, educational equalization was chosen as the breakthrough issue. She added that COPS had also been looking into economic development issues and unemployment as items for an agenda for future statewide action.

The meeting itself promised to be a scene familiar to almost a decade of San Antonio officeholders and aspirants: a COPS "accountability" hearing, in which voters are given the opportunity to hold elected officials accountable for their promises and for the public trust bestowed upon them. The meetings are an exercise in power and an exercise in education. The theoretical underpinnings of the event are drawn from the teachings

of Paulo Freire, who emphasizes the educational component of every political action, and from the organizing methods of Saul Alinsky. The ritualistic nature of the accountability hearings is familiar and comfortable to COPS members and usually alien to those being held accountable. COPS hearings have taken place in church assembly halls, in school board meeting rooms and in the middle of city council meetings. Always the rooms are jammed with COPS members, who cheer the assertions of their leaders and jeer attempts by public officials to discount them. It is as much a means of education as a show of force, building what Larry Goodwyn calls "collective self-confidence" in people who have spent most of their lives deferring to authority or entrenched power. It is also an educational process for the official under scrutiny, forcing a confrontation with the physical reality of a constituency, a reality that must at times be intimidating, that must seem to many an unresponsive officeholder as something akin to a Jacobin inquisition.

There is a real testing of power in these meetings. Power does not automatically rest with those in positions of traditional authority. The fact that COPS members are always well-informed on the issue at hand, and often better-informed than the official being questioned, is a key to their collective self-confidence. The bride is stripped bare by her suitors. This

sometimes provokes a revealing reaction. "The real action is the enemy's reaction," said Saul Alinsky in *Rules for Radicals*. Then, of course, there is also the power of large numbers of people as a countervailing force to the power of money or of office. Large numbers of activists translate into many times larger numbers of votes. For at least the space of a meeting, power is held in balance or is controlled by the people of COPS. COPS' effectiveness is derived from the fact that it is able to retain some measure of that power once the meetings are over. Public officials know that COPS never forgets a promise, never lets an issue die. They know they are always potential candidates for COPS and public scrutiny. Above all, they know that COPS represents 90,000 families — the largest community organization in the country.

Education Equalization

For the December 21 meeting, COPS was forced to stage a moveable hearing. While officially they were the guests at this meeting, COPS chose not to let ceremony stand in the way of their pressing concerns about state education. COPS came to Austin to propose a legislative education package that would include an increase of equalization aid from the current \$360 per pupil to \$550 per pupil by 1983-'84 and then by increments of 10% for three years in order to equal the state enrichment average (\$750 per pupil this

White discusses education needs
with COPS leaders Hernandez and Ayala.



Photo by Alan Pogue

year) within three years. COPS estimates this will cost the state \$490 million. COPS also seeks to raise funding levels for compensatory education aid, bilingual education, "Impact" aid for children of undocumented workers, and for building maintenance and construction. Sister Lynn Stewart, co-chair of COPS education committee, explained that the core of the proposal calls for a revision of the equalization formula and an immediate major increase in aid.

The education equalization proposal itself was precipitated by the 1973 U.S. Supreme Court ruling in *Demetrio P. Rodriguez v. The State of Texas*, which decided that Texas school financing was constitutional but unfair and recommended that Texans look to the legislature for reform. The court case was initiated in response to the glaring disparities between San Antonio Edgewood's school system and that of San Antonio Alamo Heights (paralleling a disparity between Edgewood's current \$70 per pupil in local enrichment money compared to Alamo Heights' \$1300 per pupil).

COPS decided that the time was ripe to take the Supreme Court up on its recommendation and to seek from the state government a more equitable system of educational funding. COPS was joined in this effort and at the meeting by an alliance of community organizations — all with some connection to the Alinsky-generated Industrial Areas Foundation: Austin Interfaith Sponsoring Committee (AISC); Eastside Sponsoring Committee (ESC) of San Antonio; Allied Communities of Tarrant County (ACT); The Metropolitan Organization (TMO) of Houston; and El Paso Interreligious Sponsoring Organization (EPISO). The members of these organizations live in communities similar to those served by COPS.

Accountability Rite

The meeting was scheduled to begin at 4:30. At 3:30, two aides for Mark White sat alone in a conference room in the Sam Houston Building. One of the aides, who had worked for the White campaign in Bexar County, asked, "Have you ever seen a COPS meeting? Do you know what we're in for?" He smiled a bemused smile and walked away.

Five minutes later, the door opened, and three women, four men, and a boy appeared, carrying microphones, speakers, boxes of paper, and posters. They immediately set to work, taping the red, white, and blue COPS logo to a speaker's podium and to several columns near the

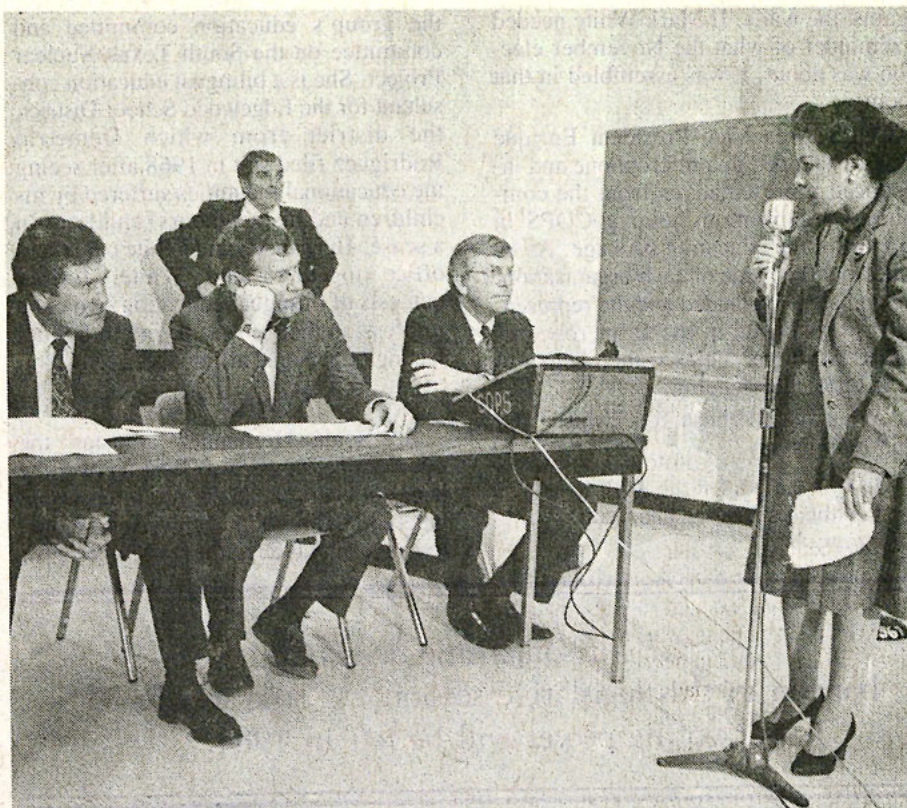


Photo by Alan Pogue

COPS V.P. Helen Ayala questions Lewis, Hobby, and White (l. to r.)

front of the room. A man and the boy arranged tables in the front of the room so that one was set apart and at a slight angle to the audience while another was moved to the left and placed at a right angle to the first. A small speaker's podium was placed on each table. Three tables were pushed to the right side of the room and reserved for the press. Another table was moved forward slightly from the front row of the audience in order to distinguish it slightly.

A man directing this advance work asked White's aides about the number of chairs in the room, saying at least twice that many were needed. Within minutes more chairs appeared. The men and the boy began carrying tables out of the room and replacing them with rows of chairs. Soon the conference room was filled with chairs, and the rest of the rooms on that first-floor hallway were filled with tables.

With the business of setting up the hall under control, the advance man introduced Mary Segovia, a small woman with graying hair, as the press contact. She began dispensing press packets with an outline of the COPS education package. She gave a background of the COPS organization and a brief history of events leading to the meeting. When four women and a man entered the room, Mary Segovia introduced one of the women, Sonia Hernandez, president of COPS. Hernandez, surveying the room, said, "We told them there would be two hundred coming, but they didn't believe us." She walked to the front table, stood

by the microphone, surveying the room again, then rejoined the people she came in with, who were huddling by the door.

It was 4:18. The boy who had been setting up chairs, rested in a chair in the middle of the room, looking around every once in a while to admire his handiwork. A television news crew checked out possibilities for camera angles while the COPS advance team retested the microphones. The door to the conference room opened, and a small, white-haired woman tottered in. Two women with gray hair followed her, then a tall man, then by twos and fours, men, women and children, some women wearing Christmas corsages of green and red ribbon with a peppermint stick attached, boys wearing football jerseys. They filed through the rows of chairs and quietly took their seats.

Sonia Hernandez walked out into the hall to greet them. Many stopped to shake her hand and to wish her encouragement. An office worker asked the building security guard in the foyer who these people were. "Some group called C-O-P-S," came the spelled reply. They were serious and orderly, intent on their mission. (They gave the impression, which is sometimes expressed, that COPS represents largely the old, the retired, the unemployed. These, of course, are the COPS members who are able to go to a meeting such as this in the middle of a work day.) By 4:25 all the seats in the room were filled, save twenty reserved in the front, and a ring of people stood

against the walls. If Mark White needed a reminder of what the November election was about, it was assembled in that room.

COPS Area Vice President Enrique Velasco stepped to a microphone and introduced representatives from the community organizations joining COPS in support of the education package. As he called out the name of each organization, the audience applauded and the representatives took seats in the front rows reserved for them. Velasco then began to do a little cheerleading.

"What do all those red, white, and blue buttons say?"

"COPS."

"Let the legislators hear you."

"COPS!"

the group's education committee and committee on the South Texas Nuclear Project. She is a bilingual education consultant for the Edgewood School District, the district from which Demetrio Rodriguez filed suit in 1968 after seeing the educational inequities suffered by his children and his neighbors' children. In a sense, Hernandez and White came into office together, and White, former nemesis of bilingual education, gave the impression that he was trying to build a feeling of personal affinity between them.

Round One

As Sonia Hernandez adjusted the microphone, power was floating over the heads of everyone in the room, uncertain where to light, wary of the wrong move, testing each side for the possibilities for

"... if something does not happen in this legislative session, ... the weight of our voting power will be felt in 1984."

"Do we want a \$20 a year increase in funding?"

"No!"

"What do we want?"

"Equality!"

There was a precision and an order about all this that frightens the anarchist heart. But there was also power here. You could feel it hovering as Mark White and Gib Lewis appeared at the door — White smiling, Lewis expressionless.

The advance man stepped to the microphone to tell the crowd to welcome its leaders. Sonia Hernandez then walked toward the table at the front of the room, followed by COPS Vice President Helen Ayala, Sister Lynn Stewart, and Tino Gonzalez, COPS Executive Treasurer. The crowd stood and broke into applause. Then Mark White, Bill Hobby, Gib Lewis, and State Representative Frank Tejeda entered the room and walked to the table on the left. White waved to the crowd. He may have been the only person in the room confused about which "leaders" were being applauded.

The crowd sat down as Sonia Hernandez stood at the podium. Hernandez became the COPS president at the organization's ninth annual convention on November 7, the convention at which Mark White appeared, fulfilling a campaign promise, and where he pledged himself to the COPS education agenda and to the initiation of this meeting to work out a legislative package. Hernandez had served as COPS executive secretary for two years and as chair of

attachment and support. The audience sat motionless, flexing its will, awaiting the proceedings. Hernandez opened the meeting, speaking in slow, measured tones. A slightly nervous edge to her voice was gradually replaced as she spoke by a tone of controlled anger. She began by describing COPS members as belonging to families "whose children are subjected to the most degrading and inadequate public education system in the state of Texas."

She moved on to the COPS education proposal: "Equalization aid is the cornerstone. It will do no good to simply raise teachers' salaries as a sole panacea to the state's education ills. Such a move will only perpetuate the inequities between a wealthy school district and a poor school district. What is needed is teacher pay raises coupled with a substantial increase in equalization aid. This is not an either/or proposal. We have learned that the Legislative Budget Board is recommending an increase of \$20 per pupil for the next biennium. This means for us that our children still won't have textbooks, that our children still won't have workbooks, and that the best teachers will still continue to be siphoned away by the districts that can offer more money. The COPS organization is here in strength with its allied organizations and we say to you that enough is enough. . . ."

"We understand that some people are saying that it's going to take a tax bill, a revenue bill to pay for any changes in educational funding. A tax bill put onto education will be making education a

scapegoat . . . If somebody wants a tax bill, then ask the transportation lobby to handle it. Don't put it on education. We have over the months heard many commitments to education, and we are here today to reaffirm our commitment that this fight for equal education is one that we will follow through to the end. Finally, if something does not happen in this legislative session, then we certainly will assure the state that the weight of our voting power will be felt in 1984."

Hernandez then introduced the representatives of the five organizations allied with COPS, who each gave a brief statement of support. By this time it was clear that she controlled the meeting, that there was to be no deference to the authority of a governor-elect, a lieutenant governor, or a probable house speaker. This was transmitted to the audience, which politely interrupted Mark White, when he later spoke, to ask him to speak louder. All were equals. Elected officials had to hear out their guests and constituents before speaking.

Estela Padilla, the representative from EPISO, spoke last, saying: "I am the proud mother of an intelligent and creative five-year-old boy who has been playing the piano since he was two-and-a-half years old." She was interrupted by applause, then continued: "As a parent I am concerned about how intelligent and how creative he will be at age eighteen. My feeling is that my son will not realize his full potential. Why? Because our part of the state, Region 19, is the poorest in Texas . . . When every cent is drained from the state, from the local taxpayer and from federal money, when we have squeezed dry every money resource we can find, we still spend only \$1,576.59 per child while our neighbor district spends \$2,511.90 per child. The state average is \$2,175.65. When we have this kind of disparity in the educational system, you know that our school district, the Socorro Independent School District, will have to make decisions that will hinder and hurt the growth and development of my son. . . ."

Sonia Hernandez then turned to Mark White, who throughout the meeting, looked as if he were watching the proceedings from the inside of a fishbowl. "I will ask now for brief opening remarks, beginning now with Governor Mark White, who committed himself at the COPS convention of 5,000 delegates on November 7 that, first of all, this meeting would be pulled together. We appreciate that. You did follow through, sir. Now I ask for your opening remarks."

White followed with a rambling soliloquy that began with shared concerns

about education, moved on to the impact along the border of the peso devaluation and arrived for a few sentences at the question at hand, saying, "My commitment is reaffirmed today. I want to make certain there is an equalization of education in the state regardless of place of residence." From there he launched into a discussion of crime and welfare, stating that the way to stop crime and reduce the welfare rolls is to "do the job that must be done on the front side, on the positive side, and that's make certain that we provide adequate, equal, and abundant educational opportunity for every child." This was met with applause. He went on to discuss the rotting system of teacher salaries, which eventually led him to federal funding used to supplement state funds for education in order to "build a net against ignorance, to deal with adult illiteracy and the problems associated with the lack of jobs. And if you want to talk about electric bills, I'm here to talk with you any day you want to talk. . . ." Suddenly Mark White had veered onto the field of his biggest vote-getter — utilities. The audience applauded the first mention of electric bills then sat silently as White carried the discussion further and further away from education.

Sonia Hernandez tolerated this for five or six sentences, then interrupted White in mid-sentence in order to thank him and move on to Bill Hobby: "Lieutenant Governor Hobby, we have your commitment to work with us on the education package. Specifically, you have said, and I quote, 'I will work for an increase in equalization aid and a revision of the equalization formula.' "

Hobby, wearing a rumpled suit and bow tie like a disgruntled dean of students, mentioned his work throughout his career on behalf of education equalization. He pointed out that the Legislative Budget Board, on which he serves, had recommended an increase in aid of \$30 for the first year and \$60 for the second — "about an 8-point-something increase each year and that's from zero in 1975." He repeated his commitment to equalization aid, but he made no promises and he gave no ground. He did, however, say that the thing that distinguished "COPS, EPISO, ACT, TMO, and these other groups is the quality of the work, the quality of the investigation you have done on these important issues."

But Sonia Hernandez was not visibly swayed by the compliment. She moved on to Gib Lewis: "Representative Lewis, the COPS organization has met with you, and at that time you said that the COPS proposal is 'only giving the children of Texas what they deserve.' " She asked

him to commit himself to making that proposal a reality.

Lewis stood. When he spoke, the only moving feature in his granite face was his lower jaw. "Let me recommit that statement to you all here. . . . It's a pledge that I give you." He then commended the assembled organizations for bringing the problem of educational equalization to their attention. "Many times we in policy-making positions do not see the forest for the trees — I think that is the old saying or vice versa. . . . I think you'll see some great things happen in the upcoming session due to your efforts, due to the effort you've taken to make us aware of some of the problems that exist in this state."

Then Representative Frank Tejeda of San Antonio spoke, representing the majority of the Bexar County legislative delegation. He brought the delegation's endorsement of the COPS package and reminded his fellow office-holders that they are involved in this meeting by virtue of the electoral support they received from the people represented by the community organizations. He then reminded the audience that "it will be a tough session. There will be many competing interests. There will be many competing forces for that dollar. And it is limited."

"If you don't [equalize education], . . . you will have continued to maintain a permanent underclass in the state of Texas."

It's getting more limited as we go along. However, we shouldn't talk of only taxes because many of us, particularly in the poorer school districts, are overtaxed as it is. What we should do is talk about reevaluating our set of priorities. . . ."

Round Two

So much for the first round. The meeting moved into higher gear — to the segment that exacts more commitments from the politicians. Sonia Hernandez recognized Sister Lynn Stewart, sitting at the head table. Stewart reiterated the specifics of the COPS education proposal. She then responded to Hobby's remarks: "\$30, \$60, \$90 is a drop in the bucket and is not equitable as far as funding for education goes. Poor school districts will not ever become wealthy. That is not our objective. What we are asking is that they not remain substandard and that they not remain impoverished."

COPS Vice President Helen Ayala, a graduate of Edgewood and a mother of Edgewood students, then stood and ad-

ressed Gib Lewis and Hobby: "We know that the speaker of the House can make appointments to committees of people who are sympathetic to equalizing education. We know that you can schedule the bill and that you can place it on the calendar. We also know that the lieutenant governor can do the same thing and that he can use his influence to increase money for education. What we want to know is — would you be willing to work with the COPS organization and sit down with us to form a strategy about which is the best way to put that bill through?"

Lewis nodded and was applauded. Hobby said he'd designated a staff assistant to work on the issue and that he looked forward to working with these groups in the future. More applause.

Tino Gonzalez then stood at the head table and asked Mark White if he would make education his "number one issue for this legislative session and put these requests for funding in your executive budget? Will you respond to that sir?"

White first responded affirmatively, then hedged. "We're working on the executive budget at this time. It is my number one priority. I also want to make certain you recognize the dual priority of making certain we can keep the lights on in the school. . . ."

Gonzalez then asked White if he would make education bills part of his executive package and tag them "emergency legislation." White tried to elude answering this question, too, saying it was under discussion and that he's trying to determine the "most effective means in trying to achieve those goals." White promised to arrange another meeting with these groups early in the legislative session. For now the examination was over.

"We Are Not Naive"

Sonia Hernandez concluded the meeting at 5:28, exactly on schedule, saying, "We know that the process required for passing legislation means negotiation. A lot of deals are made and broken. We will be constant reminders throughout the wheeling and dealing of this legislative session that you do not lose the focus — and that is the children of the state of Texas. We will be here every step of the way and we will work with you to make the COPS package a part of your executive budget. You must make something significant happen in the

next few months to equalize education. If you don't, you will be condemning our children to the same poor life that their parents have and you will have continued to maintain a permanent underclass in the state of Texas.

"We are pleased by what we have heard, but we are not naive. We are prepared to fight every inch of the way. There is no effort too great or too time-consuming that will deter us from reaching our goal."

With that the meeting adjourned. Mark White walked over to Sonia Hernandez's table to deliver a homily about a little girl he met while campaigning who only spoke Spanish and how education was her only chance. The bilingual educator listened intently to the attorney general. Then they shook hands, and White left the room.

COPS had moved the process to the next step — a meeting early in the session to plot legislative strategy. The officeholders, for their part, recommitted

themselves to a cause but escaped without committing themselves to any specific legislative action. After the meeting, Sonia Hernandez responded to this by saying that they were depending on Mark White to carry the issue forward as he has promised. They will meet with him during the first week in the legislative session in preparation for a state "summit meeting" on the issue in the first week of February. Regarding passage of COPS seven-point package, she said, "The guts of it is equalization; if we can get the increase, that will be a significant change."

While Sonia Hernandez spoke with reporters, the COPS faithful waited in the meeting room. She then joined Helen Ayala and Tino Gonzalez at the front of the room. Ayala told the group, "This is the best kind of Christmas shopping we can do for our kids." Gonzalez added, "You are the ones who make COPS." Hernandez said, "When we first arrived, there was nobody here. And then the

buses came and they came . . . I think they know who we are now. You know and I know that we will hold them accountable for everything they said here. We've gotten commitments because they have heard your voice."

A priest among the COPS delegation led the group in prayer, calling them "your newly transfigured people." To mark the season, the group sang "Silent Night" in Spanish and in English, the pomp of the Church reinforcing the ritual of the meeting.

The group then filed quietly out to the buses waiting in the darkness of winter solstice eve. They had met the next governor, lieutenant governor, and speaker-of-the-house. They had shown the strength of their collective purpose. They had exacted promises and advanced their strategy for equalizing education another step. They had insinuated themselves into the grinding processes of state government. They will return. □

◇ DIALOGUE ◇

North Dakota Notes

Byron Dorgan received more votes than any other U.S. Representative candidate in the country. (We do have a large district.) He even outpolled popular Quentin Burdick, a moderate/liberal, who was running against an extremely flawed Republican. How does an opponent of the corporations do so well? It could be that Dorgan did absolutely no negative campaigning. Every advertisement was a statement of his views on — railroad abandonment, corporation taxes, grain embargo, and so forth.

North Dakota passed the nuclear freeze resolution by 59%. Grand Forks Air Force Base, a strong first strike community, passed the freeze by 60%!

Congratulations to Ann Richards for leading the ticket.

John M. Perkins, 311 N. 8th Street, F, Grand Forks, ND 58201.

Rural Doctors

You referred to RURAL DOCTORS on page 3 of the August 6 issue that Dr. Sam A. Nixon informed you how the

medically underserved areas are being served or will be served thru educational loans to medical students. You might be interested that the federal government has had the National Health Service Corps which has placed physicians, nurses, dentists, and social workers in health manpower shortage areas for over a decade. When I left the National Health Service Corps a year ago we had over fifty physicians practicing in medically underserved areas in Texas, over 2,000 health professionals practicing in the United States thru the mechanism you have recommended plus a number of volunteers.

Dr. Nixon may consider the feds as competitors in the arena of finding docs for poor areas but the problem is much more amusing than that. Medical students who apply for an educational loan do so at a low interest rate. Federal applicants to the National Health Service Corps receive a scholarship, not a loan! Either type gains economically in the transaction. We (I don't know about Dr. Nixon) had some doctors who were more interested in the economic savings than in rural medicine. The easy loan or inexpensive education might just attract

persons who are interested in money. And then we are right back where the practice of medicine has a problem, attracting too many young people with a deep and often abiding interest in making money!

Enjoy the *Observer*. Thanks for that. Incidentally, Dallas has an office for its chapter of Physicians for Social Responsibility, phone (214) 688-2699.

PEACE!

Lawrence D. Egbert, MD, MPH, formerly clinical coordinator for NHSC Region VI (Texas and the four neighboring states), 3883 Turtle Creek Blvd., Dallas, Tx. 75219.

Schell Defended

Patrick Bishop, who reviewed several books on nuclear war including Schell's *The Fate of the Earth*, (TO, 8/20/82) may be an expert on criminal law but he is criminally ignorant of world politics.

He is generally favorable to Schell's argument but he objects that Schell's "solution to the problem of what to do

(Continued on Page 23)

Remembering the Alamo

By Steven G. Kellman

San Antonio

MARK TWAIN blamed the Civil War not on states' rights, the Industrial Revolution, or slavery, but rather the insidious influence of Sir Walter Scott. The pen can sharpen the sword, and it might have been a turgid prose style that also slew thousands in South Texas three decades earlier. Yes, Virginia, there was an Alamo, though its impetuous 27-year-old commander, William Barrett Travis, learned to read Twain's dread Scott in his native South Carolina. Beset by personal problems, Travis made his way West, to a dramatic role in that famous, and evitable, battle of March, 1836. Travis refused to heed General Sam Houston's sensible advice that San Antonio de Bejar was of little strategic value — its meager band of defenders could best contribute to Texian independence by evacuating and joining Houston's forces. Instead, as everyone but careful students of the event knows, Travis's grandiloquent exhortation on behalf of liberty persuaded every single one of the men assembled at the Alamo mission to die gloriously with him, fighting for a sublime ideal.

Song, story, and screenplay have familiarized us with the poignant scene in which Colonel Travis pulls out his sword and draws a line in the dust of the courtyard. For ten days, fewer than 200 volunteers have been besieged by Santa Anna's 5,000 soldiers. Reinforcement is now out of the question and military defeat certain as Travis considers the possibilities of surrender, escape, or militant martyrdom. "I now want every man

who is determined to stay here and die with me to come across this line," proclaims Travis according to the most reliable historical document. Every last man crosses that line, even James Bowie, who, suffering from typhoid-pneumonia, directs that his cot be carried over. And within hours, all give up their lives, without exacting an exorbitant price for them from the Mexican Army.

Yet, if none of the 16 surviving non-combatants — women, children, and slaves who remained behind locked doors and out of touch throughout the ordeal — had anything to say about Travis' linear bravado, how do we know about it in the first place? The fact of the matter is that one man, Louis "Moses" Rose, found Travis less than persuasive and lived, until 1850, to tell about it. Instead of crossing that line, Rose vaulted a wall and fled to the safety of Nacogdoches, where he opened a butcher shop.

Born in Ardennes, France, in 1785, Rose was a seasoned veteran by the time he found himself, at the age of 50, in that prairie mission in the company of strangers half his age. Named to the Legion of Honor, he had served with distinction in Napoleon's 101st Regiment during campaigns in Italy, Spain, and Portugal. Adept at survival, he must have regarded young Travis' histrionics with ample detachment. The misfortunes of war had exiled him to the wilderness of North America, but surely he had scant



Drawing by Gilles Chabannes

desire now to die either in vain or in a paroxysm of vanity.

Archival evidence in France and the United States documents Rose's peripatetic career. Nevertheless, popular and even scholarly accounts of the Alamo often ignore or disparage the cogent evidence that one defender chose to absent himself from martyrdom. Although very nearly razed in 1903 in order to make way for a hotel, the Alamo has since become a veritable shrine, a permanent reference point in the Texan, and American, psyche. Monumental folly or not, the Alamo has been preserved as a memorial to a golden age when men were capable of united, heroic action. Rose is a thorn in the side of that myth. To suggest that not every heart within the beleaguered mission beat in fervent unison is to be the kind of historiographical Scrooge who insists that "it is so" about Shoeless Joe Jackson or that Thomas Jefferson spawned illegitimate black children.

However, the existence of one lone dissenter, the alien Louis Rose, in later years taunted by neighborhood children with the diminutive nickname "Luesa" for his presumed cowardice, might rather serve to highlight the courage of the others. Rose made his choice and had to live with it, while Travis was pleased to

Steven G. Kellman is associate professor of comparative literature at UT San Antonio and author of *The Self-Begetting Novel*.

die with his.

Veneration of the Alamo assumed the proportions of a major secular cult in the 1950's, when coonskin caps became almost as popular as hula hoops. Both *Davy Crockett, King of the Wild Frontier* and *The Last Command* were released in 1955, and John Wayne followed these with *The Alamo* only five years later. Alamania, the apotheosis of a group of frontiersmen who chose to die resisting a foreign tyranny, was very much a creature of contemporary Cold War anxieties — a projection into the past of the doctrine that it was better to be dead than red. Only the most acrobatic of apologists could rationalize the harsh realities of Soviet expansionism and oppression, and dead versus red posed a vexing dilemma indeed. But a revisionist rehabilitation of Moses Rose might begin with a simple practical consideration; while some have been known to come back even from Communism, none, so far as can be proven, has yet returned from the dead.

Joseph McCarthy went down fighting what he characterized as the forces of capitulation. Yet the spirit of confrontation, and the tendency to allegorize the Battle of the Alamo, lives on. As recently as October 31, 1982, in a piece published in *The New York Times* under the title "A Critic Casts a Kindly Eye on Texas," naturalized New Yorker Jacques Barzun perpetuates the legend, proclaiming: "Texans rightly see that this heroic sacrifice is an exact parallel to that of Leonidas and his 300 Spartans at Thermopylae — it saved a nation."

One can quibble with the aptness and accuracy of the analogy. Greece was not a nation to be saved, but rather a macedoine of jealous city-states, few of which were sufficiently concerned about the territory north of Corinth to send more than token support to Leonidas against the Persians. The vast majority of the 6000 soldiers who began the defense of Thermopylae surrendered to Xerxes, the Santa Anna — or Stalin — of the ancient world. The bravery of Leonidas and the 300 Spartans who remained loyal to him is incontrovertible, much more so than the claim that their fatal engagement saved Greece. The Battle of the Alamo was also, of course, a military defeat for the forces of virtue, but many more such victories the Mexicans could not afford. And it is widely believed, on not indubitable grounds, that the loss of the Alamo so boosted Texian morale that it won the war for Sam Houston. His soldiers, according to legend, rushed into San Jacinto shouting "Remember the Alamo!" (Some evidence suggests that this is a retrospective fabrication of just how and why that culminating battle was won.)

W E, TOO, remember the Alamo, though memory was the mother not only of Clio, the muse of history, but of more wayward muses as well. Perhaps the memorable story of Masada provides a more instructive parallel to the Alamo resistance than does Thermopylae.

A mountain fortress overlooking the Dead Sea, Masada is the site where, in 73 A.D., 960 Jewish Zealots took their own lives rather than surrender to Flavius Silva and his Roman legions. Its excavation in recent decades has provoked considerable controversy over whether contemporary Israel suffers from a "Masada complex" — a conviction that the tiny Jewish state stands alone in a treacherous world fraught with powers dedicated to its annihilation. After the Holocaust, the bleak Middle Eastern landscape provides the stage for a desperate last stand. Newly-commissioned officers in the Israeli Army are flown to the peak of Masada for a dramatic induction ceremony, as if to remind them not to go gentle into the awful night surrounding them. With the cautionary fable of the Zealots, Israelis will never again fall victim to their oppressors without, like Sam-

son, bringing a cataclysmic finale to everything. And of course a nuclear device detonated by any Middle Eastern nation would mean just that for (at least) the entire region.

But meditations on the Alamo need not divagate too far if, as Mr. H. Rap Brown noted, violence is indeed as American as cherry pie. Outlaws have guns, and so do many others, as if the wild frontier had not been replaced by shopping malls in America, and even Texas. Have the lustrous examples of Masada, Thermopylae, and the Alamo degenerated into Jonestown? A freedom that programs us to self-destruct is no freedom at all. It is the permission to wander in any direction while in the aisle of a jet zooming inexorably eastward. Nuclear deterrence presupposes the hairy logic of Samson, and perhaps there is a more effective means of resisting aggression and oppression than mutual obliteration. Perhaps the urge to canonize the fallen defenders of the Alamo is as perilous as the cannon of Santa Anna. To the strength of Samson, join the wisdom of Solomon and the conscience of Moses. Scorn not Moses Rose; partial as his solution was, it might still have been the better part of valor. □

PLAIN FACTS ABOUT SIMPLE FUNERALS

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Adams' Pigskin Iliad a Flawed First Novel

"... a tall tale not a novel ..."

By Lyman Grant

BLIND MAN'S BLUFF

By Michael Adams

Austin: Imperial Palms Press
226 pp., \$11.95

Austin

Austin has a new small press called Imperial Palms Press, and it has published its first novel, *Blind Man's Bluff* by Michael Adams. I wish I could say that the press was off to an auspicious beginning, but I can't. Reading Adams' novel only makes one realize again the vast differences in a good book and a fair one.

The main problem lies in Adams' attempt to do too much in a short book. The dust jacket tells us that Adams "doesn't simply intend for us to laugh and wonder at the ribaldry and drooling cretinism of the Texas outback. He means to hold up a mirror to something permanent and commonly shared." But the opening paragraph illustrates the problem Adams experienced in accomplishing both ends:

The world was so small to us back then. Slightly aware of our own grandeur, we were not at all aware of the rest of the world. . . . We never realized that who we were and what we had been would one day become the infinite fuel for memory, whether looking back through romantic or cynical eyes. For we were engaging in, totally without our perception, a drama that filled us with feeling, but blinded us to understanding. . . . Our teachers couldn't teach us about concepts of determinism or help us see we were the products of an environment because we *were* the environment. In other words, we were ignorant asses.

Do we belittle ourselves and our pasts in

satire, or do we dignify ourselves in myths? Adams tries to do both at once, and fails, leaving himself with a tall tale not a novel.

Blind Man's Bluff is the story of Slat Threadgill, tenth grader and football manager of the Oakalie (Texas) Armadillos. Slat is a poor bumpkin, son of an itinerant locksmith who had hopped a train years earlier. He lives with his mother and a black couple, Oralee and Florence, who treat him like their own. But Slat isn't satisfied with his life; he wants to be one of Oakalie's chosen — hanging out with the football players at the Rattlesnake Den (where Oralee shines shoes) dating Oakalie cheerleaders. Just as important, Slat hungers for, but never completes, his sexual initiation. Slat's story is that of *initiatius interruptus*: first with Hummingbird, a Mexican whore who hums "The Eyes of Texas" during oral sex; then with Old Lady Hornaday, spinster school teacher who has tutored most of the football squad in the bed of her pick-up; finally with Sally Joe Humphrey, cheerleader and practiced tease. The story ends with Slat still uninitiated, but wearing the Oakalie letter jacket and exaggerating to a couple of freshmen his participation in the previous year's events.

These events concern the football rivalry between Oakalie and Copperas Cove, and it is in Michael Adams' presentation of these events that *Blind Man's Bluff* becomes a tall tale and not a "mirror to something permanent and commonly shared." Adams chooses to satirize this rivalry and by pretending it is the Greek (the Achaians) and Trojan War. Thus Agamemnon becomes A. A. Game, Oakalie's coach, who tries to lead his boys to football triumph and the recovery of Ellen (Helen) their mascot armadillo which has been stolen nine years ago by Frenchie (Paris) Lancaster. The prospects look good until Alec Lightfoot (Achilles) leaves the Oakalie

team, thus dooming it to defeat by the Covites, lead by Heck Lancaster (Hector). The County Judge, Hannibal Duce (Zeus), a bit partial to Copperas Cove, tries to put an end to the rivalry, but to no avail. The fights grow worse, and finally Alec rejoins the fight and kills Heck.

All this is bad enough, but Adams turns automobiles into chariots and football jackets into shields. Worse yet, Alec, who was baptized in the River Lampasas by his mother who was holding his penis, dies with a hat pin stuck through him.

I suppose it is in the name of satire that none of this is presented realistically — 18-year-old boys kicking each other's jaws off and no one mourning any of the three deaths in the story. After Alec kills Heck, for instance, he restlessly sleeps, dreaming of "nothing more than his glorious races at the track meet last year." And when Heck's father asks Alec to return his dead son's football jacket, he says, "I want you to know I ain't blaming you for last night. It was an accident . . . Thangs like that just happen. Thangs just git outta hand."

The problem with Adams' method is that with it he forfeits opportunity for real satire. The characters are not themselves but mythical Greeks and Trojans; therefore, they act in accordance to Homer's story and not to their own personality or culture. Thus, because Adams' story doesn't faithfully mirror anything commonly shared, he cannot satirize it. He can only make it meaningless.

Portions of this book are well written, some are funny, some tense, some tender — most of them dealing with Slat's story. But in the end they are lost because Michael Adams did not trust his material. Had he told the story faithfully, every reader would see how ignorant it is to believe in the Texas macho myth and how painful yet strangely inspiring it is to be an adolescent growing up amidst it. □

Lyman Grant is a member of the faculty at Austin Community College and, with William Owens, is working on the collected letters of Roy Bedichek.

Texas Oasis' Natural Treasure

By Steve Russell

Austin

Topical songs are hard to pin down for the uninvolved, in print or on records. To get the full flavor of the best Phil Ochs, Tom Paxton, or early Bob Dylan songs, you have to have *been* there. Tom Paxton's song about the cruel irony of Henry Kissinger's Nobel Peace Prize, Bob Dylan's portrayal of integration arriving at Ole Miss, Phil Ochs flat picking a Pepsodent commercial into the middle of a talking blues about the Cuban missile crisis — all these songs pack a lot less punch if you cannot remember John Kennedy and Nikita Krushchev eyeball to eyeball, Robert Kennedy and Ross Barnett likewise, and Kissinger's foreign policy at work in Chile.

Delightful as topical songs are in their prime, no one ever got rich and famous writing them. Some very successful performers sprinkle their recordings with topical lyrics, but recognition commensurate with their talent eludes some very fine performers identified closely with the genre, such as Holly Near and Tom Paxton.

Good topical songs require, in addition to uncommon wit, an uncommon dedication to something beyond fame and fortune. In Bill Oliver's case, for example, protecting the environment.

Oliver has produced an album that resolves the greatest difficulty of topical songs — the need for the audience to "be there" with the performer — by his selection of topics. Depredations of the environment are commonplace in Texas, and will be until the Sun Belt boom dies down or there is nothing green left to pave.

One side of Oliver's *Texas Oasis* (Live Oak Records, 3911 Ave. G., Austin, TX 78751. \$8 for record or cassette tape) is about Texas; the other side purports to

be for the rest of the world. But the album shows itself as a solid chunk of Texas before you even remove the jacket: cover by Michael Priest and Scott Van Osdol (respectively, one of several fine Armadillo World Headquarters poster artists and *Observer* contributing photographer); liner note by John Henry Faulk; harmonica, fiddle, autoharp, Dobro, horns, piano, banjo, drums and numerous contributory vocals by half the musicians in Austin.

This album is by Texans about Texas, but it will disappoint any remaining seekers of Texas *chic*. The title song has a bit of country flavor, but there is something for almost everyone here: traditional balladeer Bobby Bridger's vocal harmonies on "Song for William O. Douglas," jazzman Beto Skiles on "Condo," and Akiro Endo's excruciatingly beautiful violin on "Heartstrings."

There are a few cuts of unadulterated Bill Oliver on guitar, vocal, and pointed question:

*"Not so fast, L.C.R.A., before you
haul Bastrop County away
We, too, think about that lignite bed
We're soft in the coal but not
in the head*

*Not so fast, L.C.R.A., who's to gain
and who's to pay
Whose fortune do you hope to find?
Whose pockets do you plan to line?
Whose water do you plan to use?
Whose atmosphere will pay the
dues?"*

After a priceless rendition of "Condo" recorded live at an Austin City Council hearing, we hear an amused Mayor Carole McClellan: "Does anyone else wish to speak and/or sing in opposition? . . . that'll be a tough act to follow."

On the "rest of the world" side, Oliver takes up the case of a small fish that briefly held up a Tennessee Valley Authority dam:

*"Snail darter, snail darter
You may be small, but you're a
starter.
Snail darter, snail darter
Saving you was a dam site smarter"*

There is nothing fishy about the pointed question peeking between the lines of "Snail Darter March." How much economic advantage does it take to justify the extinction of a species?

*"Homo sapiens, Homo sapiens
Use your senses, Homo sapiens
Push your planet to the brink
Someday we too will be
extinct . . ."*

And does your answer depend on which species is on the block?

I asked Tom Paxton recently why he no longer sings "Anita O.J.," a song poking enormous amounts of fun at the grim reality of Anita Bryant's antihomosexual crusade. He replied, essentially, that Bryant has suffered enough. With her marriage down the tubes and her career not much better, it is time to get off her case. "Anita Bryant is not the problem," Paxton said, "bigotry is the problem."

Like Paxton, Oliver makes his points with humor rather than venom, taking on the policies of Interior Secretary James Watt:

*"A Grand Canyon boat trip to him
is a bore
What gets him excited is drilling
offshore . . ."*

Texas Oasis is everything an album of topical songs should be: Superb music, subtle and not-so-subtle-humor, produced just too late to cash in on Texas *chic* and distributed through the Lone Star Sierra Club just too late for Christmas giving. But for those who acquire this record, there is a musical appreciation of the beauty we must work to save that will bring tears to your eyes, and a hand in preserving the natural treasures of Texas, not the least of which is Bill Oliver's music. □

Steve Russell is a Travis County district judge and a former *Observer* contributing editor.

• SOCIAL CAUSE CALENDAR •

Notices on upcoming events must reach the *Observer* at least three weeks in advance.

CALC WORKSHOP

Clergy and Laity Concerned in Amarillo will hold a planning workshop, "Envisioning Peace in a World of Violence," **Jan. 15** at Mt. Zion Baptist Church, Amarillo, 8:30 a.m.-5 p.m., to plan CALC's 1983 program. CALC will also observe a peace vigil at Pantex **Jan. 28**. Call (806) 373-8668 for information.

DRINAN AT ROTHKO CHAPEL

Father Robert Drinan will speak at the Rothko Chapel in Houston on Sunday, **Jan. 16**, at 3 p.m. His topic will be "International Human Rights in Central America," and the role of the Church in liberation movements. The program will mark the Chapel's annual observance of the birthday of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. The program is free and open to the public. For information, contact The Rothko Chapel, 3900 Yupon at Sul Ross Street, Houston 77006; (713) 524-9839.

TARAL/NOW CELEBRATION

Plans are underway in Texas by pro-choice groups, including NOW and TARAL, to celebrate the 10th anniversary of *Roe v. Wade*, the 1973 Supreme Court decision that legalized abortion, by placing large ads in major newspapers on **Jan. 22**. The text of the ad will be an excerpt from the decision. To be included in the ad send a minimum of \$5 and your printed name, address, and phone number (which won't appear in the ad) to TARAL, 1200 Guadalupe, Austin 78701, as soon as possible.

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSEMBLY

The Texas Environmental Coalition has scheduled its next General Assembly for **Jan. 22** at the South Austin Multi-Purpose Center, 2508 Durwood, 8:30 a.m.-5 p.m. The meet, hosted by Central Texas Lignite Watch, will focus on lignite development and the regulatory programs that are supposed to protect the environment and the public health from the adverse effects of such development. Contact the TEC office in Austin at (512) 476-3961.

PEACE & JUSTICE MEET

Peace and justice groups from Texas, Oklahoma, and New Mexico will meet in Ft. Worth **Jan. 28-29** to form plans for a regional network that will work for peace primarily with the religious community. For information contact Diane McDonald, 5012 Stadium, Ft. Worth 76133, (817) 923-1776.

SWEET HONEY IN THE ROCK

Sweet Honey in the Rock, nationally-known black women's singing group from

Washington, D.C., will present a concert **Jan. 30**, 2 p.m., in Hogg Auditorium on the UT-Austin campus. The concert, which kicks off Black History Month (February) in Austin, is sponsored by the UT Afro-American Culture Committee, Black Arts Alliance, and Women and Their Work. Scintilla, an Austin-based black women's singing group, will also perform. Tickets are \$7; call (512) 477-9660 for information.

NUCLEAR WEAPONS SYMPOSIUM

"Nuclear Weapons — the Human Impact" is the topic for a symposium in Seguin, **Feb. 10-12**, at Texas Lutheran College. Some of the featured speakers will be Harrison Salisbury, historian and Pulitzer Prize winning journalist; Henry Steele Commager, historian and educator; and Simon J. Ortiz, Acoma Pueblo poet. The symposium is free to the public. Contact Phil Gilbertson, Texas Lutheran College, Seguin 78155, (512) 379-4161.

PAX: OUR CHOICE

"Pax: Our Choice 1983" will focus on the threat of nuclear war, the social costs of the arms race, and the role of the church as peacemaker. Some of the speakers will be theologian Dr. Robert McAfee Brown, Major General William Fairbourne, U.S. Marine ret., Congressman Jim Wright, and peace activist Cora Weiss. The conference is scheduled for **Feb. 17-19** at Colonial Hill United Methodist Church, San Antonio. Registration is \$5, some free housing is available, childcare provided. Contact Dr. Bill Harris at (512) 432-7875.

WOMEN'S HOTLINE

"Women USA-Hotline" is the number to call toll free from almost anywhere in the country to receive information on women's rights legislation and programs. It operates 24 hours a day, seven days a week presenting a 90-second recorded message that is changed every week or more frequently when emergency alerts are needed. Call 1-800-221-4945.

Progressive Organizations

The *Observer* has built up lists of organizations in Texas we regard as progressive. The editor invites communications recommending organizations for inclusion. We will generally run the listings for Austin, San Antonio, and Houston in one issue followed by Dallas, Fort Worth, and Around Texas in the next.

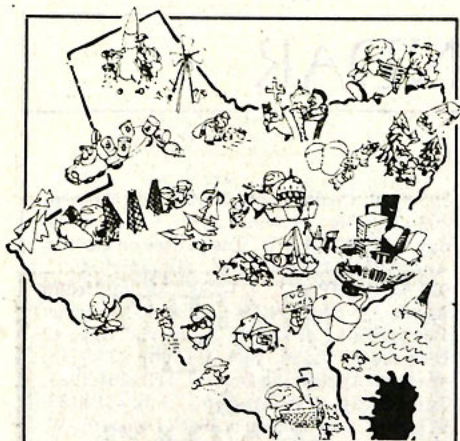
FORT WORTH

ACLU, 534-6883; ACORN, 924-1401. Armadillo Coalition, 927-0808; Bread for the World, 924-1440 (Dist. 12), 923-4290 (Dist. 6); C.O. Awareness Cmte. (COAC), 457-6148, 485-1527; Citizens for Education on Nuclear Arms (CENA), 926-3827; Citizens for Fair Utility Regulation, 478-6372; Ctzn. Party,

293-7129; Coalition of Labor Union Women, 469-1202; Dist. 10 Demos., 535-7803; First Friday, 927-0808; Ft. W. Task Force on Central Am., 921-0419; Ft. W. Tenants' Ccl., 923-5071; IMPACT, 923-4506; Mental Health Assn., 335-5405; NOW, 336-3943; Precinct Workers Cl., 429-2706; Senatorial Dist. 12 Demos., 457-1560; Sierra Club, 923-9718; Students Against the Draft (UTA), 261-1935; Tarrant Cty. Demo Women's Club, 451-8133, 927-5169; Tx. Coalition of Black Demos (F. W. chap.), 534-7737; Women's Political Caucus, 336-8700.

AROUND TEXAS

Alta Loma: Brthhood of Viet. Vet., 925-6405. Amarillo: ACLU, 373-7200; Pan-handle Environmental Awareness Cmte., 376-8903; Northwest Tx. Clergy and Laity Concerned, 373-8668. Arlington: United Viet. Vets. Organization (U.V.V.O.), 461-6453. Bastrop: Central Tx. Lignite watch, 285-4180. Bay City: Matagorda Co. Citizens for Environmental Protection, 244-1458. Bastrop: Central Tx. Lignite Watch, 285-4180. Beaumont: ACLU, 898-0743; Amnesty Int'l. Karen Dwyer, 420 Longmeadow, 77707. Brthhood of Viet Vets, 727-4873. Brownsville: ACLU, 541-4874. Bryan: ACLU, Box 4523, 77805; Brazos Society for Alternatives to Nuclear Energy, 822-1882. College Station: Gay Student Services, 846-8022; NOW (Brazos Co.) 846-2506; Sierra Club, 846-5985. Corpus Christi: American GI Forum, 241-8647; Gulf Coast Conservation Assoc., 991-9690; League of Women Voters, 852-6443; LULAC, 882-8284; NAACP, 883-2931; NOW, 883-4469; Org. for the Preservation of an Unblemished Shoreline (OPUS), 881-6308; Sierra Club, 883-0586; Tx. Pesticide Abuse Coalition, 855-7061, 387-2886 (Robstown); Women's Pol. Caucus, 854-1080; Women's Shelter, 881-8888. Denton: ACLU, 387-5126. El Paso: ACLU, 545-2990; Amnesty Int'l, 584-4869. El Paso Peace Coalition, 9524 Bellis Ave., 79925. Fredericksburg: Fredericksburg Peace Alliance, 997-3263. Gainesville: Organizing Cmte. for Nat'l Writers Union (OCNWU), 411 N. Morris St., Gainesville 76240. Lubbock: ACLU, 765-8393; Nat'l Lawyers Guild, 799-2714; NOW, 793-0582; South Plains Alternative Resources Coalition, 762-8950; West Tx. Demos., 792-5720. Midland: Brthhood of Viet Vets, 684-3768. Tx. Women's Political Caucus-Permian Basin, 683-3863. Muleshoe: Defensa, 272-5343. Nacogdoches: Alternative Views, 560-4363; Pineywoods Coalition, 218 W. Austin St. Odessa: Tx. Women's Political Caucus — Permian Basin, 332-8112. San Juan: ACLU, 787-8171. San Marcos: Students Against Continued Involvement in El Salvador (S.W. Tx. State Univ.), 443-8525. Seabrook: Galveston Bay Conservation & Preservation Assoc., 471-3119. Temple: Brthhood of Viet Vets, 773-7987. Texas City: Gulf Coast Council on Foreign Affairs, 938-1211x296/297. Tyler: Inter-Faith Peace Fellowship, 593-5650; NOW, 566-2705. Waco: ACLU, 755-3611; Baylor YD's, 662-6313; Bread for the World, 772-3135; CURE, 754-2008; GI Forum, 799-8712; 521-0439. IMPACT, 772-7006. League of Women Vtrs., 776-5432; LULAC, 776-0438; NOW, 752-5975.



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THE PENROD CHRONICLES

(Being some history according to the memory of one Scobie Penrod)

By Buck Ramsey

Amarillo

“BACK IN THOSE days the town wasn’t very big and if you had the habit of curiosity it was easy to keep up pretty well with what most of the people around town were up to,” Scobie was saying to me the other day. “About all you had to do was hang around downtown awhile in your spare time and keep an eye and ear out for goings and comings and news and rumor and you’d get a pretty good picture of what was going on.

“But I’d say the kid at the newsstand downtown knew more about what was going on than anybody. He not only had the habit of curiosity but the knack of observing, and he was able to idle back and take notice of things and soak up a history of the place on a day-to-day basis. In a way naturally come by, he just sort of made finding out what was going on a part of his work and play. But he was passing good at keeping things to himself — maybe because kids in those days

Buck Ramsey is a Panhandle writer who’s been collecting stories like this one for years. The first installment of his “Penrod Chronicles” appeared in the Observer of Dec. 14, 1979. The most recent was on Feb. 6, 1980.

were’n’t expected to talk about the grown-up world to grown-up’s, generally weren’t allowed to. And, of course, working at a place like that he was thrown in with the grown-ups early on, so he just politely stayed pretty quiet. But he liked information for its own self, gathered it in like he was hungry and it was all good food.

“A lot of the talk he picked up came out at the newsstand where no one paid much attention to him even while he was taking their money, but he also got around a good bit on errands and such, and on those rounds he was quick to learn the good places to gather information. It got to where he was such a natural part of the scenery, the men doing the talking would keep it up as free around him as they would around a brass spittoon. He’d meander unnoticed as a ghost through the drugstore booths and watering holes, the pool halls and domino parlors and hotel lobbies and such places as the office of the doctor who specialized in transplanting goat glands to men so they could have a better way with the women in bed.

“But there were a few noticing kind of fellers in town who saw in him a knowing and trusty sort of boy a man might put to good use. One of ’em was a gambler, the man, in fact, who wore the purple among the gamblers around here in those days. (It’s my opinion gamblers read character about as good as anybody.) He ran his game in a real fancy apartment just downtown. It was a popular spot among the rich men in this part of the country, and they paid mighty well for the pleasure they got from the

Drawing by Sarah Clausen

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place. And I've got to say, even though I was fond of that gambler, not all the money those rich boys left in his place was parted from 'em as a result of poor poker playing or the bad luck of the draw. Leif the Lucky would've died in his first danger if he'd had to face the odds those old boys faced when that gambler got good and ready to stuff his coffers.

"He had some way of steaming the seal from a boxed deck of cards — that was in the days before cellophane wrapping — and what he'd do was mark the cards and reseal the deck in the box. Well, without telling the kid at the newsstand just what he was up to and drawing him into some sort of complicity, he'd leave several decks of those cards at the newsstand and tell the boy to keep 'em apart somewhere to sell only when he sent for a deck. That way when a big loser called for a new deck not furnished by the house, the gambler would send someone to the newsstand for a fresh deck, in full knowledge the table balance would keep shifting his way. As far as the kid at the newsstand was concerned, that gambler was always a good tipper.

"He found himself another real good tipper one day when he was traipsing through an alley taking a shortcut on an errand and heard some ruckus coming from the foundation of a house — it was the residence of one of the prominent families — and his curiosity made him stop to see what was going on. It seemed to him somebody was banging from down below on a pipe vent coming out of the basement, and after a minute he put his mouth down to the pipe and asked if anybody was there; and sure enough there was. To make a long story short, it turned out the son and heir of the family had been locked in the basement because his folks had judged he was crowding too close to the public troughs of iniquity to uphold his station in life. Being kindly disposed toward the young man in his misery, the kid followed his instructions about how to get medicines for the sore spirits and started on a schedule of dropping a bottle now and then down the vent pipe, usually staying for a little chit-chat about the outside world. Of course, after the young feller down there quieted down awhile his parents thought their cure had worked and set him loose, but they locked him up again the first time he was too drunk to resist, and that happened over and over till his folks saw locking him up was about useless. The kid stayed good friends with that feller for years and years till he passed on in old age leaving a goodly fortune to his children.

"Well, you can see the kid at the newsstand was picking up pretty well on

the tastes and wants and wishes of the public and he used that learning, you might say, to serve the public in bigger ways as the years went by. His next job after the newsstand was at a drugstore. The cause for this was a grocer had gone bankrupt and the kid, knowing full well by now the habit a lot of local folks had in those dry days of stirring a little mischief into an innocent beverage, had bought up all the store's cases of high alcohol lemon and vanilla extract. Back in those days the drugstores all had soda fountains, and if a customer called up in the heat of day and ordered a lemon or vanilla coke on ice, the drugstore would deliver it. So what the kid did was apply for the first job that came open mixing and delivering soda fountain specials so he could turn a dime or two on the little extras he had come up with. Well, he got the job, and I probably don't have to tell you how the sale of sodypops in the drugstore soon became a booming business in itself. The boss was real proud of his little soda jerk, who before long was catering to such a big clientele he bought himself a motorcycle to make his rounds on. If memory serves me right, that was about the first motorcycle in town."

Scobie was quiet awhile, letting memory serve him, and I took the opportunity to ask him if the kid who started out at the newsstand, with his hunger and thirst for knowledge, had grown up to be a historian or if he had continued in the ways of an entrepreneur.

"A little of both, you might say," Scobie said. "He always kept up with what was going on, read a good bit to learn what he couldn't learn by watching and listening, and was all the while making his small mark in the business community. He grew up to be what you might call an average citizen liked by most and not by some. But I'd say the kid did all right." And Scobie gestured a toast with his jug, took a long pull and smiled, I thought, in a self-satisfied kind of way as he passed the jug to me. □

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Poems by Albert Huffstickler

The Aliens

*After we knew that we would not get
back;
after we realized that the ship would
not return —
not in our lifetime or the lives of our
children.
When it came to us at last that we
would die here
and the memory of home with us,
we set out to create a monument,
a memory of where we had come from
that would last forever,
a giant effigy carved of the most
durable materials,
tall as a tall building,
a mountain the shape of what we had
been.
We wanted it to take the rest of our
lives to finish
because then those after us would
know how important it was.
Days passed and years and the
structure grew,
the shape refining itself as the years
of our lives passed.
One day when all of us were old, we
stopped
and stood there, hands joined, looking
at it.
It was finished.
It was perfect.
Our tears spilled on the ground.
Then, out of nowhere, a crack
appeared,
stretching the length of it through and
through.
That was all.
It stood there firm as ever, the clear
surface rent by a giant fissure.
Mending did no good. The crack
reappeared.
Finally, it came to us that all
memories of home
are disfigured by hope and time
and, putting away our tools, we lay
down beside it
to sleep the long sleep.*

Pieta

*I wish I could remember the name of
the all-night cafe
below my upstairs room in the
Canyon Hotel on Santa Fe Street in
Flagstaff
where a very drunk Indian said to me
with utmost sincerity,
rising out of the murk of his
drunkenness to look me straight in
the eye as he spoke,
"You know what's wrong with people
today?
They don't have any compassion."
He'd just been called down by the
waitresses for abusive language
and she'd threatened to call the cops
on him.
"No compassion," he repeated
and his voice and demeanor slurred
back into utter drunkenness, his
head lolled
and he was sunk once more into the
depths from which no one could
retrieve him.
I rose nervously and walked outside
to continue my Saturday afternoon
ramble of the sunny streets of
Flagstaff,
stopping at the Salvation Army Store
to browse
and then at Good Will to buy some
reading material,
then back to my room
to lie on my clean bed by the window
overlooking Santa Fe Street and
drop off into a nap.
It is seldom that you hear a man utter
a word with his whole being.
When I dreamed him, he was tall and
straight as an arrow,
robed like a chief, his clear eyes fixed
on infinity.
"Compassion," he said in a strong
voice.
"Passion, passion, passion."
The words echoed from the walls of
the canyon surrounding us and
died slowly.
I woke to evening shadows
and the clear, desolate cries of the
Saturday evening drunks on Santa
Fe Street
in Flagstaff, Arizona, U.S.A.*

The Caretakers

They cultivated a still expression —
the young women of the Sixties.
Pensive and grave, they peered from
behind the mystery of their long
hair.
Treading serenely the No-Man's-Land
of the city streets,
they seemed the epitome of wisdom
and gentleness,
their rich bodies, moving freely
beneath the long skirts, the
ultimate haven.
It took a brave, reckless man to plant
himself beside such a woman
and, shaking his long hair fiercely,
defy the world,
force on it his music and his passion,
force acceptance of his small gold-
rimmed glasses
through which, eyes crossed
maniacally, he glared his
challenge.
Madonnas of the streets, they brought
us hope,
crouched in our two-by-four
apartments eating our Kraft
macaroni dinners.
The winter skies were vast (I love
you) and the winds came out of the
north
and we walked bent over
clutching our visions to our breasts
beneath our thin levi jackets
or hovered with a terrible patience
over our third refill
in coffee shops around the city
while the waitress' eyes hacked at us
like steel blades
seeking our vulnerability.
We dreamed then with a determination
that defied defeat
while the brown eyes watched us
gently
and the long hair stirred with an
infinitesimal nod of approval.
We live on those dreams still.
Forged in the soul's essence, they
continue.
Guarded by pensive eyes, watched
over with infinite patience,
they await fulfillment.
Winter. Austin. 1964.
Bright windows steam-fogged
in coffee shops along the Drag,
love a mist rising from damp streets
to fog the air as,
chilled, you trudged homeward
hunched in your coat,
having sat anchored
in shop after shop
(The Night Hawk, Hank's,
The Rexall, The Pancake House)
sipping your coffee,
reading messages in the air

of those bright, warm rooms
and others in the lights
on winter streets as,
burrowed in your coat,
you peered out, animal-like.
Cosmic. It was all cosmic.
You see that now
walking those same streets,
the buildings just buildings,
the pavements flat black,
flashing no messages
in the lights of passing cars.
It was.
Now it's gone.
And you sit sipping your coffee
hunched and forlorn
like an old drunk seeking refuge
from night's violence
and winter's cold.
God!
Was love really here
and we missed it?
Or is it somewhere farther on?

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What's total changes.
The partial endures.
Hold fast to the half-right
and you'll live forever
(witness the middle class,
television,
and recent American presidents)
The half-heart never breaks.
The half-ass sits on
into eternity unperturbed
by comet's fall
or love's dawning
across the distant dark.
Intent on itself,
the carefully casual
all-weather soul
contemplates its image
in the mirror of infinity,
smiles a half-smile,
trims its nails
while God looks on in horror
and the stars quail.

Albert Huffstickler is an Austin poet
whose work has appeared in Texas
Quarterly, Mundus Artium, the
New Mexico Humanities Review,
and other publications.

Dialogue

(Continued from Page 14)

with the weapons is idiotic blather about
'world government.' "

I sent my copy of Schell's book to a
son several months ago, but as I recall
it Schell did not argue for world govern-
ment. He merely said that any war can
become a nuclear war and the only way
to get rid of war is to get rid of national
sovereignty.

Schell is absolutely correct and his
statement does indeed imply the need for
a world government which would take
over certain sovereign authority —
whatever is necessary to keep the peace
and solve other world problems — while
national governments would retain
sovereignty over things they can handle.
In brief, a federal form of government.

The long sad history of our species
shows that people and groups of people
have never lived peacefully except under
government. Yet we have millions of
concerned persons who think we can get
world peace without government. The
truth is that leaders and publics will cling
to weaponry, however horrible, until new
planetary institutions of government are
ready and able to provide true security.
If this is too high a price, then we die.

J. P. Speer, 409 N. 6, Alpine, TX
79830.

(Mr. Speer is a former Foreign Service
Officer in Latin America, India and
China.)

Boll Weevil Blues

Congressman Gramm
For the Democratic party
You don't give a damn
So why not cut out the sham?
Don your presidential cuff links,
Dismount your ass,
Grab an elephant
And ride fourth-class.
Take the other boll weevils
Along with you, too,
The party doesn't need them
Anymore than it needs you.

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