

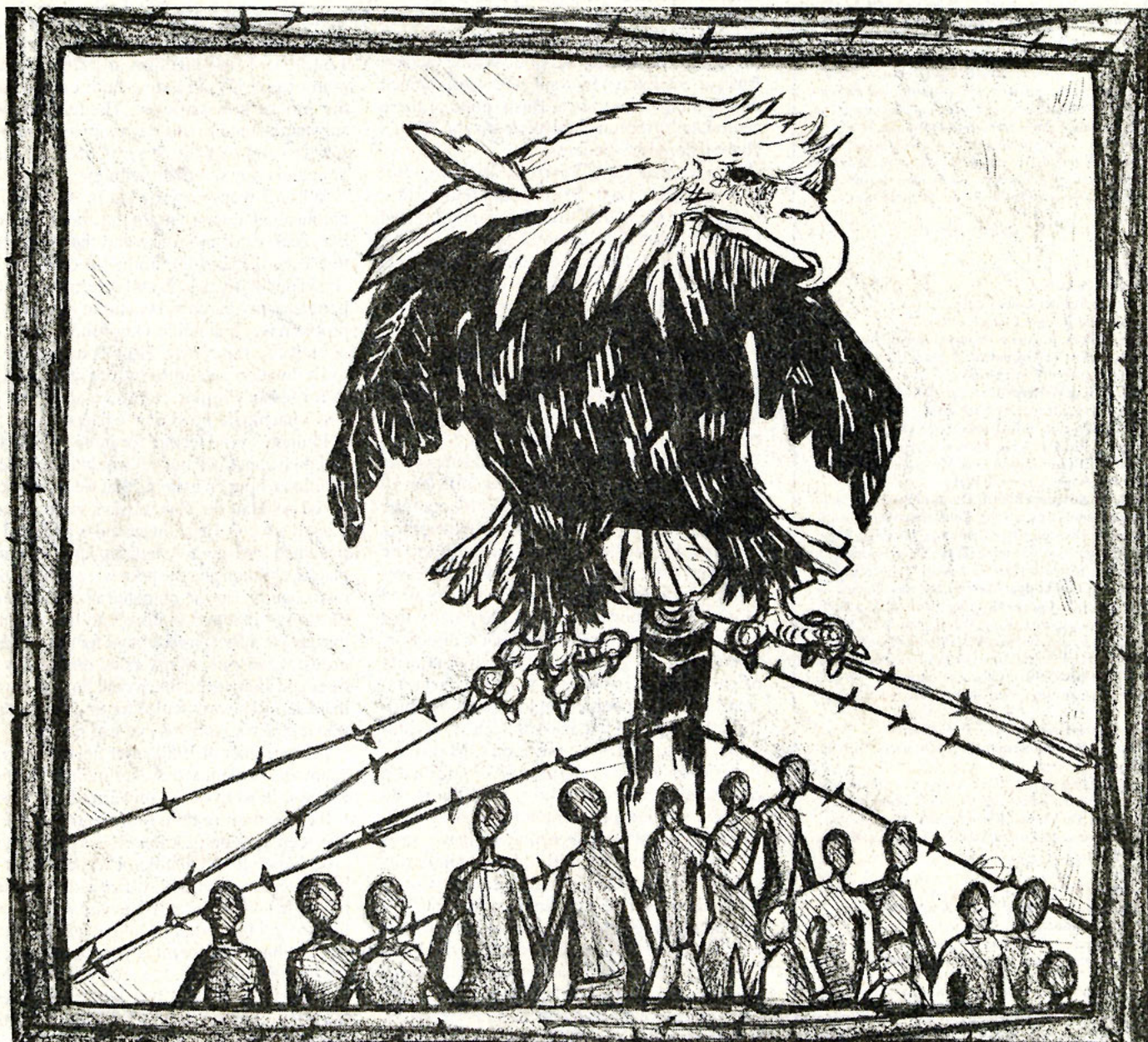
THE TEXAS Observer

A JOURNAL OF FREE VOICES

MARCH 13, 1992 • \$1.50

**PRIMARY
DECISIONS**

Pg. 6



Under Surveillance

The FBI and Central American Dissidents

New Broom Sweeps Teamsters

A Role Model for Labor Reform



A JOURNAL OF FREE VOICES

We will serve no group or party but will hew hard to the truth as we find it and the right as we see it. We are dedicated to the whole truth, to human values above all interests, to the rights of human-kind as the foundation of democracy: we will take orders from none but our own conscience, and never will we overlook or misrepresent the truth to serve the interests of the powerful or cater to the ignoble in the human spirit.

Writers are responsible for their own work, but not for anything they have not themselves written, and in publishing them we do not necessarily imply that we agree with them, because this is a journal of free voices.

SINCE 1954

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DIALOGUE

Democrats by Default

The Observer's mention (TO, 12/27/91) of the San Antonio Progressive Democrats' renunciation of the straight Democratic ticket failed to mention why we have taken this controversial, but principled position.

We believe that none of the current Democratic presidential candidates stands a snowball's chance in hell of defeating George Bush in '92. Even if by some rare stroke of luck one of them were to beat Bush, none of these candidates offers any real alternative to Bush's chaotic domestic policies....

The Democratic Party is anything but Democratic. Last May the Democratic Leadership Council (DLC) arrogantly refused to offer Statehood Senator Jesse Jackson the same opportunity as other leading Democrats to address the DLC conference. This same DLC that is pushing Bill Clinton for the presidential nomination openly espouses a more conservative party line, and is for the most part controlled by such multinational corporations as TRW, B.F. Goodrich, and British Petroleum. These and other corporations financed the DLC conference last May in Ohio.

We are tired of working for and supporting Democratic candidates who differ little if at all from their Republican opponents. We are tired of doing the blockwalking, the phonecalling and the other legwork, yet continuing to be excluded from the decision-making processes of the party. More importantly, we are tired of giving our money and votes to a party that has no clear or consistent ideological direction. The time is long overdue when the majority of this nation (workers, women, farmers, small business people, persons with disabilities, the aged, African-Americans, Asian-Americans, Native Americans, Mexican-Americans and other Hispanics) should have a presidential candidate who is truly theirs and not just another politician prostituting himself to the wealthy and corporate class.

Our solution? We will remain Democrats only until something better comes along. Fortunately for us and the rest of the U.S., that "something" is now beginning to take form and is being manifested through several different, but equally vital sectors of the progressive community: the National Organization for Women, Ralph Nader, the National Rainbow Coalition, and at least 5,000 trade union activists across the U.S. under the auspices of Labor Party Advocates. While these different sectors have yet to unify and consolidate their efforts, events driven by the people's dismay with the two-party system make such a consolidation inevitable.

So you see, it really doesn't matter to us what party functionaries like Bob Slagle or Ron Brown think. The majority of the people of the U.S. certainly don't care, as proven by the

declining number of people voting.

In Struggle,

—Frank Valdez, Co-Chairman,
Progressive Democrats of San Antonio.

Philpott Remembered

Many memories were brought back as I read the tributes to Professor Tom Philpott (TO, 12/13/91). I first met him in 1976, my freshman year at UT, in a nine-hour course called the American Experience. The readings were substantial, and to this day many of the books, *Hard Living on Clay Street*, *Catch 22*, *Native Son*, and others, remain with me.

When I was growing up in Abilene, my parents had always taught me about the horrible cruelties of prejudice and the inequalities that exist. When I left home for college I was confident in my beliefs and determined to treat people as my parents had taught me. The only problem was that I didn't know how many others felt the same way. How comforted I was to sit down in an auditorium of 400 and listen to Professor Philpott reinforce all of my parents' teachings. I had a new friend.

Philpott would lecture for more than an hour and then announce that he would lecture for an additional hour on material that we would not be tested on. Half the class always stayed. I never missed a word. He showed slides and read stories aloud. We saw how Indians, Jews, Hispanics, blacks, children and the poor were treated in our own country. He was outraged and so were most of us. We listened in horror to the atrocities that people inflict on each other for the most ludicrous of reasons. Many cried during his lectures and afterward a line would form to hug and thank him. I always settled for a nod in his direction after I was sure his eye was on me.

In December of 1980, after finishing my last exam as a student at Texas, I spotted Professor Philpott in front of the undergraduate library. It had been more than four years since I had last seen him, and I knew it was probably my last chance to say thanks. I walked over and introduced myself. He smiled and introduced me to his wife, who sat at his side. I tried hard to tell him what he had meant to me and what he had done for me. I wanted to thank him for all he had taught me, and for reinforcing my beliefs. He should have known that his was the first outside voice I had ever heard talking about dealing everyone an equal hand. I wanted him to know that he caused me to speak louder than ever of the convictions that we knew to be right. But as I stood there, "Thanks" was all I could muster. He must have known what I wanted to say, for his eyes were as watery as mine.

I'm sorry Professor Philpott is gone but with the same conviction he possessed I can assure you he lives forever in many of his students.

—Patrick Terry, Austin

On Raising Hell in the Primaries

Let's get this straight. Tom Harkin is teetering on the brink of elimination from the Democratic primary because he has swept only one state primary and finished second in another primary, while Bill Clinton is poised to capture the nomination because he has finished a strong second in one primary and a better-than-expected third in another. All of a sudden, Paul Tsongas, a little-known former senator from Massachusetts, is considered a leading contender because he won in neighboring New Hampshire, most of which falls under Boston's TV beams, while the victory of Robert Kerrey, a better-known Nebraska senator, is discounted in South Dakota, which at least is a full-sized state with distinct media markets.

It sounds as if the Democrats are headed for a repeat of 1988, when Michael Dukakis, a solid if unspectacular Massachusetts governor, used a strong showing in neighboring New Hampshire and the attendant Eastern-dominated press coverage to run away from the others of the Democratic "Seven Dwarves." Dukakis, you will recall, won the Democratic nomination, only to get his legs cut out from under him in the general election race by George Bush and his running mate, Willie Horton.

This time Bush is bloodied by a lingering recession and unkind cuts from Republican rivals, Pat Buchanan and David Duke, who combine taunts of Bush's broken campaign promises with appeals to latent racism. So who does the brain trust of the Democratic Party put up to face the wounded Bush, but Clinton, who is covered with festering sores of his own.

The line on Clinton was that he was electable, at least before he ran into the one-two punch of his past as a war-dodger and a womanizer. Liberals liked Clinton because he worked on George McGovern's campaign in 1972 and Mario Cuomo couldn't make the race. Blacks liked him because he is from the South and Jesse Jackson decided not to run. Conservatives liked Clinton because he was one of the founders of the centrist Democratic Leadership Council and Lloyd Bentsen opted out. As governor of Arkansas, a state whose most prominent socioeconomic contribution is the Wal-Mart, Clinton has shown himself willing and able to help business interests, even at the expense of crossing organized labor, but the AFL-CIO decided to withhold its formidable support from Harkin, the closest candidate the Democrats have to a progressive populist in the race, and watched him founder during the critical early stages.

Democrats have a justifiable fear that another four years of Republican control of the White

House will further solidify the conservative hold on the federal courts. They are desperate to elect a Democrat as president, and Bill Clinton has seen his opportunities. But Texas Democrats should think long and hard before they place their bets on the boy governor from Arkansas.

Maybe the lurid scandal over Clinton's affair with Gennifer Flowers, who says he got her a state job, will not do him in. Maybe the public will understand his decision to renege on a promise to join the ROTC and instead take advantage of a high draft number in 1969 so he could avoid Vietnam while maintaining his "political viability." Maybe his ties to Nicaraguan contra supply operations in Arkansas and his support for the Persian Gulf war and the death penalty in his home state will help make inroads with Southern conservatives. Or maybe, as Kerrey told Georgians, the Republicans will open up Clinton like a boiled peanut in the general election.

But President Bush is looking more and more like Herbert Hoover, with his popularity falling below 40 percent as the bills for a decade of Reaganomics come due. Democrats can afford themselves the luxury of raising hell this spring and voting for candidates they really believe in, whether it be Harkin, with his support for organized labor; Kerrey, with his single-payer, state-administered health care plan; or Jerry Brown, with his anti-incumbent campaign. There will be plenty of time later to sober up and plant Clinton yard signs in the fall. —J.C.

Only Son

I intended to write toward a conclusion in which I would say that "Bill Clinton's success must be counted in the devalued currency of American politics. He is a masterpiece of manufacturing, a triumph of positioning rather than positions, an encyclopedia of first pages and a political dictionary of few words."

But Andrew Kopkind had already said that in the *The Nation*. And, since Bill Clinton is going to win the Democratic nomination anyway, and George Bush will be the Republican nominee, there's a pragmatic argument to be made for getting behind Clinton now.

Labor lobbyist and organizer Dee Simpson is making that argument. Simpson, who works for the public employees union, AFSCME — here at the Capitol and around the state on political campaigns — takes the pragmatic argument a step farther. Bill Clinton, he contends, is not only the best candidate among the Democrats on the ballot in Texas this year. "He is," Simpson

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Cover illustration by Gail Woods

said, "the best of our generation." The best of our generation, that is, as represented at the top of the ticket in this primary election.

What makes Bill Clinton the best of our generation is his personal history — the history that matters: Clinton comes out of the civil rights movement, the anti-war movement and the McGovern campaign. And following in the tracks of Winthrop Rockefeller, Clinton set out to implement a progressive agenda in a backward Southern state.

If Clinton seems to have compromised his ideals over the past 20 years, it's because for 12 of those years he's worked within the narrow constraints of an executive office in a "third-tier Southern state." Judging Clinton by the standards of the national liberal agenda doesn't work. "Bill Clinton jumped on a bunch of very liberal initiatives in his first term and the people in Arkansas thought he was the second smart aleck," Simpson said. Then, at a particular moment in his career, Clinton understood that he had to be "of the people" he represented. "And among their priorities is not the repeal of the Taft-Hartley Act," Simpson said, adding that it's not a priority of the Texas electorate, either. That's for organized labor to do, "for us to do, with the help of politicians, but without leading those politicians to slaughter. ... If Ann Richards is going to run for president, are we going to say that she's from a right-to-work state so she's not qualified? Are we ready to say that the governors of 17 states aren't qualified to run for president? That the only Southern governor who can run is the governor of Florida?"

The labor issue, according to Simpson, is one of many "cheap shots" available to politicians from Northern states, politicians who inherited a tradition of organized labor. "What we're doing down here is Southern labor unions and we know what that's about," Simpson said.

The real measure of the candidate's worth is what he has done with the limitations of his office. "The most important thing Clinton could have done as a governor in one of those almost Third World situations — and we have it South Texas, we have it in West Texas, and we have it in parts of East Texas, and in inner cities in Texas — is to get the education system straightened out. Do what you can to provide for security of people in their homes and get the educational system straightened out. That's part of what Bill Clinton's done in Arkansas."

"We're struggling with it here. But that doesn't mean we're not people of vision, because we start with this difficult circumstance. In a Southern governorship, you don't run the world ... What you want to know is does this

NO, NO... HELP ME... NOT ANOTHER... SOMEBODY STOP ME...
STOP ME BEFORE I NOMINATE AGAIN!!



MATT WUERKER

guy have the character to govern? ... Does he have the character to put together the kind of coalitions to get the country out of this mess?"

Former Texas Ag Commissioner Jim Hightower is less enthusiastic about the race. As Hightower sees it, the candidates are all "decent human beings and any one of them could probably beat George Bush in the general election. ... After all, they're getting into an race with a President who has a one-third approval rating," Hightower said. But all are being cautious, listening to their advisors and following the polls.

Hightower, who worked in New Hampshire on behalf of the Ralph Nader write-in campaign and the Campaign for Financial Democracy, said he could support Clinton, Harkin, Kerrey, or Brown. Hightower expects that in the primary Democrats will "vote their gut."

However, he can't quite stomach the candidacy of Paul Tsongas, whom he described as a supporter of Reaganomics with a voting record in Congress that "wasn't pro-business, but pro-corporate America and anti-farmer."

The advantage Clinton has in Texas, according to Hightower, is that he has done some work organizing the state. Bob Brischetto of the Southwest Voters Education and Registration Project agrees. "Clinton perceived the South and Texas as important to him, lined up a campaign manager who's very energetic, Garry Mauro, who is doing his work here and is beginning to do all the right things in lining up the leadership among the Hispanic community."

Brischetto said the Mexican American Democrats (MAD) endorsement of Clinton is

"symptomatic of the work that he's done in working the territory. They [MAD] don't usually give that unanimous support ... the other campaigns just didn't seem to get started soon enough."

Clinton's Texas organization is built around the coalition that helped elect Ann Richards: teachers, key players in the Mexican American community, the statewide Coalition of Black Democrats and some labor unions. There's probably an argument to be made for voting for this coalition in the Texas primary. And besides, no one else is here. "Kerrey has said he wants to work Texas but we haven't seen him yet," Brischetto said. The Tsongas campaign, he added, has done little in the state.

Clinton's coalition might be broader than it is deep, but at least Clinton and his supporters have done their work. No one else has. The Harkin campaign is dead, Jerry Brown's campaign never got off the ground, and Bob Kerrey, draped in a bloody flag, is in Georgia exploiting the worst in the Southern character.

If all our wagers are made in a devalued currency, perhaps it's because it's the only currency we have left. For some of us two-dollar bettors, a vote for Clinton represents nothing more than lowering the odds that U.T. law professor Lino Graglia will be appointed to the Supreme Court. Bill Clinton's not our favorite son; he's our only son.

I set out to be pragmatic, and so I have. Yet there's something very sad about the circumscribed nature of our political debate, and Bill Clinton doesn't seem inclined to change that. "The country," Lawrence Goodwyn said a few years ago in Austin, "is lonely." — L.D.

Under Surveillance

The FBI Exposed in the Valley

BY ROBERT KAHN

Brownsville

BEGINNING IN 1982, the FBI conducted a secret investigation of political activists in the Lower Rio Grande Valley, sharing the information its agents gathered with other federal agencies and foreign governments. The focus of the investigation was Proyecto Libertad, a non-profit corporation and the major law firm representing indigent refugees in the Lower Rio Grande Valley. Most of Proyecto Libertad's clients are Central Americans detained at the largest immigration prison in the nation, at Bayview, 25 miles northeast of Brownsville.

Though the subjects of the investigation included attorneys, paralegals, volunteers and donors to the law office — as well as the Texas Farm Workers Union and its officials — the investigation focused on Lisa Brodyaga, an immigration attorney who founded the Proyecto Libertad law office in 1982.

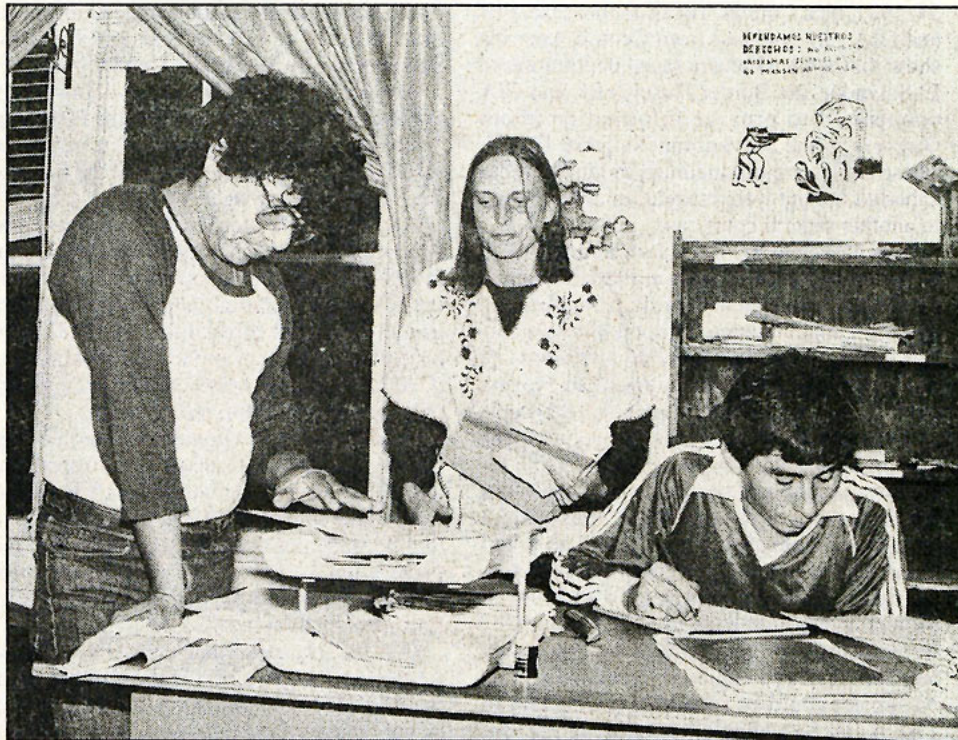
Information was collected on Brodyaga's reading habits, office finances, the license plate numbers of office workers and visitors, and on political asylum applications Brodyaga had submitted on behalf of Salvadoran clients. Not only was the information gathered for the FBI's use; some of it was turned over to the Internal Revenue Service and other government agencies. The Immigration and Naturalization Service, however, has always maintained that information in asylum applications is confidential.

Documents from the investigation, coordinated in the San Antonio FBI office, are titled "El Salvador-Terrorism." A May 10, 1985, cable to FBI headquarters in Washington, D.C., states: "No information has been received by the San Antonio office to indicate that captioned organization [Proyecto Libertad] is directly connected with any terrorist organization. Furthermore, there are no specific or articulable facts to indicate Proyecto Libertad [half line of text deleted] or in any activity in support thereof."

The heavily censored, 2-inch thick stack of FBI reports was obtained through a Freedom of Information Act request. The bureau wrote that it located 362 pages of files from its investigation of Proyecto Libertad. It released only 128 pages and blacked out more than half the text in those pages.

Many of the techniques described in the memos are reminiscent of the intrusive violations of First Amendment protections that the FBI promised to cease after reforms during the 1970s.

Robert Kahn is city editor at the Brownsville Herald.



FILE PHOTO: VALENTINI AVALOS

Lisa Brodyaga and two paralegals

Among the revelations from the FBI files are:

- An INS official at the Bayview immigration detention center provided the FBI with information from political asylum applications filed by Brodyaga on behalf of Salvadoran clients.

- The FBI reported information about Brodyaga to the Internal Revenue Service. (Sections of the FBI files are deleted by request of the IRS.)

- The FBI investigated the political views of a McAllen Monitor reporter after the reporter wrote an article about a Pan-American University public forum on U.S. Central American policy, at which Brodyaga spoke.

- The Texas Farm Workers Union was included in the FBI investigation after a TFWU organizer criticized U.S. Latin American policy at a 1982 Pan-American University forum at Edinburg.

- The FBI investigated contributors to Proyecto Libertad, including "an unidentified 'young millionaire' from Austin, Texas, whom [deleted] described as a 'liberal.'" The file states the FBI would "try to determine the identity of the young millionaire."

- The FBI also compiled photographs — all deleted from the files — of Proyecto Libertad workers.

An FBI agent in San Antonio wrote on

September 30, 1983, that Brodyaga represented Salvadoran asylum applicants "knowing full well that these aliens will ultimately be deported to El Salvador, thus keeping the UNINS camp busy and keeping the United States/Central American policy controversy alive in the Rio Grande Valley, Texas."

The FBI also investigated religious groups that opposed U.S. foreign policy in Central America.

FBI officials in Washington refused to comment on the investigation. "The information you received is information that stands on its own, meaning that any information that is going to be released, you have it," said Carlos Fernandez, spokesman for the FBI in Washington. Asked why the bureau investigated a law office, FBI San Antonio spokesman Joe Hanley said, "Most of this file is classified in nature and therefore because of the different reasons protecting it, will not be made available."

Brodyaga said she was most concerned that the INS had disseminated information from Salvadorans' asylum applications. "On one hand, it's disgusting, but on the other hand it doesn't surprise me in the least," Brodyaga said. "I am deeply angered, particularly with respect

to the manner in which the INS treated the asylum applications of Central Americans fleeing U.S.-sponsored terror and persecution in their own countries. Our government appears to have lied about this practice, lied even to the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals, in a case where we were trying to obtain guarantees of confidentiality for asylum applicants."

Brodyaga appealed to the Fifth Circuit Court the case of a Ana Guevara Flores, a Salvadoran woman arrested by Border Patrol agents on June 24, 1981, near Cotulla, Texas. In that case, FBI and CIA cables to and from Central America show that while Guevara faced deportation to El Salvador, the Border Patrol, FBI, and CIA cooperated to provide information about Guevara to the Salvadoran National Guard. These cables are not included in the Proyecto Libertad file but were introduced as testimony in another federal court case.

In an answer to an FBI cable of June 30, 1981, CIA deputy chief of station Fred Burger in San Salvador cabled to the FBI in San Antonio on July 1 that Guevara "is not a known guerrilla subversive.... [Salvadoran] authorities do not believe subject is identical to Norma Guevara, for whom they have arrest warrants. ... They stated, however that it is against the laws of El Salvador to possess subversive literature and she could be detained in El Salvador for possession of the same. ... El Salvadoran authorities requested that copies of all documents found in subject's possession be forwarded to them for analysis. In addition, if subject is deported back to El Salvador, they would desire to be notified of the date and flight number.... Perhaps copies of documents found on subject could be furnished the captain of TACA [El Salvador's national airline] for passage to El Salvador National Guard, to the attention of Col. Eugenio Vides Cassanova, director general."

The "subversive documents" found on Guevara were a cassette tape of a sermon by Archbishop Oscar Romero, who was assassinated March 24, 1980, while saying mass, a book on the role of women in the church, and "a leftist-appearing letter ... found hidden in her underwear."

Six days after the FBI received the cable in San Antonio, an FBI agent in Texas told the Associated Press that Guevara was a communist terrorist. A Border Patrol agent told the Associated Press that day that Guevara had come

to the United States to kill Salvadorans.

The AP reported on July 8 that Guevara "is thought to be 'Commander Norma Guevarra' ... [who] allegedly belonged to a terrorist group ... according to an FBI agent who asked not to be identified." This occurred one week after the CIA cabled to the FBI that "[Salvadoran] authorities do not believe subject is identical to Norma Guevarra." Given the chronology of the documents, it is difficult to avoid drawing two conclusions: that the FBI knowingly disseminated false information about Guevara and that it did so to stir up fear and hatred of Salvadoran refugees in the United States.

Attorney Thelma Garcia, co-counsel with Brodyaga in the case, wrote that the FBI cables "were reasonably calculated, if successful, to result in the death of my client at the hands of the Salvadoran government."

After the INS denied Guevara asylum, Brodyaga appealed the case to the Fifth Circuit in 1984. The appeals court remanded Guevara's case to an immigration judge for reconsideration in 1986, but refused to order the INS to keep political asylum applications confidential. (Courts of original jurisdiction in immigration cases are special immigration courts.)

"The INS said that it was not a routine practice to give information about asylum applicants to other agencies or governments," Brodyaga said. Since the early 1980s, the INS has said that because political asylum applicants fear persecution from their own government, information from asylum applications are kept strictly confidential.

Don Nielson, spokesman for the INS Southern Region in Dallas, said "If they're not using the name [of the applicant], then that would be very much within intelligence guidelines, to share the country information," with the FBI.

However, beside information from the Guevara case, FBI documents from Jan. 13, 1982 and Feb. 23, 1982, contain names of other Salvadoran clients represented by Brodyaga. The 1983 file is marked "documents submitted by attny Lisa S. Brodyaga Proyecto Libertad in support of Political Asylum requests."

According to Nielson, the sharing of information saved U.S. taxpayers money. "Oh, the confidentiality thing, our business is people, service to people. In this particular case, somebody else [the FBI] didn't have the information and didn't have to go over the same ground." Several notes in the Proyecto Libertad FBI files refer to the agency's investigation of CISPES, the Committee in Solidarity with the People of El Salvador, and the "CISPES spin-off files."

CISPES is a nationwide organization of activists opposed to U.S. policy in El Salvador. A lawsuit filed by CISPES in 1988 turned up evidence that the FBI had burglarized CISPES offices, planted informers in the organization, stolen lists of members' names, and may have provided the Salvadoran government with information about Salvadorans seeking political asylum in the United States. The FBI settled the CISPES case in 1990 by agreeing to turn over CISPES files to the National Archives.

"There were intimations that information gathered [in the FBI CISPES investigation] was disseminated to other, foreign governments,"

specifically to El Salvador, said Beth Stevens, an attorney for the Center for Constitutional Rights in New York, who helped litigate the CISPES lawsuit. (See story, pg. 7.)

The last entry in the Proyecto Libertad FBI file is dated in late 1985. Responding to a Proyecto request, the FBI wrote in a cover letter that the bureau had "agreed to transfer all CISPES related documents to the National Archives Records Administration." The National Archives has not responded to a Freedom of Information request for material on Proyecto Libertad.

Brodyaga said she is concerned that the 1981 FBI memo which states she "[knew] full well that these aliens will ultimately be deported to El Salvador" indicates that the INS had pre-judged Salvadoran asylum claims and denied them in order to avoid embarrassing a U.S.-supported government that has been widely criticized for killing its own people.

In December 1990, the U.S. government acknowledged that its political asylum policy was biased against Salvadorans and Guatemalans. In agreeing to settle the lawsuit, American Baptist Conference vs. U.S., Attorney General, the Justice Department agreed to give new trials to all Salvadorans and Guatemalans denied asylum in the 1980s — if the asylum applicants remained in the United States. The out-of-court agreement acknowledged that by deporting refugees to a country at war the U.S. Justice Department had violated the Geneva Conventions. The 1949 Geneva Conventions define forcible repatriation of refugees as a "grave breach" of the Conventions — which may be considered a war crime.

Since 1981, Proyecto Libertad has represented more than 12,000 asylum applicants, according to the office's paralegal coordinator, Jonathan Jones. The immigration law firm had represented more than 6,000 clients — nearly all of them Salvadoran, before the INS first granted asylum to a Salvadoran in 1986.

In that case, Karen Parker, a San Francisco attorney who specializes in international law, told an immigration judge at the Bayview detention camp that the Geneva Conventions define the forcible repatriation of refugees as a war crime. Immigration Judge Michael Horn deliberated the case for two years before deciding to grant asylum.

Proyecto Libertad remains one of very few offices that provide legal recourse for indigent refugees in South Texas. Brodyaga, no longer associated with the Proyecto, practices immigration law in Harlingen. Since 1978, she has led or assisted in virtually every major case that secured legal rights for refugees in South Texas. The file of successful lawsuits she has filed against the INS is as voluminous as her FBI file.

"While I still can be disgusted, I can no longer be shocked by the manner in which either of those agencies operates," Brodyaga said of the INS and the FBI. "Those of us who dare to dissent, or to defend the victims of the government's excesses are called communists and subjected to vilification and harassment. This is a price I have long decided to bear, in order to follow my conscience." □

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Under Surveillance II

The FBI exposed in its own words and deeds

BY LOUIS DUBOSE

BREAK INS, DEATH THREATS AND THE FBI:

*The Covert War Against the
Central American Movement*
By Ross Gelbspan.

257 pages. Boston:

South End Press. 1991. \$14

The FBI surveillance of the Harlingen offices of Proyecto Libertad and attorney Lisa Brodyaga were not isolated incidents. Nor is it likely that this surveillance was part of an operation conducted by "rogue" FBI agents — operating without the consent of their superiors.

In *Break-ins, Death Threats and the FBI*, Ross Gelbspan documents a coordinated nationwide operation of surveillance of U.S. citizens, foreign residents in the United States, and domestic and foreign organizations perceived to be opposed to the Reagan Administration's Central American policy. The surveillance campaign was complemented by series of unsolved break-ins, intimidation, and in at least one case, violent sexual assault, of opponents of American policy in Central America.

Gelbspan, a Pulitzer Prize-winning Boston Globe investigative reporter, stops short of concluding that the break-ins were conducted by any government agency. But though his story doesn't place the burglars' tools in the hands of FBI agents, it makes unmistakably clear that the collaboration of the bureau, or information provided through some government agency, is the connective tissue that holds together the two hundred-plus incidents of harassment, arson, death threats, assaults, and, most commonly, burglaries in which files were stolen while cash and other valuables were left behind. These were not, as writer Frank J. Donner writes in a foreword, "a series of scattered horror stories ... [they] must be recognized as unified by an overall plot to eliminate critics and opponents of Reagan's Central American initiatives."

The Proyecto Libertad case Robert Kahn writes about (see pg. 5) is discussed briefly in Gelbspan's book. It, too, appears to have been part of that overall plot. "The little girl was carrying the papers in her clothing, when customs nabbed her," Frank Varelli, a Salvadoran FBI contract employee, says in a routine phone call from Dallas to San Salvador.

"Perfect! Good work!" responds Salvadoran National Guard official Antonio Villacorta. Varelli's calls were, by his own arrangement with the FBI, monitored by The National Security Agency satellite system. They were also taped by Varelli, who seems to be a lot brighter than the FBI officials who, in the

end, hung him out to dry. The "little girl" was Ana Estela Guevara Flores, detained by the INS on the Texas-Mexico border and represented by Lisa Brodyaga, a Harlingen attorney.

Gelbspan speculates that the epidemic of "official harassment and covert low-grade terrorism" began shortly after the election of Ronald Reagan. Perhaps it was in 1982, when a New York woman returning from Nicaragua learned that she was the subject of a sudden IRS audit. Or perhaps not until 1983, when Milwaukee field agents began questioning Daisy Cubias, a Milwaukee woman working for a group called the Ecumenical Refugee Council. Cubias's run-in with her government was something more than interrogation; FBI officials told her, "You're going around with a bunch of terrorists and we want to keep you clean." Or perhaps the campaign began on Jan. 3, 1987, when burglars broke into the offices of the Arlington Street Church in Boston — on the night before a Sunday sermon when Rev. Victor Carpenter announced the results of his congregation's vote to participate in the sanctuary movement and provide shelter to refugees from El Salvador and Guatemala. Or perhaps four days later when the office of Rev. Timothy Limburg of the Christian Reform Church of Washington, D.C., was burgled for the second time in a month.

By page 33 Gelbspan's narrative has already reached California and 1987:

"In June of that year, Yanira Corea, a 24-year-old Salvadoran woman who worked as a volunteer at the Los Angeles Committee in Solidarity with the People of El Salvador (CISPES) office, was driving to the Los Angeles airport with her three and a half year old son when a car driven by two Hispanic men forced her off the road. While one of the men kept pounding and kicking her car, the other tried to pull her out of the door. Although she managed to escape, the man did get a book of hers containing a photo of her son Ernesto. The boy was so traumatized by the event that he did not speak for three days after the incident. Two weeks later she received a letter with her son's photo. The letter, containing petals of dried flowers, bore the notation: 'Flowers in the desert die,' a traditional warning of Salvadoran death squads. The following Tuesday, as she approached her car outside the Los Angeles CISPES office, a man came up behind Yanira and put a knife against her back. The man and two others (she later identified them as two Salvadorans and one Nicaraguan by their accents) drove her around the city in a van for six hours. They cut the initials EM (for the Spanish words for death squad) into the palms of her hands. One man punctured her

neck with a knife blade. Another raped her with a stick.

"All the while they kept interrogating her about CISPES, about her brother who is a union activist in El Salvador, and about individuals involved in CISPES. Her wounds were confirmed by both an investigating officer of the Los Angeles Police Department and a doctor in a Los Angeles hospital who examined Corea."

The attack was followed by a series of related death threats, break-ins, and one other abduction that occurred during a two-week period in the Los Angeles area. Gelbspan admits he can't directly link violence to covert U.S. or Salvadoran government activity. But he does provide careful documentation of FBI collaboration with the Salvadoran National Guard, and the three-way sharing of personal information among the Salvadoran government, the FBI and private right-wing groups in the United States.

What is most solidly documented in *Break-ins* is that the FBI, working out of the Dallas office, coordinated an investigation of U.S. citizens who opposed their country's policies in Central America. The central target of the four-year nationwide investigations was CISPES, and the central figure in the investigation was Frank Varelli. Baptized in El Salvador as Franklin Agustin Martinez Varela, Varelli had once preached to 100,000 people at a San Salvador revival. That was three years before he fled the country, after FMLN guerillas attacked his family's house. Their target was Varelli's father, Col. Agustin Martinez Varela, former head of the Salvadoran Military Training Center, former Director of the National Police of El Salvador, former Minister of Interior of El Salvador and former Salvadoran Ambassador to Guatemala. After the assault, in which six died, the Salvadoran government arranged safe passage to Los Angeles for the Varela family.

Shortly after their arrival in Los Angeles in 1980, Franklin Varela — who had adopted the more American sounding name Frank Varelli — was approached by FBI special agent John Esparza, according to Gelbspan. Varelli, a graduate of the Salvadoran military academy and well connected with the Salvadoran right, was enlisted in an FBI investigation of terrorism exposed by the author as an effort to coerce and intimidate opponents of Reagan's Central American policy.

Within the course of four years Varelli had:

- Traveled to El Salvador to arrange a secret pact by which the FBI and the Salvadoran government would directly share information, thus circumventing the CIA and the American Embassy, both perceived as unfriendly dur-

ing the tenure of Jimmy Carter.

- Compiled lists of Salvadorans identified by their government as being threats to the country's security. The list, by Varelli's admission, included not only names of suspected terrorists, but also of "liberals, socialists, and homosexuals..." and some who were placed on the list because of family feuds.

- Arranged a loose partnership with Salvadoran expatriates and the FBI, who together would work to discourage American liberals opposed to the war in El Salvador.

- Joined a number of peace-activist groups and participated in a series of meetings with CISPES activists — including meeting to organize a 1983 anti-Klan protest march in Dallas. (When he began the research the FBI com-

missioned him to do, Varelli found most of the names and addresses of advocacy groups in a single issue of *Mother Jones*.)

- Entered the headquarters of CISPES in Washington to meet with their director and sketch the office floor plan.

- Entered the headquarters of the Institute for Policy Studies in Washington — to gather information and study the layout of the office. (Both the CISPES and IPS offices were subsequently broken into).

- Compiled a "Terrorist Scrapbook" for the FBI's use, which included foreign and domestic suspects — including U.S. Sen. Christopher Dodd and Rep. Patricia Schroeder.

- Briefed FBI agents on potential terrorist threats, the Salvadoran left and U.S. organizations opposed to the war in El Salvador.

- Gained access to all passenger lists of TACA, the Salvadoran airline. Varelli forwarded the passenger manifests to the Salvadoran National guard, so they could intercept Salvadorans deported from the United States. The INS exclusively used TACA for deportations, after losing a contract with a U.S. airline.

In the end Varelli became disillusioned with the FBI after he began to suspect that they were more interested in surveillance and intimidation than tracking potential terrorists. (They showed little interest in the only potential terrorists Varelli ever located.)

None of this occurred in a vacuum; it all related to policy decisions made in and around the Reagan White House. And it is a policy that began, according to the author, in such documents as a 1980 Heritage Foundation report which recommended a restoration of extraordinary powers to the intelligence agencies — powers that had been curtailed after inquiries and legislation in the 1970s. Another recommendation of the Heritage Foundation was that intelligence agencies be allowed to contract secretly with private sources, and to be allowed to conceal such contracts.

The recommendations of the right-wing think tank became policy with Reagan's signing of Executive Order 12333. And Reagan's pardoning of two FBI officials who had authorized a series of break-ins against civil rights and anti-Vietnam War groups in the '60s and early '70s sent a strong signal to CIA and FBI agents who might have been concerned about restraints imposed on them by the reforms of the 1970s. One result of this change in policy was "a massive FBI operation which targeted more than one thousand domestic political groups and hundreds of thousands of citizens — opposed to the President's policies in Central America." The investigation turned up no terrorists and produced no indictments.

There was, of course, a Congressional hearing. Appearing before a House Committee, FBI Director William Sessions — who was confirmed director of the agency after the project involving Varelli had been terminated — said that he could find no evidence that high-level FBI officials had ever been involved in any CISPES investigation. "He must not have looked very hard," Gelbspan writes. "A copy of the October 28 teletype — directing the nation-wide expansion — was signed by none other than

Buck Revell." Revell had been the assistant director of the FBI.

This is not the only incident in which the author documents that representatives of the agency were either lying or ill-informed. Gelbspan is a better reporter than these guys are cops. His book is meticulously documented and the careful reader can cross-reference the author's citations within the book.

Like the best of journalism, Gelbspan's work here is both anecdotal and documental. Until he disagreed with Gelbspan, apparently over politics, Frank Varelli was a primary source. And the 3,500-page FBI file that the Center for Constitutional Rights forced the agency to turn over to Varelli corroborated the story he told to Gelbspan; Christi Harlan, then of the *Dallas Morning News*; and a Congressional committee. (The FBI files frequently corroborated statements and accounts made by Varelli which had been denied by the FBI.)

Think about it, though. Where else but in Ronald Reagan's America could a refugee preacher, fresh off the plane from San Salvador, include photos of a congenial senator like Christopher Dodd and a prominent member of Congress like Patricia Schroeder in a "Terrorist Scrapbook" for agents of the federal police force? In what other America and at what other time could an expatriate cab-driver whose house was "filled with Nazi-type artifacts, including books on Hitler and the Third Reich (never mind Wagner blaring on the stereo)" become a credible informant for the national police by making only one phone call? Could there have been another government that would include Houston's Lady of Guadalupe Church, Radio La Tremenda, and Ripley House in lists of groups that threatened the internal security of the republic? This, while the real criminals were looting the S&Ls and the evil empire that was using Ripley House as a subversive front was collapsing — and the intelligence community was the last to know it!

It's almost funny. But, in two passages that have nothing to do with our eroding domestic civil liberties, Ross Gelbspan reminds us that it's not:

"The most sinister aspect of the FBI's collaboration with the Salvadoran National Guard may lie in unmarked graves and obscure ravines in the small war-ravaged nation, where refugees, having sought shelter and a safe haven in the United States, were buried after being deported by U.S. officials back to waiting security forces.

"One sample of 154 political refugees, which was reported by the Political Asylum Project of the American Civil Liberties Union Fund, included 52 returnees who were killed, seven who were arrested, five who were jailed as political prisoners, 47 who were disappeared (fates unknown) and 43 who were captured and disappeared under violent circumstances."

Frank Varelli, whose story is more unshakable than the FBI's, maintained that the bureau approved "every damn call I made [to the National Guard]." If that is true, Gelbspan, a prudent reporter concludes, "then the Bureau has on its hands the blood of innocent refugees." □

This is Texas today. A state full of Sunbelt boosters, strident anti-unionists, oil and gas companies, nuclear weapons and power plants, political hucksters, underpaid workers and toxic wastes, to mention a few.

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Think Red Instead?

BY JAMES CULLEN

Politics being a perverse science, often the people who seem to make the most sense are the ones farthest from power.

J. Quinn Brisben, the Socialist Party USA candidate for president, is free to tell his version of the truth as he crosses the country in his quixotic search for write-in votes for the nation's highest office.

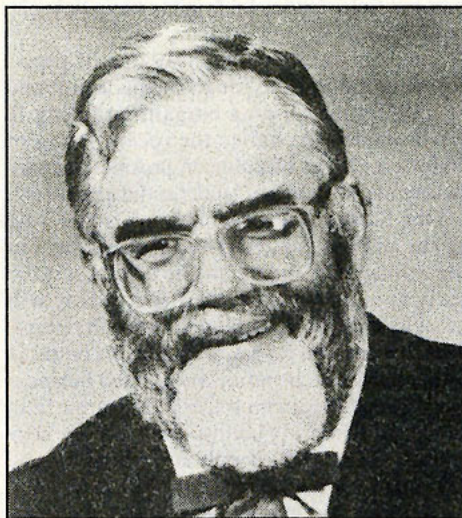
Brisben, a retired Chicago schoolteacher who resembles Col. Sanders, as played by Burl Ives, has visited 20 states since he accepted the party's nomination in September. One of his first trips was to Florida, where he spent three days in an Orlando jail for his part in a disability rights demonstration. On a recent Texas swing that took him through Denton, Fort Worth, Richardson, College Station and Austin, Brisben, 57, an Oklahoma native, had pointed comments about Texas politics and the cast of characters running for president in the two "mainstream" parties.

"I'll never understand two things about Texas," he said to a dinner group of 25 in Austin recently. "First, why you think it's necessary for the state to kill mental defectives who've been convicted of a crime, and second, why you elect so many of them to public offices."

Brisben peppered his remarks with similar one-liners as he outlined the Socialist platform, which calls, among other things, for higher tax rates for wealthy individuals and corporations, socialized banking and health care, more spending on education, public works to provide affordable housing for all, support for unions and family allowances for day care. He also called for universal nuclear disarmament, abolition of the Central Intelligence Agency and a drastic reduction in military spending.

Brisben believes health care is an issue whose time has come. He noted that a recent poll showed 70 percent of Texans want to see a new approach to paying for medical care, but Time magazine has dismissed U.S. Sen. Robert Kerrey's plan to create a national health-care system, which does not even approach the socialized health-care model Brisben proposes, which would abolish all fees for service.

He proposes a drastic reordering of the government's spending priorities, with more money spent on health, education and a public works project to build 30 million housing units. "One of the reasons we have to starve the health and education sectors in the United States is that we've been ... spending billions and trillions of dollars on weapons systems, and the best thing I can say for them is they're useless," he said. "Now George Bush, in his State of the Union message, said we won the Cold War. Well, dammit, if we won the Cold War, why are we still paying all this money on Stealth bombers and other things we don't need? Why aren't we building schools with that



Mounting a write-in campaign is "a tremendous disadvantage, given the state of your school system."

money? Why aren't we building houses? Why aren't we healing the sick with that money?"

The bailout of the nation's banking system is a good time to institute a central bank, he said. "If we're going to socialize their losses, why don't we socialize the profits too," he said.

His plan to put the nation's jobless to work building houses for the homeless is not terribly original, he admitted. "It's exactly the kind of idea FDR used to steal off Norman Thomas [the Socialist leader of the 1930s], and I'm terribly disappointed in the Democratic Party that they don't have anybody around today with the wit to steal ideas like that today."

That prompted another one-liner: "I've always felt friendly toward the Democrats. You know the Republicans will do things to the working people on principle while the Democrats will only do when they're bribed with hard cash."

Brisben supports the rights of democratic labor unions to represent workers, a fairly radical concept these days. A top priority would be repeal of the Taft-Hartley Act, which allows states such as Texas to adopt "right-to-work" statutes. While the Democratic Party has been campaigning to repeal the law ever since it was passed, he noted, despite Democratic control of Congress during most of the intervening years,

"that Taft-Hartley law is still in place."

American labor leaders are going to have to revive their demands for social and economic reform, soft-pedaled since the 1930s, when the unions embraced Roosevelt's New Deal, Brisben said.

"The workers are fairly sensible, and they know it's not really a democracy when you've got no choice except between George Bush and whichever Democrat wins the primary," he said. "They know you have a democracy when you can determine how your work is laid out and how you do it. So it's not enough to have a political democracy; it's got to be an economic democracy too."

Even the Democratic candidate closest to organized labor, Tom Harkin, has felt the need to tone down his rhetoric, Brisben said. "He used to be in favor of a progressive income tax ... [but] Tom Harkin told the Des Moines Register a couple months ago that he didn't want to be known as the 'soak the rich' candidate. I sent a letter immediately to that paper, applying for the vacancy."

Brisben dismisses the fear that a vote for a Socialist candidate may help elect a Republican, even with the threat of further stacking of the U.S. Supreme Court with conservatives.

"I wouldn't worry too much about one or two more reactionary judges," he said. "I think it would be a disaster if Roe vs. Wade [the landmark decision establishing abortion rights] were repealed, but in a way I'd kind of like to see everybody go out there and raise some hell with their representatives and their senators to get protection for abortion rights in the law."

Mounting a write-in campaign is "a tremendous disadvantage, given the state of your school system in a lot of areas," he quipped, but he has little choice as Texas allows only one month after the regular primary elections for independent candidates seeking to get on the general election ballot to collect more than 58,000 signatures from registered voters who have not participated in either the Democratic or Republican primary.

The low-tech campaign has Brisben and his wife travelling by car and usually bunking at the homes of fellow Socialists. Brisben joked that George Bush probably spends more on his hairdresser than Brisben will spend on the entire campaign. And response sometimes comes from unlikely places, such as the punk rock fanzine, Maximum Rock and Roll, which generated interest when it reported his comment, "We don't need new drug laws, we need better reasons to stay sober."

In his parting shot, Brisben said the two major political parties reminded him of a remark attributed to Tallulah Bankhead as she watched a bride and groom stroll down the aisle: "I've had them both, and they're awful." □

Role Model: Teamsters

BY JAMES CULLEN

The victory of a reformist Teamster slate in elections supervised by the federal government has encouraged reform movements that hope to democratize other labor unions.

A slate headed by Ron Carey, a former UPS driver from New York, swept the top 16 offices in the International Brotherhood of Teamsters, the nation's second-largest union, with 1.55 million members. Carey's victory, aided by more than 16 years of work by the Teamsters for a Democratic Union, is a model for reformers in the United Auto Workers, the United Food and Commercial Workers and the United Paperworkers International Union, all of whom are mounting challenges in their respective unions. All share the hope of instituting one-member, one-vote elections for union officials and of ending what they see as sweetheart deals with employers.

In the case of the Teamsters, the rank and file watched as three of their last five presidents were jailed on charges ranging from tampering with union pension funds to bribery of public officials. Members also resented the lavish salaries of union executives, as 154 Teamster officials made more than \$100,000 each in 1990.

Teamsters for a Democratic Union got its break after the U.S. Justice Department filed an anti-racketeering lawsuit against the union leadership and a federal court appointed an administrative panel to oversee the union. When Teamster officials, facing possible criminal prosecution, agreed in 1989 to changes in the union's bylaws, including the one-member, one-vote election in 1991, Carey saw his opportunity. Although not a member of TDU, Carey had a reputation for integrity as well as support for rank-and-file members, and he relied on the organization's support as he campaigned for the next two years.

In the election, tallied in December, Carey's slate carried 48.5 percent of the vote, doing best in the South and West, but carrying the East and Central regions as well. The second-place finisher with 33 percent was R.V. Durham, the hand-picked successor to outgoing international President William McCarthy. Walter Shea, a former presidential assistant, finished third with 18.3 percent. Only 28 percent of members voted.

The election also brought the first woman to the executive board in Diana Kilmury of British Columbia, and the first Hispanic in John Riojas of San Antonio, bringing hopes that the union would pay more attention to the issues of minorities and working women.

Carey has promised to bring democracy and aggressively pro-worker unionism to the union. He cut the president's salary by 22 percent, to \$175,000 a year, and promised to end the practice of paying executive board mem-

bers multiple salaries for holding more than one union office.

Carey also faces the challenge of transforming the middle ranks of the union and rebuilding the union's bargaining strength. He promised to change the recent string of endorsements of Republican presidential candidates and support pro-labor candidates instead.

Don Stone, TDU organizer in Detroit, said Texas and the South were early supporters of the reform movement, but he said it was too early to tell how much resistance Carey will meet as he tries to implement those reforms. TDU has pressed for majority rule on contracts, increased strike benefits and elected business agents, and Stone expects the TDU to grow from the approximately 10,000 members it now claims. "Many more people are coming out and are curious about Teamsters for a Democratic Union," he said, particularly since the intimidation that reformers experienced in the past has been curtailed. "They want to know their rights. They're hungry for information," he said.

"One had to only be at the IBT convention in Orlando to witness that the spirit was just fantastic compared to conventions in the past, where our people were beat up, and booed, and spit on, and everything else. It's a new day in this Teamsters union, and it's good for all Teamsters. It's even good for those who are opposing it. They just don't know it."

Tom Salinas, a TDU member in San Antonio-based local 657, attributed the low turnout in the election to cynicism about the possibility for real reform, but he hopes rank and file members will seize the opportunity to democratize their locals.

Salinas ran as a reform candidate for 28 years, but finally won election as a delegate after the feds took over. He sees the opportunity for minorities, who until now were given token jobs with the unions.

"Durham lost the election because he relied on the officials to carry the ball. Carey won because he relied on the rank and file." Of the remaining old-liners, Salinas said, "Some are bitter, but hopefully once Carey talks with them he can change some minds."

He added, "We don't underestimate the work needed to get things done, but we're happy at the opportunity."

Reform drives auto workers

Jerry Tucker, a United Auto Workers (UAW) reformer from St. Louis, is running for president of the international union against longtime incumbent Owen Bieber.

One of the priorities of the three-year-old New Directions movement, which Tucker helped organize, is to get direct voting by the

800,000 union members for the international president, instead of sending delegates to a convention, which then selects the international officers.

"Ron Carey's recent victory with the Teamsters, thanks to the long years of work by the TDU, has made that seem a lot more real to people in the UAW," Tucker said. "I think there's little doubt that if we had (direct voting) today, that Owen Bieber and the national leadership would be on their way out."

Tucker said the success of the Teamsters reform movement has helped UAW New Directions grow to approximately 7,000 on its mailing lists. He noted that locals with a combined membership of 80,000 have elected New-Direction-affiliated presidents, including Carroll Butler, president of Local 848, with 5,000 members, mainly at the LTV plant in Grand Prairie.

Butler's local has worked out the problems it had with the international union leadership in 1984 and 1985, when local union officials complained the international officers were not supporting their efforts to beat back concessions the management sought. Butler believes the international officers have become more responsive to local units, but he still supports the New Directions efforts to democratize the union.

With the prospect of defense cuts, Butler's local also is concerned about the union's role in avoiding cutbacks. "I hear a little about what's going on in Arlington, and the international hasn't been very vocal at all about the way the company is going about it," he said before GM announced its decision to keep the Arlington plant open (see accompanying article, "Whipsawed at the UAW").

Butler does not expect Tucker to win the presidency at the national convention in June. "You've got to beat an incumbent, and that's pretty hard to do in this union," he said. But he sees better prospects for a change in the voting, which could allow direct elections in 1995.

Tucker said Texas locals generally have supported the reform movement, including the Arlington GM local, before it became preoccupied with saving the plant.

"I think generally across the country people are getting more and more angry, which, rather than hurt, it helps our efforts to reform the union, because the anger is looking for an outlet, and one of the things we have stood for all along and now find greater resonance in is the voting rights of the membership."

Reform in the Piney Woods

John Anthony of Naples, president of Texarkana-based local 1149 of the United Paperworkers, is running for president of the

Nashville-based union, which has 200,000 members in the United States and Canada.

"We're going to have a reform platform — much like what they had in the Teamsters election," Anthony said. Reformers have been talking about mounting a campaign since the spring of 1991, he said. When they failed to come up with a better-known name, Anthony decided to run himself as president against the incumbent, Wayne Glenn. Anthony hopes reformers will run for offices in every region. "We're going in with the knowledge that incumbents are going to be hard to uproot, because they have the freedom to travel and access to membership lists, but it's like everything else — the rank and file is like the whole country in wanting a change at the top," Anthony said.

Rank-and-file members were bitter at the lack of leadership from the international during a bitter 18-month strike at International Paper

plants in Pennsylvania, Maine and Wisconsin, which resulted in the decertification of two union locals. "We lost 2,300 members to permanent replacement," Anthony said. Like many other locals working on expired contracts, Anthony's own local is working on a contract that expired in November 1991. Anthony said many of the companies have adopted confrontational tactics, seeking concessions from the union and seeing little need to bargain in good faith after 12 years of Republican administration of labor laws.

"Ever since 1980, when Reagan replaced the air traffic controllers, it's been open season on strikers. The [National Labor Relations Board] has been useless," he said.

Anthony said the reformers are not radicals. "We're not Wobblies [referring to an early Socialist trade union]; we're just working guys, but I just think somebody has to go out and make the union more democratic. What it's

going to take is a reorganization from the inside; nobody's going to come down from Nashville, off the mountain, and help us out," he said.

Familiar complaints from food workers

A similar reform movement is brewing in the United Food and Commercial Workers union, where Lewie Anderson, former director of the packinghouse group of the UFCW, organized REAP (Research Education Advocacy People) in 1989 to support changes in the 1.3-million-member union.

While union members, mainly in grocery stores and meat-packing plants, have absorbed contract concessions, their officers have treated themselves to lavish salaries and perks, Tucker said. He noted that International President William Wynn received \$263,000 in 1990, and the average salary of presidents of

Whipsawed at the UAW

United Auto Workers officials played down reports of conflicts between its union local at Arlington's General Motors plant and a UAW officer in Detroit who threatened to veto any concessions the local may have made to keep the plant open, after the Arlington plant won the closely-watched contest.

Stephen Yokich, a UAW vice president and director of its GM Department, on Feb. 25 accused the carmaker of "whipsawing" the Arlington plant against one at Willow Run, near Ypsilanti, Mich., in an attempt to force concessions from the union. Yokich said the union could strike at supplier plants to stop GM from putting in a third shift at Arlington to accommodate the movement of work from the Michigan plant. Yokich backed off the threats after Mike Seiler, shop chairman at UAW local 276, which represents 3,450 hourly workers at the Arlington GM plant, explained that the local made no concessions and does not plan to go beyond the UAW national agreement with GM, which runs through 1993. "I've been a union rep 24 years and I'm not going outside a national agreement," Seiler said. "But I am going to use it to the extreme and I'm going to stretch the hell out of it."

GM chairman Robert Stempel on Feb. 24 announced the Willow Run plant and 11 others with 16,000 employees would be closed in the first phase of a reorganization that will eliminate 74,000 jobs.

Jerry Tucker, a UAW dissident from St. Louis, dismissed Yokich's threat as "bluster and blow" after a decade of concessions promoted by the UAW leadership. Tucker, organizer for New Directions in the United Auto Workers, is running for president of the 800,000-member international union against incumbent Owen Bieber.

"They've permitted whipsawing of that very

type to go on for eight years, but they weren't as visible as what went on between Arlington and Ypsilanti," said Tucker, who opposed UAW-sponsored concessions when he was a director of the region that includes Texas.

Since 1987, the Arlington plant has operated under the "team concept," where six to eight assembly-line workers operate as a team, which allows them input into how their jobs are set up to increase productivity, Seiler said. The point of controversy was whether workers would be called to work four 10-hour shifts without overtime pay. Seiler said there was no concession.

While Yokich criticized the purported Arlington deal, Tucker said the UAW had approved a similar work plan at Lordstown, Ohio. Tucker also said the Michigan workers were prepared to match Arlington's concessions in their last-ditch attempt to save their plant. "I sympathize with the workers who have been whipsawed, but if anything it shows we should stay away from so-called partnerships with GM, Ford and Chrysler," which the UAW has promoted since 1984, Tucker said.

"In the historic sense of labor v. capitalism, there's plenty of instances of workers being lured into cooperation with management, only to be victimized by the corporate agenda," Tucker said. While carmakers have been pitting American plants against each other, they have been moving production outside of the country, where wages are lower, he said.

"Arlington winds up being the gateway to low-wage production in Mexico," he said. Mexico already has 33 GM plants (See "General Motors Grows in Mexico," TO 2/28/92). While most of the Mexican plants supply parts for assembly at American sites,

Tucker expects more assembly to move south as well.

"Somewhere along the line we have to get off the downward spiral," he said. By replacing the current leadership, he said, "At least we can begin with a fresh start and people who are committed to basic unionism."

To prevent lawoffs, Tucker would eliminate overtime where possible. He noted that European and Japanese workers are reducing their work hours, with German carmakers looking at a 35-hour week, while the UAW has proposed a 50-hour work week at GM's Saturn plant. The union could save 20,000 jobs by reclaiming nine paid-absence days it gave up in 1982, he said.

"Workers are awfully afraid of the possible loss of jobs, and they're faced with a major restructuring of the auto industry, but already we're feeling the impact of shifting jobs out of the country," he said. "The free-trade agreement will enhance that," but he added that he does not blame Mexico for seeking the plants. "These are U.S.-based corporations making these moves and no one in national political life seems likely to challenge them."

Seiler sees cooperation with the company — without surrendering — as the wave of the future. "I think it's the only way to survive and make it a better place to work," he said.

Seiler said he hated to see jobs lost, but when GM announced its plans to close plants, "We stepped up and we started making things happen." He also said he supports Bieber and the incumbent leadership in the election. "We need to have more involvement and we need to help drive the train; we don't need to sit back and let the train wreck and then holler," he said. "If this corporation and this union don't change with the times, we're all going to lose our jobs."

—J.C.

the 50 largest UFCW locals in 1990 was \$110,000.

"There's a real problem with leadership accountability to the members," said Tucker, an unpaid international vice president and business agent of local 304 in Sioux Falls, S.D. Like the other reformers, he is pushing for direct election of officers.

"Both groups [retail and meat packers] are taking a terrible beating," he said. "We have the highest paid international officers in the labor movement, or at least among the highest paid ... and they have a record established of being one of the leading concessionary unions in the labor movement, with at one time as much as 80 percent of its membership being forced into concessions.... We're talking about people who in many cases are not a hell of a lot above the federal poverty level to start with and end up with concessions."

REAP claims 5,000 members, but he admitted there is little organized support in Texas. "The local unions down in Texas, at least at this point, seem to be in line with the international leadership," he said. "We do have rank and file members in Texas, particularly in the Dallas area, but in leadership, not so far."

Anderson believes the time is ripe for a challenge. "I think the Teamsters is just the top of the iceberg of what's yet to come," he said. "It can be done. ... The Miners for Democracy did it in the mid-to-late 70s after a very bitter battle. In fact, one of the reformists, [Jock] Yablonski, was killed in the process of trying to reform that union, and that membership now has the right to vote for their international officers."

"It's a long and a very difficult struggle, but my sense of it is that in this [UFCW] union ... things have gotten so bad as it relates to the

membership, their economic situation, the type of representation they're getting, the insensitivity of their leaders, that it's easier to push for reform than it has been in the past. We see a real upsurge in enthusiasm ..."

Jim Woodward, editor of Labor Notes, an

independent union magazine in Detroit, wrote that even in unions where the leadership is less remote from the membership, the need for reform is evident. "The job is clear. The need is immense. And we have a great example to inspire us. Let's get on with it ..." □

OK With OCAW

Saudi Arabian plans to buy a half-interest in Fina Inc. may be good news for employees at two Fina refineries in Texas, if joint ownership of Star Enterprises, another Saudi joint venture, is any indicator.

Earlier this month, oil industry newsletters reported that a group of private Saudi investors was close to an agreement to buy one-half the refining and marketing system of Fina Inc., which operates refineries in Port Arthur and Big Spring.

In 1988, the Saudi national oil company, Aramco, bought one-half of Texaco's refining and marketing system in 23 Eastern and Gulf Coast States. One of the Texaco refineries, renamed Star Enterprises, is in Port Arthur, and Jerry Sparks, chairman of the Star Enterprises group of local 4-23 of the Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers union there, said workers welcomed the Saudi investment at the plant.

"I was kind of glad at first, because of the financial situation Texaco got into with Pennzoil," Sparks said, referring to a multi-billion-dollar court judgment against Texaco, since settled, that threatened the New York-

based oil company with bankruptcy.

Under the joint venture, Sparks said, "I really haven't noticed any change," other than expansion of the refining capacity, which workers hope will give them more job security. He also noted that the Saudi ties should ensure a stable crude oil supply at the plant.

Mickey Breaux, chairman of the Fina Workers Committee at the OCAW local in Port Arthur, said initial reports on the joint venture talks were positive. "If anything it will stabilize our operation," he said.

Fina has confirmed it is negotiating with the Arabian Petroleum Co., the private Saudi group. Fina is 85-percent owned by Petrofina S.A., based in Belgium.

"It's just unfortunate it wasn't Chevron instead of Fina" announcing the joint venture, said Eldon Soileau, president of the Port Arthur-based Sabine Area Labor Council. Chevron, based in San Francisco, recently has announced it would eliminate at least 700 jobs at its Port Arthur refinery. □

—James Cullen and Paula George.

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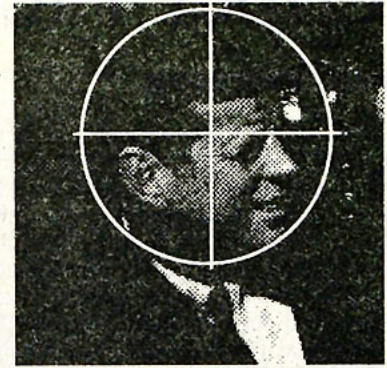
LIFETIME INVESTIGATION BY RALPH THOMAS JUST RELEASED!

MISSING LINKS

THE JFK ASSASSINATION CONSPIRACY INVESTIGATIVE REPORT

By: *Ralph D. Thomas*

Based on a lifetime of investigation, research and obsession by one of the country's most well known investigative professionals.



Missing Links is an encyclopedia on the assassination conspiracy and cover-up of JFK containing new evidence as well as a different look at old evidence through the eyes of a professional investigator.

INTRODUCTION: Details of the trip to Dallas, the first reports of the assassination and the beginning stages of the cover-up.

THE WITNESSES THEY WANTED TO GO AWAY: In this investigation, Thomas looks at grassy knoll witnesses who felt that at least one shot was fired from the grassy knoll. Some heard shots, some saw men behind the fence on top of the knoll, some saw puffs of white smoke and some smelled gunpowder in the area. Many were threatened, several had their film taken from them and some remained silent for years, but the story of these people provide conclusive evidence that shots were fired from the grassy knoll.

THE MAGIC BULLET AND OTHER EVIDENCE THAT DOESN'T ADD UP: The magic bullet theory and why it's just a theory and couldn't be a fact. The Paraffin test that would have proven Oswald not guilty in a court of law. Solid evidence of other rifles found in the School Book Depository and evidence of one rifle filmed being brought down the back fire escape. Suspicious information concerning the empty shells and fingerprint. The third man wounded during the assassination and the attempted cover-up. Blood on the sidewalk steps and the attempts to cover it up. The body of the president and suspicious facts. The fake backyard photographs.

FROM THE SIXTH FLOOR WINDOW TO OSWALD'S ARREST: Time study that proves Oswald couldn't have been in the sixth floor window. Witnesses who describe men other than Oswald with rifles in the upper windows of the School Book Depository. Oswald's activities after the assassination that indicates he didn't murder anyone, including Tippit. The suspicious and strange arrest.

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Prime motives and prime suspects including the Mob, the Civil Rights Movement, The Vietnam War, Castro and the Cubans, Right Wing Groups and the Oil Business, Internal Affairs, J. Edgar Hoover, the CIA, the Bay of Pigs and the Cuban Missile Crisis are explored.

Missing Links is over 100,000 words and concludes that JFK was murdered as the result of a conspiracy which was covered up. It contains hard evidence and takes new investigative approaches never before explored. Judge for yourself the overwhelming evidence of the conspiracy and cover-up on the crime of the century from one of the most famous investigative specialists in the United States.

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Pepper Pickers Picket

BY KENT PATERSON

Albuquerque, N.M.

ONCE A SPECIAL TREAT of Southwestern cuisine, the New Mexico chile is fast becoming a hot item on the international food market. Nowadays, border food-processing companies churn out a steady supply of chile-based powders, salsas, frozen and canned foods for a worldwide clientele. The chile's popularity reached new heights in 1991 when electric lights fashioned in the image of red New Mexican chile peppers glittered from the nation's Christmas tree at the U.S. Capitol.

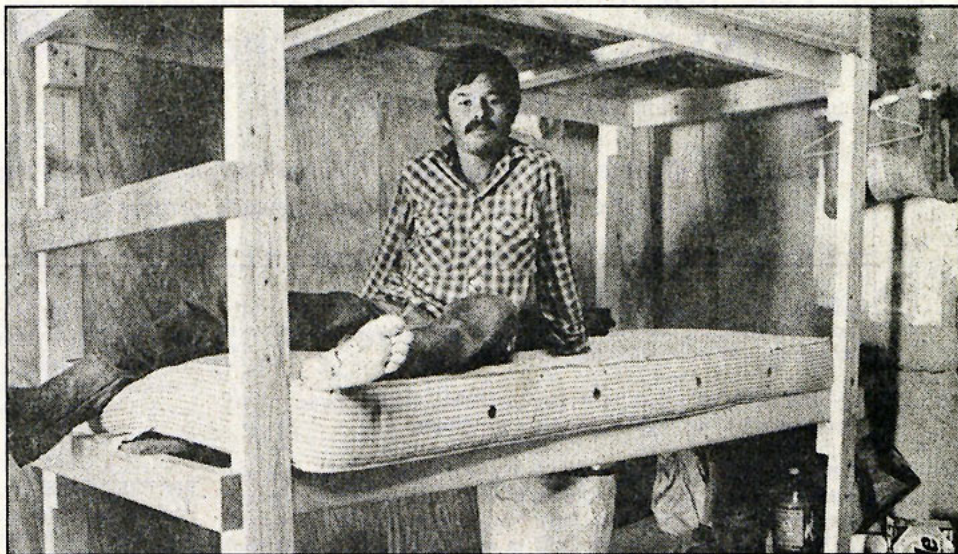
With chiles garnering an estimated \$230 million to \$300 million annually for the New Mexican economy alone (according to New Mexico State University analysts), it's not surprising that growers in Texas and Arizona are joining the bonanza. "We're now in eastern Arizona and West Texas growing chiles to come to the Rio Grande Valley here to be processed," said NMSU researcher Paul Bosland. "So it's like ripples on a pond. We started here [New Mexico] and kind of just expanded to Arizona [and] Texas."

Bringing in the chile crop requires lots of hand labor, and in recent years thousands of mainly Mexican field hands have arrived in the chile-growing belt in search of work. Many say they are not sharing in the boom. Arriving in old cars or labor contractors' buses from the U.S./Mexico border, they often encounter low wages, fields without bathrooms and inadequate housing. Surveys by two separate groups, the non-profit housing organization Tierra del Sol Inc. of Las Cruces, N.M., and the El Paso-based Border Agricultural Workers Union, estimated the average chile picker earns between \$4,800 and \$6,000 per year.

And according to Ruben Nunez, an organizer with the New Mexico Catholic Church-affiliated Farm Worker Project, the typical agricultural worker in the Texas-New Mexico border region has a life span of 48 and 52 years, significantly lower than the national average.

Early in the harvest season at a windowless cement barracks in the chile-producing town of Hatch, N.M., chile workers complained of declining wages and housing shortages. A forty-ish Mary Kitteridge, laid off from a \$7.10-an-hour job as a Colorado meatcutter, said she liked picking chile but wished she made more than the minimum wage of \$4.25 an hour. Her co-workers nodded in agreement, claiming piece rates for each bucket of picked jalapeño peppers had dropped from \$1.30 in 1990 to 85 cents in 1991. "Let's say the work isn't easy, because you work hard enough and they pay very little," added Juarez resident Pablo Ramirez.

Kent Paterson is a free-lance writer and radio producer based in Albuquerque, N.M.



GLENN ELLIOT

Farmworker in barracks

Still, Kitteridge and her roommates considered themselves lucky to have a roof over their heads. Across the Southwest, according to the Associated Press, the homeless farmworker is an increasingly common sight, scrambling to find shelter under bridges in Hatch, on street corners in El Paso, and in caves just minutes from exclusive Pebble Beach, Calif., golf greens.

"So many people don't have a place in Hatch," said Kitteridge, "I would like to have good apartments ... for so many people to come. You can tell Bush, OK?"

Lack of shelter for Mexican workers traveling to U.S. fields is starting to become a contentious issue between Washington, D.C., and Mexico City. In El Paso, the Mexican consul is requesting city authorities to devise some sort of temporary housing for chile harvesters who gather at the downtown Santa Fe bridge to be recruited and then transported to farms in the region.

Many chile farmers, who logically would seem to be the parties responsible to provide worker housing, maintain they are hard-pressed by competition from Mexican chiles and cannot afford to shelter their seasonal help.

"I'd like to see everyone live in a new house and drive a new car, but unfortunately we compete in a world market where people make 10 times less," says New Mexico chile grower Dino Cervantes. According to Cervantes, who is experimenting with growing chiles in Mexico, U.S. processors are buying cheaply-produced Mexican chile varieties. In Mexico, he points out, harvesting cayenne peppers costs \$3.75 a pound as opposed to \$7.75 in the U.S. "People

say that we should pay a little bit more money, we'd be able to attract more people, but unfortunately if we pay more money, we take ourselves out of the world market," said Cervantes.

While the popularity of chile had increased phenomenally in the last few years, boosted by the surge in popularity of spicy ethnic goods, the future of the domestic chile industry is at a crossroads. Like other labor-intensive crops, the business will be put to a test by the expected signing of the North American Free Trade Agreement between Mexico, Canada and the United States.

Touted by the Bush and Salinas administrations as virtually the cure-all to the ills of their nations' economies, the agreement is sure to have its share of winners and losers. Analysts such as Ed Avalos, a marketing specialist with the New Mexico Department of Agriculture, foresee grain and livestock producers on the U.S. side in a better position to cash in on Mexican markets.

Conversely, the lifting of remaining U.S. commercial barriers for Mexican agricultural exports, principally labor-intensive crops such as chile, strawberries, tomatoes and citrus, puts pressures on U.S. farmers to keep their labor costs at a minimum. In the worst-case scenario, observers say, smaller growers could be forced to lay off field help and switch to crops that require less hand labor. Some producers may go out of business entirely.

"When the negotiators negotiate the free-trade agreement, maybe they can take into consideration the negative impact it could have on the chile industry in the U.S., especially New Mexico," Avalos suggested, "and maybe restrict or keep an import duty for a certain peri-

od of time. It would be a period to phase in the free trade agreement."

In fact, extensive agricultural trade already takes place between Mexico and the United States, a situation which gives some clue as to the probable effects of free trade on growers and workers. Today, a shopper in a U.S. supermarket can find Mexican chile, broccoli, tomato sauce, beer and a host of other products on the shelves. Mexico's farm exports to the U.S. doubled between 1982 and 1990, reaching a value of \$2.6 billion in 1990, according to the U.S. International Trade Commission.

One significant development of the 1980s was the spread of "agro-maquilas," U.S.-based firms in Mexico that take a raw product and process it for export. According to writer Tom Barry, a director of Albuquerque's Resource Center and the author of a forthcoming book on Mexico, some 40 "agro-maquilas" existed in Mexico by 1991.

Big players setting up shop south of the border include Campbell, Carnation, Ralston-Purina, Kellogg and Beatrice Food. At the same time, growers and corporations such as Del Monte and Caste and Cook provided financing and technical assistance to capital-poor Mexican agriculture. Barry's research revealed that 90 percent of the crops in Baja California, Mexico, for instance, are grown with transnational financing.

Although some analysts discount a massive migration of U.S. agriculture to Mexico because of free trade, noting that productivity and technology across the Rio Grande still lag behind the U.S., the existence of a huge, low-cost labor pool to the south is a powerful incentive for agro-investors. David Runsten, a researcher on free trade and agriculture for the California Institute of Rural Studies, estimates that farmworkers in central Mexico, where many vegetables for the U.S. market are grown, earn from 65 to 85 cents an hour. In real terms, this wage level is about equivalent to 1960 rates in the U.S.

In testimony before a federal commission meeting in Las Cruces, N.M., last October, Runsten also claimed that real wages for U.S. farmworkers have declined since 1986. "The market right now is working in favor of agriculture businesses. That is, there is a flooded labor market. Wages are falling," he testified.

Despite the low wages, the U.S. farm-labor market is different from five years ago. The passage of the 1986 Immigration and Reform Control Act legalized hundreds of thousands of formerly undocumented farmworkers, giving once-hidden laborers greater freedom to travel from field to field, looking for the highest pay.

Faced with the uncertainties of free trade, farmer representatives want the federal government to step in and guarantee a dependable, affordable workforce. That was the message delivered to the U.S. Commission on Agricultural Workers in Las Cruces this fall. Established by Congress to study the impact of the 1986 immigration reform on agriculture, the commission is preparing a 1992 report to Capitol Hill lawmakers. Recommendations could result in changes of employer sanctions for hiring undocumented workers, redefinitions

of criteria used to assess labor shortages and new guidelines for existing guest worker programs such as H2A, a program that brings Caribbean workers to U.S. shores for the sugarcane and apple harvests.

A section of the 1986 law allowed the entrance of hundreds of thousands of Replenishment Agricultural Workers (RAWs) into the U.S. in the event of a federally sanctioned farm labor shortage. So far, the feds have declined to certify that a shortage exists, much to the disappointment of chile and other growers who have claimed periodic labor deficits in their fields. New groups such as the New Mexico Farm and Livestock Bureau seek the easing of current regulations to permit the seasonal entry of Mexican contract workers.

"We believe that our area is in need of a guest-worker program for Mexican nationals, whereby farmworkers are allowed to enter the U.S. on a seasonal basis and then return to their homes in Mexico at the end of this contract period," farm and livestock bureau Vice President Bob Porter testified in Las Cruces. "This proposal could be modeled somewhat similar to the bracero program of the late '40s and '50s," he said. "Such a program would not replace American workers and could become a valuable tool in the implementation of a free-trade zone between our nations."

But farmworker advocates dispute the existence of a labor shortage and charge that guest-worker schemes are thinly veiled attempts at union-busting. In El Paso alone, hundreds of chile pickers went without work this season because of bad weather and the mechanization of some chile crop thinning. Advocates report that the situation is even worse in South Texas, where hundreds of thousands of agricultural workers provide much of the nation's migrant labor pool.

In February, chile pickers loudly protested outside the annual chile conference in Las Cruces. Hosted by New Mexico State University, farmers, agricultural workers, agriculture researchers and representatives of food processing firms met to discuss free trade and eye a new line of chile-harvesting machines designed to eliminate the need for hand labor. But while conference attendees lunched with the staff of New Mexico's congressional delegation, scores of UTAF members stood outside the Hilton Hotel meeting site, waving union flags and demanding an end to what they charged are subminimum wages in the field.

"People are almost desperate to find work," says Yvonne Charbinau, the director of the Farm-worker Health and Safety Project for Texas Rural Legal Aid. "From what we see there's a work shortage, not a worker shortage."

What labor recruitment problems may exist, contend worker advocates, stem from the unwillingness of once-illegal workers to put up with abusive working conditions and poverty-level wages. Grower proposals for expanded guest-worker programs are meant to control a potentially restive workforce, said Border Agricultural Workers Union staffer Sandy New.

"It's hard to realize that people are blind to

see there are plenty of workers willing and available that want to harvest the crops," New said. "And why they want to bring in workers from another country is absurd, other than that bringing in workers from another country is to keep wages down and exploits the workers. How long can we put up with things like this?"

Chile farmers like Dino Cervantes, on the other hand, insist the immigration reform has led to an exodus of their best workers from the fields, driving productivity down because of the inexperience of newer chile pickers. Workers will have to become more productive, cautions Cervantes, or suffer the prospect of seeing their jobs lost to mechanization as farmers attempt to compete with Mexican rivals. Cervantes, for one, plans to monitor the progress of free-trade negotiations, a regional version of the world scene by the GATT talks aimed at eliminating global trade barriers. The realities of free trade, Cervantes predicts, might encourage growers to request federal assistance to help pay for worker housing and transportation. "With free-trade agreements hanging on the horizon, I think those supplements from government are going to become a reality here shortly," said Cervantes.

El Paso's Border Agricultural Workers Union, known popularly by the Spanish acronym UTAF, is also keeping abreast of free-trade politics. The union took an early stance in opposition to free trade and in May 1991 and working with allies from the Democratic Peasant Front of Chihuahua shut down one lane of an El Paso-Juarez bridge in protest.

The Democratic Peasant Front, which represents members of Mexican communal landholdings called *ejidos*, fears that the Salinas government's economic liberalization plan will force millions of peasants off their lands. A vital element of Salinas' economic strategy — linked with free trade — is to break up the *ejidos* and allow their sale, a policy opponents argue is sure to result in an agribusiness land grab.

"The *ejidos* are going to be eaten up ... that is going to play into the hands of the ranchers and they'll be saturated with labor," says UTAF spokeswoman New. Both the union and the Front also decided to fight free trade, she said, because they don't think small Mexican corn or bean farmers will have the wherewithal to compete with a tide of more efficiently grown U.S. exports to its southern neighbor. The consequences, she contended, will be a landless proletariat subject to the whims of agribusiness on both sides of the border.

"Free trade is going to push workers off their land. They're not going to be able to compete with the small crops — beans, corn," maintains New. "It'll displace a lot of workers who, of course, will come north. It's going to be a field day for the growers."

Since last spring's bridge closure, UTAF has taken its anti-free trade message to the Mexican media, talked with other activist groups opposed to the Bush-Salinas accord and held meetings with farmworkers on the subject.

New said the work will continue. "We'll keep forming alliances, talking to workers and they'll talk to other workers on the rancho. We plan to keep on voicing our opposition." □

A Ghastly Kitchen

Cooking the books on the supercollider

BY DEBORAH LUTTERBECK

New York City
WHEN SAMUEL JOHNSON was told of Bishop Berkeley's theory that all time and space was simply an illusion, the great 18th-century doctor reputedly kicked his foot against a stone and declared, "I refute it thus." These days you must do a lot more than kick a rock to participate in theoretical scientific debates. You must prepare cost-benefit analyses and dodge funding roadblocks.

Consider the modern scientific debate over the proposed \$8.25 billion Superconducting Super Collider, which is being built in Waxahachie, just outside of Dallas. While physicists want the atom smasher to answer questions about how the universe began, policy-makers are more inclined to wonder about the next election. For Texans, even before the sub-atomic particles are sent around the collider's 54 miles of underground track, the project will be providing a gravy train for the state.

Part of the problem with the collider, or SSC, is with science itself. While we all know Albert Einstein had one of the greatest minds of all time, even the wonderfully simple formula, $E=MC^2$, can be tricky to explain. The idea of giving a select group of physicists all this money has some people seeing a boondoggle on the "Big Bang" scale. U.S. Rep. Sherwood Boehlert, D-NY, warns: "The project will swallow up the nation's already limited science budget, forcing a round of 'beggar thy neighbor's' scientific discipline."

So comes the need to make this academic pursuit more palatable to the tax-paying public. Spin-offs from great science projects often are given as much weight by policy-makers as the theoretical studies. This is the chord that Henson Moore, the former deputy energy secretary, now deputy White House chief of staff, wanted to strike in early 1990 when he addressed the International Industrial Symposium on the SSC. "Who among us tonight can possibly guess what technological progress and what economic progress is going to come from an operating Super Collider?" he asked. "We'll learn a great deal just in building it. We've learned a great deal already in the past year in designing it. And just think what we're going to learn in the years to come from operating it." Moore conjures up the ghosts of physicists of the 1920s and 1930s whose research in quantum mechanics and the splitting of the atom led to such things as personal computers, Walkmans and compact disks. "One-third of our present day GNP can be traced back to basic knowledge from their

work on the atom and the nucleus," Moore said.

People who have traveled down this path provide all the assurance you could ask for. Right now, the largest physics laboratory is the Fermi lab outside of Chicago. The head of the Research and Technology Applications section, Richard Carrigan Jr., noted that work done at Fermi helped to develop magnetic resonance imagers. The laboratory also was used by Leon Lederman, who was awarded the Nobel Prize for Physics in 1978. But while Carrigan acknowledges that the "gadgets" from Fermi are a welcome offshoot, he said, "it's really for knowledge in the fundamental sense" that the laboratory is important.

Scientists in Texas are sounding the same themes about the Super Collider. Vidgor Teplitz, who heads the Physics Department at Southern Methodist University, said, "I think it is a tribute to our country and our century; we have the capacity to ask the fundamental questions about what the world is made of ... and the knowledge itself is the chief reason (to pursue the project)." But, he too, adds that when you "go after nature's secrets" you often find practical applications.

Some of that has already happened. Last March, work on the SSC yielded a self-shielding magnet, a tool for biologists to map the human brain. In April, a second practical application allowed medical plastics to be sterilized or reused instead of being dumped. SSC proponents say you can't even imagine what the future could hold along these lines.

Some say the future windfalls are not the only thing left to the imagination. They like to point to the surprises in the price of the SSC.

The official estimate for the collider is \$8.25 billion. However, forecasts have run as high as \$11.3 billion—a long way off from the \$4.4-billion initial estimate in 1988.

So far, the federal government has coughed up more than a billion dollars for the project. Overall, it is expected to grant \$5 billion in funding. The state of Texas has to come up with \$1 billion, and the rest is supposed to come from foreign governments.

This year the President asked for \$650 million for the collider, and according to Rep. Joe Barton, R-Ennis, whose district includes the SSC site, "If I do my job right, he'll get it." Each year the battle for funding gets tougher—but this is no reason to start writing epitaphs. The funding always comes through, although it might not be exactly what the President asked for. For example, the request for 1991 was \$318 million; over the course of the appropriations process \$75 million was shaved off. Similarly, the full request for fiscal 1992 was \$484 mil-

lion, while Congress provided \$434 million.

That is not all. In 1989 there was an attempt on the House floor to limit SSC spending to research and development rather than construction. That effort was soundly defeated, 331-92. Last year when an amendment was offered to shut down SSC it was defeated 251-165. Barton says we are past worrying about the actual survival of the SSC, but that doesn't mean the struggle is over. The next line of attack comes on the foreign-contribution front. Which takes us to Japan.

When the President went to the Far East, most of the focus was on cars and car parts, but another reason for his trip was to secure a \$1 billion commitment from Japan for the collider. Instead, he came back with an agreement to create a study group. Critics called this a setback. To Barton, "It was a disappointment that people were disappointed." The Congressman was not looking for an actual pledge out of the trip, he said, but he hopes to get a firm commitment from the Japanese in 1992, and actual funding the next year. "Even if we don't receive foreign funding that won't kill the SSC," he said.

So far, the only country to toss a coin in the collider's cup has been India, with a \$50 million commitment. One Congressional staff member dismissed the \$50-million pledge as, in fact, a drain. "It will take money out, not put it in," the aide said, because the payment is an in-kind offering of scientists and hardware. "I don't follow that logic," responds Barton, who notes, "\$50 million is a help not a hurt." However, he concedes that there is merit in the debate on how to spend the funds. "There is an honest disagreement on priorities," he said.

Some lawmakers simply make short-hand attacks, labeling the SSC an "economic black-hole," or the "Texas Gila Monster." Jim Slattery, D-Kan., voices the sentiment: "Will our country be better off 10 years, 20 years from now if we pour all this money into the SSC? Or will we be better off if we take part of this money and put it into desperately-needed basic research in our universities all across this country? ... With the adoption and support of the SSC, we are going to choke off basic research in this country. There is no other way to look at it."

For the 1993 Fiscal year, the Administration is asking for \$650 million for the SSC, and about \$630 million for other high-energy physics projects. Those projects are part of the Energy Department's \$3.4 billion budget for the Office of Energy Research Science.

At the state level, SSC funding has made a difference. The \$1 billion to be financed by Texas taxpayers has swelled the state's bonded debt in recent years. So far, \$500 billion in

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Newspapers In Chains

BY RONAN G. LYNCH

WHEN JASON ROBARDS' Ben Bradlee strides into the Washington Post newsroom in the 1974 movie adaptation of "All The President's Men" and practically challenges Richard Nixon to a kickboxing match, real editors must have had a laugh. Closer to the truth, then and now, is a managing editor whose motto is not "'damn-the-cost' journalism," but "'damn-the-journalism' profit."

If life imitated art in the newspaper business, the order of the day would be serving the community, generating public debate and trying to outscout the competition. In reality, newspapers serve their shareholders, generate whopping profits, and the competition, frankly, is dead.

Researching his 1983 book, *The Media Monopoly*, former editor Ben Bagdikian found that 29 corporations controlled the lion's share of America's 25,000 media outlets. In the 1987 second edition, the 29 had dropped to 26. The latest number is 23. In Texas newspaperland, things appear to be going the same way; standardization, monopolization, only three competitive markets—Oh, well, there goes the Dallas Times-Herald; make that two . . .

The only two truly competitive newspaper markets in Texas are Houston and San Antonio. In El Paso, a joint operating agreement between the Times and the Herald-Post combined their business operations while the two newspapers compete editorially. To put a less inspirational twist on it, that means a monopoly situation in virtually every newspaper market, which translates into high profits for corporate newspaper chains.

The chain phenomenon began about 30 years ago, when third- and fourth-generation owners of family newspapers who no longer felt familial allegiance to the paper sold out to larger corporations. As corporations started to trade publicly, Wall Street investors taking an interest in the newspaper business were pleasantly surprised to find that newspapers, quite simply, made buckets of money.

Twenty years ago, the only chains in Texas to speak of were Harte-Hanks Communications Inc., which owned 11 newspapers, the News-Texan group which had six Dallas suburban newspapers, and Freedom Newspapers Group, which owned five. Out of the 112 daily newspapers in Texas, 48 were in "chains," mostly of two or three newspapers. In other words, there were 64 independent newspapers; 64 independent newspapers that made loads of money.

Today, there are 94 dailies published in Texas. Fourteen are independents, 10 of which are small

operations with circulations under 5,000. The remaining 80 are owned by chains. This is consistent with newspaper ownership across the country: Of about 1,650 American dailies, 82 percent—about 1,350—are owned by groups.

There's no inherent evil in being in a chain; it's a fact of modern life that small, family-owned businesses get bought out by corporations. Some corporations, like Knight-Ridder and The New York Times Co. have (barely-deserved) reputations for spending money on talent and facilities. Others, such as Donrey Media and Thomson Newspapers are known for their balls-out profiteering and newsroom stinginess. Problem is, neither Knight-Ridder or the Times own Texas newspapers. Donrey and Thomson do.

In fact, virtually every small and medium-sized newspaper in Texas is owned by Donrey Media (10), Thomson (five), Freedom Newspapers (four), Southern Newspapers (five), Cox (four), Hartman (five) or Harte-Hanks (five). Small-circulation newspapers enjoy a monopoly in their local market, enabling chains to engage in ruthless cost-cutting to squeeze maximum profits from the paper. In these papers, the first thing to go was the "hard news" hole; reporters are notoriously expensive, especially when they actually get outside the press-conference room and start digging up stories of their own. (This is why most newspapers don't have "investigative" reporters; publishers think they cost too much.) Instead, "soft" news—features on cars, real estate and fashion—which draws advertisers has become the mainstay of many papers.

Publishers have consistently defended the decimation of news staffs and budgets because of "tough times," which usually means increased competition from other media, and declining profits. There's a consensus that things aren't all roses in the newspaper business; the rise of cable television and information services has driven down newspaper readership—or has it? Thirty-seven newspapers have suffered a decline in readership, mostly less than 10 percent, while the other 57 have increased readership. (Donrey and Southern in particular seem to have a special touch for killing off readership at almost every paper they get their hands on.) But overall, the 94 dailies still publishing in Texas enjoyed an average *increase* in readership of over 25 percent in the last ten years. Sure, the death of fourteen other Texas papers and population growth has had an effect on readership, but those still publishing and whining about the decline in readership should be taken with a grain of salt.

Newspaper publishing remains one of the most profitable businesses in America. Because

so many newspapers are now owned by outside interests, their profits disappear into the chasm of the parent company's databases, making it virtually impossible to figure out profits for individual newspapers. Since many reporters can't independently find their typewriters, it's probable that most have no idea what sort of profits their newspapers generate. That keeps potentially rebellious advertisers and employees under control.

The Canadian-based Thomson chain, which owns 163 dailies—six in Texas—had 1990 revenues of \$1.4 billion, up almost 6 percent from the previous year. Busy gobbling up small-town monopoly newspapers over the last ten years, Thomson's reputation for fantastic stinginess was exceeded only by its reputation for fantastic profits. By the mid-1980s, the Thomson group's pretax profit margin peaked at 37 percent. The most recent figures, from the third quarter last year, still show Thomson producing margins of 15.7 percent. The little papers have made majority owner Kenneth R. Thomson a rich man. According to last year's Fortune magazine, Thomson is worth a cool \$6.7 billion, making him the tenth richest man in the world.

The Thomson chain is by no means unique. Donrey Media, owned by Nevada billionaire Donald W. Reynolds, is the biggest chain in Texas, with 10 papers. It enjoys a stinginess reputation equal rivalling Thomson's, although Donrey—which is privately-held—won't give out its profit margins.

Not that larger, privately-owned companies have a reputation for benevolence; in fact, you might be grateful that the smaller companies only own your newspaper. The Hearst Corp., for example, owns two major Texas newspapers, the Houston Chronicle and the San Antonio Light, and four smaller papers. But as a "diversified" media corporation, newspaper money counts for only about a third of Hearst's income, as privately-held Hearst also owns several TV stations, chunks of A&E, Lifetime and ESPN, and is second only to Time Warner in magazine publishing.

The recession/depression has brought down the pretax profit margins of publicly-traded newspapers from 17.7 percent in 1989 to 15 percent in 1990. While most businesses would be deliriously happy with profit margins of five to 10 percent during periods of economic growth, many newspapers have laid off reporters, further reduced their "news hole" and increased their prices to maintain profits and remain an attractive investment. (As near as I can make out, a third of Texas' newspapers are owned by billionaires. Did the billionaire Cox sisters really need that extra 15 cents per copy for the American-Statesman?)

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Cinema Latinísimo

BY STEVEN G. KELLMAN

TWO INGREDIENTS are necessary for a successful film festival: imaginative programming and an adventurous audience. In its 16th edition, CineFestival, San Antonio's annual exposition of Latino film and video, offered almost 100 works not likely to be encountered in the shopping mall theaters that have been proliferating throughout the county like fire ant mounds. (Most are available from independent distributors and/or are already scheduled for theatrical circulation; information can be obtained from the CineFestival staff at (512) 271-3151). But, apart from a few glamorous events—opening night festivities that included a premiere of the Mexican film *Cabeza de Vaca* or an awards ceremony presided over by Cheech Marin—a zealous viewer could count on 19 days of solitude. It was a sweet-and-sour 16 for the oldest surviving festival of Latino cinema. Sponsored by the Guadalupe Cultural Arts Center, in San Antonio's westside barrio, the 1992 CineFestival, which ran Jan. 23 through Feb. 14, was a *succès d'estime*, but the few able to do the estimating were outnumbered by a typical audience for *Home Alone*.

Though they did not adjudicate anything quite as consequential as *Roe v. Wade*, the nine jurors for CineFestival had a case load as heavy as the Supreme Court nonet. Several works, including Cuban director Tomás Gutiérrez Alea's *The Last Supper*, the 1977 feature, about an 18th-century slave revolt, that was a seminal force in the resurgence of Latin American cinema, were screened out of competition. But enough works were entered to drive a lucid judge to Visine. Not only did jurors have to view and grade each entry in the brief interval between submission and exhibition. They also had to be more adept at taxonomy than the IRS.

"Latino" is the only qualification for general eligibility, but CineFestival's definition is so generous that it encompasses works either by Latinos, about Latinos, produced in Latin American countries, or about Latin American countries. If Oliver Stone ever does a biography of Cheech Marin, it could be entered in CineFestival, as could a biography of Oliver Stone by Cheech Marin. *Pace* Dan Quayle, a knowledge of Latin is less necessary to a Latino filmmaker than intimacy with one of the Hispanic or Portuguese cultures of the Western Hemisphere. Though French, too, is derived

from Latin, Haitian and Quebecois works do not show up at CineFestival.

But those that do have to be assigned to one of seven categories: documentary, made-for-TV documentary, animation, experimental, first film/video, feature, and short feature. Winners of CineFestival's *Premio Mesquite* and honorable mentions are determined for each classification, while the coveted Special Jury Award is bestowed on the one work from any category that best exemplifies the spirit of CineFestival.

It is often an unruly spirit, as in the case of *Border Brujo*, a manic monologue written and performed by Guillermo Gomez Peña and directed by Isaac Arstenstein. With minimal change of clothing, Peña alternates among 15 distinct personalities who, in Spanish, English, Spanglish, Nahautl, and tongues, ponder the polarities of North-South, Spanish-English, myth-reality, and self-other. The only other recent work that comes close to resembling *Border Brujo* is Eric Bogosian's *Sex, Drugs, Rock & Roll*, and the only category in which judges could possibly consider it would be something called Performance Documentation. So they created that label and awarded *Border Brujo* a *Premio Mesquite* in the new classification.

Over the years, CineFestival has been particularly strong in documentaries, non-fiction accounts of political struggle in Nicaragua, El Salvador, Guatemala, Chile, and elsewhere in the hemisphere. Though this year's festival offered fewer documentaries about Latin America, non-fiction film and video continued to be a powerful part of the program. The *Premio Mesquite* for documentary went to *Carlos Loarca*, the portrait of an exuberant and remarkably accomplished self-taught painter. For Loarca, painting is "one of the very few ecstasies that we can experience in this world as we are alive," and the 15-minute video, directed by Danna Peterson and Jonna Ramey, does a persuasive job of illustration. Loarca, who lives in San Francisco, left Guatemala in 1956, but his native myths persist in the presence of a black dog—who, according to Indian legend, is the patron of cantina drunks—in many of Loarca's vibrant canvases.

Gustavo Vasquez's *Free From Babylon*, honorable mention in the documentary category, is the portrait of another extraordinary personality—Joseph DiLerbert aka Treehouse Joe, a middle-aged man who opted out of the alienating complexities of technology for the simplicity of a treehouse he constructed near San

Diego. Honorable mention also went to another study in stubborn construction: *Casita Culture*. Narrated by salsa star Willie Colon, Cathe Newcum's video examines the proliferation in New York City of more than 40 *casitas*, "little houses" with a distinctive Caribbean architecture that have become cultural oases for Puerto Rican immigrants. *Casita Culture* also won the CineFestival Special Jury Award.

An inn is the icon for the winner in the category of made-for-TV documentary; Natatcha Estebanéz calls her WGBH portrait of Mario Bauzá *Notes From the Mambo Inn*. The film traces the development of the 80-year-old musician from precocious stints with the Havana Symphony and with nightclub bands in Cuba to emigration in 1926 and emergence as a hero of Spanish Harlem, the leading proponent of Afro-Cuban music. Ignoring his personal life, *Notes From the Mambo Inn*, is the story—told through interviews and performances—of Bauzá's public career in jazz. Honorable mention in the same category went to Carolyn Hales' *Tierra o Muerte: Land or Death*, an analysis of the ancient struggle over land rights to the New Mexico region of Tierra Amarilla. Narrated by Luis Valdez, the video traces the current clash between commercial development and conservation, between private speculation and communal culture, to the differing attitudes toward ownership and society held by the Indians, Mexicans, and Yankees who have laid claim to the bare but stunning valley, now one of the poorest counties in the United States. *Tierra o Muerte* is both a lucid case study and a haunting *corrido* about dirt and death.

The award for novice work went to *Home Is Struggle*, Marta N. Bantis' attempt to tell the parallel lives of Hispanic women, from a wide variety of countries and backgrounds, who have settled in New York. Honorable mention went to a fascinating piece of ethnographic cinema: *Huichol Sacred Pilgrimage to Wirikuta*. Larain Boyll managed to apprentice herself to a shaman of the Huichol Indians in western Mexico, and her film records the ritual pilgrimage of 1,000 miles and the sacred hunt for peyote that the surviving Huichols undertake each year.

Harry Gamboa Jr.'s *Vis-A-Vid* won in the category of experimental work. The 13.5-minute video consists of four vignettes that emphasize the absurdity of Chicano life in Los Angeles. Luis Valdovino's *The World of Dance*, which won honorable mention in the same category, is a wryly irreverent spoof of both ballet and cal-

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isthenics. *Fast Food Matador*, the winner for animation, is a fantasy about a coffee shop delivery boy who battles New York traffic as courageously as a matador. "The bull was not harmed, nor was any real blood shed," reassure the titles at the conclusion of this pen-and-ink romp.

Luis Avalos' *Always Roses* is the earnest story of a 12-year-old from Los Angeles who reluctantly spends the summer with his grandparents in rural Arizona but ends up understanding and cherishing his Mexican heritage. The film, which features Freddy Fender as the grandfather, won the CineFestival award for best short fiction. Honorable mention in the same category went to *I'll Be Home for Christmas*, Robert Diaz LeRoy's drama about a self-loathing Chicano who, though born Roberto Herrera, calls himself Robert O'Hara and traces his bitterness to the death of his father in prison when he was only nine.

The award for best feature film went to *Jerico*, a Venezuelan production that dramatizes the crisis of conscience experienced by a Christian missionary who accompanies the Spanish conquistadors to South America and

is traumatized by the atrocities he witnesses. Honorable mention went to *La Mujer de Benjamin*, Mexican director Carlos Carrera's account of a village idiot's crush on a ram-bunctious 17-year-old beauty.

One of the most beautiful offerings at CineFestival was *Daughters of the Dust*, Julie Dash's drama about a Gullah family abandoning its base on Ibo Landing, off the Georgia coast, at the turn of the century. Shown to a large and enthusiastic audience at the Carver Community Cultural Center, on San Antonio's black East Side, *Daughters of the Dust* is one of the few features directed by an African-American woman. It and several other works, as well as a panel discussion on the impact of the African diaspora on Latino cultures, provided this year's CineFestival with a connecting theme: the links between African and Latino cultures.

"A festival in San Antonio cannot exist solely for one purpose or one community," CineFestival director Yvette Nieves-Cruz told *The Texas Observer*. Though the fiercely Hispanic Guadalupe Theater remains the fes-

tival's base of operations and Latino cinema its *raison d'être*, this year's screenings were spread over nine different venues throughout San Antonio. "Latino filmmakers do not exist in a vacuum," notes Nieves-Cruz, who ponders bringing works from as far afield as India for her fourth year at the helm of CineFestival. By 1992, the annual exposition can claim credit for a boom in productions by and about Latinos, and with their increased participation in mainstream productions. It must also contend with competition from newer festivals that are receptive to the kind of programming that CineFestival pioneered. This year's edition overlapped with both the New York Latino Festival and the Sundance Festival, an event now hospitable to Latino independents. With a total budget of \$35,000, mostly from government grants and corporate underwriters, CineFestival cannot afford the pomp of Cannes or the cant of parochialism. Running a festival can be a roller coaster of elation and despair. Attending one is more like staring at the funhouse mirror until your eyes pop and glaze and the world never again seems the same. □

Down to Earth

BY BETTY BRINK

EARTH IN THE BALANCE, ECOLOGY AND THE HUMAN SPIRIT

By Al Gore

New York: Houghton Mifflin

1992

365 pages

"It is not so much the easy lies we tell each other, it is the hard truths that are never told at all."

— Al Gore, on the political ethic of the age, *Earth in The Balance*, page 174

AL GORE, Democratic senator from Tennessee, one-time presidential candidate, and longtime environmental voice in the Senate, has written an extraordinary book. *Earth in the Balance, Ecology and the Human Spirit* tells us in straightforward language some "hard truths" about the environmental crisis we face. It considers the roots of the crisis, names the good guys and the bad guys, and, in its final chapters, charts a path back to ecological balance.

It will take a sea change in the way we think to bring it all off. There are no easy solutions in this book, no "50 Things You Can Do To Save The Planet," no "easy lies." We are not going to get out of this mess by recycling and feeling good about ourselves. The

assault against the environment is global and nothing short of a global response will work.

Gore calls for a worldwide commitment to make "the rescue of the environment the central organizing principle for civilization," and points to the "only model history has given for the kind of powerful cooperative effort needed," a Global Marshall Plan for the environment, "a large vision ... translated into effective action".

Gore reminds us that the Marshall Plan worked not only because it rebuilt a devastated Europe after World War II; it was consciously designed by its Western Architects to change the dynamics of the systems it aided. Part of that "conscious design" was altruistic, but another factor was more cynical: the West wanted to build a bulwark against Communism.

It worked. As Gore points out, Communism finally fell, but at a terrible cost to the earth and its people. The arms race that grew out of the drive to contain Communism drained the world of resources and wealth and led to the unchecked assault of the environment, especially in Eastern Europe where industrial pollution is worse than anywhere in the world.

For Gore, a Global Marshall Plan entails population control coupled with the promise of a sustainable lifestyle, the promise that every child will have the opportunity to grow old. It entails changing the way we determine economic value, assigning a cost to the pollution we create today and including in that price the loss of natural resources that future generations will never be able to use. "In calculating

the GNP," he writes, "resources are not depreciated as they are used up."

"Why isn't the topsoil in Iowa depreciated as it washes down the Mississippi River" like buildings, auto, machinery?", Gore asks. By never being confronted with the "real costs" of our arrogant assumption that the earth and its resources are limitless, we will never stop the wholesale destruction of systems critical to the planet's fragile life-sustaining balance, like the tropical rainforests. Gore is at his best when he writes of the destruction of the rainforests:

"...the wholesale annihilation of so many living species in such a breathless moment of geological time represents a deadly wound to the integrity of the earth's painstakingly intricate web of life, a wound so nearly permanent that scientists estimate that recuperation will take 100 million years."

Nuclear waste will be around that long too. Or longer. No one has ever factored that cost to the future into the capital or operating costs of a nuclear plant. Here in Texas, if those hidden costs of nuclear power had been calculated before Texas's two nuclear plants were built, we would be generating electricity by burning natural gas, and saving energy through cogeneration and/or conservation. As it stands now, health and environmental costs which will result from the long-term storage of nuclear waste in Somerville and Matagorda Counties, the sites of the two plants, will be borne by future generations. The real estate these two

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Organizing for the Next Century

Dallas

In an interview following a book-signing session, Al Gore discussed his recently published book:

You've said that one regret of your 1988 presidential campaign was your inability to make the environment a major issue that year. What about the current Democratic contenders, are they making the environment an issue, and if not, why not?

The political dialogue in this country has been so compressed into seven-second soundbites that the candidates ... are made to feel it's impossible to talk about something new ... and that they should use the seven seconds to turn a phrase that will strike a spark.

Most of the Democrats are [talking about environmental issues.] In [1988] it didn't fit the description most people had of a presidential issue. It doesn't fit neatly into the agenda that the pundits and pollsters have constructed ... but I think we're nearing a threshold beyond which [the environment] will become the dominant organizing principle for government and politics for the rest of this decade and on into the next century....

You said that this will be the "central organizing principle" for the future. Will it be more so than the debate over what we're going to do with the peace dividend?

By central organizing principle, I mean something more than a major issue. For the last half-century the central organizing principle for the Western Democrats has been the effort to defeat communism as an idea ... for example, the Interstate Highway Bill passed as the Defense Interstate Highway Bill. Federal aid to education passed after ... Sputnik [the first Russian satellite in 1957]. Aid to hungry people in Africa and Latin America was to slow down the spread of communist ideology. In this post-Cold War world, that ... principle is no longer one that gives coherence to policies and programs.

The effort to save the earth's environment must become the new central organizing principle so that stabilizing populations and accelerating the development of renewable energy technologies, debt for nature swaps, all seem to make sense because they fit in with this principle. The Japanese understand this. In the last 18 months they have gone through a sea change ... they are aggressively organizing to make and sell the new technologies that the world will demand to foster progress without environmental destruction ... if you give people in the developing world the choice between developing and not developing, they will choose developing, of course.

But if you give them a third option, developing according to a new pattern, [one] that enables them to leapfrog the technologies of the industrial age ... to avoid the mistakes that have led to environmental destruction, they will choose the third option. And the Japanese plan to have those new technologies there to sell to them. [By contrast, the U.S.] is still arguing over whether the problem is real! It's just so ridiculous.

You make a point in the book that in order for this central organizing principle to work, it will take strong leadership, special leader-



ALAN POGUE

ship. Do any or all of the candidates in the Democratic primary have that kind of leadership ability?

All of them are light years ahead of President Bush. And all of them have made responsible statements about the global environment ... I've made it plain I'd like to hear more.

Does that mean you might get into the race?

I'm not having second thoughts. [In August 1989, Al and Tipper Gore's young son nearly died from injuries he sustained after a car struck him.]

"The recovery process has involved the entire family, including me," Gore said, "which meant I could not be away from him or my family for a presidential race."

How about 1996?

I hope we'll be electing a Democratic incumbent. But if I have a chance to run for president in the future, I will.

Will Earth In The Balance be the blueprint for your campaign?

Yes. If I have a chance to run, I'm keenly aware that history waits for no candidate. If that's the case, I will not have second thoughts about the decision I made [not to run this year] because I made it for the right reasons.

One of the most important points you make in the book is that we must redefine the way we determine economic value [by including in the cost of a product] the economic losses to the future of lost natural resources or the wastes left behind. How do you see that in terms of your position on nuclear power and the amount of wastes we are leaving for the future?

If you look at the standard I set for the new generation of passively safe, standardized nuclear technology, that the risks posed to human beings from the disposal of the wastes has to be no greater than the risks posed by the raw material in the earth before it is mined, then surely that is a reasonable standard ... Because of the CO-2 problem I don't see how we can fail to continue research ... but I make it very clear in the book that conservation, efficiency and renewables are by far and away the preferable options.

What about the Johnson-Wallop energy bill [just passed] and its provision to make nuclear plant licensing easier for the utilities and harder for the public? Did you approve of that provision?

No, I did not. I proposed a whole series of amendments which passed, and which I think you'll like.

[Those amendments will direct the EPA to speed up the phaseout of ozone-depleting CFC's; will provide grants to states to distribute to industries willing to become more energy efficient; will provide grants to universities and technical schools for students to work with small businesses to make them more energy efficient; and directs the DOE to develop programs for "super efficient" appliances, among other things.]

At that point in the interview, Gore's publisher's representative said Gore had to catch a plane; a final question remained. At least one reviewer had suggested that Gore, a journalist for seven years before he entered politics, might have enlisted a ghostwriter to produce *Earth In The Balance*. A call to Gore's staff in Washington with that question received a resounding, "Absolutely false!"

— Betty Brink

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plants occupy will be off the market for a few hundred thousand years, too.

Sometimes, though, elected officials stumble onto the right thing for the right reasons. Gov. Ann Richards' offer to buy all the state's autos and trucks from General Motors if the company would stay in Arlington and convert to the production of vehicles that run on compressed natural gas may or may not have played a role in GM's decision to remain in Texas; another more cynical and potentially environmentally harmful reason is that the Arlington plant is closer to parts suppliers in Mexico, where environmental regulation is notoriously lax.

Gore also proposes that we tax pollution as it leaves the smokestack (or seeps into the ground water). That could result in a quick reduction in production of ozone-depleting chemicals such as chlorofluorocarbon (CFC). Texas leads the nation in industrial CFC emitters. Fort Worth's General Dynamics Air Force Plant 4 leads the state in CFC emissions.

The threat against the three systems which keep the earth in its delicate, life-sustaining balance; the ozone shield, temperature constancy and atmospheric oxidation, get a lot of attention in *Earth*. Ozone shield protection got some additional attention recently with NASA's announcement that depletion of the ozone is greater than had been expected over the Northern Hemisphere and that the densely populated areas of New England, Canada, and Europe might soon be threatened by an ozone hole similar to the one which opens each fall over Antarctica.

Perhaps the thought of excess ultraviolet rays beaming down on Kennebunkport finally prompted President Bush. The United States will phase out CFC's by 1995 instead of the year 2000 as had been previously agreed on. In the often-reluctant Senate, Gore was able to push through an amendment to the controversial Johnson-Wallop energy bill by a vote of 96-0 (both Texas senators voting yes) that directs the EPA to speed up the phaseout of CFC's.

There are important topics that Gore doesn't adequately consider; he doesn't give half enough attention to the tons of radioactive waste produced in weapons and power plants. The nuclear accidents at Three-Mile-Island and Chernobyl, and their aftermaths, get little attention. Yet he does make the point that it would be a mistake to increase our reliance on nuclear power as a means of reducing pollution from the burning of fossil fuel.

Despite these omissions, Al Gore has written an important book filled with valuable information; and it is often, finely and compassionately written. Gore's accounts of his own personal and spiritual journey, his son's near-fatal accident, his despair at his inability to make the environment the central theme of his 1988 presidential campaign, and the chapters in which he pays tribute to the gentler earth-preserving cultures of the past and the courageous individuals of the present, are powerful.

Gore's commitment is that of an elected offi-

cial in a position to connect sound thinking on the environment to public policy. But Gore can only do that with a public commitment to make the environment a central organizing principle in our lives. "The choice is ours," Gore writes. "The earth is in the balance." □

Supercollider Continued from pg. 16

bonds have been issued to help fund the project. But, there is a silver lining. According to the Texas National Research Laboratory Commission, the state arm on the SSC project, during the first two years the super collider project has generated \$883 million in North Texas. In years ahead, this is expected to increase. As for jobs, there are now 1,700 lab employees, and during the peak construction years, employment is expected to exceed 9,000.

In the meantime, the funding struggle will continue. A European scientist from the last century once said, "The science of life is superb and dazzlingly lighted hall which may be reached only by passing through a long and ghastly kitchen." The same could be said about the life of science these days. □

Newspapers Continued from pg. 17

Alternative papers aren't immune from the dollar chase. Given the profits an alternative weekly can generate, mainstream chains are beginning to move into the "alternative" market. In Ft. Lauderdale, the giant Tribune chain publishes both the Fort Lauderdale Sun Sentinel and XS, a new "alternative" weekly, which is less political and more consumer-oriented than traditional alternative weeklies. XS's competition? The Miami New Times, an alternative weekly owned by New Times Inc., a Phoenix-based alternative chain with four newspapers (including its most recent acquisition, the Dallas Observer) and reported revenues of \$14 million.

"Follow the money trail," old-time editors used to warn their young reporters. It looks like the publishers, not the journalists, have taken that advice. □

'Mrs. Democrat' remembered

The late Minnie Fisher Cunningham, a pioneer suffragist and early supporter of what became the Texas Observer, will be honored on March 15 with the placement of an historical marker.

Liz Carpenter, former press secretary to Lady Bird Johnson, will be featured speaker at the 2 p.m. event on U.S. 75, 2.6 miles north of New Waverly, with a reception to follow at St. Joseph's Catholic Hall in New Waverly.

Cunningham was the first woman to receive a pharmacy degree from the University of Texas Medical Branch in 1901, only to discover her education was worth only one-half of what her male colleagues earned. She later said this disparity made her a suffragist.

With husband Beverly Jean "Bill" Cunningham, a lawyer, she moved to Galveston in 1907. By 1912 she was leading the Galveston Equal Suffrage Association and in 1915 she began the first of four terms as president of the Texas suffragists' statewide organization.

Mrs. Cunningham was a delegate to the Democratic National Convention in 1920, a founding member of the League of Women Voters and executive secretary of the Women's National Democratic Club.

In 1944, she finished second in the Democratic primary for governor but prevented Gov. Coke Stevenson from leading an anti-Roosevelt delegation to the Democratic national convention. In 1945, she retired, emerging to work in the campaigns of Ralph Yarborough and Adlai Stevenson and to organize women's clubs. She mortgaged the farm to save the State Observer (forerunner of the Texas Observer), and as a member of a local school board in 1954 worked to implement desegregation. In 1964, "Mrs. Democrat of Texas" died and was buried in New Waverly with a donkey pinned to her dress.

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MYTHS AND MISPERCEPTIONS ABOUT HIGHER EDUCATION

by Dr. William H. Cunningham
President, The University of Texas at Austin

I frequently have occasion to discuss higher education with groups of citizens, and I find in those conversations a deep commitment by most citizens to supporting and strengthening our colleges and universities. I also find, however, that our universities continue to be surrounded by myths and misperceptions, including some that were all too common during last summer's critically important legislative debates on the state budget crisis.

Here are some of the myths that I encounter most often. Although many people apply them to higher education generally, I will frequently use the example of The University of Texas at Austin in explaining why they misrepresent reality.

First, it is often believed that institutions of higher education in Texas are well-funded. The data simply do not support that view. Annual state spending on higher education (that is, state appropriations plus tuition) is about \$4,200 per student in Texas — more than \$1,500 below the national average. Among the 50 states and the District of Columbia, Texas ranks 50th in spending per student, just below Mississippi and just ahead of West Virginia. One might suppose that tuition and fees might compensate for low appropriations, but the fact is that among the major public universities in the 50 states, UT Austin also ranks 50th in resident tuition and fees.

Second, some people assume that UT Austin can get by with lower state appropriations because the Permanent University Fund makes it one of the nation's wealthiest universities. It is true that the market value of the Permanent University Fund is nearly \$4 billion — making it the nation's second largest university endowment, next to Harvard's. We must always remember, however, that the PUF does not benefit only UT Austin, but institutions in both the UT and Texas A&M systems. The fund is shared by 17 institutions with a combined enrollment of more than 160,000. By contrast, Harvard's endowment of more than \$4.5 billion supports only one institution with less than 18,000 students.

Third, it is widely perceived that the University's budget has increased significantly since the mid-1980s. The bottom line is that our budget has increased by \$202.2 million since 1985 — a 10.4 percent increase over inflation. The interesting fact, however, is that although the total operating budget increased by \$202.2 million, our state tax dollars, which are used to meet the fundamental educational mission of The University, actually decreased by \$6.9 million during that period.

Fourth, I often hear that Texas universities are inefficient and wasteful. Two of the best ways to measure productivity are an institution's administrative cost per student and its student-faculty ratio. At UT Austin, the yearly administrative cost per student is \$690, while the average for the flagship public universities in the 50 states is \$1,540. UT Austin ranks 48th among those schools. Our student-faculty ratio is 20.39-to-1 — which puts us 44th among the 50 flagship public universities. The University of Illinois and the University of Michigan

have ratios of 11-to-1. Austin is an efficient institution — far too "efficient," I often think, for our students' welfare.

Fifth, there is the myth that UT Austin cannot attract a diverse student population. It is true that UT Austin has not been as successful as it must be in attracting African American and Hispanic students. However, our aggressive recruitment and scholarship programs have had substantial positive results. UT Austin, in fact, has the largest number and the third highest percentage of African American and Hispanic students among all the 50 major state universities.

Sixth, some people are under the impression that research efforts such as those at UT Austin are carried out at the expense of undergraduate education. This simply is not true. There is a rich interrelationship between research and teaching, and the presence of research programs benefits undergraduate education in many ways. Many undergraduates work in laboratories or participate in other ways in research. The presence of research programs also leads to an enhancement of library materials and other educational facilities, to which undergraduates have access. In addition, faculty members who are not involved in research will soon find themselves and their lectures outdated. A university's reputation is directly a function of the quality of its faculty. If the University were to try to discourage research, most of our prized faculty would soon leave for other institutions. If that happened, undergraduates who came to UT Austin because it has an outstanding national reputation would soon find that the reputation and the value of their degrees had declined significantly.

Seventh, it is maintained that universities are short-changing classroom instruction by diverting tuition revenue toward ever-expanding research programs. Not so. Almost all research spending comes through grants and contracts from outside agencies and is designated for specific research projects. These awards are made to faculty members on the basis of highly competitive research proposals. Last year UT Austin's budget included \$338 million in state appropriated funds, from which we budgeted only \$8.3 million for research. That relatively small amount is a vital investment that, last year, helped leverage \$171 million in new research grants and contracts from external sources.

Eighth, many people are convinced that all undergraduate classes at UT Austin are large, that all undergraduate classes are taught by teaching assistants, and that all teaching assistants are foreign students. While The University does have some large classes, almost 53 percent of our freshman and sophomore classes have 25 students or less, and 77 percent have 50 students or less. Only 21 percent of our undergraduate classes are taught by assistant instructors. These teachers must have a master's degree or its equivalent, and they are closely supervised by regular faculty members. Finally, 25 percent of the assistant instructors are foreign students. They must pass an oral English proficiency test before they are allowed to teach a regular class.

Dark Horses

BY DAVE DENISON

If you're on a deserted sidestreet in Manchester, New Hampshire, on a cold day in February and a light snow is beginning to fall and the signs of economic recession are all around, then you know several shades of bleak. Then you know new dimensions of dreariness.

I was on that street. And I stopped to take a picture.

What caught my eye was the sign on a storefront: Dark Horse Presidential Candidates Headquarters. A deserted sidestreet in Manchester is just where you'd expect to find the Dark Horse headquarters. One picture would tell the story.

But as I approached my subject something on the street changed. Presences that had been lurking were suddenly alert. An electrical current charged the air. A journalist was present, with camera and notepad. That was me.

"Who are you writing for?" called out a woman who came toward me from the parking lot across the street. Another one followed behind her. A man stepped out of the Dark Horse office to take a look. Soon they were around me and they all had literature. They were Dark Horse candidates. I was in the middle of a reverse feeding frenzy; candidates converging on the press.

The first woman proffered her bumpersticker: Killeen-Cuomo. She said she was Killeen. I said, "Why Cuomo?" She said, "Because he's my running mate. We don't want another Dan Quayle in there, do we?" The other woman was running as a Republican. She handed me her 27-page platform and a handbill. Her slogan had a certain kick: "Your Viable Choice to the Slimey Politicians."

"But we've got a candidate in here from Texas," she said. "He just got in last night. Why don't you come in and interview him?"

Inside Dark Horse headquarters, they introduced me to the man just in from Texas. Rufus Higginbotham, from Dallas. "I ran for mayor the other day," he said, by way of introduction. "You know the Reverend Criswell?" I said sure I did. "Well, I'm with him." I knew what he meant by "with him." With him in spirit. And probably with him in peculiar political views. I didn't foresee an extended interview.

But anyway, here was Rev. Higginbotham with a table of his own, in the midst of a dozen other tables set up by so-called minor candidates. Rev. H. said he wasn't enamored of the



Dark Horse Headquarters in Manchester

DAVE DENISON

sign I stopped to take a picture of. He didn't like to be called a Dark Horse. "If you call yourself that, people will think that's what y'are." Uh-huh. "I'll tell you what I am," he said. "I'm the next resident of the White House."

When the Rev. H. said, "I'll tell you what I am," and paused for a brief dramatic breath, geography melted away for a moment. What you could see was the Dallas glint in his eye. He gave his Texas preacher look — amiable and steely at the same time. Had the temperature gone up a few degrees? Had the sun come out? No, it was still dreary outside. And Rufus Higginbotham was a long way from home.

What makes a man or woman go down to the print shop, order up a few hundred flyers, and declare himself or herself a candidate for the Presidency of the United States?

Psychologists sometimes break motivations down into three categories: need for achievement (n-ach), need for power (n-pow), and need for affiliation (n-aff). But psychologists have probably not sufficiently studied Dark Horse Presidential candidates. These are not people with high n-ach, or n-pow because they never win ach or pow. Their cam-

paigns are lonely and solitary, suggesting low n-aff. So we need for them a new motivational category. It might be this: need for just one or two mentions in the press (n-j1,2,mitp). The true Dark Horse candidate will travel thousands of miles, motivated by n-j1,2,mitp. What is amazing in modern society is how many mean, indifferent reporters will not satisfy the needs of so-called minor candidates. Or, those who will, perversely, mention the candidate in a negative or demeaning way.

Buried in the middle of Georgiana (Your Viable Choice to the Slimey Politicians) Doerschuck's 27-page platform was this cryptic reference to the heartbreak of bad press: "Here is hoping I will get a big write-in vote, as the only publicity of any account was bad publicity, in the Palm Beach Post." Caroline Killeen (Killeen-Cuomo ticket) experienced it, too. An excerpt from her political resume: "1984: 'Bad Press' in N.H. forced Caroline to abort her campaign for President. She headed for Canada."

Only a temporary setback in her case. This year she polled 93 votes statewide. Doerschuck was the viable choice of 57 voters. Higginbotham came in with 31. Low numbers, maybe. Still, it says here that they are running for President of the United States of America. □

Former Observer editor Dave Denison lives in Boston.

POLITICAL INTELLIGENCE

✓ **GUATEMALAN LAWYERS** investigating the 1990 killing of anthropologist Myrna Mack Chang in Guatemala City (TO, 10/2/91) are receiving death threats, according to a story in the National Catholic Reporter. The NCR cited the New York-based Lawyers Committee for Human Rights as a source of reports of threats made against the lives of attorneys Ernesto Rolando Corzantes Cruz and Jose Lopez Mendoza, both working on the investigation. Reporters following the case in Guatemala have also reported receiving death threats. In most cases, stories about the assassination, which was recently attributed to a military official in the presidential guard, are now published without bylines.

✓ **REMEMBER TORT REFORM?** Four years ago it was at the top of the business community's legislative agenda here in Texas. Trial lawyers and consumer-interest groups then stood in the way of a complete dismantling of the private tort system, by which an injured party can have his day in court. Residents of Colorado were not so fortunate. Wall Street Journal reporter Milo Geyelin found that generally, the promised decrease in insurance premiums hasn't happened — six years and 68 laws after the business-dominated Colorado Legislature went to work on their state's tort system. While some rates have dropped, the Journal reports some have increased. Consider automobile insurance: "Between 1988 and 1990, rates rose 8% on the average nationwide. But in Colorado, they rose 9.2 percent in the same period." What has decreased are awards plaintiffs receive. The Journal story includes several individual accounts of why tort reform doesn't work for plaintiffs.

"I think we did legal reform, but now the pendulum has begun to swing back, so the person who needs compensation can get it," Republican house majority leader Scott McInnis told the Journal. McInnis is described as "an early reform supporter who is now backing off."

✓ **THE BENTSEN CANDIDACY** continues to be the story that won't die. Dave McNeely, the veteran political reporter for the Austin American-Statesman, suggests that if Bill Clinton lays claim to enough delegates to win the party's nomination on the first ballot,

and then continues to take a beating from his opponents in April and May — on important issues such as adultery or Vietnam — party leaders might panic and persuade Clinton to withdraw, allowing Bentsen or House Majority Leader Dick Gephardt to claim the Clinton delegates. "For Bentsen, a draft would be the only way to run. He misses the strain of all that retail political campaigning in New Hampshire, Iowa, Maine and elsewhere. More important, he avoids in some states the liberal litmus tests that almost force a candidate to make pandering statements that could come back to haunt him in the general election."

✓ **SEWER MONEY**, a New York Times editorial called what political campaigns have come to describe as "soft money" — huge political contributions solicited from wealthy donors and funnelled through state parties to fund presidential campaigns. Soft money allows candidates to circumvent federal spending limits. This year, all Democratic candidates in the presidential primaries have promised not to use indirect financing in the general election — if the Republican candidates will make the same promise. The Times article suggested that the real estate subsidies in the President's economic package are a give-back to some 60 real estate executives who contributed \$6 million to Bush's 1988 campaign.

✓ **GREEN VOTES.** In contested primary races, the Lone Star Chapter Sierra Club endorsed incumbent Rep. Glenn Maxey in central Austin House District 51; Lon Burnam, a longtime environmental and social activist challenging incumbent Rep. Doyle Willis in Fort Worth House District 90; Judy Millspaugh, a Republican, in open San Antonio House District 121; Floyd Freed, a Republican primary challenger to incumbent Rep. Dalton Spring in Houston House District 135; and incumbent Rep. Kevin Bailey, a Democrat, in Houston House District 140. The club also endorsed Lena Guerrero for Railroad Commissioner, the re-election of Sen. Carlos Truan, D-Corpus Christi, and, in another Senate primary, Juan Hinojosa, a former McAllen state representative, over incumbent Sen. Eddie Lucio of Brownsville, who attempted in 1991 to authorize tax-free bonds to build

a luxury resort complex on Padre Island.

✓ **TAX ATTACKS.** Republicans accused congressional Democrats of — horrors — playing politics as the U.S. House of Representatives, on a 221-209 vote Feb. 27, approved a bill that would give middle class tax relief at the expense of the wealthy. Pete Geren of Fort Worth, Ralph Hall of Rockwall and Bill Sarpalius of Amarillo were the only Texas Democrats voting against the House plan. Meanwhile, Sen. Lloyd Bentsen, chair of the Senate Finance Committee, has his own plan to pay for \$300-a-child tax credits to middle-class families with higher taxes for the wealthy, including a 10-percent surcharge on income over \$1 million. Both Democratic bills would reduce the tax on capital gains, but not as much as President Bush demanded when he set a (presumably apolitical) March 20 deadline for action. Bush has threatened to veto any bill that increases taxes.

✓ **JUDGE NOT.** One of Justice Oscar Mauzy's backers is drumming up support for Charles Ben Howell's Republican primary campaign for Mauzy's seat on the Texas Supreme Court. Howell, an eccentric former justice on the 5th Court of Appeals in Dallas who has won three statewide GOP primary races, is running against Craig Enoch, a current justice on the Dallas appeals court with backing of GOP leaders. The Enoch campaign released a copy of a telefaxed letter from Timothy E. Kelley, a Dallas lawyer and Mauzy supporter, soliciting contributions on Howell's behalf after a GOP poll reportedly showed Howell with a 2-to-1 lead over Enoch. Kelley told the Houston Post he sent the letter as a favor to Howell, but he would support Mauzy in the general election.

✓ **BEAN COUNTERS.** In more evidence of the decline of civilization, a recent Texas Poll suggested that a majority of Texans prefer beans with their chili. In the poll of 1,003 adult Texans, conducted by the Public Policy Research Laboratory of Texas A&M University for Harte-Hanks Communications Inc., 49 percent said they ate chili with beans and 42 percent sided with the traditional bowl of red. Among native Texans, 54 percent prefer their chili without beans.