

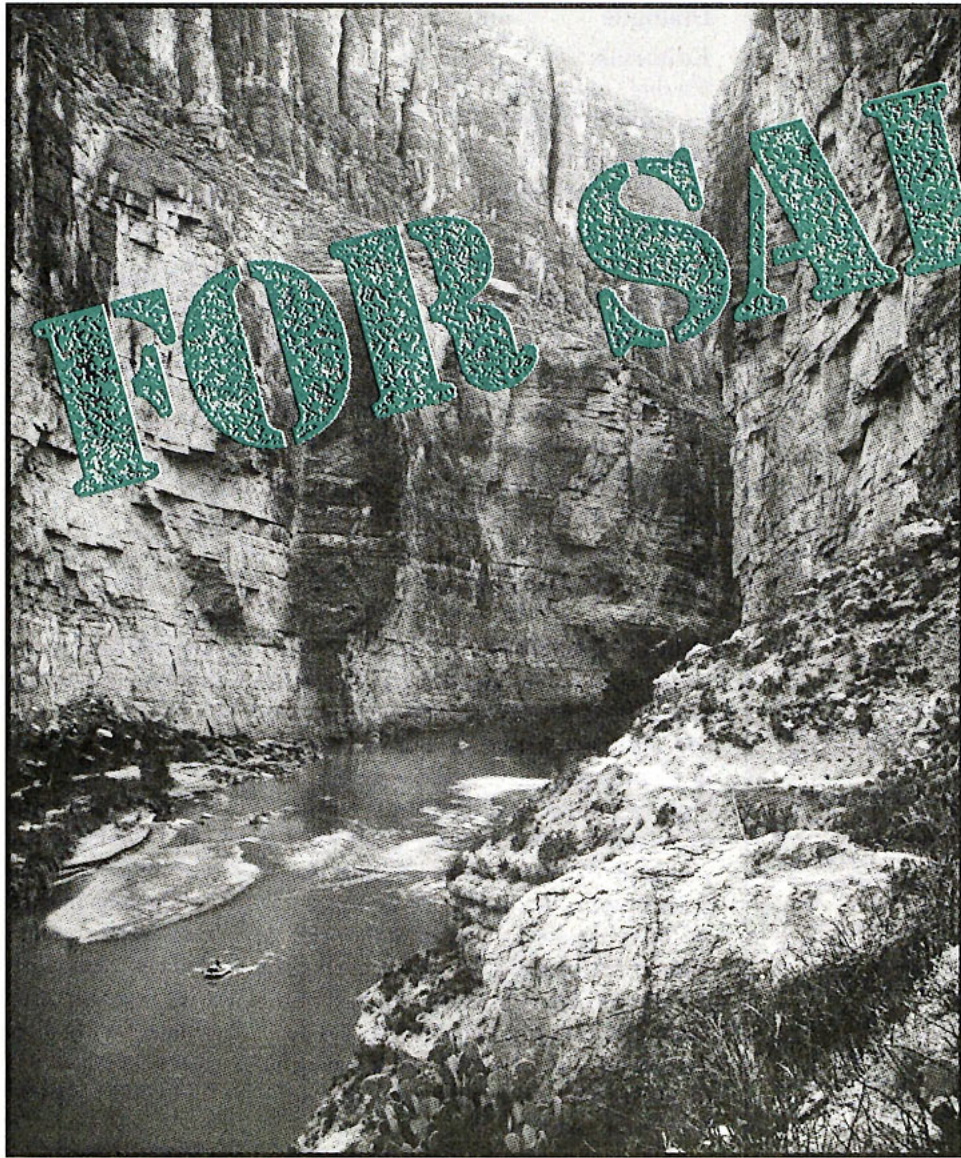
Nazi Braceros: Hitler's Doctors in Texas Hospitals

THE TEXAS
Observer

A JOURNAL OF FREE VOICES

FEBRUARY 28, 1997 • \$1.75

ENVIRONMENT



FOR SALE



Free Market Enviro-Dollars Pollute Barton Creek
The Assault on Environmental Education
Senate Rubberstamps the Gov's TNRCC Chairman



THE TEXAS Observer

VOLUME 89, NO. 4

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.

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Founding Editor: Ronnie Dugger

Publisher: Geoff Rips

Managing Publisher: Rebecca Melançon

Editor: Louis Dubose

Associate Editor: Michael King

Production: Harrison Saunders

Copy Editor: Mimi Bardagjy

Poetry Editor: Naomi Shihab Nye

Circulation Manager: Amanda Toering

Special Correspondent: Karen Olsson

Editorial Intern: Mark Murray

Contributing Writers: Bill Adler, Barbara Belejck, Betty Brink, Brett Campbell, Jo Clifton, Lars Eighner, James Galbraith, Dagoberto Gilb, James Harrington, Jim Hightower, Molly Ivins, Paul Jennings, Steven Kellman, Tom McClellan, Bryce Milligan, Debbie Nathan, Brad Tyer, James McCarty Yeager.

Contributing Photographers: Vic Hinterlang, Alan Pogue.

Contributing Artists: Michael Alexander, Eric Avery, Tom Ballenger, Richard Bartholomew, Jeff Danziger, Beth Epstein, Valerie Fowler, Kevin Kreneck, Michael Krone, Ben Sargent, Gail Woods.

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Cover photo by Harrison Saunders

DIALOGUE

CRUNCHED NUMBERS

I appreciate the information in "Thus Spake the Governor" (February 14) but it appears to me that the chart is incorrect in using the same salary interval for the "Next 4 percent" and the "Top 1 percent." I also wonder whether the text is correct in saying the "richest fifth pay 5.5 percent." It seems unlikely that the top quintile would be paying 5.5 percent if the 96th through 99th percentiles pay an average of 5.5 percent, the next 15 percent pay 6.6 percent and the top 1 percent pay 4.4 percent. In any case, I would like to have clarification on the intervals for the last two bars in the chart.

One other question: you credit the Citizens for Tax Justice for the statement that Texas has one of the "ten most regressive" tax systems in the country and refer to the graph, which credits another organization as the source for the graph. Am I correct that the information in the graph supports

the "ten most regressive" statement but was not provided by Citizens for Tax Justice?

*Jay Doubleday
Kerrville*

Michael King replies:

Mr. Doubleday is right; due to a layout error, the graph incorrectly repeated the last income interval for the "Top 1 percent." The correct figure for the "Top 1 percent" should be "\$395,000 and above." (See corrected graph, page 3. The average annual family income in this range, paying just 4.4 percent in state and local taxes, is \$743,000.) My textual error, based on an

ERRATA

In the February 14 issue, the name of poet Tim Seibles was misspelled in the Table of Contents, and Frank Coronado was incorrectly identified in the photo on page 14. We apologize for the errors.

eyeball estimate at deadline, is less forgivable: the correct state/local tax rate for the top 20 percent of Texas incomes (\$71,000 and above), as confirmed by Dick Lavine of the Center for Public Policy Priorities, is 6.3 percent—still less than half the rate (13.8 percent) on the lowest 20 percent of family incomes.

As for the double credit: the chart, based on a study by the Citizens for Tax Justice, appears in materials provided by the Texas Center for Policy Priorities. For more information, contact the CPPP at (512) 320-0222.

Thank you for the opportunity to correct these errors.

BANANAS REPUBLIC

A great piece on the Republic of Texas ("Xmas in the Texas Republic," by Debbie Nathan, January 17). It shows that in addition to the native people of Hawaii, the Chicano community and the Western Shoshone Nation [in Nevada], people in Texas want *out* of the New York- and Washington, D.C.-run corporate tyranny that the U.S. is rapidly degenerating into. We are fed up with our lives being gambled with by a bunch of suits and ties on the floors of the New York Stock Exchange and Congress. They may be a little off in blaming the U.N. for a lot of it (it's clearly the U.S.),

since the U.N. doesn't have the manpower or resources the U.S. government and corporate power structure has, to run its "global economy."

The one thing we all have in common is our exasperation at being downsized, outsourced, subcontracted and welfare-reformed into ever declining states of poverty—by decision makers ensconced far away in New York and Washington, D.C. I hear so much about "if California were an independent country, it would be the sixth largest economy in the world." How nice that would be, to be an independent and democratic economy owned and run by California's working people, not some wealthy minority, the majority of which live on the East Coast and overseas. No more NAFTA or GATT, jobs for everyone! No more political corruption like Newt Gingrich or Bill Clinton! No more demagogues like Pete Wilson! If getting independence from the overgrown banana republic known as the U.S. is the only way out of our economic and political ills, then more power to those of us seeking independence.

Chris Ellis
San Bernardino, CA

EVERY VOTE COUNTS

The reporting on the Sheriff/County Commissioners' election in Val Verde

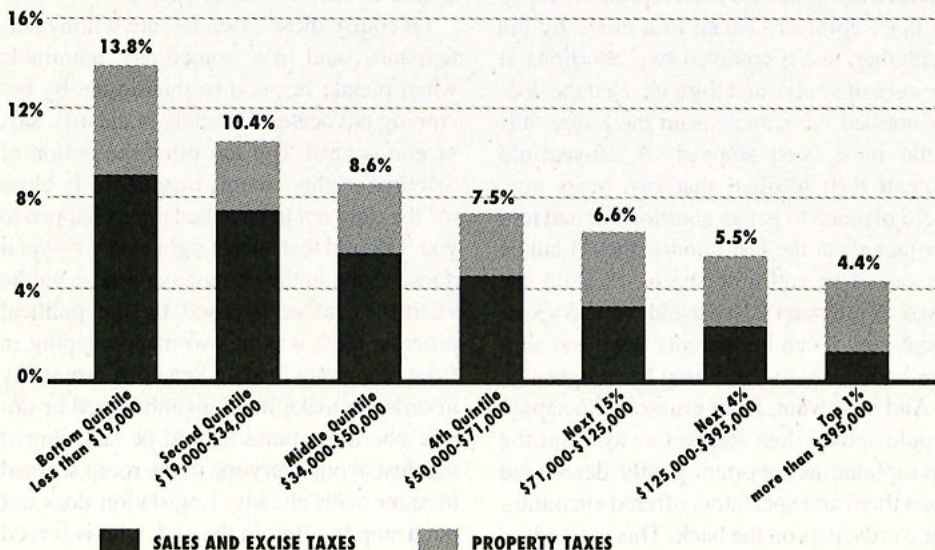
County has sort of pushed a button with me. During my thirty-plus years as a military "lifer," I was seldom able to get an absentee voting application in time to have my vote counted back here in Menard. During my years as an officer, I continually stressed to my subordinates that they were citizens too and had rights and responsibilities as such, despite the perception to the contrary often encountered, especially in the 1960s. It is very easy to understand a rifleman's perception, on the DMZ in Korea for instance, that the general public doesn't give a flat damn about him, and this is the reason the Armed Services have done much to make voting an easier thing to do. I used to use the cartoonist Mort Walker's having his Sgt. Snorkel admonish his troops that "Our job is to defend them, not to speculate on whether they're worth defending," as a bit of levity to defuse the sense of alienation.

I have particularly bad memories about the 1972 General Election. I encouraged all of my men, stationed in Afghanistan, to vote, and almost all of us applied to do so. Not one of us was able to get our completed ballots back home in time to be counted. Local minorities are not the only ones who perceive a "dilution of voting power," as the Voting Rights Act calls it.

There is probably some reason for it, but I wonder about the identification of the military voters as the decisive element that produced the victory of the two candidates whose suitability might be open to question. This happens in a democracy, and there is precious little we can do about it except vote the rascals out next term. In administering primary elections, I am damn careful that the confidentiality of the voters' choice is preserved, particularly in the case of mail-in absentee votes. My experience in running primaries has been that the Secretary of States' guidance is that "residence" is a matter of the individuals' preference, and that the usual answer to voter eligibility is "if at all possible, let 'em vote."

Richard R. McTaggart, COL, USA (Ret)
Democratic County Chair, Menard

The Poorest Texans Pay a Greater Share of Their Income in State and Local Taxes Than Do the Wealthiest Texans



Source: Texas Center for Public Policy Priorities

Uterine Gothic

"What about suffering?" an interviewer once asked Bernard Malamud. "It's a subject much in your early work."

"I'm against it," answered the writer, "but when it occurs, why waste the experience?"

A couple of weeks ago there were 1,782 pairs of old shoes lined up in rows at the Capitol complex—suede boots, gold lamé sandals, beat-up sneakers and sequined heels and purple slippers and beige flats—all collected by Mothers Against Drunk Driving to represent the 1,782 Texans killed in drunk-driving accidents in 1995. Signs were attached to some: "Actual Victim's Shoes," "I Was Killed February 26, 17 Yrs Old," or cards bearing just a name. The shoes were arrayed along both walls of a skylit corridor, and between them the usual Capitol crowd of staff, tourists and lobbyists made its way down the hall; most ignored the exhibit. Occasionally, someone glanced at the shoes or muttered something: "Hoo—scary," said one woman.

A MADD spokesman later told me that the shoes had been collected as "a visually penetrating image of just how many people lost their lives in one year." There are a number of related bills in the works, he added—one to lower the acceptable blood alcohol content for juveniles to zero, another to establish sobriety checkpoints, another to outlaw open containers in vehicles. Perhaps the exhibit of shoes served to remind lawmakers about the pending legislation. And maybe "awareness" is a good thing for everyone—we look at the shoes, and next time we're out on a Saturday night we're more careful about how we get home.

Even so, it was a jarring display, for there was such a discrepancy between the emotion invested by the friends and families of those who died—whoever attached a prom photo and decorations to a beat-up pair of grey jogging shoes—and the responses from passers-by. Displayed along a busy office hallway, the shoes were, naturally, ignored.

The display also represented a broader trend, in which personal tragedies are reinvented as political arguments—a little unsettling in the case of the shoes, in other instances absurd, stomach-turning, and unnecessary.

On February 19, the Senate committee on Health and Human Services met in the Senate chambers to hear testimony on several abortion-related bills. The showpiece bill, sponsored by Republican Senator Jane Nelson of Flower Mound, would require minors to get their parents' permission (or a judge's waiver) before having an abortion. In attendance were a number of Regular Folks—cardigan-wearing moms and their kids, mostly—with yellow "Parents' Rights" cards pinned to their shirts.

The lurid stories began even before the parental consent bill came up. Testifying in favor of a bill sponsored by Republican Senator Chris Harris, which would provide for stricter monitoring of abortion clinics to make sure they meet health and safety standards, a young woman recalled in some detail how she almost died as the result of an improperly-performed abortion. Her uterus had been ripped, she said. It had taken six years to convict the people responsible; they had only been sentenced to six years in prison, and "that is not enough," said the woman, breaking down into tears as the Senators watched.

Another man testified that his mentally retarded daughter had been repeatedly raped by her stepfather. Taken to a clinic by the stepfather, she'd received two abortions at the ages of twelve and thirteen. Had the doctor notified the parents, said the father, this could have been stopped. A 20-year-old woman then testified that two years ago, she'd planned to get an abortion but had told her parents at the last minute; they'd talked her out of it; and now she has a child she loves. A pregnant 22-year-old woman spoke about how much her parents' love and support had meant to her during her pregnancy.

And so it went, from gruesome to sappy: people spoke, then stepped away from the microphone as reporters gently descended upon them and spectators offered encouraging words, pats on the back. This is standard operating procedure—no matter that most

of what was said had nothing to do with safer clinics or parental consent. The debate over abortion becomes a battle of anecdotes: a man from a right-to-life group handed me a packet of information that included not one but two letters from doctors asserting that Becky Bell, an Illinois girl who died after trying to induce an abortion on her own rather than tell her parents, had died of pneumonia, not self-inflicted injury.

Dwelling on the grotesque is doubly harmful: not only do horror stories block out discussion but, as Katha Pollitt has pointed out, they cast the entire debate in right-to-lifers' terms, associating abortion with unscrupulous surgeons, rapes and ripped wombs rather than a woman's decision to have a child. The airing of misfortune isn't limited to abortion politics. Just in the past few weeks the Legislature has granted the spotlight to stalking victims and victims of violent convicts who were granted early parole, while nationally the politics of "victims' rights" has become both bread and circus. Candidates ask us to vote for them so that they can crack down on stalkers and put criminals in prison, and people who've had relevant personal tragedies become handy props.

Of course those "victims" are willing participants, and it's sometimes admirable when people respond to misfortune by becoming advocates for safety standards, say, or gun control. But too often the notion of "victims' rights" seems treacherously close to "the right not to have bad things happen to you." Would that such a right existed—yet it doesn't, and in the end many of these public victims seem oddly used by the political process. Here was this woman, weeping in front of a group of state Senators, ostensibly in order to make a point (unlicensed or unsafe abortion clinics should be shut down) that just about everyone in the room seemed to agree with already. Legislation does not put a stop to grief: in the end, who is served by these displays?

—K.O.

Wild About Barry

*This is of record. Where slept then
your lightning?
Loafed your torque.*

—John Berryman

The legislative process is a predictable affair, and were the print medium allowed to print only what accurately can be called “news,” our already downsized Capitol bureaus would long since have been reassigned to the police beat. For example, just as those of us who are paid to watch the Lege know to never split an infinitive, we also know that whenever the unctuous and dapper Senator Eddie Lucio gets close to anyone with any real economic or political power, the Senator’s going to violate the state’s sodomy statute. So we all knew what to expect when Lucio stopped by Senate Nominations’ confirmation hearing for Texas Natural Resources Commission Chair Barry McBee—just long enough to tell McBee what a great job he has done since the Governor appointed him, and that the Senate would be with him when his nomination got to the floor, and by the way how about that channel dam on the Rio Grande, and aren’t rivers important to all of us and isn’t it wonderful that McBee is keeping them clean.

McBee is the chief regulator of what government professors call a “captured regulatory agency”—that is, a regulatory agency controlled by the interests it was created to regulate. In this case, those industries represent one of the greatest concentrations of economic power in this state, and like his randy Republican colleague Drew Nixon, in certain situations Eddie Lucio just can’t help himself. His unseemly public embrace of Barry McBee was hardly news.

What follows is.

For two hours, in a hearing room thirty feet below the rosebeds on the north lawn of the Capitol, Democratic Senators Gonzalo Barrientos, Mario Gallegos, and Carlos Truan—three of the most steadfast defenders of our state’s beleaguered environment—behaved as if they were TNRCC factotum in the service of McBee.

For weeks, representatives of the state’s

environmental organizations had provided the senators’ staffs with information about McBee’s eighteen months’ tenure at the agency charged with protecting the state’s natural resources. The studies, position papers, and lists of questions about TNRCC practices provide a fact-based case against McBee. And although Republicans control the Senate, it was assumed that the Democrats—or at least these three Democrats—would use the nomination process to extract a few promises from McBee. The Republicans’ protracted examination of

WHEN MCBEE RESPONDED THAT BECAUSE THERE WAS NO FEDERAL MANDATE PROTECTING FARMWORKERS, HE HAD ELIMINATED THEIR STATE PROTECTION TO MAKE THE REGULATIONS UNIFORM, GALLEGOS DIDN’T EVEN WINCE.

Ann Richards’ pro-consumer Public Insurance Counsel Amy Johnson, at a time when the Senate was controlled by Democrats, might have served as a model for the new Senate minority.

It didn’t.

Truan, a Senator whose reckless courage often provides the pretext for his colleagues to dismiss him, asked a few insider’s questions about inter-basin water transfers—and the permitting process for shrimp farms. Then he gently reminded McBee (and TNRCC board member John Baker, who is also up for confirmation) that their authority is sanctioned by the advice and consent of the Senate.

Barrientos, who in an exhausting filibuster two years ago, at least attempted to throw his body in the path of Senator Teel Bivins’ “takings” bill, postured, sputtered and at one time even asked in his most stentorian voice: “Mr. McBee, do you recycle?” (You really should have been there.)

And Gallegos, a solid vote on environmental issues despite the fact that his district is owned by the Texas Chemical Council, asked McBee about his dismantling of pesticide protection rules designed to protect farmworkers, while McBee was working for Rick Perry at the Texas Department of Agri-

culture. When McBee responded that because there was no federal mandate protecting farmworkers, he had eliminated their state protection to make the regulations uniform, Gallegos didn’t even wince. And when McBee claimed that he had ordered his inspectors to provide advance notice before all on-site inspections because inspectors frequently found that the person they needed to speak to when they arrived unannounced was not available, or that gates were locked—not one of the three tenors even slowed him down.

It was a bravura performance. But all bravura. The only tense moment occurred when Barrientos took off his gloves and went after Clean Water Action director Sparky Anderson, who for just a moment must have thought that he had been nominated for something. Barrientos demanded from him a full accounting of Clean Water Action’s ethnic breakdown, then condescendingly dismissed Anderson—who tried to explain that such statistics are not available, but that his organization works in all urban neighborhoods.

If all of this were not on tape somewhere in the bowels of the Capitol, I would expect readers to challenge even this brief recapitulation.

Some four hours after they began, the seven members of the Nominations Committee voted to endorse the nominations of both McBee and Baker, giving a green light to an agency that in a rare moment of candor Senator Truan had compared to Chairman Hugh Yantis’ infamous and oxymoronic Texas Water Quality Board—a predecessor of the TNRCC.

By the time that 7-0 vote was cast, Senator Lucio’s cameo performance two hours earlier seemed like a sweet Gulf breeze.—L.D.

One week after McBee’s hearing, Democratic Representatives John Hirschi, Robert Puente, Elliott Naishtat, and Lon Burnam announced that they are co-sponsoring—with the support of 113 environmental and consumer groups—eleven bills to restore public access to TNRCC decision-making processes affecting the environment and public health.

U.T. to Bullock: Dollars and Apologies

BY ROBERT BRYCE

In the wake of a lawsuit recently filed against University of Texas officials, questions of possible administrative coercion and improper political activity have been raised concerning university personnel.

An investigation by the *San Antonio Express-News* has found that U.T.-System officials have been bundling political contributions on a system-wide scale over the past four years. During that time, U.T. administration officials from across the state have contributed nearly \$125,000 to Lieutenant Governor Bob Bullock.

When it comes to buying influence and lobbying at the Capitol, the U.T. officials have been walking a very fine line. The fundraising on Bullock's behalf indicates how important U.T. officials believe it is to maintain good relations with the Senate's most powerful curmudgeon. And while there is nothing currently illegal about bundling funds, U.T.'s actions more closely resemble those of a corporation than a publicly funded school system. Unlike corporations, U.T.'s lobbyists are not required to register with the Texas Ethics Commission. In fact, U.T. officials are prohibited by law from "lobbying" legislators. "The basic rule is you can't use state funds for lobbying," explains Karen Lundquist, general counsel at the Ethics Commission.

The U.T. System office has six staffers in its governmental relations department, including Mike Millsap, the vice chancellor for governmental relations. Like many other lobbyists at the Capitol, Millsap is a former state representative, a Democrat from Fort Worth. And Millsap has visited many legislators over the past few weeks about legislation that would affect U.T., including the proposed football stadium expansion at U.T.-Austin.

But Ray Farabee, the general counsel for the System, insists that Millsap and the others do not "lobby." Instead, he says they "provide information and answer inquiries." That description could be made by virtually any hired-gun lobbyist at the Capitol. Every lobbyist in Austin wants to provide information and answer inquiries. And if you have access to legislators and

can deliver your information, then you have power, which, at the Capitol, is the ability to affect legislation.

U.T. is certainly justified in providing information at the Capitol. After all, the System has fifteen campuses, 150,000 students and 60,000 employees. Texas needs good schools at all levels, particularly at the university level. But how much influence should U.T. have at the Capitol? And who will monitor U.T.'s lobbyists to assure that they just provide information? Farabee insists that they "do not advocate for or against a measure." But who watches to make certain that Millsap and the others do not advocate a position one way or the other?

Lundquist admits that U.T. and other state agencies and institutions fall through the cracks of current state laws. On one hand, she points out that there is a provision in state law that exempts members of the executive, legislative, or judicial branches from registering with the Ethics Commission if they are compensated for lobbying. On the other hand, those same officials are not supposed to lobby. "How do you request a report on something that is illegal?" asks Lundquist.

The U.T. fundraising issue will be debated over the coming months during the proceedings in a lawsuit known as *Jude Valdez vs. William Cunningham et al.* Valdez (a vice president of U.T.-San Antonio) sued Cunningham (the chancellor of the U.T. System) and other U.T. officials in federal court in San Antonio last fall, claiming that the university violated his civil rights and his right of free speech. Valdez contends he was forced to donate money to Bullock by his superior at U.T.S.A. When he turned in his \$100 check a few days late, he was reprimanded by U.T.S.A. president Samuel Kirkpatrick. Valdez says Kirkpatrick then demoted him and stripped him of many of his duties.

Lowell Lebermann, a former Austin city councilmember and now a member of the

U.T. Board of Regents, calls the Valdez suit "nonsense." Two days after the publication of the *Express-News* story, Lebermann said he had just returned from a luncheon honoring Lady Bird Johnson. While there, he saw Bullock's wife, Jan. He joked that he had asked the Lieutenant Governor's wife to tell Bullock that "we love him and we are with him and don't let him be mad at us for raising so little." According to the *Express-News*, U.T. officials and the U.T. political action committee, along with university supporters like Morris Atlas, Jim Bob Moffett, and regent Bernard Rapoport, have donated a total of \$208,900 to Bullock since 1992. Lebermann said he asked Mrs. Bullock to tell her husband that "in spite of press reports, we only raised \$190,000 of the \$10 million he's raised over the past five years and we hope he's not mad at us."

When asked if U.T. officials had coerced its administrators into giving money to Bullock, Lebermann replied, "This is Texas, not Louisiana."

Austin may be a long way from the Mississippi River, but it appears U.T.'s fundraising and lobbying activities would be right at home in Baton Rouge. □

Robert Bryce is a Contributing Editor for the Austin Chronicle, where a version of this article first appeared.

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Legislation To Look Forward To...

BY THE BAD BILLS GIRL

Long, Cold Wait

H.B. 323

Rep. Arlene Wohlgemuth (R-Burleson)

Wohlgemuth and four co-authors want to institute a one-year "cooling off period" for Texans trying to get a divorce. Sounds more like a "deep freeze period," but Wohlgemuth views the current 60-day wait as insufficient. By proposing that failing marriages get the Han Solo treatment, she said, "what we are trying to do is begin the process of changing the mindset of the people of this state."

The preposition-packing legislator is also suggesting that a no-fault divorce be granted only with both parties' consent; otherwise a couple would have to live apart for three years first. The bill's sponsors claim that all this will somehow protect children. "If marriage is not going to mean something, then we shouldn't have marriage," said Representative Glenn Lewis (D-Fort Worth), a co-author, who also insisted that the bill is not "trying to re-establish the dominance of men in our society."

What a relief. Less reassuring are reports of other marriage bills currently being drafted. According to Representative Charlie Howard (R-Sugar Land) one proposal would require premarital counseling; another would mandate a one-year waiting period *before* marriage.

Visions of a better society: don't let people who want to get married marry, force people who don't want to be married to stay together—altogether now, *I'd like to teach the world to sing...*

No Quarters

H.B. 743

H.B. 762

Representatives Tony Goolsby (R-Dallas) and Kip Averitt (R-Waco)

Goolsby's H.B. 743 would make drinking games a Class C misdemeanor, supposedly to crack down on college student debauchées. Outlawing frat house drinking games would be silly enough, but the bill doesn't specify game location or participants' ages—any game that "includes the consumption of an alcoholic beverage as an element of the game" and whose "primary

purpose...is the intoxication of the participants" would be outlawed. So the bill would primarily affect non-students (a large percentage of college drinking is already illegal, since so many of the drinkers are underage). One University of Texas student labeled the bill "insane."

Averitt's bill, filed in response to a request from Baylor University officials, proposes to classify buying, selling, or distributing term papers as a Class B misdemeanor. H.B. 762 would deter students from cheating, its proponents say.

Last time we checked, cheating was already a serious offense at most colleges. But why not put a few cops on the thesis beat? There must be some crossing guards due for promotion.

Votes From Outer Space

In the Works

Representatives Suzanna Gratia Hupp (R-Lampasas), Carl Isett (R-Lubbock), and Jerry Madden (R-Richardson)
Senator Jerry Patterson (R-Pasadena)

In response to the Val Verde voting lawsuits (over whether military personnel who haven't lived in a county for years should vote in local elections), Republican lawmakers have joined the GOP squawk squad in supposed defense of "the right of the military to vote." Madden says he will file a bill (currently in Legislative Council) to make sure that votes mailed "in a timely

manner" will be counted, even if received after election day. He also wants legislation to facilitate voting by service members and others who are "knowingly away and out of communication—like that guy up in the space station," said Madden. "I.e., people who have no way to get home to get a ballot." He's considering fax and e-mail votes.

Squawk squad teammates Hupp and Isett have co-authored a bill, also in council at press time, that would require county clerks to count any absentee military ballots received up to ten days after a general election (four days for special elections or primaries) provided they are postmarked by election day.

Maybe the Reps believed Phil Gramm and Kay Bailey Hutchinson when they claimed that the ability of military personnel to vote has been threatened by the lawsuits, or maybe they're just working together to spin the issue. Senator Madden, on the other hand, has cut to the chase, proposing to eliminate state funding for that left-wing organization Gramm loves to hate, Texas Rural Legal Aid. By filing the initial lawsuit, Patterson told the *Dallas Morning News*, TRLA "participated in racist, partisan and prejudicial actions toward military personnel."

The Senator is waiting to see "what action TRLA takes to discipline itself" at an upcoming board meeting, said a spokesman from Patterson's office. After that he's likely to recommend that TRLA be denied almost \$1 million in state funds. □

The Center for Mexican American Studies at the University of Texas
and *The Texas Observer*
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Rosemary Catacalos

Thursday, March 27

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Environment for Sale at Barton Creek

BY MICHAEL KING

Environmentalism pays.

That was the central lesson learned from "Environmentalism at the Crossroads," a weekend conference held last month (January 30-February 1) at that Austin ecological crossroads, the Barton Creek Conference Resort and Country Club.

The conference, sponsored by the Political Economy Research Center (PERC) of Bozeman, Montana, brought together about a dozen Texas journalists for a series of presentations by PERC economists and others on something PERC calls "free market environmentalism." PERC, a conservative think-tank founded at Montana State University in 1980 (it has since become an independent non-profit), says its primary goal is to address environmental problems with "market solutions," as opposed to "command-and-control" solutions—i.e., the dreaded "governmental regulations." On the theory, I suppose, that we hapless scribblers need regular doses of economic orthodoxy to prevent regulatory contamination, PERC sponsors annual journalism conferences in Montana, and recently branched out to Minnesota and now Texas. Guests of PERC represented at the Austin conference included the *Houston Chronicle*, *Austin American-Statesman*, *Texas Monthly*, *Forbes Magazine* (a *Forbes* editor sits on PERC's board of trustees), the *Wall Street Journal*, UPI, and several smaller publications. While most of the presenters agreed in principle with PERC's economic doctrines, also speaking were representatives of the Lone Star Sierra Club, the Save Our Springs Alliance, and even Big Bend National Park (which PERC believes should be whimsically privatized, along with all state and national parks).

The "Perkies," as they cheerfully call themselves, are an affable, outdoorsy bunch, partial to anecdotes about fly-fishing and big-game hunting, testimony to their affections for all things natural. They were even a little apologetic about hosting a conference amidst the rolling fairways and garish splendors of palatial Barton Creek Resort, saying they were used to more rustic Montana venues—although reporter Carol Estes, guest at an earlier conference, priced the Mountain Sky Guest Ranch (near Bozeman) at \$2,000 a week. I guess it's simply a question of what you're used to.

The pillared excesses of the Barton Creek Country Club include, among other gestures at conspicuous expense, a bar named in honor of Freeport-McMoRan CEO James R. Moffett: the "Jim Bob Lounge." One could hardly turn around without bumping into an expensive gew-gaw, but my favorite touch of fake elegance were the shelves lining the lobby/"library," where we were welcomed with hors d'oeuvres spread across the grand piano. The shelves were filled with the sort of thrift-shop, never-touched, hard-cover "books"—long-forgotten novels, out-of-date trade manuals, neo-Victorian memoirs—usually found only in the bedroom suites of discount furniture stores.

The next morning PERC executive director Terry L. Anderson would begin his introductory remarks by first donning an economist's green eye-shade and then an environmentalist's headband, and explaining that the purpose of free market environmentalism is to bring these seemingly antagonistic worlds together. Then he leaned over the marble-top conference table and confided a couple of PERC's favorite mantras: "Wealthier is healthier," and "Only people in rooms like this can afford to be worrying about the environment." Hold dearly those thoughts (while you try to forget the poisoned air of Corpus Christi, the

HE LEANED OVER THE MARBLE-TOP CONFERENCE TABLE AND CONFIDED A COUPLE OF PERC'S FAVORITE MANTRAS: "WEALTHIER IS HEALTHIER," AND "ONLY PEOPLE IN ROOMS LIKE THIS CAN AFFORD TO BE WORRYING ABOUT THE ENVIRONMENT."

fouled water of the *colonias*, the sludged and irradiated earth of Sierra Blanca). They were painfully representative of the level of panglossian economic "ideas" addressed during the conference.

Yet it was mostly the Perkies themselves who seemed devoted to these oversimplifications. Beyond their sloganeering, the conference did offer several notions of interest to environmentalists, although few of these had much to do with ideological caricatures like "command-and-control" regulation or "free markets."

Over Thursday evening's grilled salmon, the opening speaker was Howard Burris, a local businessman who once owned 1,000 acres of west Austin land, at first virtually valueless and then discovered, during residential development, to be habitat for the endangered golden-cheeked warbler. Burris told an engrossing story of being whipsawed between oscillating land values and rapidly changing regulations, and finally being hamstrung and foreclosed upon in the wake of of contradictory applications of local and federal environmental laws.

Although still angered by his experience, Burris was not embittered. Even when goaded by his audience, he did not leap to condemn the Environmental Protection Agency or the Endangered Species Act. (Indeed, he insisted that if somebody intentionally tries to skirt the environmental laws, "the government probably ought to hang 'em high.") Instead, Burris said, his story was a classic illustration of the political problem of "competing goods": the need to preserve endangered species with the need to maintain the rights of property owners, each of which is a potentially expensive proposition. When it comes to the social costs of environmental protection, Burris said, "Nobody wants responsibility; nobody



Karen Olsson

▲ *Better Habitats through Chemistry?*

wants to pay." In short, his tale was an argument for improved and fair environmental regulation (and its adequate funding), not for its abolition.

It was hardly the ringing defense of unfettered free markets proclaimed by the Perkies. The story would be much the same, at least from the invited guests, throughout the conference. Much of Friday's session was devoted to presentations by consultants or businessmen who had found inventive ways to combine local (i.e., micro-economic) forms of environmental protection with commerce: a Midwest landscaper who specializes in native plants instead of lawn grass; a North Texas private zookeeper using upmarket "eco-tourism" to help protect endangered African species; an environmental consultant helping to establish birding trails on private and public Texas lands; an Oregon environmentalist lobbying the state and raising foundation money to purchase agricultural water rights to use in preservation of salmon runs. Peter Emerson of the Environmental Defense Fund described environmental projects in El Paso, San Antonio, and the Gulf, each of which involves the balancing of commercial interests (utilities, residential development, fishing) with environmental protection (air, water, Galveston Bay), and each of which requires the intensive cooperation of industry, citizens, and governments (local, state, and national) to achieve economic and environmental ends. Each of these projects held useful lessons for environmentalists, but also cautionary ones.

It is difficult to imagine, for example, what a museum-scale preserve of endangered African animals assembled for the entertainment of Dallas tourists can tell us about the destruction of African habitat by the combined forces of empire, post-imperial devastation, and multi-national corporate rapacity—except that it needs to be stopped, and as soon as possible.

During the entire conference, the word "corporation" was rarely uttered, but it's probably just as well. PERC Senior Associate Richard Stroup (director of the Interior Department's Office of Policy Analysis during the Reagan administration) is fond of such Eco-101 fatuities as "Producing the greatest amount of value for society, net of total cost, is the job of the corporation" (*PERC Reports*, December 1996). Stroup even seems to believe such bromides represent the real world; the original Professor Pangloss would have the good grace to blush. Stroup's wife, Jane Shaw, also a Senior Associate, is co-author of a just-published parents' environmental manual called *Facts Not Fear*, with an introduction by that well-known naturalist, Marilyn Quayle. The book, proclaiming that environmentalists are attempting to terrorize our children with made-up horror stories of pollution, is a central document in the current right-wing campaign to stop reauthorization of the National Environmental Education Act, which provides funds to public schools. (See "The Assault on Eco-Education," page 10.)

In fairness to the Perkies, while they preach that private property

owners should be fairly rewarded for incurring public environmental costs ("positive incentives matter"), they also insist (at least in principle) on the libertarian corollary that those who damage the environment, in Anderson's words, "should bear the costs for what they've done." Anderson has published some useful observations about the environmental devastation sustained by federal subsidies of massive western water projects for the benefit of private industry. His solution? Privatize all federal and state forests, parks, lands, waters, etc., etc., etc.—as if eliminating the beleaguered public middleman in this private aggrandizement would somehow

slow down, rather than accelerate, the economic and environmental destruction it has wreaked. (The day before the PERC conference, Anderson had promoted these notions at yet another Austin conservative confab, this one sponsored by two PERC allies, the Texas Conservative Coalition Research Institute and the Washington-based Competitive Enterprise Institute. Also in attendance were TNRCC Chairman Barry McBee, and Texas State Representatives Warren Chisum and David Counts—be sure to look for PERC's discounted doctrines on sale at a Legislature currently meeting in your neighborhood.)

THE ASSAULT ON ECO-EDUCATION

BY MARIANNE MANILOV AND TAMARA SCHWARZ

Another mother tells how sad her six-year-old daughter seemed one night as she settled into her new bed. Why? her mother asked. "They killed trees to make my bed," was the reply.

—from *Facts Not Fear*,
by Michael Sanera and Jane S. Shaw

This anecdote, reprinted in a recent op-ed in the *Wall Street Journal*, is one that every environmentalist may soon come to know all too well. It is part of a nationally coordinated media campaign run by a small but powerful interest group that is trying to cripple environmental education by overturning or changing teaching requirements at the state level. Their message: environmental education has gone too far, is full of one-sided arguments and outright lies, and asks students to become activists. The real agenda behind this "reform" campaign, however, is to build enough key media coverage to derail reauthorization of the National Environmental Education Act. The NEEA, which passed the Senate by unanimous consent last year, is slated for action in the House. A look at the connections between these individuals and their respective organizational affiliations reveals ties to big industry, rightwing think tanks, conservative foundations and the religious right. This coordinated attack is conducted by groups financed by Chevron, Shell, Dow Chemical and other industrial polluters with a vested interest in undermining environmental education. While attempting to portray themselves as concerned about the peace of mind of America's children, the true goal of the

environmental education reformers is more insidious. They want to strike at the heart of the environmental movement to ensure that the next generation of passive over-consumers does not become a group of informed, active citizens. Michael Sanera, Jane S. Shaw, Jonathan Adler and Jo Kwong are the key figures most frequently quoted in media articles citing a "trend" of criticism against environmental education. Sanera and Shaw co-authored the campaign's bible—*Facts Not Fear: A Parent's Guide to Teaching Children About the Environment* (with a foreword by Marilyn Quayle).

Hype, not Hysteria

Facts Not Fear is a credible-looking organizing manual that raises questions about environmental issues, environmental textbooks and environmental groups. Each chapter is reviewed by "experts" and is detailed in its approach, attacking issues statistic by statistic. Common beliefs about rainforests, endangered species, population, water and air quality issues are all rewritten. An advertisement claims that *Facts Not Fear* offers parents a balanced, sound-science alternative to the "exaggerated claims about the environmental crises" that kids hear in school. Yet the authors resort to the same one-sided arguments for which they criticize environmental education as a whole. For example, the book contends that rainforests are not really being deforested by forces commonly identified in textbooks (i.e., agriculture, commercial logging and cattle ranching) but by "countries bringing on the problems themselves." A

World Bank adviser backs up this claim by explaining how policies of the Brazilian government encourage deforestation—but he fails to place the Brazilian government's policies in the context of the world economic system. *Facts Not Fear* carries the copyright of the Alabama Family Alliance, which is part of the Focus on the Family network—a large, grassroots, religious-right coalition, based in Colorado. The book attempts to bridge the gap between national conservative policy organizations and the grassroots—a gap the religious right has bridged successfully in the past. "This is similar to what the religious right did in the 1980s when they focused locally on school board elections," said Dan Barry of the Clearinghouse for Environmental Advocacy and Research. Moreover, Sanera and Shaw maintain deep ties with rightwing foundations and dirty industries.

"We Are the NRA"

Sanera directs the Center for Environmental Education Research at the Claremont Institute, a highly conservative think tank founded in 1979. Sanera is also president of the Arizona Institute for Public Policy Research (AIPPR). Both organizations are members of Alliance for America, a nationwide network of more than 500 Wise Use groups. Alliance for America's funders include the National Rifle Association and numerous industry groups, including the American Mining Congress, the American Petroleum Institute, the American Pulpwood Association, and the Chemical Manufacturers Association. The Claremont Institute and

As a group, the Perkies, who say they trace their doctrines to the "classical liberalism" of Adam Smith, Ricardo, Hume, and the Austrian and Chicago schools of economics, dreamily posit an economic universe filled with eighteenth-century yeoman farmers, each supplied at birth with an equal amount of property-rights vouchers readily exchanged for swords, ploughshares, golden-cheeked warblers, or clean air. As an intellectual system, it's touching, quaint, and utterly ahistorical; as an economic doctrine, it's eerily reminiscent of pre-Columbian geography. Asked what this fantasy has to do with the universe most of

us live in, where the only recourse most ordinary citizens have against economic or environmental destruction is the increasingly enfeebled statehouse or courthouse, Perkies respond in unison: What the market can't do, governments shouldn't even attempt. Of course, Perkies especially hate taxes, of virtually any kind, with one glaring exception: extremely regressive sales taxes for the right to enter or use whatever remains of public parks, lakes, wildlife refuges, preserves and the like. They don't call them "taxes," of course, but "user fees"—set intentionally high enough so that the only people who can pay them will be, you guessed it,

AIPPR are also network members of the Heritage Foundation, one of the most influential—and well-funded—rightwing advocacy and public relations organizations in the country. According to *Buying a Movement*, a report by People for the American Way, the Heritage Foundation "had substantial input into the writing of the Republican Contract with America." Alan Crawford, author of *Thunder on the Right: A Study of Rightwing Organizations*, found that the Heritage Foundation's supposedly objective studies "invariably confirm the notions to which its conservative colleagues and trustees are already committed." A look at Heritage's funding reveals significant support from rightwing foundations, including the John M. Olin, Lynde and Harry Bradley, and Carthage and Sarah Scaife foundations. The organization's funders also include many of the corporate giants that have the most to gain from hurting environmental education, such as the Amoco Foundation, Boeing, Chevron, Coors Foundation, Dow Chemical, Exxon, Ford Motor Company Fund, General Motors, IBM, Mobil Oil, Philip Morris, R.J. Reynolds, General Electric, Procter & Gamble, and Shell. Many of these corporations are notorious for their environmental misdeeds. An Exxon tanker caused a catastrophic oil spill in Prince William Sound, while Shell's operations in Nigeria (a major source of global warming gases) have left the native Ogoni people socially oppressed and environmentally devastated.

Corporate Lesson Plans

While supporting the claim that environmental education is biased, some of these same corporations simultaneously are sending out anti-environmental propa-

ganda disguised as lesson plans. Shell distributes a classroom video that espouses the joys of driving and the virtues of oil and gasoline as energy sources. Dow Chemical has created "Chemapalooza," a music video program promoting the idea that everything is "made up of chemicals" (thereby implying that all chemicals are natural and safe). Environmental education critics stepped up their activity just as the NEEA came up for reauthorization. The 1990 law created the Environmental Education Division of the EPA. The NEEA's primary initiatives are an environmental education grant program, the Environmental Teacher Training Program and the National Environmental Education and Training Foundation (NEETF). Sanera's Claremont Institute appears to be one of the primary organizers against NEEA reauthorization. A briefing from NEETF's Kevin Coyle states that Wise Use groups were holding conference calls to discuss steps to defeat the act's reauthorization. Last August, Sanera circulated a Claremont Institute briefing paper to legislators and the press crying that even current federal policies on the environment have gone too far: "Evidently the EPA does not want to educate students, but rather indoctrinate them to blind obedience to federal policies." Profiles of the other three key figures and their organizational and funding links look remarkably similar. Shaw is a senior associate at the Political Economy Research Center (PERC), also a member of the Alliance for America and the Heritage Foundation. In fact, Adam Meyerson, vice president of the Heritage Foundation, is on PERC's board of directors. Many of PERC's funders are also Heritage funders: Amoco Foundation, Lilly Endowment, Carthage

Foundation, John M. Olin Foundation, and Sarah Scaife Foundation. Finally, Jonathan Adler of the Competitive Enterprise Institute (CEI) and Jo Kwong of the Atlas Economic Research Foundation (AERF) are similarly connected to big business and rightwing groups. CEI and AERF are members of the Heritage Foundation's network. Earth Day '96, a newspaper published and distributed by rightwing organizations, listed AERF as a resource. Kwong's 1995 article, "Environmental Education: Getting Beyond Advocacy" (part of the Contemporary Issues Series published by the Center for the Study of American Business) quotes both Sanera and Adler and makes the apparently shocking claim that "the environmental education campaign is aimed at turning our nation's school children into environmentalists."

"The environmental movement has to understand that this is a media fight," said Makani Themba of the Praxis Project, a grassroots media and policy center. "Environmental education is too critical to our future as a nation to trust it to corporations that pollute. If confronted by who is funding the small group of people making this attack, the public will respond."

Marianne Manilov and Tamara Schwarz are with the Center for Commercial-Free Public Education, known for its UNPLUG campaign against commercially sponsored TV in public schools. The Center's address is 360 Grand Ave., No. 385, Oakland, CA 94610; (510) 268-1100. Research for this article was conducted as part of the "Consumers or Citizens Program"—an effort to educate the public about corporate polluters' involvement in schools.

those folks like themselves whom the "free market" has made rich enough to care about the environment. Keeps out the riff-raff, you see, and maintains the commercially useful delusion that the "environment" is something you drive to in your Range Rover.

That was the tone of much of the discussion, relieved by occasional doses of un-Perkian sanity. Valerie Naylor, for example, spokeswoman for Big Bend National Park, delivered a spirited defense of maintaining the common natural heritage of the American people—a pyrrhic gesture, under the circumstances. Ken Kramer of the Sierra Club argued that defining the problem of endangered species solely in economic terms was both wrong and self-defeating.

And, although it fell on mostly deaf ears, the highlight of the weekend was the Saturday afternoon presentation by Austin environmental attorney Bill Bunch, who has long fought the good fight against the degradation of Austin's land and water supply by the corporate privateers who like to masquerade as defenders of the sacred "free market." In fact, Bunch pointed out, the corporations and their defenders have no interest in "free and efficient markets." They strongly prefer the unregulated profits only made possible and sustained by massive public subsidies. Austin, Bunch said, is a case in point; private interests have repeatedly circumvented the public will by ruthlessly promoting, commercially and politically, uncontrolled development into environmentally sensitive areas. Bunch then laid

out in relentless detail (see "Dollars for Sprawl," page 13) the several hundred million dollars in taxpayer subsidies—from highway funds to infrastructure to school buildings to savings and loan bailouts—which underwrote the "private" Barton Creek Resort, Country Club, golf courses, and upscale residential development where we all sat, mulling the ineffable virtues of the free market. The manicured syl-

THE CORPORATIONS AND THEIR DEFENDERS HAVE NO INTEREST IN "FREE AND EFFICIENT MARKETS." THEY STRONGLY PREFER THE UNREGULATED PROFITS ONLY MADE POSSIBLE AND SUSTAINED BY MASSIVE PUBLIC SUBSIDIES.

van retreat, heavily taxpayer-subsidized, also happens to be located in Austin's most sensitive and rapidly degrading ecosystem, the Barton Creek recharge zone for the area's corner of the Edwards Aquifer. The beneficiaries of this taxpayer largesse included such public-minded free-marketeers as Ben Barnes, John Connally, Jim Bob Moffett, and Freeport-McMoRan. "It doesn't cost us more to save the environment," summarized Bunch. "We spend enormous funds subsidizing the destruction of the environment."

As Bunch concluded his remarks, there was a moment of reflective silence, but it didn't last. R.L. Smith (of the Competitive Enterprise Institute) suggested, apparently in all seriousness, that Bunch's attack on subsidies was essentially libertarian, and he should therefore support GOP Congressman Ron ("Buy Peruvian Citizenship")

van retreat, heavily taxpayer-subsidized, also happens to be located in Austin's most sensitive and rapidly degrading ecosystem, the Barton Creek recharge zone for the area's corner of the Edwards Aquifer. The

FUN WITH NUCLEAR WASTE: CORPORATIONS IN THE CLASSROOM

Environmental education got its start with Junior Audubon Clubs in 1910, but received its biggest boost in 1990, when President George Bush added a grant-making Environmental Education Division to the EPA. A dozen states now require environmental education in grades K through 12. Critics like Jonathan Adler of the Competitive Enterprise Institute complain that environmental education is "taking advantage of students' natural curiosity about the world and transforming them into activists." Meanwhile, cutbacks in education are forcing schools to rely more and more on free teaching materials supplied by corporations, many with poor environmental records. "Consumers or Citizens," a report from the Center for Commercial-Free Public Education (CCFPE), notes that U.S. kids—exposed to an average of 40,000 TV commercials a year at home—now face commercials in the classroom: Shell Oil Company provides a free video for schools called "Fueling America's Future" that teaches: "It takes gasoline to

power the vehicles that take us to nature. And gasoline comes from nature!" American Coal Foundation offers a fifteen-page "Power from Coal Activity Book" that advises children that, even if coal burning causes global warming (although some scientists "do not believe this is likely"), "the Earth could benefit from increased carbon dioxide, which makes plants grow larger." DuPont's classroom poster ignores the 348 million pounds of chemical pollutants the company spills into the country's water, air and land each year, and encourages children to "fashion birdfeeders out of both plastic and paperboard milk containers." Polystyrene Packaging Council's "Plastics and the Environment Sourcebook" urges children to plan a "plastics treasure hunt to reinforce the diversity of plastics." American Plastics Council publishes "Plastics in Our World," a slick K-12 kit that downplays plastic's solid waste problem by promoting incineration of plastic (called "white coal" in APC's brochures) as a way to "release useful energy." The kit makes no

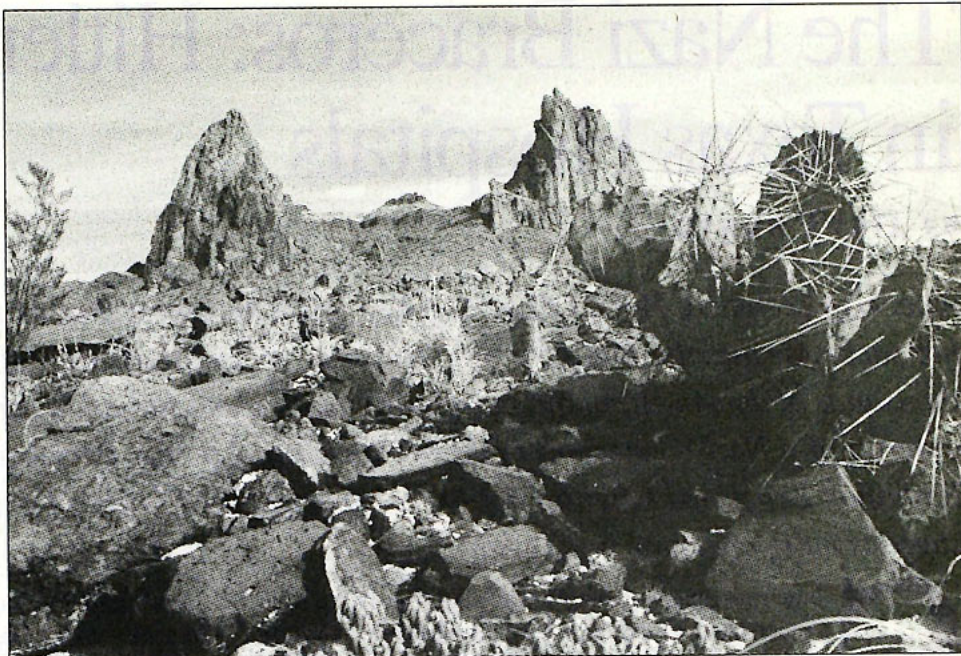
mention of the toxic dioxins and furans that result from burning "white coal." International Paper supplies teachers with a "Conserving America's Forests Teaching Kit" that informs students how clearcutting promotes the "growth of trees that require full sunlight." According to CCFPE, the kit fails to mention that the company is "one of the worst polluters in the paper industry." American Nuclear Society's coloring book, "Let's Color and Do Activities with the Atoms Family," instructs young students that, while "scientists have known for years how to deal with nuclear 'leftovers,'" Congress stubbornly refused to authorize a nuclear dump until 1982. The teaching aid recommends using "high radioactivity to 'sterilize' sewage sludge—turning waste into a benefit from our silent servant, the atom."

—Marianne Manilov and Tamara Schwarz

Consumers or Citizens is available for \$7 from UNPLUG, 360 Grand Ave., No. 385, Oakland, CA 94610, (510) 268-1100.

Paul. (For some reason, this remarkable proposal brought to mind the image of a rowboat with a bull-horn sent out to stop the Exxon Valdez.) Terry Anderson followed to insist that PERC also opposes subsidies, but that the problem Bunch had just described was obviously "too much government," and "less government meant less opportunity for subsidies."

But there are subsidies, and there are subsidies. Remember, environmentalism pays—"free market environmentalism," that is. PERC's leading lights are tenured faculty members at the Montana State University at Bozeman, and PERC itself is a federally approved 501(c)3 non-profit corporation, allowing its supporters to take tax deductions (i.e., taxpayer subsidies) to fund PERC's ongoing campaign to hand over most public assets and public business to private industry. Not surprisingly, PERC has found a ready market for its ideas among those who stand most to benefit from their dissemination and enactment. PERC's most generous recent benefactors include such friends of the environment as the Adolph Coors Company, Amoco, Burlington Northern/Meridian Oil, Coca Cola, Conoco, Exxon, Pfizer, and Proctor and Gamble. The really big bucks have come from a group of giant right-wing foundations, including the Lynde and Harry Bradley Foundation, the Carthage Foundation, the Lilly Endowment, the Sarah Scaife Foundation, the Liberty Fund, the FMC Foundation, and a whole group of foundations created by Koch Industries (oil, gas, and land management). The latter group includes the Claude R. Lambe Charitable Foundation, which paid for the Barton Creek conference. "The Koch



▲ For Rent: Rm w/ vu, Big Bend Nat'l Pk

Harrison Saunders

people consider the middle of the country...to be their general zone of influence," Anderson told me. "So they asked us to do a conference in Minnesota, and now this one in Texas." David Koch told the *National Journal* that the family foundations—which also underwrite the libertarian Cato Institute and "sound science" propagandists Citizens for a Sound Economy—promote projects designed to "minimize the role of government and to maximize the role of private economy and to maximize personal freedoms."

With apologies to Victor Hugo, the Koch-funded message of the PERC conference might be summarized as follows: The rich and poor alike henceforth will be free to buy their own privatized piece of the environment. *Caveat emptor.* □

DOLLARS FOR SPRAWL

Public Funds Used to Subsidize Growth in the Barton Springs Zone (List is incomplete, and from 1980-1994 only)

| | |
|--|---|
| Municipal Utility District (MUD) payments (4 MUDS in all) | \$161.88 million from City of Austin |
| Southwest Parkway: | \$23.5 million from Travis County |
| Other highways: | \$56.3 million from State of Texas |
| Other roads in Barton Springs Zone: | \$13.3 million from Travis County |
| Wastewater and Stormwater retrofitting in Barton Springs Zone: | \$131 million from City of Austin |
| Public Schools: | \$86.1 million from Austin and Eanes School Districts |
| Circle C bike track and soccer fields: | \$0.6 million from City of Austin |
| Circle C bike track: | \$0.5 million from State of Texas |
| Dick Nichols park: | \$1.10 million from City of Austin |
| Federal bailout of Circle C Ranch: | \$92.0 million from RTC |
| Total Subsidies: | \$474,280,000 |

Source: *Hill Country Foundation*

The Nazi Braceros: Hitler's Doctors in Texas Hospitals

BY LINDA HUNT ©

Washington

As energy secretary, Hazel O'Leary got so much bad press that it's easy to forget the legacy she leaves her successor and the President: an "openness policy" that forced the Department of Energy to release thousands of documents about our government's secret radiation experiments on human beings. But the coverup of a Nazi connection to those experiments by the President's Advisory Committee on Human Radiation Experiments, set up in 1994 to investigate the extent of government radiation testing, strongly suggests more openness is necessary.

Some experiments took place in the 1950s at the M.D. Anderson Hospital for Cancer Research in Houston, where 263 cancer patients were subjected to whole-body exposure to relatively high doses of x-radiation. One of the doctors conducting the experiments was Herbert Gerstner, an employee of the U.S. Air Force.

The Advisory Committee briefly mentioned these experiments in its final report in 1995, but suppressed one of the most important and relevant pieces of information about those tests—that Gerstner was a former Nazi who had conducted similar experiments on cancer patients in Nazi Germany during World War II.

Gerstner was brought to the United States by Operation Paperclip—a government project which might be described as a post-war "Bracero Program" for German scientists and physicians. And like many of the Mexican *braceros* brought into this country to do agricultural work, Herbert Gerstner ended up in Texas, where in 1950 he began his work at the Air Force's School of Aviation Medicine in San Antonio. Paperclip was a secret project run by the Joint Chiefs of Staff, which, from 1945 to the early 1970s, brought 1,600 German scientists to America to work for the military and NASA, according to Paperclip records. (Those brought to Texas included members of Werner von Braun's rocket team, who worked for the U.S. Army at Fort Bliss and later for NASA.)

Jewish community leaders expressed outrage when learning Nazi doctors had conducted radiation experiments in Texas. "That some of these people could have been allowed to enter the United States and occupy positions of importance in our hospitals and military facilities is incomprehensible," said Maxine Cohen, director of the Community Relations Council of the Jewish Federation of San Antonio. "They should have been charged with crimes in courts of justice. Instead, they were protected and honored in this country."

The Nazi connection to radiation experiments should have been a red flag for Advisory Committee members, who in public hearings and written statements claimed that medical ethics and the lessons of the Nuremberg war crimes trials were central to their investigations.

Yet by not mentioning Gerstner's Nazi past, the report's authors

avoided an ethical issue central to their investigation—our government's use of Nazi science to further its own goals during the Cold War.

Some of the missing pieces of the story can be found in Leipzig, the German city where Gerstner spent much of his career. Leipzig is best known for its place in the history of music. Like Herbert Gerstner, Johann Sebastian Bach and Felix Mendelssohn once called Leipzig their home.

By the time Gerstner arrived in the early 1930s the city was changing. Over the next ten years, most of the city's 18,000 Jews would be sent to Buchenwald and other concentration camps and their synagogues would be burned to the ground. The University of Leipzig, where Gerstner worked, would also change. Under the Nazis, political appointees who were members of the SS replaced the directors of many academic departments. And at least one professor played a significant role in "T4," an early Nazi euthanasia program aimed at the mentally ill, the first victims of the Holocaust. Dr. Werner Catel, a senior official in the children's euthanasia project, was director of the university's pediatric center, where there was a special ward established for the killing of feeble-minded children. Catel was later prosecuted in West Germany for war crimes and died in 1981.

That horror had not yet begun when twenty-five-year-old Herbert Bruno Gerstner received his medical degree in 1935. The slim, 5'5" med student had come a long way from his humble beginnings as the eldest of four sons of a carpenter in Zeitz. He wasn't what anyone would call handsome. His ruddy complexion was marked by three deep scars on his left cheek and his brown eyes were almost hidden by dark, bushy eyebrows. But he was an excellent student, and after receiving an "A" on his final medical exam he was offered a job and an internship at the university, according to Berlin Document Center records.

That same year Gerstner joined the Hitler Youth, and for the next few years he served as a first-aid instructor to Hitler Youth troops. He became a member of the Nazi Party in May 1937, when the party re-opened its ranks to Nazis who had proven themselves active and devoted, according to Berlin Document Center records. He was assigned party membership number 5815500.

While he interned at the Medical University Poli-Clinic, Gerstner worked as a scientific assistant in the university's Physiology Institute, directed by Dr. Martin Gildemeister, a specialist in the effect of electricity on people struck by lightning and on victims of electrical accidents. Gildemeister also studied electromagnetic fields—today a topic of interest to people living near electric power lines—and even reviewed one of the earliest American EMF studies for a German medical journal. After Gildemeister died in 1943, Gerstner continued the work. But Gerstner's publications on the subject, and his collaboration with a university colleague with questionable connections, raise some important questions: Mainly, was their expertise used by T4 doctors working in asylums and clinics where they were developing an extreme form of shock therapy known as the "Panse method"? Named after Dr. Frederick Panse, a psychiatrist who worked on Germany's euthanasia program, this "treatment" was later described in a U.S. government report as "pure unadulterated sadism."

In 1935, Gerstner had worked on a study of the effect of electricity on the human body. His collaborator was Dr. Siegfried Koeppen—a pathologist and close associate of Panse who wrote a book with him after the war. Koeppen also worked with a notorious department head at the Kaiser Wilhelm Institute of Brain Research, Professor Julius Hallervorden. Hallervorden had dissected hundreds of brains of people killed in euthanasia centers. In some cases, he himself extracted the victims' brains immediately after they were killed, according to Nuremberg records.

In his book *Erkrankungen der Inneren Organe Nach Elektrischen Ufaellen*, Koeppen described how Hallervorden removed the brains of corpses after Koeppen had autopsied them. "Hallervorden has investigated six brains of electrical accident victims autopsied by me," Koeppen wrote. Further on, Koeppen wrote that Hallervorden examined the brains of ten more people who he claimed had also died in "electrical accidents."

Given all that, a study that Gerstner and Koeppen published in the German medical journal *Virchows Archiv* should have caught someone's attention. The article, after all, vividly describes experiments that compared the marks left on human skin from electrocution with those caused by burns.

In one experiment, a man's left hand was exposed to extreme heat while his right hand was subjected to an electric current. Another experiment was conducted on "fresh human skin" that Gerstner and Koeppen claim a "surgical clinic was kind enough to leave at our disposal." Photographs accompanying the article show a man's blistered hand and upper torso covered with electrocution or burn marks.

Who were the subjects? Did Gerstner really obtain "fresh human skin" from a surgical clinic, and where did the clinic get it? Leipzig University was the center of a Nazi extermination program involving feeble-minded children, and human specimens were stored in the university's pathology department.

Gerstner conducted other studies that raise equally disturbing questions, especially considering his admission in Paperclip records that he used humans as

experimental subjects. From October 1937 to September 1939, his main work in the physiology department involved studying the effect of electrical current on human skin. Subjects used in these experiments included cancer patients, patients with psoriasis, and a variety of other people described by Gerstner as "old people and young" and "the healthy and the sick."

"Examinations on persons suffering from cancer revealed that in cases of cancer the electrical skin resistance is frequently increased," Gerstner wrote. "It has not been investigated, however, whether a diagnostic method for cancer can be developed from this."

Who were these people and where did these experiments take place? Were they children killed by Werner Catel? Were they patients from the university dermatology clinic run by SS doctor Josef Vonkennel (who conducted typhus experiments on patients, according to Nuremberg trial records)?

Unfortunately, we may never know the full story about Gerstner's experiments. According to U.S. intelligence reports, he told American scientists who interrogated him after the war that his records had been destroyed when the Allies bombed Leipzig in 1943. After the war Gerstner moved to a clinic set up at the University of Greifswald in the Soviet-occupied zone of Germany.

When he was recruited in 1949 under Operation Paperclip, his professional history was no secret. And Paperclip policy, signed by President Truman, barred war criminals and "ardent Nazis" from the project. But the American officers running the program were more concerned about the Soviets than about Paperclip scientists' Nazi pasts. Army intelligence agents questioning Gerstner asked him about Soviet activities in Germany—not his wartime Nazi activities.

Operation Paperclip brought Gerstner to San Antonio and the Air Force's School of Aviation Medicine (SAM), a center for military research into the effect of space travel and jet flight on the human body.

He signed a one-year contract at an annual salary of \$5,400.

A dozen German aeromedical experts were already working at SAM when Gerstner arrived in 1950. Dr. Hubertus

Strughold, known as the "father of American space medicine," was in
See "Doctors,"
page 18

NATIONAL DEFENSE PROGRAM

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION, UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
WASHINGTON, D. C.

APPLICANT

Name of contributor: Landslut Holding Project
(State whether Police Department, Sheriff's Office, or other official designation)

City: APD 225 State: US Army
(Specify position)

Name of company: GERSTNER, Herbert, Bruno

Date: 20 December 1940

Address: 7012

Birthplace: 7012

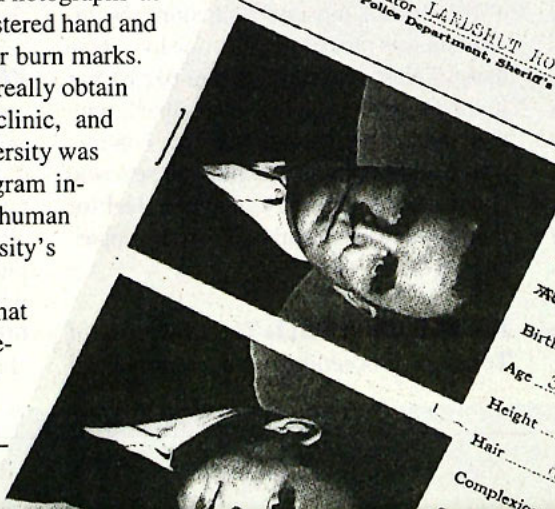
Age: 39 Date of birth: 13 December

Height: 5'6 1/2 Citizenship: German

Hair: dark-brown

Complexion: dark-brown

Sex: Male



OH, DELAY! Attentive National Public Radio listeners know why many regard U.S. House Majority Whip Tom DeLay, Sugar Land Republican, as the consummate political butcher. In a February 5 interview with NPR's "All Things Considered" host Linda Wertheimer, DeLay assailed President Clinton for playing partisan politics. Clinton, he said, "talks about [being] bipartisan. But he wants the Republicans to be 'bi' while he's running around being partisan. And we have extended our hand time and time again to have it bit off by this president."

Throughout the interview, DeLay was the one with the sharp teeth. He told Wertheimer that he opposed Clinton's State of the Union call for standards in public schools. "It's...not



▲ Tom DeLay

the function of Washington, D.C. to tell Sugar Land, Texas how to run its school system." Asked what he thought about Clinton's proposal to have campaign finance reform passed by July 4, DeLay responded: "I don't think it's going to happen mainly because we're not interested in what the President is doing."

DeLay did allow that he wasn't entirely opposed to Clinton's proposal for giving tax breaks to college students' families. But, like any steadfast Republican, he added: "I don't want it instead of a \$500-per-child tax credit or capital gains tax reduction or real across-the-board simplification of the tax code."

CORRUPTION CONTENDER. In the mad scramble for the world's richest gold deposit, New Orleans-based Freeport-McMoRan Copper & Gold has apparently won. When Bre-X Minerals, a small Calgary-based company, found the gigantic Busang deposit on the island of Borneo in 1995, some of the world's biggest gold companies began lobbying Suharto's corrupt Indonesian regime for the right to become Bre-X's partner. Barrick Gold of Toronto used two members of their advisory board, Canadian prime minister Brian Mulroney and former President George Bush, to curry favor with Suharto.

The company also hired one of Suharto's daughters. Bre-X jumped on the nepotism bandwagon by hiring one of Suharto's sons—at a reported sum of \$1 million a month—and Barrick and Bre-X were thought to have made a deal with Suharto's government.

But Freeport's flamboyant CEO, Jim Bob Moffett, was quietly working in the background. Already mining the massive Grasberg deposit on the western side of Papua New Guinea, which contains some 38 million ounces of gold, Freeport wanted a slice of Busang, which contains an estimated 70 million ounces of gold. At \$350 per ounce, the gold at Busang is worth at least \$25 billion.

Freeport has long had close ties to Suharto's regime. And on February 17, Freeport and Bre-X announced that they are to be partners in the Busang deal. According to Reuters, the mining venture will be "45 percent owned by Bre-X, 30 percent by two Indonesian companies and their partners, 10 percent by the Republic of Indonesia and 15 percent by Freeport-McMoRan Copper and Gold." Bre-X said Freeport, which will operate the mine, would provide approximately \$400 million, or 25 percent of the money needed to build a mining complex at the Busang site. Reuters also reported that Freeport, through Chase Manhattan bank, will provide up to \$1.2 billion in additional funding for the project.

Congressional investigators are looking at several companies operating in Indonesia for potential violations of the Foreign Corrupt Practices Act, which prohibits American companies from paying bribes to foreign officials. In 1995, Transparency International and the University of Goettingen released a ranking of the world's most corrupt countries. Indonesia was ranked number one by a wide margin. Last year it fell to number 10, but it appears to be staging a comeback with this deal. The Busang mining contract was widely seen as a contest to see who could provide the most lucrative deal for Suharto and his cronies. Freeport apparently won.

JIM BOB UNIVERSITY. The University of Texas is proceeding with controversial

plans to name a building on campus after Jim Bob Moffett, the CEO of New Orleans-based Freeport-McMoRan. The naming came at the suggestion of U.T. Chancellor William Cunningham, who, at the time the building was named, was sitting on Freeport's board.

But just a few blocks away from Jim Bob Hall, the State Legislature (meeting in the plain old "Capitol," which at press time had not yet been named after any big companies or their CEOs) will soon get a chance to restrict corporate kickbacks at state schools. Austin Representative Glen Maxey has filed HB 510, which would prohibit officials at state-supported universities from taking donations from a person or company if a university official "at any time within the preceding year has had a substantial interest in the business entity." The bill could also prevent university officials who have business ties to big donors from naming campus buildings after those donors.

During a February 11 House Higher Education Committee meeting, U.T. System officials expressed concern over Maxey's bill. They argued that the bill could thwart the system's ability to raise private funds, which they claim is now essential due to the state's dwindling support. Board of Regents member Lowell Leberman argued that HB 510 is superfluous because the System already has "all the tools necessary" to check conflicts of interest in naming university facilities. For example, he said that any building name must be approved by the Board of Regents and that officials must disclose their financial interests. But Leberman neglected to mention why these checks and balances didn't stop the egregious conflict of interest involving the Moffett building.

VAL VERDE, STILL GOING. State officials are still making noise about the Del Rio military voting case ("Uncovering the Val Verde Vote," February 14). Texas Secretary of State Tony Garza has written to Attorney General Dan Morales to complain that the federal judge's ruling, which kept two Val Verde incumbents in office pending the outcome of the election challenge, contradicts state election law.

Garza maintains that the candidates who won in November, including Ku Klux Klan veteran Murry Kachel, should hold office until the court declares the final winners. And Val Verde County GOP Chairman Randy Sheppard has sent letters to state Republican party members soliciting contributions to the candidates' legal defense fund.

Democratic Representative Debra Danburg, head of the House Elections Committee, has named a special panel of two Democrats and one Republican to consider the case, in hopes of achieving "peace and tranquility."

Meanwhile in Washington, Democratic Senator Robert Kerrey has expressed an interest in the story—look for Kerrey, a Vietnam vet, to counter Phil Gramm's framing of the case as an assault on the rights of military personnel.

DAMNED IF YOU DO. Black and Hispanic undergraduate applications to University of Texas are down 52 percent, according to admissions officials, while the number of white applicants has dropped 32 percent. Those figures are based on the 10,000 applications received before February 1 (the original deadline, which has been extended to March

1). Richard Romo, a vice provost for U.T., didn't hesitate in explaining why: "We know the reason for this sharp drop—because we've been having an increase [in minority applications in past years]—is Hopwood," Romo told the *Austin-American Statesman*, referring to the U.S. Court of Appeals decision that struck down race-based admissions policies at the U.T. Law School. "Nothing else can explain it."

At Texas A&M, applications from black students have declined by 15 percent, five times the decline in white students' applications. "If you go out and talk to individual students, they don't know what Hopwood is," said Gary Engलगau,

director of admissions at A&M. "But they sense something has changed and it ain't good, and so they say, 'Why try?'"

Meanwhile in the Capitol, the subject of a recent Texas Civil Rights Coalition press conference veered quickly from Equal Employment Opportunity language in the appropriations bills to the recent opinion from Attorney General Dan Morales mandating a broad interpretation of Hopwood. Several Democratic lawmakers said they would not approve funding for universities whose policies caused the number of minority students to decrease. To much applause, Representative Al Edwards (D-Houston) warned: "We're going to be looking at that appropriations bill, Mr. University of Texas, Texas A&M, Texas Tech and all the rest of you."

NO MORE ASSASSINS. As we went to press, Massachusetts Democrat Joseph Kennedy was joining Austin's Lloyd Doggett in an Austin benefit hosted by State Senator Gonzalo Barrientos and the

Guatemala Action Network of Austin (GANA).

Kennedy has reintroduced legislation to close the U.S. Army School of the Americas (SOA). The school, dubbed the "School of Assassins" by its critics, was established fifty years ago in Panama under the guise of promoting stability in Latin America and the Caribbean. In 1986, the SOA was relocated to Fort Benning, Georgia. It has graduated some of this hemisphere's most

flagrant human rights abusers including: Manuel Noriega, the ex-Panamanian president in U.S. prison for drug charges; Roberto D'Aubuisson, instigator of the assassination of Archbishop Oscar Romero of El Salvador; and Colonel Julio Alpérez, the Guatemalan officer paid by the CIA and linked to the torture and murder of Efraim Bámaca (husband of former

Austin attorney Jennifer Harbury) and U.S. citizen Michael Devine. The SOA is funded by taxpayers at a rate of \$18.4 million a year.

The congressional momentum is growing after recent revelations about the SOA's involvement in teaching torture techniques, substantiated recently by the Department of Defense release of Spanish-language training manuals used at the SOA. The manuals advocated executions, physical abuse, false imprisonment, and the use of truth serum.

Activists are being asked to call or write their Representative and urge him or her to support HR 611, which would close the SOA.

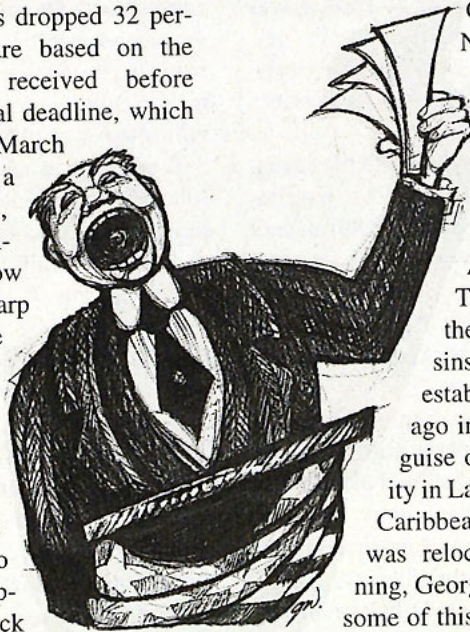
The full text of HR 611 and other information about the School of the Americas and SOA Watch can be found at www.derechos.org/soaw/ or send email to soaw@derechos.org.

DUMP ON TRIAL AND IN CONCERT.

Sierra Blanca Legal Defense Fund and other citizens' groups will stage a mock trial March 1 at the Capitol, charging Governor Bush and the Texas Natural Resources Conservation Commission (TNRCC) with gross ineptitude in the matter of the proposed radioactive waste dump at Sierra Blanca. Proceedings begin at 4 p.m., with testimony from a Mexican public official, a law professor, environmental activists, and private citizens. Then at 6 p.m. the jury will render judgment on the questions: "Is the State of Texas guilty of environmental racism and is the TNRCC unfit to manage Texas' natural resources?"

Don't expect deliberations to take too long. But you can mull it over some more that evening at La Zona Rosa's "Dump Aid '97"—a benefit concert for the defense fund featuring eight Austin bands.

RAPOPORTS HONORED. Congrats to longtime *Observer* supporters Bernard and Audre Rapoport, winners of the first annual John Henry Faulk Award for Civic Virtue, given by the Freedom of Information Foundation of Texas. The foundation will honor the Rapoports at a special March 22 dinner in Austin; it has also named its annual conference after them. □



charge of the group and closely supervised its work. During the war, he'd been a colonel in the Luftwaffe and head of the Luftwaffe's medical institute in Berlin. Today, the library at Brooks Air Force Base is named after him.

Many of the Germans at SAM had Nazi pasts, and Strughold himself was suspected of being involved in experiments at Dachau. He escaped prosecution only by dying. In 1974 he was identified as one of thirty-seven war crimes suspects under investigation by the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service. And at the time of his death in 1986, the Justice Department's Nazi-hunting unit was investigating his wartime activity, according to government sources.

The curricula vitae of other scientists must have made interest-

ing SAM dining hall conversation:

■ Walter Schreiber, a notorious Nazi general, worked at SAM in 1951—even though he was a wanted war criminal. In response to public protest, Air Force officers facilitated his emigration to Argentina.

■ Konrad Schaefer was a doctor in Strughold's Berlin institute, who was tried at Nuremberg for conducting seawater experiments on Gypsies at Dachau. After he was acquitted, he worked at SAM until he returned to Germany in 1952.

■ Ulrich Luft, a physiologist at Strughold's institute, published articles which describe several high-altitude experiments he conducted on human subjects, including one in which a man was locked in an airtight chamber under conditions simulating altitudes up to 29,500 feet.

THE PAPER CHASE

The Advisory Committee's decision to withhold information about the Nazi connection to U.S. radiation experiments is one of many coverups of government complicity with Nazi war criminals, especially those living in the United States:

■ In 1978, the Government Accounting Office had to re-open its investigation of government complicity with Nazi war criminals after it learned intelligence agencies had misled Congress and deliberately withheld files from GAO investigators.

■ In 1980, the Justice Department's Nazi-hunting unit was forced to drop its case against Waffen SS officer Tschirim Soobzokov, long rumored to be a CIA employee. Documents—ostensibly showing Soobzokov had disclosed what he was charged with concealing—miraculously appeared in the CIA's files and Soobzokov's possession.

■ In 1996, the CIA intervened to weaken the War Crimes Disclosure Act, sponsored by Representative Carolyn Maloney of New York, which would have made U.S. intelligence files on Nazi war criminals available to the public.

My own experiences reporting on "Operation Paperclip" over the past decade have not always been agreeable. I received death threats, was stalked, and wiretapped. My research was impeded by government agencies, followers of Lyndon LaRouche, and others. Files were hidden or deliberately destroyed. In one in-

stance, the Army denied having records, then attempted to charge me \$263,000 in "search fees" for them. A TV cameraman's tape was also confiscated while I was on base working on a news story.

No wonder I became suspicious when I learned the Department of Defense was doing the Advisory Committee staff's research. In the committee's office, I was shown seven Paperclip scientists' files, but was denied access to Herbert Gerstner's and Hubertus Strughold's files because of "privacy" concerns.

When I asked to see the seven files again one week later, I was told that psychochemical expert Dr. Friedrich Hoffmann's file was "missing." Five months later, after repeated inquiries, I was informed that the file had reappeared—but that I couldn't see it because it had been packed for shipment to the National Archives.

My attorney, Elaine English, immediately filed FOIA requests with both the Advisory Committee staff and the Department of Defense. I eventually obtained the records—which are deposited in the U.S. Holocaust Museum's library.

But now I see the DOD has *re-classified* the Gerstner and Strughold files, according to the committee's final report (page B41).

I had similar problems in 1984, after I learned that Hoffmann and a dozen other Paperclip scientists had been employed at the Army's primary chemical warfare base at Edgewood Arsenal, Maryland—where more than 7,000 soldiers were used

as guinea pigs in LSD and other experiments. When one LSD victim, James Stanley, sued the government, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that soldiers couldn't sue for injuries obtained incident to military service.

Stanley's Congressman, Harry Johnston, asked me to testify about the Nazi connection. The DOD had long fought passage of a bill Johnston introduced to compensate Stanley, and the Congressman thought evidence about the Nazi involvement would help the former soldier.

It did, but in a way that neither I nor Johnston expected. When I appeared before a House Judiciary Committee subcommittee on July 10, 1991, it quickly became evident that the Pentagon was working overtime to stop my evidence from being discussed at the hearing. Minutes into my testimony, the committee's chairman cut me off.

The Palm Beach Post, Stanley's hometown newspaper, tenaciously pursued this coverup and reported that, "Within an hour of that hearing, the chief lawyer for the Defense Department faxed a letter to the chairman of the House Judiciary Committee, dropping objections to Johnston's bill."

Stanley's attorney, Richard Kupfuer, said he believes the DOD wanted to avoid a full-scale investigation of the Nazi connection to the Edgewood experiments. Undoubtedly, that's the motive behind the coverup of Gerstner's Nazi past and his involvement in the radiation tests.—L.H.

In San Antonio, Luft studied the effect of rapid decompression on men in space flight. In 1954 he was named director of physiology at the Lovelace Foundation for Medical Education and Research in Albuquerque, where numerous radiation studies were conducted for the Atomic Energy Commission. He died in 1991.

Shortly after Gerstner arrived at SAM, he began work on radiation hazards to pilots and astronauts. Little was known about how radiation affected humans, but with space travel just around the corner, the Paperclip scientists at SAM were ahead of their American colleagues in this specialty.

In 1951, the Air Force, in association with the University of Texas Medical School, funded whole-body radiation experiments at M.D. Anderson Hospital. Patients at the hospital were used as subjects, even though "human experimentation" had been prohibited by the military. But as one Air Force officer rationalized at the time, sick patients can't be considered "normal people."

Over five years, 263 cancer patients were used as subjects in the experiments. Many of these patients were indigent African Americans, and references to "language barriers" suggest that others spoke only Spanish. There was a wide range of both age and diagnosis—from a five-year-old-boy with leukemia to a 75-year-old man with skin cancer, according to Advisory Committee records.

While the patients were looking for a cure, the Air Force was after information about the number of flights a pilot of a nuclear-powered aircraft might take without being injured by exposure to radiation. The military also wanted to determine how exposure to radiation affected people's mental and physical capabilities, so the cancer patients were subjected to mental and psychomotor tests before and after being doused with radiation.

During experiments patients sat slumped directly in front of the x-ray beam and dosages ranged from 15 to 200 rad. After half the dosage was administered, the patient was turned around and exposed to the other half-dose. After-effects included nausea, vomiting and loss of appetite. In one case, a twenty-five-year old man lost seven pounds in two days, due to vomiting and complete loss of appetite. There's no evidence that patients gave their consent or were fully informed about the Air Force's motive for the tests. M.D. Anderson officials told the Advisory Committee in 1994 that they couldn't identify the patients used in experiments. But generally, after 1953, patients had signed forms authorizing radiation therapy, according to M.D. Anderson correspondence.

When the experiments ended in 1956, Gerstner moved to Oak Ridge, Tennessee. At the Oak Ridge Associated Universities he developed training programs for the medical use of radio nuclides. He died in 1984.

Herbert Gerstner is just one example of our government's Cold War belief that the end justifies the means. President Clinton's Advisory Committee had a responsibility to confront the ghosts of that era and set the historical record straight. But the moral standard at Nuremberg somehow didn't apply to the German scientists recruited after the war—nor to the Americans who overlooked their crimes and tolerated their methods. □

Linda Hunt is a Washington, D.C. writer and author of Secret Agenda: The U.S. Government, Nazi Scientists and Project Paperclip, published in 1991 by St. Martin's Press.

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AS THE MINDLESS CANNIBALISM GOES ON— CAN CIVILITY BE RESTORED?

BY JIM WRIGHT

It's a sad time in Washington, when it should be joyful. A politics of personal disparagement hangs like an angry cloud over tomorrow's inauguration. Republicans plot ugly things for the President. Ethical improprieties dog House Speaker Newt Gingrich. Democrats and Republicans hurl vicious imprecations at one another. The public business suffers.

It shouldn't be this way. For decades it wasn't. Even when the White House and Congress were controlled by different political parties, a spirit of amity prevailed. Both sides yielded to cooperation, respected agreements. Neither questioned the other's honor. Debate aimed at destroying arguments, not personal reputation.

Ten years ago this month, I became speaker of the House. The Iran-contra scandal had just come to light. A secret cabal in the White House had broken laws and hastily shredded documents before Congress could reconvene and subpoena them.

President Ronald Reagan, meeting with the Democratic leaders, swore that he was unaware of the blatant illegalities. Senate Majority Leader Robert Byrd and I accepted his word. We wanted no rerun of Watergate, no personal humiliation of the President. There was important public work to be done. It wouldn't be served by a dozen committees vying with sensational allegations for media attention and Reagan's scalp.

Byrd and I insisted on one joint set of hearings. We each appointed our most authoritative members. Republican leaders did the same. The blue-ribbon panel set a time frame, proceeded expeditiously with public hearings, got the facts out on the table and announced its findings. By decision of the co-chairman, Lt. Colonel Oliver North, who coordinated the illicit effort, was induced to testify by a grant of immunity. This judgment by Rep. Lee Hamilton and Sen. Dan Inouye drew criticism, but neither Byrd nor I interfered. We were out to exculpate the sin, not to stone the sinner.

These nonpartisan hearings let the business of Congress proceed. We adopted an ambitious agenda. Congress rose in public esteem.

Rep. Newt Gingrich and other GOP stalwarts began attacking me personally, accusing me of various rules infractions. I requested an ethics committee investigation, confident that I'd be quickly exonerated. A year later I'd paid \$500,000 in legal fees and was broke. Congress was bogging down, mired in the high-level controversy.

In May 1989, I resigned as Speaker. Some journalists have speculated that some House Democrats encouraged me to step down. This is incorrect. The decision was mine alone. Democratic colleagues were uniformly supportive in every conversation I had with them. Even a few Republican members came by to assure me of their support. There is little doubt that I could have remained Speaker if I had desired to put myself and the House through a bitter, divisive, expensive and cri-

pling ordeal, but at what cost to the institution, the country, and the well-being of my family?

My resignation, as I pointed out at the time, was an effort to save the House from the kind of painful experience to which I see it and the nation now being subjected. This is not to make the judgment that I was right in resigning and that Gingrich is wrong in clinging desperately to the Speaker's chair. We are two entirely different kinds of people. He is answerable to his conscience, as I am to mine.

In my case, I did not want to be Speaker unless I could be an effective Speaker and a positive example to the institution and the country. Being Speaker was not essential to my self-respect. Being responsible was, and is.

Although I was certain I had violated no House rules, and was not even accused of breaking any law or of misrepresenting facts, it became clear to me that resigning was the honorable course. I had been made a focal point of a major controversy that was polarizing and paralyzing Congress, distracting it from the business to which it should have been addressing its undivided energies. So, as I announced on May 31, 1989, I decided to step aside so Congress could get on with its work.

It turns out that I was mistaken to believe my doing so would bring an end to what I saw as a season of "mindless cannibalism" and would shock the House into restoring an atmosphere of civility. Perhaps I was foolish to expect that. Right or wrong, that's what I hoped for.

Can civility be restored to our political process? I don't know. So many hateful things have been said, and there is such a cry for vengeance. Even more than this, the independent judgment of legislators has been crudely corrupted by the incessant demands for money in the political process. Constantly begging for contributions, as lawmakers are increasingly reduced to doing, is demeaning.

Last year, Gingrich spent \$5.2 million on his re-election to the House. Several others spent almost that much. Fund raising and the clamor for contributions lies at the heart of the most serious complaints against the White House and the Congressional leadership. Gingrich is accused of diverting charitable gifts to political use, Clinton of accepting donations from foreigners and rewarding blue-chip contributors with vanity invitations to spend the night in the White House.

Things will not improve until we see serious, thorough-going and enforceable campaign finance reform. That must be the genesis of any credible claim to renew America's political honor and restore its standards of decency. Absent action on that front, anything else is pretense.

This editorial originally appeared in the January 19, 1997 Fort Worth Star-Telegram.

Gasoline Morality? Not a Chance.

BY JEFFREY ST. CLAIR

It's the old, familiar problem. You're driving along the interstate and you have to pull off some time in the next twenty miles for gas. Each exit advertises a couple of oil companies. Is there one, you ask yourself, just marginally less vicious than the others? Is there a moral choice to be made here, or are they all equally bad?

Here's a traveler's advisory.

EXXON

Start with the ones you wouldn't dream of patronizing.

Exxon is the biggest and one of the foulest, its lineage stretching directly back to the old bandit, John D. Rockefeller. He spawned Exxon, formerly Standard Oil of New Jersey; Chevron, formerly Standard Oil of California; Mobil, formerly Standard Oil of New York; and Amoco, formerly Standard Oil of Indiana. Standard Oil of New Jersey was the core of the Rockefeller oil empire.

Exxon is the world's largest oil company and the second largest company in the world, after General Motors, with more than \$150 billion in annual sales. In its treatment of the environment, of its workers, and customers, Exxon operates as if it was immune from any regulatory constraint. Most notoriously, in 1989 its

tanker the Exxon Valdez discharged 11 million gallons of crude oil into Prince William Sound, after running aground on Bligh Reef. Perhaps the company's most brazen effrontery in the affair was its attempt to manipulate a federal jury to avoid paying \$5 billion in punitive damages to Alaska's fishing industry.

Exxon's air pollution record from its refineries is the worst in the business, with thousands of citations. Moreover, it refuses to disclose the toxic chemicals used at its refineries outside the U.S., and at many sites inside the country. In

fact, in 1992, the EPA tried to fine Exxon \$110,000 for not reporting the release of toxic chemicals at its Baytown, Texas re-

finery. Dan Quayle's Competitiveness Council intervened on Exxon's behalf and squashed the puny fine.

Exxon has repeatedly falsified advertising claims on its high octane fuels and has been ordered by the Federal Trade Commission to send letters to its credit card holders retracting the claims. The company was convicted in 1992 of defrauding the Defense Department when it falsified records in order to help its oil additives qualify for military contracts. Exxon agreed to pay \$3.8 million in fines.

It's a dangerous company to work for. In a four year period, from 1988 to 1992, OSHA issued forty-one citations against Exxon that it termed serious and willful violations of safety rules.

Exxon is making huge investments in developing nations. One particularly ugly project is in eastern Venezuela, where Exxon has joined with PDVSA, the Venezuelan national oil company, to develop a \$3 billion natural gas reserve deep in the rainforest.

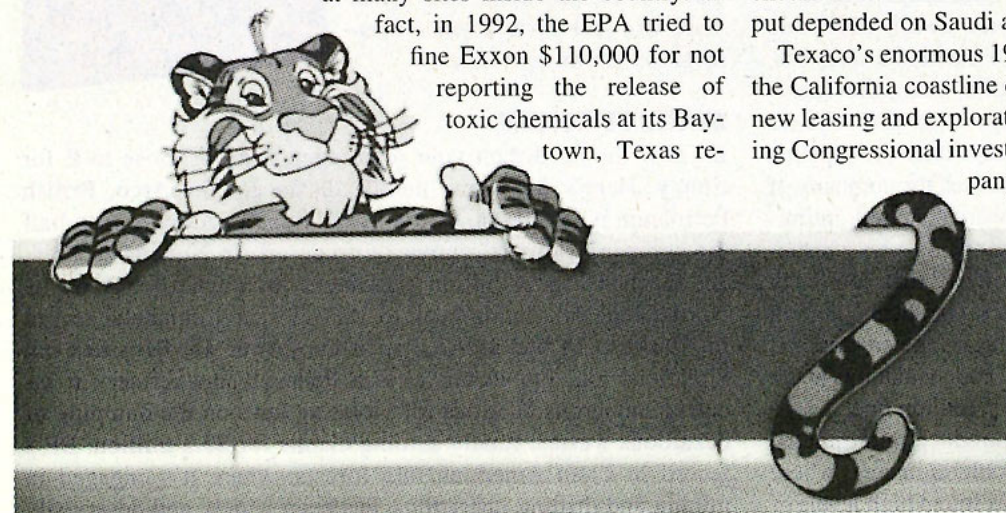
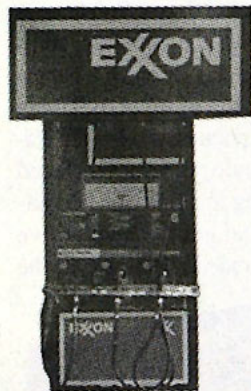
TEXACO

Here's the Texaco sign. But you may not want to stop there either. In a recent edition of *Counterpunch*, we described the company's illegal shipments to Mussolini and Hitler. Texaco's racist attitude to its minority employees forced the company to settle a class action suit for a record \$176 million. The company is deeply involved in Indonesia and Siberia, and was one of the big cheerleaders of the Gulf War because 60 percent of its refinery output depended on Saudi and Kuwaiti crude oil.

Texaco's enormous 1969 oil spill in the Santa Barbara channel off the California coastline did have the incidental effect of suspending new leasing and explorations off the California coast, and of prompting Congressional investigations of the entire oil industry. The company's supposedly cleaner fuels have caused health problems.

SHELL

Texaco is now merging its U.S. refining and sales with Shell, the U.S. subsidiary of Royal Dutch/Shell Group, the world's second largest oil company. The most recent blot on Shell's copybook was its successful urging of the Nigerian government to deal summarily with Ken



WHEN SIX FORMER EMPLOYEES OF THE ALYESKA PIPELINE SERVICES COMPANY ACCUSED THE COMPANY OF MISMANAGEMENT AND ILLEGAL DUMPING, THEY WERE HARASSED, INTIMIDATED AND FIRED.

Saro-Wiwa, who was inconveniencing Shell by organizing protests against the company's operations in the Ogoni tribal lands along the Niger River and in the Niger's delta. The Nigerian government promptly arrested Saro-Wiwa and his fellow activists, and hanged them six months later.

Not only did Shell conspicuously refuse to join the international campaign to save Saro-Wiwa and the eight other activists (nineteen more are still in death cells), but the company has been forced to admit that it armed death squads operating in the Ogoni region. At the end of October, 1996, the London *Observer* reported that "in 1990 the mobile police, whose nickname in Nigeria is the Kill and Go Mob, killed fifteen in the village of Umuechem, where Shell installations were being attacked by villagers angry at the pollution." Subsequently a company spokesman admitted that the company had bought arms for police guarding Shell's oil rigs in the Ogoni region.

Shell has a particularly awful poison rap sheet. It is one of the world's leading producers of pesticides. It co-ran operations at the Rocky Mountain Arsenal, where nerve gas was produced for the Army and pesticides for the agriculture industry. One of the pesticides concocted there was dibromochloropropane (DBCP), the use of which was banned in the U.S. because it caused sterility in farmworkers. Undeterred, Shell exported large amounts of DBCP to Costa Rica and Honduras, where more than 13,000 workers later claimed that contact with the chemical had rendered them sterile.

ARCO

Next, glowing in the distance, is the friendly Arco sign, emblem of the Atlantic Richfield Company. Here we meet one of the big despoilers of the Alaskan tundra, where 66 percent of Arco's domestic reserves are located. It was in 1968 that Arco tapped the largest oil deposit in North America, on Alaska's North Slope. The company's treatment of the fragile tundra has been awful, with toxic wastes dumped into 200 unlined pits dug into the tundra wetlands. Arco has been responsible for numerous spills along the Trans-Alaska pipeline. When six former employees of the Alyeska Pipeline Services Company (the company that runs the pipeline and is co-owned by Arco, BP, and Exxon) accused the company of mismanagement and illegal dumping, they were harassed, intimidated and fired. After a judge ruled the employees to be whistleblowers protected by federal law, they were offered their jobs back and substantial financial settlements. Arco's chemical plant in Channelview, Texas, exploded in 1990, killing seventeen workers. OSHA later cited the company for 347 safety code violations at the plant. Arco settled the matter by paying a \$3.5 million fine.

Arco was one of the first companies to introduce reformulated gasoline, which has caused chronic health problems in areas where it is widely used, such as Alaska. The EPA has found high levels of



poisonous methyl tertiary butyl ether (MTBE) in blood samples of Anchorage residents, who complain of persistent headaches and nausea. Maybe that Arco sign is not so welcoming after all.

CHEVRON

Now comes Chevron, from the old Rockefeller stable. It's deep into Indonesia, sharing global operations with Texaco in a company called Caltex. Among its more notorious international operations was close association with the apartheid government in South Africa, where it remained active throughout the international boycott. Chevron led the entry of oil drillers into Papua New Guinea, where Caltex's security forces murderously suppressed indigenous protestors.

Inside the U.S., Chevron has a particularly appalling record of oil spills and toxic releases. In October of 1994 it was hit with the largest fine—\$17 million—ever issued under the Toxic Substances Control Act, for fabricating data on the presence of toxic compounds in its detergent gasoline. Chevron called it "merely a paperwork oversight." Chevron has also repeatedly run afoul of the Clean Water Act, by dumping waste into wetlands, estuaries, and the Pacific Ocean. In 1986 its refinery at El Segundo, California, faced 888 citations for violations of the Act, resulting in a fine of \$1.5 million. In 1992, the company was forced to plead guilty on sixty-five counts of violating the Act at its Platform Grace drilling rig in the Pacific. Chevron coughed up \$6.5 million in fines and \$1.5 million in civil penalties. The company's Richland refinery is the largest water user in the parched area on the east San Francisco Bay.

Chevron owns hundreds of leases to drill for oil along the Rocky Mountain front from Yellowstone National Park in Wyoming to Glacier Park in northern Montana. In order to protect these leases, Chevron has invested heavily in Wise Use anti-environmental campaigns in the western states.



BRITISH PETROLEUM

By now the needle on your instrument panel is close to E for Empty. Here's BP in the middle distance. Like Arco, British Petroleum is in Alaska, where its holdings yield more than half the company's annual output of crude oil. In November 1994, BP reached a \$1.4 billion settlement for unpaid taxes on its North Slope oil, dating back to 1978. Its environmental record in Alaska is as bad as Arco's. In the Lower 48, BP's had big violations too. For example, at a Pennsylvania refinery it incurred numerous citations for violating laws on the dumping of hazardous wastes, finally settling claims for \$2.3 million. BP's record in Latin American rain forests, where it's engaged in mining and drilling operations, has been widely and deservedly



KEEP DRIVING...

By now you're getting desperate.

Conoco? Somewhere you read this was the place to go because the company has bought double-hulled tankers to lessen risks of spills. Check first with the indigenous people of Ecuador, who will tell you the story of what happens before the oil is loaded on those virtuous tankers. These days Conoco is owned by DuPont. Enough said.

Sunoco? The Sun Company initiated the "cash-for-clunkers" program, as a way of diverting attention from the infinitely more baneful nitrous oxides spewing from refineries and power plants. In fact, the Sun Company was hit in 1994 with the largest fine—\$1.4 million—ever handed down for violations of nitrous oxide emission laws. Anyone pondering whether to stop at Sunoco should drive across eastern Wyoming and have the altogether chastening experience of viewing the Sun Company's stripmines outside Gillette. The Sun Company has no female or black corporate officers. None. This is the company from which the Pew Charitable Trusts—largest funder of mainstream environmentalism—sprang.

Here comes the fragrance of the past, in the form of the **Phillips 66** sign: the memory of Route 66. In the 1940s the Oklahoma-based company was actually run by a Cherokee Indian, William Keeler, aka Tsula Westa Nehi. Keeler helped Phillips make a lot of money by drilling on native lands, a practice the company has zestfully engaged in ever since. (Keeler, however, was the first, and to date only, minority officer of the company). Phillips stepped eagerly into Indonesia not long after Suharto and the generals were assisted by the CIA in identifying and killing upward of a million people suspected of being communists or sympathizers of the PKI. Since 1989, the company has been drilling in the Timor Gap, off the coast of East Timor. On its board is Lawrence Eagleburger, who was Kissinger's aide and under-secretary of state in 1975, when his boss and President Ford visited Jakarta—three days before the Indonesian invasion of East Timor. Phillips, which maintains hefty military contracts, was one of the companies that sold base chemicals to the Iraqis for manufacture of chemical weapons.

A stop at **Mobil?** It was another Rockefeller company, as Standard Oil of New York. Some companies invest in butchering indigenous people. With its sponsorship of Masterpiece Theater, Mobil has butchered entire cultures. Its Op-Eds and steady flow of

excoriated. The company has worked with the Colombian military in order to ensure unimpeded access to 5 trillion cubic feet of natural gas reserves the company has leases on. BP recently went through a particularly brutal downsizing, dumping 23 percent of its workers.

full-page ads led the corporate counterattack in the early 1980s. Today Mobil exploits depletion allowances and accelerated depreciation loopholes to pay fewer taxes, so you can pay more. Last year Mobil gained over \$2 billion in corporate welfare through this scheme. In addition, Mobil has bilked the treasury out of at least \$200 million in unpaid royalties on oil drilled from public lands and off-shore reserves. Mobil's PAC doles out about a million dollars a year to keep things flowing in their favor.

Somewhere recently you read that **Amoco** might be the gas station to patronize. The company has pulled out of Burma. Maybe you missed the testy crack of Texaco's CEP, who confided to Ted Koppel that in matters of racial sensitivity, "we're just the tip of the iceberg. Wait till they look at Amoco." In fact, when you look at Amoco, you find that among its highest paid employees there are *no* women or minorities. Everyone remembers the Exxon Valdez, but who recalls the Amoco Cadiz, which spewed 120,000 tons of crude oil off the French coast—six times more than Exxon's charitable bequest to Prince William Sound.

Your car is beginning to sputter, just as the "76" sign looms into view, emblem of **Unocal**. So, are you going to take on board gasoline from a company which joyfully hailed the fanatic Taliban regime's takeover of Kabul as likely to bring a firm hand to Afghanistan? A firm hand is craved by Unocal, because the company plans to run a pipeline through the afflicted nation, from Turkmenistan to the sea. Unocal is also the major player in Burma, where it is part of a consortium planning to exploit a natural gas field. To ease transportation of the gas, the Burmese junta has conscripted prisoners to build a railway. Its operations in the states are no better. In 1994, Unocal was convicted on three criminal charges for failing to report massive leaks of phenol and other toxic chemicals at its Guadeloupe oil field in California. The company paid a \$5.5 million fine and faces perhaps as much as \$50 million in civil damages. Unocal has the lowest number of women and minorities in management of any major oil company.

Face it, there's no "good" oil company, and ethanol won't come to the moral rescue, if you've studied the recent career of Archer-Daniels-Midland. You'd better base your purchasing decision on essentially whimsical criteria, perhaps judging the dispensing facility by standards of physical security and the nature of its bathrooms. The danger of making "moral" corporate choices was nicely exhibited by the Council on Economic Priorities, whose social profiles of the oil companies the organization kindly faxed to us. At the turn of this year the Council, amid much fanfare, took one particular oil company off its no-no list, on the grounds that the company had shown evidence of a social conscience. The company? Texaco. □

Jeffrey St. Clair is a freelance writer based in Oregon.



Boy Howdy for the Dow!

Berkeley, California

Gosh, wow, the Dow Jones industrial average soared above 7,000 points last week. Golly, that's really something, isn't it? Even to the 80 percent of Americans who don't own any stock. Even to Americans affected by the fact that 93 percent of all the entitlement reductions made by the last Congress are in programs that help poor people in our nation.

Meanwhile, the Doug Jones average—the one that covers the rest of us (as in “How’s ol’ Doug doin’?”)—is showing some downward indicators.

Imagine how proud I was to find Texas state Representative Mike Krusee, Republican of Round Rock, bound and determined to cut food stamps to jobless adults who receive them only because they live in parts of Texas where the unemployment rate is at least 20 percent above the national average. Got to encourage those loafers to get out there and look for a job, y’know.

Then there’s the charming move by State Representative Burt Solomons, Republican of Carrollton, to make anyone who receives welfare pee in a cup. Solomon wants drug testing and criminal background checks on anyone so unfortunate as to wind up unemployed, although doing so would cost millions of dollars in an already shrunken public assistance budget. On the other hand, it would be good for plastic-cup stock.

Hey, we Texans live in a state that provides \$188 a month for a family of three with no work; we’ve got to give these people some incentive to get off welfare. Nothing like \$188 a month for a family of three to destroy your work ethic.

And what manner of citizens might we be talking about? Well, according to a story in *The New York Times* last week, farm workers who swing between Texas and Florida are having an unusually rough time this year because the freeze in Florida last month destroyed the winter vegetable crop. There’s so little work that the migrants can’t get gas money to go north looking for work, and now they’re starting to get evicted and/or have their utilities cut off.

I wouldn’t want to generalize about the work ethic of migrants, but I never heard anyone claim that theirs is easy work—especially anyone who’s ever tried it. True,

some of the migrant workers are illegals from Mexico—who, as it happens, also pay U.S. taxes but are of course ineligible for any form of aid, so we don’t have to worry about them.

Of course, not everyone is so silly as to have made migrant farm work their chosen field of endeavor. Some of us even become stockbrokers, a far cleverer thing to do when the Dow Jones is on its way to 10,000. But the Dow Jones has a peculiar way of making just about anyone into Doug Jones, Average Guy.

You may have noticed the recent merger announcement between Dean Witter—the sponsor of those heartwarming ads about how they do financial planning “one customer at a time” so we can all retire to our dream ranches or send our kids to college—and another Wall Street biggie, Morgan Stanley. Now, this is not expected to result in widespread layoffs, but some have said it could be the beginning of a series of Wall Street mergers that will result in downsizing.

Then, we have the GM-Hughes/Raytheon defense merger, which is not only a job-killer but also has that eye-popping tax loophole attached to it. GM nets \$9.5 billion in cash and stocks on this one and pays zero taxes! Banc One is taking over First USA, and Hilton is trying to take over ITT. Have you considered the steadier job security in migrant farm work?

Then, there is the truly noteworthy effort to make life a little more unfair being pushed by Texas’ only governor, Shrub Bush. Governor Shrub himself described our state tax system as “inherently unequal and unfair” and then promptly proposed making it worse.

Citizens for Tax Justice in Washington, D.C., already says that Texas has “one of the ten most regressive tax systems in the

country.” It’s simple: The poor pay more. The February 14 issue of the *Observer* contains a handy bar chart provided by the Texas Center for Public Policy Priorities, giving the details (see also today’s “Dialogue,” page 3). The poorest fifth of Texans now pay 13.8 percent of their income in state and local taxes, while the richest fifth pay 6.3 percent. Shrub’s proposal to cut property taxes, on which our public schools depend, by \$1 billion merely shifts the tax burden even more dramatically to the folks with the least money. Nice work, Shrub.

I know we’re all happy for Dow Jones with this big 7,000 landmark. Wake me up when someone with power in this country does something that helps Doug Jones, would you? □

Molly Ivins, a former Observer editor, is a columnist for the Fort Worth Star-Telegram.

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Jargon of Tyranny

All kinds of "doublespeak" words have been coined by greedheaded corporate executives trying to cover up the fact that they are dumping middle-class workers by the millions: "downsizing," "decruiting," and "negative hiring" are just a few examples.

Having discarded so many valuable employees, though, has hurt corporate performance, so the honchos are now bringing in millions of new workers to replace them—workers who are paid less, get few if any benefits, and have no long term future with the company. Instead of calling these folks what they are—corporate serfs—the jargoneers have come up with more doublespeak: "Contingency workers."

Sounds impressive—until you realize that it simply means the worker's job is contingent on the daily mood of the big boss, who can dump them without reason or recourse: *adios*, chump.

Already, about a fourth of the jobs in our country are filled by temporary and part-time employees, doing everything from secretarial work to airplane maintenance, banking to engineering. Some 30 million of us now wander from job to job, hoping there'll be another one after being punted from the last one. Among major corporations, 70 percent now use contingency workers, and the number is growing dramatically as top executives realize, "Hey, we can hire these throwaway employees and take no responsibility for their well-being."

Seventy-five percent of contingency workers make less than \$16,000 a year—almost a poverty wage. Only 39 percent get any paid vacation, only 8 percent get health coverage, only 4 percent get life insurance, only 3 percent get sick-pay and only 2 percent get a retirement plan.

What we are experiencing here is an ongoing war against the middle class, a war in which a few privileged executives and investors are profiting at the expense of the rest of us, destroying the American notion that we are a united nation.

THE PESTICIDE PIPER

A recent *New York Times* headline blared some comforting news...comforting to the pesticide industry, that is. It read: "Chemicals on Food? A Panel of Experts Finds Little Danger." Before you stop shopping for organic food, you might want to take a deeper look into the issue than either *The New York Times* or these experts did.

You'll find that this particular panel of scientists looked only at studies involving the cancer-causing impacts of one chemical at a time, rather than considering the real life situation, in which our families are exposed to a toxic stew of hundreds of synthetic chemicals in our dinner. It's this mix that is so deadly, and we consume it tiny bit by tiny bit, day after day. Also, the so-called experts looked only at adult exposure, failing to consider that our babies and children are far more vulnerable to these poisons in their diet. Nor did they acknowledge that thousands of the pesticides have not even been tested for their long term health impacts, and that government testing methods do not even identify more than half of the chemical residues found on our food.

Why such sloppy work? One reason is that the panel was as contaminated with chemicals as our food supply. Three of its members had direct ties to such industry front groups as the Sound Science Coalition and the Food Safety Council—their names might seem innocent, but these groups are financed by the very companies profiting from putting more chemicals in our food. Likewise, people who presented "evidence" to the panel hailed from Monsanto and other industry groups. And if this isn't enough to taint the process, there is the added fact that the panel's study was substantially funded by Nabisco Foods and the American Industrial Health Council.

Remember the old adage: "He who pays the piper calls the tune." And even when *The New York Times* claims that poisons are safe...always read between the lies. (See "How many deaths for a dollar?" NAS reports on pesticides: Spring 1996.)

CORPORATE LAPDOGS
You've eaten hushpuppies, haven't you—

those little fried balls of cornmeal served with catfish? These tasty bites were first made by cooks on overnight hunting trips—they tossed them to the hound-dogs to hush up their yelping.

Top executives of America's biggest corporations have become hushpuppy specialists, cooking up goodies to hush up their own Boards of Directors. A board is supposed to be a hard-nosed watchdog, yelping whenever management gets out of line. But too many boards have become executive lapdogs, way too pampered to bark at—much less bite—the hand that feeds them.

And these board members are fed a much richer dough than cornmeal. In a survey of America's largest 200 industrial firms, *Forbes* magazine found they were paying their directors an average of \$700 an hour for their "watchdog" role. That'll make a mighty big hushpuppy, won't it?

At IBM, board members are paid \$91,000 a year; \$132,000 at GE...and all the way up to \$274,000 at Compaq Computer. Just for a few day's work. Plus, 70 percent of the companies pay lavish pensions, many worth up to \$100,000 a year. And it's not uncommon for directors to get free medical and dental coverage...for life!

And if that's not enough to keep a board member fat and sleepy, companies also toss out other tasty tidbits. For example, General Motors' directors get a new Cadillac every three months, and United Airlines provides unlimited first-class travel for its directors and their spouses.

Aside from these paychecks, pensions and perks being an obvious conflict of interest for directors, every dollar spent on them is treated as a tax-deductible cost of business for the corporation, meaning you and I subsidize this corporate extravagance. Now that's really something to howl about. □

Jim Hightower is a former Observer editor and Texas Agriculture Commissioner. His nationwide radio show broadcasts daily from Austin, Texas.

The Art of the Low-Ball?

The Clinton administration has issued its 1997 economic forecast. If the projections are right, the next two years will see a miserable two percent economic growth rate in each. Unemployment is expected to rise slightly. This means no more gains in real wages, no more improvement in living standards. The expansion isn't over. But if this forecast is right, it isn't going to do working Americans any more good.

One cannot, I suppose, blame Clinton for taking a bleak view. His administration doesn't control the economy. It doesn't even control the people who make the policies that do. Alan Greenspan operates on his own, and Clinton long ago adopted a policy of supporting whatever Greenspan decides. Better under such conditions to assume the worst from the beginning.

Budget politics also dictated pessimism. Had the forecast been more optimistic, Clinton would have had a faster, easier route to budget balance. The budget, accordingly, could have been less restrictive than it is. There might have been a larger investment program, more human services and even more generous tax cuts, and still a path to balance by 2002.

The catch is, Clinton would then have had to propose a more ambitious policy package. That would have set up political failure, on two grounds. First, Republicans would have screamed blue murder about the forecast, claiming it was a liberal gimmick to justify an easy budget. Second, they would have beaten the proposals, as they have the votes to do.

The politics of the balanced budget amendment probably also played a role. With Clinton now declared in opposition to this mischief, opponents have a fighting chance of beating it in Congress. But to do so, they have to concede the case for a balanced budget, and then argue that we can get there without amending the Constitution. A rosy scenario would have damaged that political argument, for no clear gain.

In the upshot, both parties are now hopelessly committed to actually achieving budget balance by 2002. No serious economist thinks there is any magic to this, but I can see why politicians feel differently. If they succeed, perhaps they hope to find budding surpluses in the federal accounts within a

few years. That would finally enable them to start handing out tax cuts once again, or even to think about new spending programs. Until then, everyone who thinks this way, Democrat and Republican, must sit tight, keep quiet, think small—and hope that nothing goes wrong.

Unfortunately, two things are quite likely to go wrong. The first is a recession

TWO THINGS ARE QUITE LIKELY TO GO WRONG. THE FIRST IS A RECESSION AND THE SECOND IS A RISE IN INTEREST RATES. EITHER COULD BLOW THE BUDGET TO BITS.

and the second is a rise in interest rates. Either could blow the budget to bits.

The most serious recession threat comes from the tight budget policy of budget balancers themselves. The Administration foresees no economic downturn at any time between now and 2002. But no recession has ever been put in an official forecast. An uninterrupted expansion from 1991 through 2002 would be longer than any on record. It could happen, but it isn't very likely.

Rising interest rates are the second big budget risk. Secretary Rubin testified last week that a balanced budget would keep rates low, but he knows this isn't so. The Federal Reserve controls rates, and forces behind the Fed continue to itch for a rate hike. The reasons are not mysterious: higher interest rates produce higher profits for bankers, while turmoil in the bond market produces profits for traders. So we are always hearing from these quarters about phantom inflation threats, wage pressures, stock market bubbles, and other nonsensical excuses for raising interest rates.

Lately, the Federal Reserve has been ignoring the higher-interest lobby. That's been good, but it could change. Two of the better economists on the Federal Reserve

Board—the conservative Lawrence Lindsey and the moderate Janet Yellen, have departed, leaving two vacancies to fill. We hear calls to replace them with bankers—as if banking interests didn't already effectively control twelve of the nineteen seats on the Federal Reserve's policymaking Open Market Committee. If Clinton bows to such pressures, he may be rewarded with rising rates, a slowing economy, and the path to budget balance could be wrecked.

Can this economy be saved from the low-ball forecasters and growth-slowing budget balancers? Lower interest rates, if he could get them, are Clinton's best hope. Lower interest rates could buy a little recession insurance. They might produce a faster-than-expected growth rate and a stronger-than-expected budget. There is no technical reason why the economy cannot grow at three percent or better—as it did in 1994 and again last year. That would gradually reduce unemployment below five percent, most probably without raising inflation. That is the only way to give average Americans a little bit of improvement in living standards in the years just ahead, and it is surely the best way to approach budget balance without slashing Medicare or messing with Social Security.

To have a chance of getting that much, Clinton needs to be very careful about who he puts on the Federal Reserve Board. More than anything else that the President actually controls—which isn't much these days—those next two appointments could determine whether he gets through his term with an acceptable economy and with budget balance in reach. If he messes up, he might have to live with his own miserable economic forecast. Or worse. □

James K. Galbraith teaches economics at the Lyndon B. Johnson School of Public Affairs, the University of Texas at Austin.

Winston

"Pink seashells—they easy,
they in the shallow water,
but the brown ones, they deep,
they for the best divers,
like me, Winston."

His gold
bicuspid glints like a ring
when he grins.

Between us
gleam shells like armadillos
or rainbow tornadoes of bone.

"I dive myself for all these
shell.

I wash them every one
myself.

I dive.

I sell.

You want good shell, see Winston."

One size too tight, his shirt-
front screams at the buttonholes.

When he squats, his underwear
droops through a slit in the seam
of his shorts scissored from old
trousers at the knees.

I see him

younger by twenty years,
a boy after his first dive,
hawking starfish and grinning ivory.

Then, twenty years ahead,
too old to dive, toothless,
selling green sunhats
woven from belts of palm.

Only that gold biter will not stop
glistening like wealth itself
amid this paradise of tourists, orchids,
shanties and the hoarding, hiding sea
that swills the beach like mopwater.

Sam in Mid-Song

It comes to him in pieces
like a poem.

Fingers on the keyboard

wait...

For what?

He's listening
to something he's about to hear.
It can't be hurried.

Each time
he tries to rush it into sound,
it comes out wrong.

Still
listening, he walks away,
distracts himself by humming
Rock, assumes the song
will happen when he least
expects it.

And it does.

Back
to the piano...

His fingers flex
until cadenzas draw them
to the right keys.

The melody
becomes a stream cascading
over rocks.

The rocks can't stop it.
The stream keeps surging over banks
it's just discovering.

It sings
as it goes, and what it sings
is turning into notes and words
right now, right now, right now.

—SAMUEL HAZO

Samuel Hazo lives in Pittsburgh, where he teaches at Duquesne University and directs the International Poetry Forum, for decades one of the most active poetry series in the United States. His most recent books are *The Past Won't Stay Behind You* (poetry), *Stills* (fiction), and *The Rest is Prose* (essays). He has written two plays, *Solos* and *Until I'm Not Here Anymore!*; the latter became a film for PBS. He has also published works of translation. In 1993 he was named the first State Poet of the Com-

monwealth of Pennsylvania by Governor Robert Casey.

Both these poems employ a keen sense of observation and attention to other people's motions and voices, whether spoken or sung. The "song" element has long permeated Hazo's melodious works. He memorizes his own poems immediately upon writing them and gives poetry readings entirely from memory.

—Naomi Shihab Nye

He Was There

Red Not Read in Hollywood

BY STEVEN G. KELLMAN

INSIDE OUT:

A Memoir Of The Blacklist.

By Walter Bernstein.

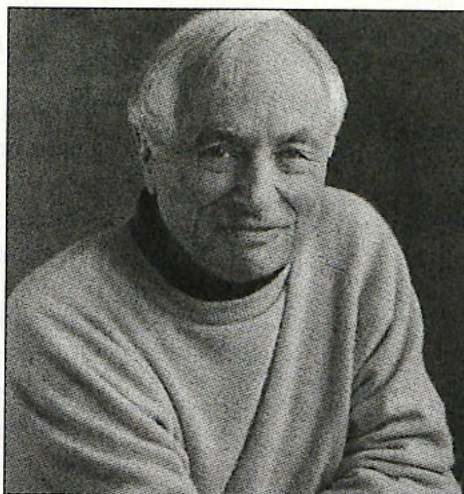
Alfred A. Knopf.

292 pages. \$24.00.

Writers occupy a distinctive position in the movie business: supine. One of the hoariest jokes in Hollywood is about

the ambitious young actress so ingenuous that she sleeps with the writer. Walter Bernstein, a staff writer for *The New Yorker* before turning his hand to screenplays (*The Magnificent Seven*, *The Molly Maguires*, *The Train*), faced sleepless nights after learning, in 1950, that he was being blacklisted. *Inside Out* demonstrates Bernstein's mastery of the verbal craft, while it documents his experiences before and during eleven years of screenwriting purdah. For more than a decade, during which "un-Americanism" was vaguely defined and zealously hunted down, Bernstein's moot classification as a dangerous subversive restricted his literary employment within the United States.

Though it begins at the moment his agent announces that scripts signed by Walter Bernstein are no longer marketable, *Inside Out* circles back to recount the author's life before he was colored unacceptably Red. After an unpromising boyhood in Brooklyn where his two principal passions were the Dodgers and movies, Bernstein developed political passions during six wayward months in France. He made his mark at Dartmouth when, as a critic for the college newspaper, he panned *Lost Horizon* as escapist, though in order to meet deadlines he always wrote about films before he could see them. Bernstein spent World War II on the staff of the Army newspaper *Yank*, and some of the liveliest



▲ Walter Bernstein

Marion Ettlinger

pages of *Inside Out* recall antic military experiences in the Middle East and Italy, where the European theater's uniformed bureaucracy created a theater of the absurd. Plucky, lucky and insubordinate, he defied blunt orders by slipping into occupied Yugoslavia and obtaining the first interview with Marshal Tito, leader of the Balkan antifascist forces.

After the war, Bernstein wrote speeches for the presidential campaign of Henry Wallace, the standard-bearer of the Progressive Party, whom he describes as "a handsome, distant man, at home with humanity but not necessarily with people." Bernstein is palpably more gregarious, and he relished the camaraderie he found by joining the Communist Party. By his account, meetings of his group were comic encounters with similarly feckless intellectuals whose most daring escapade was an aborted attempt to establish a progressive post of the American Legion. For all its dogmatism and duplicity, Bernstein convinced himself that the party best exemplified the democratic ideals for which he had donned an American uniform: "The Communists had led the antifascist fight. They had led the fight against racism and colonialism. They had dared and sacrificed the most."

Disillusioned by the Soviet invasion of

Hungary, he resigned from the party in 1956. But, though he admits to willful blindness about Stalinist hypocrisies and atrocities, he refuses to repudiate his egalitarian beliefs: "I had left the Party but not the idea of socialism, the possibility that there could be a system not based on inequality and exploitation." During the delirium of the Cold War, when mere acquaintance with someone leftist sufficed to destroy a career, Bernstein's outspoken advocacy of Marxist principles, his byline in *New Masses*, and his participation in Soviet-American friendship projects earned him a listing in *Red Channels*, a roster of 151 names banned from the entertainment industry. Though he recognized the naïveté of his reverence for Moscow, Bernstein refused to salvage his own career by informing on others.

Bernstein was present during the infancy of television and the infantilization of American politics, by Joseph McCarthy and other adult impersonators. He worked closely with socially conscious directors such as Sidney Lumet and Martin Ritt.

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Though cynical about the Hollywood culture, he exults in the collaborative process of creating stories for a camera: "I loved being inside a studio, watching how a film was made, the craft that went into it, the teamwork among the makers, the unstated pride in their work." Banished from that world by ideological inquisitors who deliberately targeted an industry that was most visible and vulnerable, Bernstein was prevented from writing openly for movies or TV. Intent on intimidation, FBI agents periodically accosted him, interrogated his friends, and inspected his garbage.

Yet despite government harassment and economic hardship, Bernstein endured his ordeal more successfully than other blacklist victims, casualties of depression, exile, prison and suicide. As a screenwriter, he had an advantage over actors, directors and

others forbidden for political reasons from making a movie: he did not have to show up on the set. Bernstein describes how he sustained his career, and his income, by submitting material under a false name, through a series of unlikely surrogates willing to pretend that they actually wrote his script. One, fond of dangling from dangerous window ledges, eventually gave up the job because passing off Bernstein's work as hers threatened her fragile ego; another because the quality of the scripts offended his exalted sense of self. Bernstein finds irony in the sly contributions he was able to make to the TV series *You Are There*: "In that shameful time of McCarthyite terror, of know-nothing attempts to deform and defile history, to kill any kind of dissent, we were able to do shows about civil liberties, civil rights, artistic freedom, the Bill of Rights."

Inside Out is a print-based *You Are There* for a scoundrel time in American life. However, it concludes triumphantly, in 1975, on the set of *The Front*, the movie overtly written by Bernstein and starring Woody Allen as a man who pretends to be the creator of screenplays written by a blacklisted author. This zestful book features finely etched profiles of Elia Kazan, Rocky Graziano, Zero Mostel, Irwin Shaw and Bette Davis and a wrenching account of the benefit concert—for the leftist Civil Rights Congress—by Paul Robeson in Peekskill, New York, that was violently disrupted by a police-promoted riot. *Inside Out* is signed, proudly, by Walter Bernstein. □

Steven G. Kellman is the Ashbel Smith Professor of Comparative Literature at the University of Texas at San Antonio.

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Surfin' with the Virgin

BY BARBARA BELEJACK

Are you stuck in that mid-winter slump? Stressed out? Maxed out on plastic? Or have you been troubled by something more serious, something closer to a deep existential crisis brought on by The Awful Rowing Towards the End of the Millennium?

Have you ever thought about joining that growing legion of cybernauts discovered by *Time* and "Looking for Jesus Online"? or Umbanda (www.sul.com.br/~umbanda/index.htm), Santería (www.seanet.com/~efunmoyiwa/welcome.html), the Kabbalah (www.kabbalahcentres.com), or any number of destinations both mystical and marvelous?

Well, search no more. Here in the land of *milagros*, where reality is always virtual if not necessarily virtuous, we know just what you need. You need a little divine intervention, a veritable message from heaven that goes by the trade name of *Interlupe*, one of several cybernetic homes of Mexico's unofficial patroness.

According to Church tradition, the dark-skinned Virgin Mary appeared to an Indian named Juan Diego in 1531 at the hillside of Tepeyác, the same spot where the Aztecs had worshipped Tonantzin, the mother of gods. Today the most visited shrine in the Western Hemisphere is the Basilica of Guadalupe, located at the bottom of the hill of Tepeyác. But why jostle with the ungodly mix of the devout, the curious, and the devious that make up real life in Mexico City? Now you can follow Juan Diego's progress on the road to sainthood, keep up with the latest in Guadalupan research, and make a virtual pilgrimage in the comfort of your own home, thanks to *Interlupe* (spin.com.mx/~msalazar/lupe-s.html), which was unveiled with great ceremony last November at Mexico City's *Centro de Estudios Guadalupanos*.

Should you prefer to read about miracles en inglés, rather than *milagros* en español, try spin.com.mx/~msalazar/lupe-e.html. Be forewarned, however, that occasionally, things do get lost in translation, even when we are dealing with the cybermiraculous.

Guadalupe's final appearance on December 12, 1531, for example, is rendered here as the day "when she got stamped at the miraculous clothes of Juan Diego."

Botched translations aside, *Interlupe* is strictly for traditionalists. Post-modern Guadalupanistas à la Ana Castillo—the Chicana feminist writer and editor of *Goddess of the Americas/La Diosa de las Américas*, a recently published collection of essays guaranteed to raise a few eyebrows at the Centro de Estudios Guadalupanos—won't find much of interest here. Those searching

YOU CAN LIGHT A VIRTUAL CANDLE, PRAY THE ROSARY AND LISTEN TO AVE MARIA OR PACHELBEL'S CANON— PROVIDED YOU POSSESS ALL THE APPROPRIATE TECHNOLOGY.

for the latest update on the inner-circle turf battles between the Archbishop of the Diocese of Mexico City and the Abbot of the Basilica of Guadalupe (who finally stepped down last year in the wake of revelations that he had been quoted in several magazines as doubting the existence of a certain Juan Diego) are certain to be disappointed, although *Interlupe* welcomes comments and questions. You might try sending yours to Homero Hernández, the young architect and computer wizard responsible for launching the site.

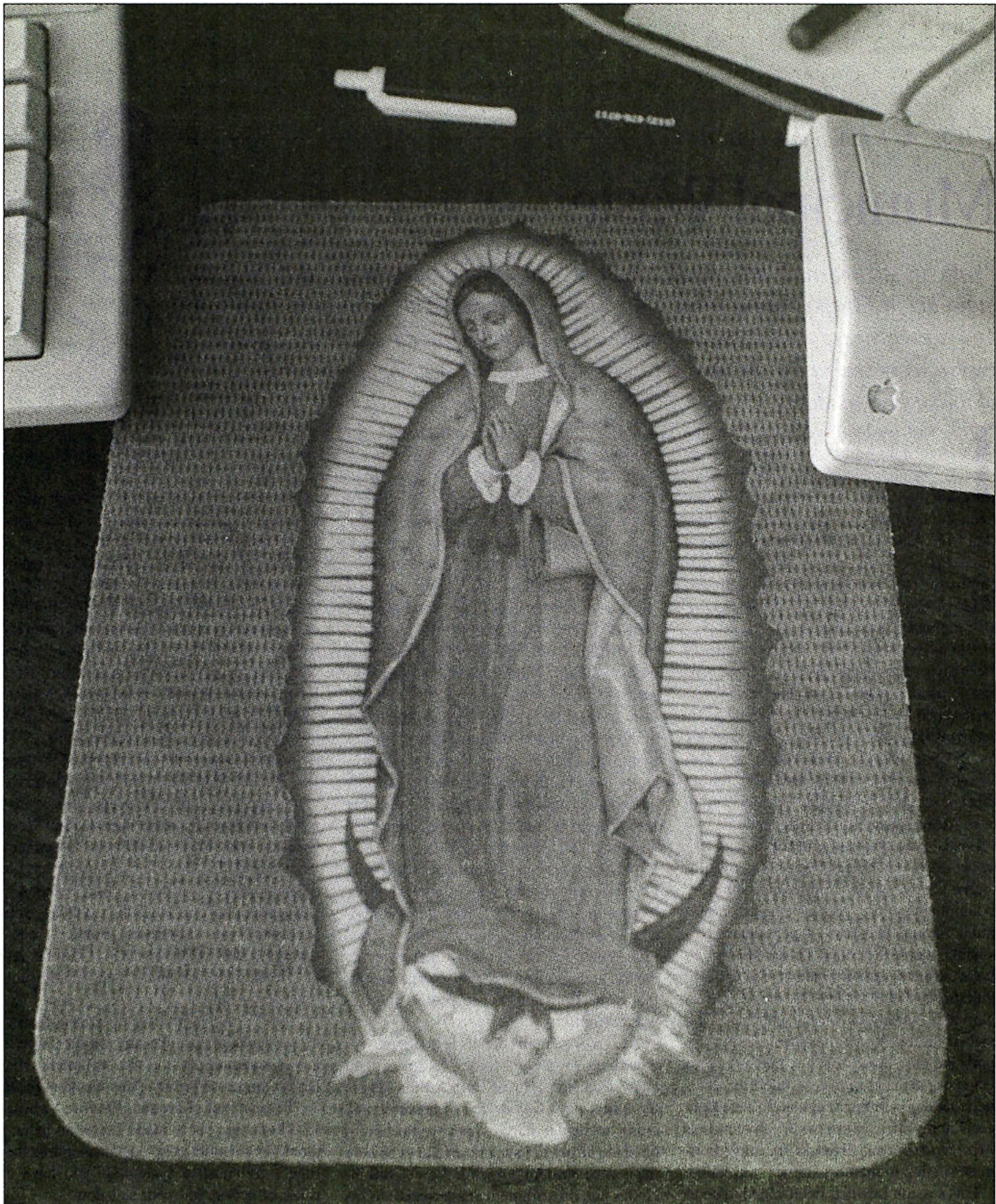
If you're looking for answers to theological questions of a more outwardly political nature, consider the *Revista Latinoamericana de Teología (RELAt)* at uca.ni/koinonia/relat/relat.htm, where you will find articles with titles such as "Following Jesus under the Neoliberal Regime in Latin America," and "Liberation Theology and Chiapas," not to mention a Spanish translation of a Noam Chomsky article about the latter-day Anti-Christ, the International Monetary Fund.

Unfortunately there are no links to RELAt on *Interlupe*, but there is a link to the Cyber Basilica of Guadalupe (200.23.74.12/basilica/basilica/htm), where you can light a virtual candle, pray the rosary and listen to Ave María or Pachelbel's Canon—provided you possess all the appropriate technology. For a no-nonsense chronology of the Guadalupan Tradition, consult the site maintained by Guadalajara University (mexico.udg.mx/tradiciones/guadalupe). And before leaving cyberspace, check what is without a doubt the grandest Guadalupan site of all, "Our Lady of Guadalupe" (ng.netgate.net/~norberto/materdei.html), which you can experience in Spanish, French or English. The "norberto" in question is Monsignor Norberto Rivera Carrera, Archbishop of the Diocese of Mexico and a prominent member of the winning team in last year's ecclesiastical turf battles. Following the Abbot's departure, Church authorities announced that there will be no more Abbots at the Basilica; on the web page Rivera is listed as the Church's "official custodian of the Image of Guadalupe." And in a nod toward ordinary reality, the site is dedicated to "the millions of poor men, women and children that each year visit Her Basilica." Most of them will never see this page, nor any other one on the Internet, but they will always be on-line with Her in their hearts.

So, there you have it. Plug in, turn on, boot up. Send the prayer. Click. Clear the form. Click. Count your blessings and join those who have recently asked: "May I meet my soulmate and live happily ever after;" or "Please pray for my personal finances," and "...on behalf of those who govern Mexico, forgive our sins, and deliver us from all evil."

Amen. □

Barbara Belejack lives in Mexico City, and knows cyber-sanctity when she surfs it.



Alan Poguc

Municipal Waste

"With his red face and that orange blazer he wears on Orange County Day, he looks more like a Cheeto than a man." The House sartorial critic who compared Ron Lewis to a cheesy confection is gone, but the Vidor Democrat is still here, after twelve years settled into the role of a second-tier legislator doing the bidding of the highest bidder.

Last session developers wrote the checks and Lewis delivered, carrying a Freeport-McMoran Barton Creek development bill that freed the company's Hill Country subdivision from Austin's water-quality protection standards. And all Lewis had to do was eliminate the extraterritorial jurisdiction (ETJ) of a municipality 275 miles west of his Southeast Texas district.

"He never spoke to us," said a member of the Travis County delegation. "There was just no dealing with him on that stuff. It was his deal and he was going to get it done." The deal was done because Lewis was working for Freeport lobbyist Dick Brown and Hill Country developer Gary Bradley. Barton Creek watershed developers are now exempt from Austin's water-quality protections.

Lewis was also sponsor of a bill that would have restricted Texas Natural Resource Conservation Commission authority to adopt any policy more stringent than federal environmental law—which sounds reasonable when described as an attempt to make the state's environmental regs uniform with those of other states. But the oil, chemical, and hazardous-waste lobbyists who backed the bill know that many EPA standards are only broad baseline guides to protect ecosystems as diverse as the fifty states the federal government regulates. Individual states apply their own laws to protect their own environments. Even in the most anti-green session in memory, Lewis' bill failed.

This session Lewis is determined to do to

all cities what he did to Austin. In the place of the graduated scale, allowing cities of 5,000 inhabitants one mile of ETJ, while cities with populations larger than 100,000 get five miles (to protect against fly-by-night developers, sub-standard septic systems, and other potential threats to municipal water supplies and public health), Lewis would give every city equal footing. Neither Houston nor Vidor will have more than two-and-one-half miles of jurisdiction beyond their city limits. So the Austin-only provision the developers' lobby devised last session (restricting any municipality "with a population of more than 450,000, that owns an electric utility, that has a charter provision allowing for limited purpose annexation, and that has annexed territory for a limited purpose") is no longer needed. House Bill 925 covers all.

"Instant *colonias*," said one city lobbyist, referring to the unregulated subdivisions along the border. "Red flag subdivisions surrounding every city." And high-dollar developments north and west of Austin and San Antonio will escape municipal restrictions enacted to protect the Edwards Aquifer.

Also hidden in the details is a scheme that would move a Gulf States' electric plant away from the ETJ of Port Arthur, where the utility pays fees in lieu of taxation, and closer to Bridge City, which would like to have the utility in its tax base. But even here the numbers might not work. Lewis' bill includes an odd arithmetical alternative to his

two-and-a-half-mile ETJ limit, which might keep the Gulf States' plant out of the city Lewis intends to give it over to.

Lewis got his largest 1994 election cycle contribution from Austin developer Bradley—who also had his subdivision liberated from Austin's environmental restrictions. And Bradley lobbyist Bob Johnson was, as they say in L.A., "there for" Ron Lewis with \$1,000. Freeport-McMoran lobbyist Stan Schlueter was also a \$1,000 guy, and Freeport's PAC added \$600.

After all Lewis did for Freeport-McMoran last session, FM CEO Jim Bob Moffett's 1996 contribution of \$750 seems almost niggardly. (Four other \$250 checks from New Orleans, Metairie, and Norco, Louisiana, were recorded at the Ethics Commission on the same day as Moffett's.) And Freeport's PAC provided only \$1,500. Lobbyist Bob Johnson, who represents Bradley, contributed \$1,000 to Lewis' \$133,196 total. As did Bradley himself, along with Austin subdivision hustler Darrell Royal.

And if Tom Ferguson's investment theory of campaign finance has any validity, watch Lewis scramble for the tort reformers. His largest single contributor this election cycle is Texans For Lawsuit Reform, whose \$7,000 has probably made Lewis an indentured servant of interests now dismantling the state's civil justice system. If you have a cause of action, file your suit now. □

