

The Texas Observer

June 21, 1968

A Journal of Free Voices

A Window to The South

25c

John Connally, Favorite Son

Dallas

The state Democratic convention here had all the majestic dramatic suspense and emotional impact of an exhibition baseball game. Gov. John Connally won absolute control of Texas' 104 votes at the national convention in Chicago this August. His forces brushed aside the challenge of the liberal minority with consummate ease, a challenge that was only mildly annoying and which never proved an embarrassment to the governor.

So sure were the Connallycrats of their approximate 5-1 superiority in delegate strength over the liberals that they permitted two roll call votes during the day; the first, on the temporary seating of delegates, drew not one opposing vote despite the presence of several contesting liberal delegations; the second, on supporting Connally as favorite son, prevailed by 2,834 $\frac{3}{4}$ to 498 $\frac{1}{4}$.

The liberals came to Dallas spoiling for a fight but uncertain how to go about it. They desperately wanted to embarrass Connally nationally though most of them held no hope of preventing the convention from passing the favorite son resolution. Most sentiment seemed to favor holding a rump convention to name a competing delegation to Chicago. There was talk that the liberals should request a two-week recess in the convention, ostensibly out of respect and grief for the murder of Sen. Robert F. Kennedy. This seemed, actually, a maneuver to point out the deep-rooted antipathy the Texas Democratic party's official hierarchy long had felt for RFK; no liberal expected the two-weeks recess to be granted.

Mrs. David Carr, Houston, who became one of the two liberal floor leaders here, urged at a caucus that the liberals request the recess, then, on getting the expected refusal, hold their own convention two weeks later, "certainly not in Dallas," Mrs. Carr said, since that city was the site of the first Kennedy assassination. "It is imperative we let the people of the United States know there is a liberal movement in the state of Texas that is not in favor of John Connally being wished off on the United States as a favorite son and vice president of the United States," Mrs. Carr asserted.

The liberal caucus was held the night before the convention, at the same time Connally was being honored elsewhere at a \$25-a-plate dinner, the proceeds of which would assist his favorite son campaign. The room at the Baker hotel in

which the caucus was held was an uncomfortable spot for the meeting; the air conditioning gave out on a very warm night, the microphone didn't work, and there wasn't enough room for all to sit. These inconveniences, as the evening wore on, contributed to the foul mood of those attending the caucus. But probably even in ideal conditions tempers would have been as ragged, so keen was the mood of frustration that most at the caucus seemed to feel; frustration born, it appeared, of the inability most liberals here evidently felt to do anything about fighting Connally.

Forty-five minutes were required to elect a chairman. Ed Cogburn, Houston, finally was selected. The question then turned to requesting a two-week recess of the convention the next day. After a good deal of wrangling, some of it not devoted specifically to the issue at hand, the motion was carried by a narrow 79-71. Another motion was passed by unanimous voice vote, after some more extended and bitter debate, to "support the contested liberal delegations." This referred to competing delegations liberals had sent from 14 counties, only one of which, from El Paso, had been favored earlier that day by the credentials committee. There was no discussion as to specific steps to implement the caucus' motion of support. To lead the anticipated rump the caucus chose Mrs. Carr and Lee Smith, El Paso, to devise strategy for the following day.

THE NEXT DAY the convention opened with the usual ceremonies and, as has become usual for Texas Democratic meetings of all sorts, amidst rumors that President Johnson might show up. He did not. The nature of things was a visible phenomenon; slickly-done Connally-for-president signs were available to delegates and spectators at all entrances to the auditorium and were being displayed by a large number of delegates on the floor. Liberals, seated mostly at the rear of the auditorium and in the balcony by those who were in control of the convention, contented themselves with pasting Eugene McCarthy bumperstickers on their Connally placards.

National committeeman Frank Erwin, Jr., seemed a bit disturbed by the presence of the few impromptu McCarthy signs on the floor. Going up to the Denton county delegation, which was displaying two of the signs, Erwin deter-

mined that the delegation had its alternates seated with them. They were banished by a sergeant-at-arms to the balcony where alternates were supposed to be seated.

As the formalities droned on Mrs. Carr told the *Observer* that "We'll stay awhile so all can get a taste of this. The real issue is the delegation to Chicago." She said a possible way of contesting the delegation the conservatives would send would be to point out that they were to be chosen by state senatorial districts, rather than congressional districts. The *Observer* is uncertain at this point whether the matter Mrs. Carr referred to is one of federal law or a national Democratic party regulation. She also said that the unit rule, which gives the majority absolute control, may be taken to court; that San Antonio attorney Maury Maverick, Jr., had done some legal research into the question based largely on the theory that the US Supreme Court's one-man, one-vote decision should be extended to include party convention delegations; that is, that delegations should be apportioned between competing blocs rather than letting the majority have all the strength. "We'll probably walk out on the resolutions committee's report on the unit rule," Mrs. Carr said.

As the convention dragged into the early afternoon liberals began to suspect that they were being filibustered. "They're dragging this, I think, because people have to check out of their rooms soon," said Don Allford, Austin, the state McCarthy campaign leader. He said he has hopes that a liberal delegation can be seated at Chicago. "I think it's important to send a competing delegation to Chicago," Allford said, "to show that the delegation that will be chosen here today [by conservatives] is not chosen in a manner that reflects the will of the party. And certainly John Connally should not have the delegation to bargain with."

The liberals grew more and more restive, some of them wanting to leave at once but Mrs. Carr said, "We have no legal reason to leave now," that is, no basis on which to make a contest at Chicago.

ABOUT THIS TIME Erwin began looking for Allford, thinking that Allford was heading the liberal forces at the convention. He found Tom Gresham, Waco, an Allford associate in the McCarthy effort, and began a conversation

based on the idea that the liberals were to be given a chance to voice their dissent from the proceedings, that dissent not having come, as it might have, on the temporary seating of delegates earlier in the day. Erwin told Gresham that the resolutions committee report later on would include one resolution binding the Texas delegation to Connally. "I figure that's what you all will want to dispute," Erwin said, laughing. "I'm not trying to mislead you. I want you to know what will happen." Walking away, Erwin encountered Allford, chatted briefly with him, then departed, saying, "Tell me who you want to be heard."

"They're setting up a time for us to speak," Allford told the *Observer*, "and on what subject, in advance." Some of the liberals had, by this time, begun to drift back to the Baker hotel, where the rump was scheduled. Mrs. Carr and Smith, the liberal floor leaders, were advised of Erwin's offer that the liberals would be given a chance to speak, around 1:45 p.m., some 30 minutes later. It was decided that the two floor leaders would speak against the favorite son resolution. Mrs. Carr's husband pinned a card on her dress saying "HHH and Ted." "We're trying to look like we're not McCarthy people—though we are," she said.

Ronald Platt, Beaumont, the chairman of Texas Liberal Democrats and until recently the leader of the Kennedy drive in Texas (Platt switched to Humphrey

before the California primary), said to the *Observer*, "I've got cross-pressures on me you wouldn't believe. . . . I called the vice president's office about wanting to go to the rump convention. They said go ahead."

As the promised time for the liberals' speaking passed, Smith and Mrs. Carr got apprehensive. They began wondering if a live floor microphone were available to announce the rump convention. Finally they walked down to the platform to confer with Will Davis, state Demo chairman. Davis said two more speakers still had to be heard and that another 30 minutes would be required before the resolutions report.

"I'm ready to go," Smith said to Davis, referring to the liberal rump convention. "Would you let us make an announcement?"

"No, you sure can't," Davis replied. "We've adopted the procedures of this convention."

"We don't want to be here 'til five," Mrs. Carr said.

Davis said the favorite son resolution would be the third one considered, after a memorial resolution for Kennedy and a praise-Johnson resolution. "You won't be offended at the Kennedy or Johnson resolutions," Davis promised, "I'd say in 40 minutes we'll be on the Connally resolution."

Smith and Mrs. Carr conferred briefly and decided to wait awhile longer. In the

meantime other of the liberals continued to drift out of the auditorium, bound either for the Baker or for home.

Finally the resolutions were considered. Garret Morris, Fort Worth, spoke in support of the favorite son declaration, saying, "The majority is entitled to speak and say 'John Connally is the favorite son.'"

Smith attacked the unit rule and said "In order for the party to represent the people it has to represent not just the majority." He also said he had reservations "as to the fitness of Governor Connally for national office," criticizing the governor's support of US policy in Vietnam and "dragging his feet" in fighting poverty and for his policy on race relations.

Mrs. Carr said "We are prepared to take this [unit rule matter] into court . . . and before the national [Democratic] committee."

Erwin closed, saying, "The only issue before the floor of this convention is clear and simple, whether to adopt this resolution. . . . To say that Governor Connally has not helped the racial situation is an absolute lie," Erwin said, saying the governor had been responsible for the first integrated state Democratic convention, in 1962, and had helped integrate the state colleges and state agencies.

TO THE SURPRISE of most and the exasperation of many a roll call vote was called by the convention leaders, probably for two reasons; first, to demonstrate as a voice vote could not that the Connally people were in full control of the Texas convention and, second, to dramatize the extent of support for Connally as favorite son.

The rest of the liberals still in the auditorium left after the roll call was completed. At the rump convention, attended by about 250 persons, Mrs. Carr said, ". . . We're going to go to Chicago . . . and be prepared to state our case."

Resolutions passed by the liberals opposed Connally as a national nominee, urged "that the United States take prompt action to remove its military presence from Vietnam," opposed the unit rule, called for implementation of the Kerner [riot] Report recommendations, urged expansion of welfare programs, and mourned the death of RFK.

A final resolution urged by Mrs. Carr called for liberals to hold another rump convention the week before the governor's (second state) convention this September at either Austin or Corpus Christi. At that meeting a state executive committee made of a man and a woman from each senatorial district would be chosen as a step towards establishing a rival Democratic party.

A resolution endorsing Senator McCarthy for president was defeated by 68-38; it was argued that committing the rump to one candidate would violate its purpose — the right for each individual

THE TEXAS OBSERVER

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A Journal of Free Voices

62nd YEAR—ESTABLISHED 1906

A Window to the South

Vol LX, No. 12



June 21, 1968

Incorporating the State Observer and the East Texas Democrat, which in turn incorporated the State Week and Austin Forum-Advocate.

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The *Observer* is published by Texas Observer Publishing Co., Inc., biweekly from Austin, Texas. Entered as second-class matter April 26, 1937, at the Post Office at Austin, Texas, under the Act of March 3, 1879. Second class postage paid at Austin, Texas. Delivered postage prepaid \$6.00 a year; two years, \$11.00; three years, \$15.00. Foreign rates on request. Single copies 25c; prices for ten or more for students, or bulk orders, on request.

Editorial and Business Offices: The Texas Observer, 504 West 24th St., Austin, Texas 78705. Telephone GR 7-0746.

Houston office: 1005 S. Shepherd Drive, Houston, Texas 77019. Telephone 523-0685.

Change of Address: Please give old and new address and allow three weeks.

Form 3579 regarding undelivered copies: Send to Texas Observer, 504 W. 24th, Austin, Texas 78705.

to vote his conscience and not be bound by the unit rule.

Plans are being made to charter a bus

or plane for the liberal delegation to Chicago. Fund-raising events to support the trips are being considered. All per-

sons at the rump convention were named delegates with each having a portion of the vote. G.O.

Tower Controls at Corpus

Corpus Christi

Sen. John Goodwin Tower walked away from the state Republican convention in Corpus Christi last week with Texas' 56 delegate votes to the national convention neatly under control "until released after consultation with the delegation." State GOP chairman Peter O'Donnell, Jr., estimated that while twelve to sixteen of the delegates "lean toward" California Gov. Ronald Reagan and a few are undecided, the majority favor Richard Nixon for the presidential nomination. Tower guessed that Nixon has more Texas support than any other Republican, but he said the Texas delegation will "hang loose" until it gets to Miami Beach August 5.

He and other party leaders campaigned for a favorite son nomination for Tower on the grounds that an uncommitted delegation will wield more influence in the selection of a vice-presidential candidate and in the writing of the Republican platform. Tower and O'Donnell are believed to be Nixon supporters. Both campaigned vigorously for Barry Goldwater in 1964 and recall the heartbreak of supporting an ultra-conservative in a national race. Once Tower releases the delegates at the convention, they probably will be able to vote for any candidate they choose. The proposed 1968 GOP convention rules, which must be approved at Miami Beach, would prohibit the unit rule.

Although Reagan supporters captured only a few delegates, they were by far the most visible—and voluble—group at the convention. The Corpus Christi coliseum teemed with Reagan posters, ribbons, and buttons while there was a marked absence of Nixon or Rockefeller paraphernalia. Reagan's strength is mainly in Harris county, where five district conventions voted support of Tower on the first ballot only. Although one might expect conservative Dallas to have its fair share of Reagan supporters, the Dallas delegation has followed the lead of O'Donnell, a resident of Dallas, in favoring Nixon.

At the convention, the Reaganites wanted to pass a resolution that would release the delegation to Reagan after the first ballot, but they could not get the measure past the resolutions committee. The group also was foiled in an attempt to amend convention rules so as to require a two-thirds rather than simple majority vote to stop debate. As a last resort, they decided to present the Reagan amendment on the convention floor as a minority report and then stage a demonstration on behalf of their candidate.

When Tower heard of the plan, he told an aide, "You tell them they'd better call

California and see if he [Reagan] wants them to do it." When they didn't call Reagan, Tower considered doing so himself. Instead, according to an aide, Tower approached Jim Chenoweth, a Houston steel man and leader of the Reagan forces, as Chenoweth was about to introduce the resolution to the convention. Tower suggested that they place a joint call to Governor Reagan to get his approval of the resolution. Chenoweth backed down.

Someone reached into a pile of rejected resolutions and pulled out one which both Tower and the Reagan leaders could accept. Chenoweth climbed to the stage and read the handwritten resolution which urged Reagan "to take an even more active part" in national Republican politics. When he finished, approximately 300 delegates carrying Reagan placards marched through the convention hall, tooting horns and chanting, "We want Reagan, we want Reagan." Tower then went to the podium and tried to quiet the demonstrators. Some delegates started shouting, "We want Tower," in an attempt to drown out the Reagan chanters. Slowly the demonstrators began to clear the aisles and return to their seats.

When the hall had quieted, Tower explained that the resolutions committee had turned down the Reagan resolution because a majority felt that it would be in conflict with the convention's sentiment not to endorse a Republican candidate. "I, for one, find no inconsistency in it. I am appreciative of that great man, Governor Reagan," Tower said. "I favor the [pro-Reagan] minority report and I hope it does much better than the minority reports that I support in the US Senate." The demonstrators, unaware of the meeting between Tower and Chenoweth, cheered in surprised delight and the report passed on a voice vote over a sizeable contingent of "nays."

After Tower left the podium, he called the press together to emphasize that the resolution was a commendation rather than an endorsement of Reagan. "I didn't see any harm in it," he said. "I imagine that with the strong Nixon sentiment here, they couldn't have gotten an endorsement through. . . . There has been some abrasiveness here and I'm hopeful that this will put everyone in a good mood. I believe in letting everybody have his day in court."

THE REAGAN matter seemed to be the only turbulence in an otherwise smoothly run convention. Earlier in the year Republicans had feared that O'Donnell would challenge Albert Fay of Houston for the position of national com-

mitteeman. In April the two met in Houston along with Tower, Cong. George Bush, and other Republican lights to discuss a compromise. Later O'Donnell announced he would not seek the position. There has been some speculation in the Texas press that Fay may have agreed to step down in favor of O'Donnell after the election in November.

Fay was reelected national committeeman and Mrs. Tobin Armstrong of Armstrong was reelected national committeewoman.

In the keynote address, Tower told a receptive audience that the United States is not a sick society. "There is not a mood of violence among our people. Ours is one of the most orderly countries in the world," the senator said. "I remember those days in 1963 when a lot of bleeding hearts and professional dogooders tried to label a great city a hate city. I want to remind you of a few things. President Kennedy was assassinated by a man who spent a great deal of time in the Soviet Union and was committed to the communist philosophy that has nothing to do with America. Martin Luther King was assassinated by a hired gun and we have yet to find out for what dark conspiracy he was the instrument. And Robert Francis Kennedy was assassinated by a Jordanian immigrant who was concerned about Kennedy's attitude toward an international situation. These assassinations were certainly not the product of the American society or the American mood."

Concerning the upheaval in the ghettos, Tower said, "I want to indict the Democratic party nationally for precipitating an angry atmosphere in cities by promising more than it can deliver, indeed more than could be delivered." He criticized Atty. Gen. Ramsey Clark for what he described as Clark's policy of instructing the police to do nothing more than "direct traffic for looters." Later in the day the convention approved a resolution supporting Tower's request that Clark "fulfill his duly appointed functions as the nation's chief law enforcement officer or resign from office."

On gun control legislation, Tower said, "I submit to you that guns do not commit crimes, people do."

Tower did not mention vice-presidential possibilities during his speech to the convention delegates. Earlier, however, he told members of the state Republican executive committee, "the [national] convention will nominate a candidate you can wholeheartedly support, one who re-

flects consensus Republicanism." The vice-presidential nominee, he said, "will be a like-minded person," and he added, "It won't be me."

THE CONVENTION passed resolutions calling for a balanced federal budget, upholding the right to work law, supporting the present 27½% oil and gas depletion allowance, endorsing bi-lingual education, and opposing a Vietnam settlement that would result in "unilateral withdrawal cloaked in a face-saving accommo-

dation that would deny the security or the territorial integrity of South Vietnam and contribute to further communist aggression in Southeast Asia."

In a final resolution, which resolutions committee chairman Jack Cox called his "omnibus" resolution, the convention criticized the Democratic administration for appropriating "vast sums of money annually in an inept and completely mismanaged attempt to eliminate poverty," for engaging "in a program to create racial balance in public schools by artifi-

cial and costly means, including transporting school children unnecessary distances from home," for failing to force North Korea to release the Pueblo and its crew, for negotiating to return the Panama Canal Zone to Panama, and for lagging in military research. The resolve clause called on voters to study the Johnson-Humphrey record, "a record replete with failures and fantasies," and for the vote in November to "reflect a choice in the best interest of the nation."

K.N.

The Legislature

Connally's Lame Duck-itis

Austin

Gov. John Connally is not finding his specially-called tax session of the state legislature particularly cooperative. His program has little chance of passage. The lame duck governor is receiving no support for his program from the two strongest men in state government, Lt. Gov. Preston Smith, the Democratic nominee for governor, and House Speaker Ben Barnes, Democratic nominee for lieutenant governor.

HB 1, a combination mini-bottle and liquor reform bill supported by the governor, did manage to squeeze through the house. It was engrossed by a vote of 76 to 71. It was the first significant action of the thirty-day session. The bill survived a barrage of approximately 55 floor amendments virtually intact.

The bill allows on a local option basis the sale of alcohol in containers of two ounces or less in any establishment with an "on premise" permit. To qualify for a permit, an establishment must make at least a third of its gross receipts from the sale of food and non-alcoholic beverages. Private clubs may continue serving liquor by the drink. Licensing fees and taxes on the small bottles are expected to bring in approximately \$14.5 million during the next year.

A coalition of wets and dries came close to killing the bill, a compromise proposal that pleased few legislators. Rep. Jake Johnson of San Antonio, representing the hard core wets, introduced an amendment to replace the small bottle provisions with liquor by the drink. "My amendment has no mini bottle, no mini bag, no mini haha," Johnson quipped. Rep. Dick Cory of Victoria, chairman of the state affairs committee which wrote the bill, argued that liquor by the drink would be unconstitutional since the state constitution forbids an open saloon. Johnson replied that the constitution also allows the legislature to define an open saloon. "They're trying to fool you with talk about something being unconstitutional," he told his

colleagues. "When the governor had a liquor by the drink bill last session it was amazing that no one, not even the attorney general, said it was unconstitutional at that time," Guy Floyd of San Antonio added. The amendment failed, gathering only 41 votes.

The dries attempted to remove the mini bottle provisions from the bill, leaving just the liquor reforms. Rep. Bill Clayton's amendment came closer to success than Johnson's. A motion to table Clayton's amendment passed 80 to 65. Rep. James Nugent of Kerrville was successful in attaching a "dram shop" clause to the bill over the sponsor's objections. The amendment holds proprietors who sell small liquor bottles to intoxicated customers liable for damages the customer might cause after he leaves the establishment. Fourteen states have similar laws. Usually proprietors buy insurance coverage to protect themselves against damage suits.

The section of the bill relating to the consumption of alcohol on state college campuses was the subject of numerous unsuccessful resolutions. As passed, the bill forbids the sale, consumption or possession of alcoholic beverages on property owned by state supported institutions of higher learning except in married students' housing, residences of officers or employees of the institution and specific affairs approved in advance by the administrative head of the institution.

The liquor reform section of the bill provides stiff penalties for proprietors serving liquor to a minor. It also requires the presence of a parent in court when a minor is charged with breaking the liquor laws unless the parents are out of the court's jurisdiction. The bill amends present law to allow persons sixteen years of age or older to check, sack and carry out sealed alcoholic beverages from grocery stores, supermarkets and wine shops.

Other provisions provide for the immediate sale of alcoholic beverages seized by the Liquor Control Board and prohibition of gambling on licensed premises. The bill prohibits a member of the legis-

lature from appearing before the LCB as an attorney or in any other representative capacity without first filing an affidavit with the board making full disclosure of the person he represents. Rep. Jim Clark of Dallas introduced an amendment that would prohibit legislators from appearing before the board or before LCB field representatives for compensation. The house, which contains 81 lawyers, defeated the amendment 67 to 79.

The bill makes it illegal for drivers or passengers to drink alcoholic beverages in an unsealed container in a moving vehicle on a public road, except in a place where it is inaccessible.

The bill now goes to the senate where it is expected to face an even more difficult battle.

Connally's appropriations bill does not appear to be faring as well as his mini bottle bill. While he prepared a one-year appropriations bill calling for \$127.2 million in new revenue, the house appropriations committee rewrote the bill raising the tax needs to \$133.8 million for fiscal 1969, and the senate appropriations committee called for \$145 million in new money. Barnes estimated that the state may need up to \$150 million in new taxes if congress passes the president's surtax bill before the end of the Texas legislative session. If the federal tax is raised, the state comptroller will lower his estimate on the amount of revenue the state might glean from taxes, on the assumption that consumers will have less money to spend. Barnes said he is hoping that final action will not be taken on the surtax until after the close of the special session. Rather than commit himself to Connally's program, Barnes has encouraged house members, who must originate tax measures, to propose alternative plans. Smith last year opposed Connally's plan to appropriate funds on an annual rather than a biennial basis. He says he will remain neutral in the scramble to pass one-year appropriations and tax measures.

Legislators have received Connally's tax proposals without enthusiasm. Most lib-

erals are critical because the burden of payments is placed on the consumer. The governor's main revenue-raising proposal is an expanded 3% sales tax with rebates to the cities in place of their optional 1% sales tax. Added to the roll of taxable items would be cigarette and tobacco products as well as services such as telephone calls, haircuts, parking, laundering and dry cleaning.

The legislature may choose simply to raise the state sales tax to 3% while maintaining the optional city sales tax. Rep. Ben Atwell, Dallas, chairman of the house revenue and taxation committee, has introduced such a measure. It easily could pay for the state's new expenses for the coming year, but many legislators who approve of the sales tax in theory would rather wait until next year to raise the sales tax. Connally has estimated that the state will need an additional \$400 to \$500 million in new taxes during the next biennium. Some informed sources say Barnes is leaning toward a flat increase in the sales tax this year, but the speaker told the *Observer* he favors none of the tax measures introduced. He said he expects to see major changes in the governor's tax bill once it reaches the house floor. It was scheduled for consideration this week after this issue of the *Observer* was closed.

Rep. Don Gladden, Fort Worth liberal, has introduced a bill that provides for corporate and personal income taxes as well as increases in the tax on beer, on oil production, and on natural gas production. The measure is not expected to survive a hostile revenue and taxation committee. Rep. George Hinson, Mineola, is sponsoring a bill that would raise \$14.5 million by imposing a 5% entertainment tax on admission charges for most ath-

letic events, theaters, contests, and exhibitions.

While Connally's tax bill would put intrastate telephone calls under the sales tax, it would lower the telephone gross receipts tax by \$3.2 million a year. Connally argues that the telephone tax should be lowered to bring it into line with taxes on other utilities. Sen. Bill Patman, Ganado, has been the most vocal critic of this measure. "To single out a single monopolistic industry for special treatment is almost unbelievable," he said. Claude Gilmer, a former house speaker

Dana Wilson Joins Staff

Dana Wilson, a senior student at Southwestern University, Georgetown, has joined *The Texas Observer* as a summer intern on the editorial staff. Miss Wilson plans a journalism career upon her graduation. She was born in Fort Worth and reared in Mississippi.

and now a lobbyist for the Texas Telephone Association, told the house revenue and taxation committee that the telephone industry did not request the lowering of the tax, and that the industry would prefer not to be included in any of the state's new tax plans.

The Committee of Governing Boards of the state's 22 senior colleges has recommended doubling tuition at the colleges. The Legislative Budget Board recommended an appropriation for the colleges that is \$46 million less than the administrator estimate they will need. The tuition increase would bring in an estimated \$21 million a year. Administrators say

the increase is needed to prevent "serious damage" to higher education. This is the first time the college heads have requested such a hike.

Three tuition bills have been introduced in the house. HB 19 by John Treager, Seguin, would double tuition at both junior and senior colleges and raise fees for out-of-state students. He said he will run with the bill only if other tax measures fail. Rep. Curtis Graves and Lauro Cruz, both of Houston, have introduced a bill that would charge tuition on the basis of the federal income tax rate a student's parents pay. If a family falls under the 28% income tax rate, tuition would be \$50 a semester. Students whose parents' incomes are taxed 48% or over would pay \$400 a semester. A third bill by Rep. Grant Jones, Abilene, would charge tuition on a semester hour basis at double the present rate. Sen. Chet Brooks, Houston, said he will filibuster a tuition bill if it reaches the senate, and says he feels there are "many senators" who would join him in that. Some legislators and aides have been wearing "Stop Tuition Hike" buttons left over from an earlier anti-tuition campaign. "The state's policy should be directed toward making education more available rather than less available to its citizens," Brooks says, "and I look forward to the day that Texas will provide tuition-free education, at least at the junior college level."

The house appropriations bill calls for approximately \$700,000 for "additional campus security" at the state's 22 senior colleges and universities. Texas Tech would receive an additional \$69,000, the University of Texas at Austin, Texas A&M, and the University of Houston, an additional \$50,000 each; smaller colleges would receive lesser amounts. D.W., K.N.

The Itty-Bitty Bottle Bill

Austin

My startling expose [*Obs.*, May 24] of Governor Connally's plot to bankrupt liberals and other heavy drinkers has apparently succeeded in alerting thinking people everywhere to the threat posed by liquor-by-the-drink legislation.¹ Yet the very magnitude of the conspiracy has made it difficult for some of our slower citizens to grasp, and our enemies are crafty as they are treacherous. Reacting to the groundswell of enlightened opposition, our governor, in a stroke of evil genius, now seeks to stun us into helpless confusion by introducing legislation whose provisions are a monument to madness. I refer to the Itty-Bitty Bottle Bill.

Until now the threat was a simple and straightforward one. Liquor-by-the-drink, while in many respects desirable, would

double or triple the cost of on-the-town boozing by banishing the old brown bag. Thousands of people foolishly voted Yes

Bill Helmer

in the mixed-drink referendum because they didn't realize this. Myopically, they were able to see no further than the big juicy carrot of "mixed drinks" being dangled before their eyes. Like bait in a trap, the mixed drink can be obtained at the cost of calamity, and only when it is too late will the victims come to know what evil lurks in the hearts of men! Especially the men of the Texas legislature which, as the *Observer* has often warned, abounds in scoundrels, blackguards, and rascals of every description.

The exhilarating prospect of mixed drinks has blinded many people to Con-

The writer is an Observer contributing editor.

nally's chief reason for proposing a liquor-by-the-drink law in the first place. Did anyone ever think he wanted to modernize and civilize the law so a man could, as the Good Lord clearly intended, get in out of the hot sun and order himself a cool, relaxing daiquiri or whiskey sour?² Great garbage, no! He wanted to wring extra money out of every poor soak in the state by taxing not only the bottle, but every drink poured out of it. *The power to tax is the power to destroy!*³

BUT NOT EVEN the Establishment politicians can shove mixed drinks

²Had the Good Lord not intended man to drink, He would not have created distilleries. I have even heard some people credit Him with inventing their favorite cocktails. Personally I consider such claims to verge on irreverence, but I do consider the Margarita to be divinely inspired.

³Yes, indeed. If it weren't for the prohibitively high taxes all of us could, under federal law, grow our own marijuana and carry submachine guns.

June 21, 1968

¹Modest as I am, I confess to experiencing an inner thrill when my mere appearance at Scholz's or the Split Rail brings the crowd to its feet, everyone cheering and waving their unsacked bottles. My friends, I am but your servant!

down the throats of adamant Baptists, even for the purpose of taxing drinkers. Consequently, the mixed-drink proposal is currently masquerading as a liquor "reform" law designed to "clean-up" the state's liquor laws. Already the bill is a mountain of minutiae and impossible provisions ("drivel," according to one of our more perceptive legislators) that would reform not drinking, goodness knows, but only the drinkers. To get past the fanatical drys, any mixed-drink bill is going to have to provide enormous licensing fees, drastic enforcement provisions, and unreasonable penalties against any bar or restaurant owner who gets faked out by a cleverly forged ID card. Thus the good governor would render unto God and Caesar equally by taxing sin, and things are tough enough on sinners under the present system where Liquor Control Board rulings cannot be appealed and agents can raid private parties in private homes.

Since politics is the art of the possible, and since nothing is possible in this state without concessions and compromises, the prospects of any sensible mixed-drink law have already vanished. What we have now is the Itty-Bitty Bottle Bill. Under its arcane provisions, no one still is going to walk in, sit down, and be served a whiskey sour. He is going to be served a tiny bottle on a tiny tray. He will then be asked to witness a bit of ceremony—the breaking of the seal!—whereupon the waiter will patiently (or not so patiently, one may expect) truck the tiny bottle back to the bar so the bartender can mix a drink with it. Imagine the fun this is going to be in a crowded bistro on a busy Saturday night when it takes thirty minutes now just to get a beer.

The ultimate compromise is yet to come. The mixed-drink provision may be stricken from the bill altogether, leaving only the highly taxed itty-bitty bottles. If brown-bagging seems hypocritical now, the practice will have reached the *brennschluss* of idiocy when Texans find themselves carrying not one big bottle, but many tiny ones, strung around them in cartridge bandoliers, Mexican-bandit style.

NONE OF THIS trouble would have come up had Texans not gotten exposed to big-city ways that made them feel inferior, and they shouldn't feel that way at all. Granted, there is something primitive and uncivilized about lugging around a bottle, but at least it's honestly primitive and uncivilized — a quaint regional custom that has endured out of service to cultural needs. Tourists from New York might sometimes snicker, but they have to concede that, by God, it works. The possession of a full fifth of firewater protects the natives of this state against a variety of day-to-day hazards: exhaustion of funds, the early closing hours of bars and liquor stores,⁴ the dry counties that can slip up on an unwary traveler at night. "Aren't Texans cute, always carrying their bottles with them? You know, we ought to start doing that!"

But now, alas, the natives have gotten self-conscious and are ashamed of their customs. They are not able simply to

⁴As a friend of mine, Bill Day, has pointed out, one measure of this state's corruption is the power of the holdup lobby to control working hours for armed robbers: moving the closing time up from 10 to 9 p.m. so they can spend more time with their families.

abandon them, of course, and adopt civilized ways — the open saloon. No, they must preserve at least the rituals that their high preachers and political witch doctors have traditionally prescribed to combat evil spirits.

... Although they have adopted many modern institutions and made significant advances in technology, the natives of this region still cling tenaciously to remnants of their colorful past. Once every Texan carried a large bottle of snake-bite medicine. This practice was outlawed in the late 1960s, but the bottle was retained, in miniature form, in deference to the tribal superstition that any enjoyment must be earned by means of inconvenience. It is still widely believed by the state's Redneck tribes that demons live in these bottles and escape once the paper seal is broken, which has given rise to the curious ritual that is practiced in Texas bars and restaurants to this day. Many tourists collect these small bottles as souvenirs of their visit to the state. . . .

The whole bloody bushwa of itty-bitty bottles is going to make Texas, among other things, the laughing-stock of the civilized world, and somewhere in the background will be the unregistered lobbyists for the communist-controlled itty-bitty bottle industry,⁵ grinning smugly at their latest coup. Yes, folks. Write your legislator today! Texas cannot afford Preston Smith and a Liquor Reform Law both in the same year. □

⁵I don't know for a fact that the bottling industry is communist-controlled, but if may help if we can get the rumor started. I think I have a communist living in my basement and I believe we can get him to testify to his part in the plot.

Political Intelligence

GOP Hopes for November

✓ If Texas Republicans are to increase their strength materially in state politics next year they must do well in Dallas. There is a strong possibility that the GOP will flourish there this fall, particularly in legislative races where a Republican sweep might occur.

✓ The Dallas county house delegation, conservative Democrat virtually to a man, is looking to November with some well-founded discomfort. Preston Smith leading the party's ticket will not pack the same wallop in Dallas as John Connally. For example, in the June 1 runoff in which Smith beat liberal Don Yarborough for the gubernatorial nomination, Smith was unable to carry lobbyist Doug Bergman, a Democrat, to victory over Republican John Lowrance in a special runoff election. Republicans had bitterly object-

ed to Governor Connally's setting the special legislative runoff for the same date that the Democratic gubernatorial nomination would be settled, believing that Republicans, who had no other runoff that day, would not turn out in anywhere near the numbers that Democrats would. As it developed, however, several thousand people voted only in the governor's race.

The Dallas establishment suffered a setback, too, in the defeat of one of its endorsed legislative candidates, B. W. Cruce by liberal Dick Reed.

The special election earlier this week to replace the late Negro Rep. Joe Lockridge was considered important by Democratic leaders as victory might encourage the downtown money to stay with the Democrats this fall in Dallas. Further, the establishment needed a victory in this week's election to assure that their

legislative slate would include a Negro this fall, a particular need since Republicans will have at least two Negroes on the ballot this November in Dallas.

✓ The Dallas conservative leadership is so concerned about the impending GOP challenge that they are including liberal officeholders in their strategy councils. Ben Atwell, dean of the Dallas house delegation, who faces GOP opposition this year for the first time, invited liberal Sen. Oscar Mauzy and senate nominee Mike McKool to a recent meeting. Liberals are now badly needed, conservatives in Dallas figure, because of their influence among Negro voters, where the story may be told in many future Dallas elections.

✓ At a recent meeting of the delegation the discussion centered on which Negro to tap as the establishment's candidate to succeed Lockridge. However,

Dr. Emmett Conrad, recently elected to the school board and one of the most influential Negroes in Dallas, made it clear that this time Negroes intended to choose their own candidate. He called a meeting of Black leaders, who chose the Rev. Zan Holmes, a dynamic, young minister. To insure that his colleagues' wishes would be honored, Conrad informed the press of Holmes' candidacy before advising the county executive committee.

✓ Rep. Gus Mutscher, Brenham, almost certain to be the next house speaker, was in Dallas recently getting acquainted with local businessmen and, while so doing, tried to lend a hand to the Demo slate. It is understood that Mutscher suggested to those he spoke with that if they don't strongly support the Democrats this fall Republicans might sweep all 15 Dallas house seats. That, Mutscher is reported to have said, would mean difficulties for Dallas getting legislation passed in the Democrat-dominated legislature.

✓ Nonetheless, Dallas businessmen who have bankrolled the conservative Democratic legislative candidates in the past are doubtless considering aiding the Republicans this year. There are too many signs that the conservative Demos may be losing their grip in Dallas. McKool's win over establishment Sen. Jim Wade was a key blow, as was liberal County Cmsr. Jim Tyson's victory over Negro challenger C. A. Galloway. Tyson had opposed civic leaders on certain matters crucial to them so they decided to go to war against him. They picked a Negro candidate, Galloway, to run against Tyson, whose district covers much of Black South Dallas. Mauzy, long a mentor of Tyson's and widely respected in the Negro community, galvanized support behind Tyson and won.

✓ Since the accession of LBJ to the presidency and Connally to the governor's chair, downtown Dallas powers have deemed themselves Democrats. But if Hubert Humphrey is somehow beaten at Chicago and does not head the Democratic ticket it is by no means certain that Dallas business leaders will stay hitched to the party. Their natural inclinations would favor Richard Nixon over Humphrey but HHH's frequent forays into Texas on behalf of LBJ have led Dallas President's Club members to hope for advantageous positions on the playing board of a new, Humphrey administration.

Nonetheless, Dallas legislators are unsure of the oligarchy's financial enthusiasm for them. Atwell reminded his colleagues at a recent meeting that they've been sitting around too long waiting for the city fathers to do their politicking for them, and lately those patrons have had other places to put their campaign dollars — and will to an increasing extent later this year.

✓ Some members of the Dallas delegation believe that they haven't represented their city as well as their numbers might permit because of a reputation for being "businessmen's boys." When the 1967 session was about to end and this year's Republican threat was taking its

ominous shape, several legislators urged the delegation to divide into single-member districts, or at least into state senatorial districts as in Harris county, and stop running everybody at large throughout the county. But downtown businessmen didn't like this proposal and it was dropped, a decision that may mean 15 Republicans will represent Dallas in the house in 1969.

Auto Insurance

✓ Auto insurance rates across the nation may ultimately be affected by a decision of the New Jersey commissioner of banking and insurance, who earlier this year ruled that the investment income of companies writing auto insurance must be considered in that state in setting rates paid by drivers. New Jersey becomes the third state to set such a requirement, following the lead of Kentucky and Maryland.

The New Jersey decision is seen as having great impact on rate making, as that state's insurance commissioner, Charles R. Howell, has not had the reputation of being reform-minded. Six rate increases in the last ten years had been granted by Howell, who predicts that other states will begin to require the consideration of investment income in rate making.

Howell's decision is a victory for the New Jersey AFL-CIO, which has been working for three years to combat increasing rates. The labor organization employed Houston insurance consultant Charles K. Leslie, who has gained a reputation as a leading advocate of making investment income a factor in auto insurance rates [Obs., Dec. 30, 1966]. Leslie has also worked with the Texas AFL-CIO in this regard.

Farm Subsidies

✓ Delaware Republican Sen. John J. Williams has long campaigned for limiting farm subsidy payments to \$10,000 per farmer, saying about \$600 million could thus be saved the government annually. Three hundred and thirty-one Texas farms (87 more than in the year before) received more than \$50,000 for not raising certain crops during 1967. These 331 farmers (or corporations) received \$19,799,766, an average of nearly \$60,000 each.

Two State Dept. of Corrections farms, one in Fort Bend county, the other in Walker county, received a total of \$423,749. Other interesting recipients include Shary Farms at Mission, identified with the interests of former Gov. Allan Shivers, \$125,711; Lloyd M. Bentsen, the Houston insurance executive, \$108,904 for a farming operation also at Mission; and a farm that was the central target in the now-aborted strike of Starr county farm workers, La Casita, \$54,227.

The recent report on hunger in America has been mentioned often lately in connection with the large subsidies paid corporation farmers; the argument runs:

why not use the land now held out of production for growing food for the poor, or use the money paid the corporation farms to buy food for families that are hungry?

I. F. Stone, in his national bi-weekly, commented recently: "In the calendar year 1966 a quarter billion dollars in farm subsidies were paid to a lucky landowning two one-hundredths of 1% of the population of Texas while the 28.8% of its population below the poverty line received less than \$8 million in all forms of food assistance. . . ."

Miscellany

✓ Free elections are actually quite expensive. The Dallas county clerk has figured that already this year county voters have participated in seven elections at a cost of at least \$236,813.

✓ A recent Supreme Court decision concerning Illinois criminal law indirectly attacks a Texas law which enables state prosecutors to discharge prospective jurors who have "conscientious scruples" regarding capital punishment. The court ruled that Illinois "stacked the deck" against William C. Witherspoon when he was sentenced to death by a jury from which 39 veniremen were excluded "without any effort to find out whether their scruples would invariably compel them to vote against capital punishment." Dist. Atty. Henry Wade of Dallas commented that the decision "in effect abolishes capital punishment in Texas."

✓ The United Farm Workers Organizing Committee's civil suit against the Texas Rangers, six Texas labor laws and Starr county law enforcement officers was adjourned last week for an indefinite period. The case arose out of disputes last year when the committee was organizing melon pickers in the Rio Grande Valley. Chris Dixie, the chief lawyer for the union, is trying to show that the Rangers and Starr county officers acted as strike breakers rather than peace officers during the tense period. In one of the most dramatic moments of testimony, the Rev. Krueger of Mission told the three-judge federal court that Ranger Capt. A. Y. Allee and another Ranger held him and a union official within inches of a passing train. Chief Judge John R. Brown said after both sides submit briefs, more arguments will be heard.

✓ Corpus Christi may become the second city in Texas to adopt a fair housing ordinance. The Corpus council is discussing the possibility. Meanwhile the property rights committee of Texas Real Estate Association has restated the association's opposition to housing controls. The Austin chapter of the real estate group is leading the opposition against Austin's newly passed housing ordinance.

✓ Abilene, Cameron county (Brownsville), Hidalgo county (McAllen), Midland, Odessa, and Wichita Falls are the state's metropolitan centers that are

losing population, according to the population research center at the University of Texas comparing 1967 estimates with

the 1960 census. The losses in all cases were slight. Houston has grown by 352,933 since 1960, to 1,771,256; Dallas has

added 305,055 persons, to total 1,424,315. The largest percentage increases were Dallas' 3.4% and Houston's 3.2%. □

The Chicken Ranch

La Grange

Going north, State Highway 71 begins at Palacios, on the coast, pauses at Blessing, then takes off for the hills where it's famous. It's called the "Texas Hill Country Trail" north and west of Austin and it gets attention from land speculators, tourists, reporters, and the state highway department as it travels through the heart of Lyndon Land.

To the south, between Austin and Columbus, 71 is being replaced by a super-highway, and to assuage the fears of folks along the old road, it has been designated part of the stuff of history. Blue and white signs with an upraised arm and rifle, calling the highway the "Texas Independence Trail," mark the route. This ought to amuse at least two generations of Texas menfolk. For them, Highway 71 has been part of the history of stuff; their favorite spot on the road has been an obscure turnoff, just south of La Grange. About a quarter-mile east of the main road, at the end of a dirt and gravel lane, in the middle of a cow pasture surrounded by pin oaks and willows, is the Chicken Ranch — the oldest established continuously operating non-floating whorehouse in Texas—maybe the nation.

It would not be good to be more specific about its location. The law knows where it is, but believes there is no sense killing a good thing. Besides, any freshman at Texas A&M, the University of Texas, or the Texas legislature who gets money from home, or elsewhere, can find out where it's at.

The dirt road, which is posted ("Bad Curves," "Watch for Loose Livestock") and looked after by helpful Fayette county officials, leads only to the Chicken Ranch. And when one drives up for the first time, there is no mistaking what it is. In the sultry heat of a Texas summer night, shiny cars surround the house and wait in the darkness. The only sound is the loud whisper of a dozen air conditioners in the louvered windows of a dozen rooms.

The house, a one-story, white, clapboard building, is rambling and jerry-built because a room at a time has been added over the years as business increased. There was, incidentally, no interruption in the commerce within during construction; indeed, the carpenters often enjoyed long afternoon breaks, which diminished their hourly wages.

A gravel area surrounds the house for the sporty, late-model cars of the girls around back, and in the front the pickup

trucks and rented cars of the day customers, and the collegiate Volkswagens and executive Pontiacs of the night trade. Over the screened front door is a yellow light, to keep bugs away. Arrayed around the house are spotlights to discourage burglars, peeping toms, and assorted oth-

Saul Friedman

er trouble makers. During the busy nighttime hours on Fridays and Saturdays a local, off-duty law officer is hired to patrol the area against drunks or unruly students, for the Chicken Ranch is anxious to protect its long reputation for being peaceful and law-abiding — prostitution aside, naturally.

THERE IS a reason its customers, law officers, politicians, and even the folks in Fayette county protect the Chicken Ranch. It's a throwback, the last of the old time houses of pleasure which used to spice the life of Texas. In Houston there was a place where the madam kept the girls honest by counting towels. In Bell county there was a house in the country which the district attorney and most of his cronies visited until one day when he appeared sheepishly and reluctantly at the front door, having been forced by some churchwomen to lead a raid. "Not now, George!" the owner of the establishment hollered from inside. "The law has got me surrounded." And of course, Hattie Valdez' place in Austin was one of the busiest spots in town during a session of the legislature. It was destroyed by fire a few years ago and all that was left standing was the chimney.

There are still places in Galveston and Sealy and other parts of the state, but they get closed now and again as reform movements and new police officers come and go. In the big cities there are few, if any houses now. Hookers, some of them dope addicts, most of them working for pimps, hustle on the streets or in hotels. More respectable looking girls work as stenographers or behind counters during the day and answer calls at night. But the girls on the streets and the call girls prices are too steep for the student, the farmer, or the drummer without an expense account.

The Chicken Ranch has always been priced just right for the more plebeian trade, and with its seclusion, its home-like comforts, its carefully screened girls, and its reputation for staying out of trouble, it has remained in business for nearly 55 years. (That's not old, as Texas businesses go; the *Dallas Morning News*, es-

tablished in 1842, calls itself the state's "oldest business institution.") The Ranch was opened by two sisters who had made a modest bundle among the roughnecks and wildcatters around Beaumont after the turn of the century when the Spindletop oil boom began, then decided to settle down and let the business come to them. They picked their spot south of La Grange, in the hills above the Colorado river, because it was secluded, yet not far from the colleges and large cities, and on the way to the state capital, where every business and political hustler had to come. After a few years one of the sisters left to get married and the other, whom we shall call Miss Sarah, owned it until a few years ago when she died in her eighties.

Before prohibition Miss Sarah's place was a rough and Texian version of the more classic houses of the evening in New Orleans. There were drinks and dancing to the latest music in the big front parlor of the house, and there was no pressure on the girls or the customers to get their business done and the money paid. Prohibition in Texas took some of the romance and fantasy from Miss Sarah's and made it more mercenary. She used to remember how she laughed when the Fayette county sheriff came to see her one day. "Miss Sarah," he told her gravely, "I don't like it any more than you do. But the drinkin' has just got to stop."

IT WAS A MEASURE of the crazy contradictions Miss Sarah encountered in the area around La Grange. It was a strange place to open a whorehouse. Most of the farmers, ranchers, and merchants thereabouts come from German or Slavic stock — religious, prudish, conservative, strict. And yet they've never seriously bothered the Chicken Ranch or the girls who come in to town to do a little shopping. The women must know their menfolk visit the house and even take their sons there the first time to teach them. And the townspeople must know that many travelers hear of La Grange and come through it only because of the Chicken Ranch.

Maybe it's allowed to exist because of the little commerce it brings the town. Or because it's a way to keep 'em down on the farm. Or because the American puritan is unconcerned with sin which falls in some distant forest and cannot be heard.

Once a new woman in town heard about the Ranch and decided she would see it closed. She went to the sheriff, who told her it was the first he'd heard of it and he would sure check on it and if it was true, what she heard, he would

The writer is a Washington correspondent for Knight newspapers who formerly was with the Houston Chronicle.

do something about it. She went to her minister, who smiled benignly and told her indulgently that there were things in this world which simply couldn't be helped. She persisted, nevertheless, and urged her husband, who sold bagged peanuts, popcorn, and potato chips and such to groceries and taverns, to join her. One Sunday morning, as they stepped from their house on the way to church, they found the front lawn littered with bags of peanuts, popcorn, and potato chips from merchants who wanted the couple to mind their own business or lose it. The one-woman reform movement ended.

During the thirties the depression hit Miss Sarah's, but she stayed open. Her girls gave credit to good customers or accepted payment in farm produce, when they had to. There were so many chickens the girls couldn't eat them all, so they raised them, and the place became known as the Chicken Ranch.

It became so well-known that men from miles around could call the La Grange operator and ask her to tell Miss Sarah to expect a party of two or four or more at ten. During legislative sessions the lobbyists brought the politicians down for an evening. And each year, after the traditional Thanksgiving Day game between the University of Texas and Texas A&M, alumni of the winning school would treat the whole team to a night at the Chicken Ranch—after turkey dinner, of course. That's not done anymore; no need to leave the campus; no need to pay.

THE CHICKEN Ranch nearly closed for the first time in about 1962 when then-Atty. Gen. Will Wilson was bucking for governor and crusading against sin in places like Galveston. Miss Sarah became very ill and left her garish, turn-of-the-century bedroom for a hospital in Austin. She wanted to close the place but Hilda, the most veteran employee, volunteered to stay so no customer would be turned away. She and two other girls worked the Chicken Ranch until the heat was off. And when Miss Sarah died peacefully (the newspaper obituaries said she was "a La Grange businesswoman"), Hilda bought it from the old lady's estate.

As in any business, new blood will tell. Miss Hilda, who is now in her early forties, had the place redecorated (without missing a night's business), hired a dozen new girls, installed a uniformed Negro maid to answer the door, and ordered the help to wear fetching sports clothes for the day trade and fashionable cocktail dresses in the evening.

The prices (\$10-\$15 for a straight date) did not go up, but girls were now permitted, if they wished, to engage in more exotic and expensive exercises with their customers. The late Miss Sarah had been old-fashioned and would fire a girl she caught catering to the tastes of a "perv." One thing has not changed under the proprietorship of Miss Hilda. Bottles of Coca-Cola are still used for accounting. Each customer is encouraged to buy

Cokes, at 50 cents each, for himself and his girl. The extra dollars go for miscellaneous things the girls need; the bottles are counted by the management to keep track of how much business each girl does.

The girls keep about half of what they make and the rest goes to the house, which pays the room and board. The girls live where they work and leave for those few days each month when Mother Nature provides them with time to visit friends and family.

Many of the Chicken Ranch girls have fled to Miss Hilda's from the streets or from knocking around in hotel rooms taking chances on the police or dates with strange hang-ups. The Chicken Ranch is a sanctuary for them. There they find safety and peace and quiet. If they are wild, Miss Hilda turns them back to the streets and their procurers. But that's rarely necessary, for the girls of the Chicken Ranch take some pride in its reputation as a house of good, well-mannered women.

There was a judge, a couple of years ago, who had to decide a child custody

case. The ex-husband was suing to take the child from his former wife on the grounds she was a prostitute. When the judge heard that the woman worked at the Chicken Ranch he denied the husband's petition. The woman must be decent if she worked at the Chicken Ranch, he decided. And he secretly remembered his days as a young legislator. □

June 21, 1968

9

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Post Mortems on the Runoff

Archer Fullingim, editor of the Kountze News, comments on the Democrats' gubernatorial runoff. Fullingim was a co-chairman of the Rebuilding Committee, which in 1966 encouraged liberals to vote for Republican Sen. John Tower over Waggoner Carr, a conservative Democrat.

About the only way you can reasonably look at the election Saturday is that the rest of Texas is just badly out of step with Southeast Texas and deep East Texas where we voted for Don Yarborough almost 2 to 1. What in the world is wrong with the people in West and North Texas anyway? Them people up around Dallas and in North and West Texas just ain't got any sense, as Viola Beard told me. "I'm just flat glad that I live in Hardin county where people have got enough sense to vote for the right man," Viola said. Viola might have been a little extra mad Sunday morning on account of what happened Saturday night. Some thieves went into her Irish potato patch, pulled up a lot of potato vines, took them out on the highway and stripped them of spuds. Viola says that the next person she finds prowling around her place, which is at the Kountze and Silsbee Y, is going to find himself full of buckshot. A little while back she had to fire two shots at hog thieves.

What beat Don in . . . Fort Worth and other big cities, they tell me, was that the Smith people put out the word that Don, if elected, would appoint long-hairs and wierdos and irresponsible people to boards, commissions, etc. The people in West Texas voted for Smith because he's from West Texas. That's the custom out there. . . .

It now appears that the only way to dislodge the lobby at Austin which has ruled Texas with an iron fist for 30 years is to have a strong two-party system. For you can put it down that about half of the people who voted for Smith Saturday were Republicans and will vote for Nixon or Reagan in November if they are nominated by the Republicans for presi-

dent. The people who pushed for Smith the hardest haven't voted for a Democrat for president in years. That is why they belong in the Republican party. But I am not complaining about them voting for the Democrat in June and the Republican in November, because that is exactly what I intend to do. Come November, I'll vote for the Democratic nominee for president, but I will vote for the Republican nominee for governor. That's the way we beat Waggoner Carr for the senate and that's the way we can beat Smith for governor. . . .

The daily press and the Smith people kept saying that the only people who would vote for Don would be the Negroes, Latin-Americans, hippies, but like Viola said, "If I'm a hippie, I've got a lot of company in Hardin, Jefferson, Newton, Orange, Galveston, Trinity, Tyler, Angelina and Jasper counties." Smith and Don were tied in Jasper county.

I'll admit that Don got most of the Negro and Latin-American vote and I'm proud of the fact that soldiers of those races are doing more than their share of fighting and dying in Vietnam, and I think it is time for the *Dallas News* and *La. [Beaumont] Enterprise* to quit flinging slurs on Negroes and Latin-Americans. They did it all during the campaign. It is time for the *La. E.* to realize that according to the population represented in the United States, the only minority group in Vietnam is the white man.

Don Yarborough didn't get beat for governor. The people of Texas got beat. Smith was not elected governor; the lobby for the Big Rich was reelected. So the people are going to continue to pay through the nose, and the Big Rich are not going to pay for anything.

One thing that A. Shivers and P. Daniel taught Texans was that you can vote for a Republican any time you want to and that that pledge means nothing. So come November all of us hippies can vote for Paul Eggers for governor on the Republican ticket, just as most of the Smith people will be voting for Mr. Nixon. Cozy, ain' it? . . .

Another leading Texas liberal weekly editor, H. M. Baggarly, wrote this in the Tulia Herald about the victory of Preston Smith.

. . . We have a strange coalition [in Texas politics] between Big Oil, Big Gas, Big Utilities, Big Insurance, and the rural and smalltown anti-intellectuals. Each is willing to scratch the back of the other. One thing they have in common is hatred for labor, intellectualism, and progress for the masses. Capitalizing on their mutual hatreds, they pool their resources . . . and away they go! The special interests

furnish the money, the smalltown and rural areas, the votes.

We hope to see the day in Texas when this coalition can be broken, for the good of the state, but that day is far in the future. The time is still here when a Texas cowhand can don a Stetson hat, smear cow manure on his boots, murder the king's English, damn labor and anything else he considers "unTexan," and get elected governor. . . .

Perhaps the primary reason for Smith's win in Swisher county, other than Smith's geographic origin, was the intrusion of Republicans into the Democratic primaries.

In the 1964 Presidential race, 816 Swisher residents voted Republican. In the 1966 Congressional race, 785 voted Republican. Neither of these elections were "liberal-conservative" in which self-styled "conservative Democrats" had "no other place to go." In these races the Democratic candidates were Walter Rogers and Lyndon Johnson. Neither ever gave even a "conservative Democrat" an excuse to bolt the party.

It can be assumed that these 700 to 800 persons in Swisher county who voted for Goldwater and Bob Price represent the hard core of Swisher Republicanism . . . yet, last May 4 only 60 persons voted in the GOP primary!

What happened to the other 700?

They were all busy as beavers getting their registration receipts marked "Democrat" and were casting votes for Preston Smith and Waggoner Carr in the Democratic primary!

And, had Yarborough been elected, they would all have been voting for Republican Eggers come November.

Their votes weren't needed in the GOP primary . . . so they were going to help the Democrats nominate a "good solid conservative" so that there would be no way for the Republicans to lose in November.

Either Smith or Eggers would be acceptable.

In 1956, the GOP state chairman in Texas issued a statement before the Demo runoff. It was: if Ralph Yarborough is nominated by the Democrats, we will conduct a full scale effort to elect a Republican governor in November. But, if Price Daniel wins the nomination, he will be acceptable to the GOP and no serious effort will be made to oppose him.

And now, in 1968, a top state GOP official said Sunday, "we aren't going to spend much money on the governor's race now that Smith has won the Democratic nod . . . we had a good sound and attractive man in the wings, just in case

MARTIN ELFANT

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Houston, Texas

CA 4-0686

Yarborough was the Democratic winner."

All of which proves—there's no difference between a "conservative Democrat" and an ordinary Republican.

It's all right to insist on being a "conservative" — but you can't be both a conservative and a Democrat! Texas "conservatives" will never see the day they

are as moderate as most Republicans.

Many John Birchers insist they are "conservative Democrats."

What would have happened to Preston Smith's razor thin lead in Swisher had some 700 county Republicans decided to be honest?

On the state scene, the election showed

what a candidate is up against when he must face the bottomless money bags of the special interest groups which rule Texas, when he must face thousands of political illiterates who swallow every smear tactic perpetrated by PR firms—such smear tags as "liberal" and "labor." . . . □

Brown and Root in Vietnam

Austin, Washington, D.C.

Connecticut Sen. Abraham Ribicoff recently reported on his December inspection trip to Vietnam in behalf of the senate permanent subcommittee on investigations. Ribicoff travelled to Southeast Asia to check on the extent of any waste or misappropriation of government-owned goods, continuing earlier investigations by the subcommittee in Vietnam. He particularly was disturbed about the operations of military construction work, which largely has been done by a combine of four US firms including Brown and Root, the Texas-based company whose fortunes have improved parallel to the political rise of Lyndon Johnson. The four-company combine has done about \$1.4 billion worth of work in the last seven years in Southeast Asia.

"With respect to military construction," Ribicoff said last month on the senate floor, "we found serious questions regarding the performance of certain American construction firms. . . . There is a real possibility of recovering several million dollars by the government."

The construction combine is known as Raymond, Morris-Knudson, Brown, Root & Jones (RMK/BRJ). Its contract in Southeast Asia is to be phased out late this year or in early 1969. Ribicoff in his written report recalls that the subcommittee in 1966 had become concerned about RMK/BRJ's procedures for keeping track of supplies, to guard against theft and shortages in shipments by suppliers. Claims against suppliers for short or improper deliveries "normally should run into the millions of dollars for a contract of this size," Ribicoff says. But evidently poor record-keeping by the combine has made impossible the recovery of money lost due to suppliers' mistakes.

In 1967 the government's General Accounting Office was called in to check on the situation. The GAO reported, Ribicoff

said, "that millions of dollars worth of materials and supplies had been dumped in temporary open storage areas and were issued directly from them without controls. The GAO felt that it would be practically impossible to reconstruct, with any degree of accuracy, the accountability for materials and equipment which have been (1) used on authorized construction projects without accountability, (2) appropriated without authorization or documentation by military units or others for use outside the scope of the contract, or (3) damaged, pilfered, or stolen."

Ribicoff alleges that RMK/BRJ "intended to build the lack of accountability [for materials] to a sizeable amount so that the very magnitude of the unaccounted-for items would facilitate the issuance of a waiver of accountability for them." A Navy procurement officer estimated that about \$45 million worth of materials would probably not be accounted for because of theft, unapproved withdrawals from warehouses, and improper paperwork. "The obvious implication was that the fault, if any, for this loss would be placed upon the Navy," Ribicoff charges.

Another problem that Ribicoff investigated in Vietnam involved an unaccounted-for \$120 million worth of materials shipped to Vietnam for RMK/BRJ work, a shortage uncovered in 1967 by the GAO. But, Ribicoff reported, the shortage had shrunk to about \$5 million when he visited Vietnam in December. "I find it incredible that the RMK/BRJ joint venture could reduce the total figures for a unaccounted-for materials and supplies from \$120 million in May of 1967 to \$5 million in November of 1967, particu-

larly after GAO had indicated such a lack of accountability controls [italics not added]. . . . In my view, the information given to us was completely unconvincing," says the senator in his report to the subcommittee.

Concluding, Ribicoff urges the senate subcommittee on investigations to pursue its interest in expenditure of government funds in Southeast Asia to "bring about corrective measures which would save many millions of dollars in federal funds which are now being squandered because of inefficiency, dishonesty, corruption, and foolishness."

Other aspects of the Ribicoff report include the Vietnam and Thailand foreign aid programs; theft, diversions, and corruption; the production, importation, and consumption of rice; theft of PX supplies; and the use of marijuana and "hard" narcotics by US military personnel in Vietnam.

During the first eleven months of 1967 US military authorities investigated 1,239 marijuana cases involving 1,513 offenders and 29 cases involving American military personnel and ten non-American civilians for the use of morphine and heroin. Ribicoff notes a bit wryly that "The foregoing information, although it doesn't bear out the allegations of John Steinbeck, Jr., that 75% of the troops 'are on pot,' nevertheless is in marked contrast to what a predecessor . . . provost marshal told us in October, 1966, when he said that such usage was practically nonexistent." G.O.

June 21, 1968

11

MEETINGS

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

The **TRAVIS COUNTY LIBERAL DEMOCRATS** meet at the Spanish Village, 802 Red River, at 8 p.m. on the first Thursday. You're invited.

CENTRAL TEXAS ACLU luncheon meeting. 2nd Friday of every month. Scholz'. From noon. All welcome. (Please note new location).

AUSTIN WOMEN FOR PEACE/WOMEN STRIKE FOR PEACE meet twice monthly. Call GR 6-3755 or 477-1282 for more information.

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

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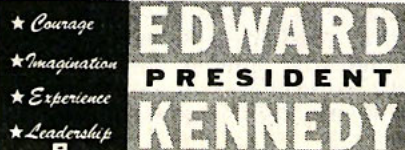
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Robert Kennedy

Austin

Robert Kennedy was the most responsible radical and the most radical responsible in American politics. I favored him for the Democratic nomination for this reason. After his brother's assassination, I began watching him closely with an awareness that I was a spectator of the drama in which he was personally trapped. I read what I could find about him; I began receiving his newsletters and speeches. He was touched with the knowledge that knowing death gives. Power could be flicked from the mighty by a bullet, always he knew it, and accepting it, he made a decision that should not be specified or described; it was manifest. It was manifest in his courage; in his eloquence from despair, in his fatalistic hope. He made the most fun of himself because he knew the reality of mortality, the absurdity of glory. His brother's death made him a rare and passionate man. The people, in general, learned this, from television, as he lay dying.

The Unit Rule

The unit rule is wrong because it is a limitation on democracy for which there is no need or justification. There is no need, and there is no justification, for wiping out proportional representation at each ascending level in the convention system of the political parties. The will of the people is more truly and just as workably expressed by proportional representation based on the divisions of opinion at each level of the convention system. The result of the unit rule is a distorting refraction which makes possible the nomination of our presidential candidates by political bosses with sufficient swing to make the multiplicity of views in their own bailiwicks into a single club which they grab and swing for their own benefit. The unit rule is the same thing, in practice, as political bossism — whether the boss is liberal, conservative, black, white, Democrat, Republican.

Thanks and Regard

In my opinion, Don Yarborough would have been nominated for the governorship but for the general reaction against "the riots." Yarborough's campaign was even-tempered; his television programs were sound, progressive, and occasionally downright inspired. He emitted the customary campaign sounds shaped to appeal to moderates and the apolitical, but his programming was basically liberal.

What he could not do much about, one way or the other, was the whole situation, the failure of the war on poverty, the unrest in the ghettos, growing insecurity among urban whites.

Let it be noted that, despite this whole situation, he polled more than 45% of the votes. His total, near 622,000, is substantially larger than his previous high, the 538,000 votes he obtained in the 1962 primary. He accomplished 45% of the vote with all the daily newspapers in Texas lined up like well-trained seals for the incumbent lieutenant governor. Ten days before the first primary, the big money met, ditched Eugene Locke, and settled on Smith. Thereafter, Smith probably lost more time trying to spend all his money than he did shaking hands. Even so, Don Yarborough got nine votes out of twenty.

The idea that Texas is a hide-bound conservative state won't wash. For instance, Sen. Ralph Yarborough has not scored less than 55% of the votes since 1957. Once a friend of the people breaks through to incumbency — once he breaks through the big press, the big money, and the big defeatism — he can stay in office and do some good.

My point is simple. The cause of liberalism is still a vigorous cause in Texas and people devoted to the public weal owe Don Yarborough and his dedicated campaign workers thanks and regard.

Memorandum

Memorandum to Gov. John Connally, Lt. Gov. Preston Smith, and the Texas legislature: According to Robert Heard, the AP reporter who was shot from the top of the University of Texas tower by Charles Whitman, 842 persons were murdered by firearms in Texas last year. End of memo.

I favor the registration of the ownership and ballistics characteristics of all firearms, many additional commonsense restrictions on their ownership, and a constitutional amendment if necessary. Ideally, I would prefer a gunless society. Practically, I believe responsibility for every gun should be recorded for the public protection. The ownership of pistols by civilians should be outlawed, with necessary exceptions taking the form of authorized rentals for limited periods of time.

To Face Reality

"Let us not then obscure reality in a vague, rosy haze of faint hopes. Let us face reality ... and then move as best we

can to improve upon it."

So said Lt. Gov. Smith to the state Democratic convention. I say, Good; let's go to it. For it is true that promises that are not kept make the situation worse, and as Smith, in all likelihood the next governor of Texas, has every right to hold liberal promise-makers to that fact, so do liberals have every right to hold Smith to his resolve: "Let us face reality ... and then move as best we can to improve upon it."

It is true, as Smith also said in Dallas, that "Men of good will can no longer afford the dubious luxury of partisan recriminations." Differences, and sharply fought, are good and necessary. The acceptance of habitual alignments as a way of thinking, are not, for the troubles of these days cannot be eased without all the resources we have. We cannot discount good will that can cause improvement or good faith that is open-minded; we need all the strength we have.

"The bell that tolled for Senator Robert F. Kennedy tolls for us, too," Smith said. "He played by the rules of the game; and he stood for something."

What does Smith stand for? Here, past his election crisis, he says, in very general terms: adequate financing of state services, education for all, "jobs for all Texans who are sound in mind and body, proper treatment for those who are not, help for those who cannot help themselves," pure water and air, law and order. But what do these generalities mean? The lieutenant governor has six months to think that question over. Then, in January, 1969, he will stand in the well of the house and become a governor—or another of the nonentities we have suffered.

Verbal liberalism is now so commonplace, the leading Establishment candidates practice it. Ben Barnes, also speaking in Dallas, sounded like a man with the concerns of a liberal in some of the things he said: "... some of us stand in a sewer of pollution," many of us are "clogged in massive traffic jams," there "isn't enough water," parks are crowded, "there are hungry children right here in Texas," many citizens are "still denied basic rights because of the color of their skin or their religious convictions." Despite John Connally's claims of accomplishment in "education," Barnes declared that "... the education we offer [our young people] is sadly lacking in excellence, from the pre-school level through the graduate level of our higher education system." Barnes does not say what he, as lieutenant governor, will do about any of these things, but he conveys a sense of being in on the ground floor of a new period in Texas. Will these new birds be birds of compassion or of prey? We shall see, but only by watching closely, for they sing most democratic songs.

Neither Smith nor Barnes show any inclination to revert to the Texas conservatives' ruling clichés of the 1950's. Far from reviving the Shivers demago-

guery of "interposition," (the doctrine that the state could somehow "interpose" itself between the schools and the US Supreme Court,) Smith implicitly accepts the school integration he voted against as a senator. No doubt Barnes "believes" in states' rights, but who can really believe, in the 1960's, that the states can solve these national problems without the federal government? Just as "federal aid" is an accepted part of the conservative-liberal consensus now, states' rights, as an argument against national action, is a dead letter.

The Regents' Rule

A legal eagle makes it clear to me that while the new University of Texas regulation to punish participation in demonstrations that "are in fact obstructive or disruptive" may be unconstitutionally applied, under recent decisions of the Supreme Court the rule is not itself unconstitutional. I persist in the view that this new regulation is slippery and political, but defer to a specialist I know to be my superior in the law on the question of unconstitutionality. I persist also, of course, in the view I expressed that this

new rule should be challenged in court the first time it is used against legitimate freedom of assembly.

There was another aspect of this new rule that is also open to doubt. The rule provides for automatic expulsion for narcotics offenders. This means that persons convicted on narcotics charges are expelled even if the legal authorities view their cases with sufficient leniency to give them probation.

According to the publication, *Federal Offenders in the United States District Courts*, put out by the Administrative Office of the United States, in 1966, (the most recent year for which figures are available), 18% of the persons convicted of narcotics offenses in federal courts were given probation rather than a prison sentence. A total of 650 persons were convicted of violations of the federal laws concerning marijuana, of whom 343, or

52.8%, were given probation rather than a jail sentence.

The regents of the University of Texas should consider these facts and at least exempt from automatic suspension the offenders who are given probation. It would be even wiser to handle each case on its own merits. R.D.

June 21, 1968

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THE TEXAS OBSERVER

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BERNARD RAPOPORT

President

Liberal Lunacy

Dallas, Austin

I never got around to making up my mind as between Robert Kennedy and Eugene McCarthy as my personal favorite for the Democratic presidential nomination. I thought McCarthy deserved priority because of his courage in blazing the trail of dissent from LBJ within the Democratic party this year. Yet I felt that RFK had a better chance of wresting the nomination from Johnson (or Humphrey) and, further, would be the stronger candidate nationwide, though not in Texas. It is now, alas, moot whom to prefer.

Of course, we here in Texas can do little to help Senator McCarthy get the nomination. The conservatives still control the state Democratic party and the delegation to the national convention. Those of you who are considering going to Chicago as part of a rump delegation from Texas to support McCarthy and embarrass President Johnson and Gov. John Connally will do well to follow your own consciences on that. I will say that there would be some propaganda value in raising some nationally-televised hell there this August; the example of the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party at the 1964 convention is evidence that there is some worth in boat rocking. But don't expect that the liberals from Texas will be seated, not so long as LBJ runs the party, and certainly not so long as the liberals' credentials are in such shoddy order. Nor is there much likelihood that you'll stop Humphrey or Connally, should, perish the thought, the delegates be of a mind to put the Texas governor on the ticket.

Liberals can rant and rave against the unit rule, the stacked credentials committees, and the retrogressives who run the Texas Democratic party. It matters not. Liberals are, in 1968, once again the losers. The challenge of the dissidents to the conservative delegation to Chicago is founded on no sound basis at all this year, contrary to the situation in some previous years.

The liberals at Dallas last week during the state convention handled themselves most ineptly and were an embarrassment to a political philosophy that deserves far better leadership than it gets. Where in hell were some of our liberal leaders last week, anyway? They weren't in Dallas. Those who did show up bungled badly, making a hopeless situation worse; but give those who showed up credit: they cared enough to be on hand during a dark hour.

The result of their presence, however, was not sound leadership nor a repre-

sentation to the state that liberalism is a thriving political movement in Texas, deserving of respect. Instead there was interfamilial rancour.

Of course, the bitterness was born of profound frustration: Yet another failure to capture the gubernatorial nomination despite almost unprecedented disarray on the party's right flank. The recent murders of Martin Luther King and Senator Kennedy. The inability to do anything real to help the challenge to Johnson/Humphrey in Texas. And the absence of savvy, experienced, reliable leadership in Dallas at the state convention.

There have been low points for Texas liberalism in the past three decades, but I don't believe the record low had been achieved until that wretched Monday night caucus at the Baker hotel. How the evening was completed without a fist fight or out-and-out riot I don't know. I do know I have never seen so much ill will and unbridled bitching in one room as I saw that night. It was absolutely disgusting. It was the shame of liberalism and there is much hard work ahead of liberals in expiation of that dreadful scene. Small wonder that the McCarthy Western states campaign worker left for home in the middle of the caucus, commenting privately that he had seen, mostly, "mental masturbation" on the part of liberals during his several trips to Texas this spring.

I fear that the pressures of assassinations, political impotence in our own state, the lure and jibes of the New Left, and the flaking away of people who should lead the movement have pushed Texas liberalism to ineptitude, deep confusion and self-doubt, sterility, almost to politically suicidal madness.

What, then, to do about it? I have no comprehensive program to lead the movement back in the right direction. Right now, though, I think it absolutely imperative that liberals honestly and squarely face the truth: we are stumbling off in all sorts of directions and flailing away to no avail. It is, for example, the sheerest of folly for one liberal to stand up and tell other liberals, as was done at Dallas last week, that there is some real hope of the rump delegation being seated at Chicago. That is balderdash. More, it is cruelty to hold out the viability of such a prospect. Even if Texas liberals had a sound basis for contesting the conservative delegation in August, which assuredly is not the case, the power of Lyndon Johnson would prevail in seeing that that competing delegation didn't get seated. Let those who would speak to Texas liberals speak honestly and not engage in idle or destructive pipe dreams.

The fantasizing has reached dangerous proportions within liberalism this year. We have been told by workers in behalf of Kennedy and McCarthy that the Texas delegation could be won for either of those candidates, though the mathematical realities of the situation never held out that prospect; that was all irrevocably settled in the fall of 1966 when liberal precincts turned in a low vote for Connally because of acute disaffection from the governor and because of having no liberal on the ticket that November (and convention delegate strength is apportioned in 1968 on the 1966 general election vote for governor).

We have seen the leader of the Kennedy drive in Texas first say he would form "an organization in every county" in Texas in the six weeks between RFK's entry into the race and the Texas primaries. That was impossible. Then this statement was followed a few weeks later by the Texas RFK man's publicly switching to Humphrey without first advising other key Kennedy workers in the state.

The hope (which the *Observer* embraced and broadcast) that the "million new voters" would turn out at the polls this spring to bring liberals their long-sought Armageddon proved futile and, in retrospect, overlooked the fact that in 1966, when some 600,000 new voters were specially registered they didn't turn out either.

The liberal response to the defeat of Don Yarborough was not mature: there was too much complaining about the money the other side had. We knew they would have money.

Dallas last week was impossible. The liberal caucus was plagued by personal axe-grinding, too many people vying for attention, too much dwelling on how good a liberal the speaker of the moment was (somehow, liberal discussions invariably include such tangential discourses), and lack of any sense, generally, about what to do. As it turned out it would have been better to have done nothing, just walk into the auditorium the next day and take the licking that the precinct and county conventions had assured.

But the revulsion at going along with Connally as Texas' favorite son candidate for president was understandably too great for most of the liberals at the convention to consider doing nothing. All right then, do something effective.

First it was decided to seek a two-week recess of the convention because of Senator Kennedy's death, not that anyone here I know about really was so overcome that the convention would work an emotional hardship on them; rather, I believe the request for a recess was considered for two purposes: (1) to embarrass the state party leaders, who were not expected to grant the two-weeks delay, thus making them susceptible to liberals' charges of callousness and lack of respect for RFK, whom the state party officials are well-known not to have admired; and (2) to give liberals time to think of something to challenge the Con-

**"Sometimes Party
loyalty asks too much..."**

-John F. Kennedy

**Democratic nomination does
NOT have to be an
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"SOMETIMES PARTY LOYALTY ASKS TOO MUCH" ...

***He spoke gloomily about the Massachusetts Democratic Party:
"Nothing can be done until it is beaten ... badly beaten. Then
there will be a chance for rebuilding."*** **JOHN F. KENNEDY**

from: A THOUSAND DAYS by Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr. (Page 31)

****The Rebuilding Committee***

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Austin, Texas**

nally favorite son drive and upset the status quo.

The walkout that everybody down to the dumbest bellboy knew the liberals would pull did not create a stir. It was not coordinated nor announced; probably most of the conservative delegates didn't notice any walkout.

Just as nothing succeeds like success nothing looks so bad as failure. What I'm trying to do here is not just to vent my own personal frustration but to persuade others to begin to take honest stock with a view to realistic future steps. There is talk of setting up a second Democratic party in the state, patterned I suppose after the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party, with its own executive committee, state office, and the rest. Perhaps this is a sound first step back. Right now we don't know enough about it to say.

What is needed now is some hard thinking and some facing of unpleasant facts. Texas liberals have little else ahead to do this year; for us 1968 is, politically, over. We can do very little about helping elect a president, choose a nominee, or alter the largely meaningless statewide races this November. Why not spend the time in serious thought and discussion and then come together to plot more realistic future courses? That may not be as emotionally satisfying as spouting off before others of like mind; it will be harder

work. But I see no other course if liberalism is to advance and, at last, to hold some sway in our home state.

Collective Guilt

Once again we are confronted with the question of collective guilt, the question whether a society is somehow responsible for the misdeeds of an individual. President Johnson tells us that 200 million Americans did not pull the trigger to kill Senator Kennedy. The same can be said of the deaths of President Kennedy, Martin Luther King, Viola Liuzzo, the Rev. James Reeb, Malcolm X, Chaney, Goodman, and Schwerner, and others. Two hundred million Americans were going about their own business while those people died at the hands of individuals.

I think we are getting a bit too used to the reasoning that individual acts do not reflect on our society. There have been too many such acts recently for even the casual observer not to wonder: what is there abroad in this land today? For myself, I resolved the question of collective guilt on the assassination of President Kennedy; it occurred to me then, amidst the din of Dallas' breast beating, that we take pride in and vicarious credit for the commendable acts that a fellow American performs. We feel ennobled when one of our astronauts does something the world admires, or when an American wins some other sort of international acclaim. We identify with that act, feel a part of it, and often I believe feel we have somehow contributed to its accomplishment.

Must not the same be true when the

act in question is a shameful one? Are we Americans not collectively guilty of the murder of Robert Kennedy? In a sense I believe we are. We have, for instance, not demanded that the serious and distressingly apt questions about the murder of John Kennedy be examined closely. Have we not thereby coddled criminals, perhaps made potential assassins or conspirators to assassination take heart? Have we not made violence an institution of our society, an instrument of our foreign and domestic policy to impose our version of peace and order on the discontented and dispossessed in this nation and on those whom we consider aliens abroad? Do we not decorate our most proficient killers of supposed foreign enemies? Do we not still practice capital punishment?

As Sen. Philip Hart of Michigan said after Senator Kennedy was shot, how can we expect violence *not* to plague such a society?

Why do we not control guns at least as fully as we do automobiles? How can we fight crime without taking some preliminary steps to, as best we can, keep firearms away from criminals, convicted and potential? Why do these public officials who moan about coddling criminals not also demand that we take steps to disarm them as best we can?

Yes

In a letter from my sister mourning the latest Kennedy tragedy I found this sentence: "I can remember the good old days when I didn't even know what a cortege was." G.O.

Dialogue

Eckhardt Remarks Were Reported

The *Observer* was wrong in reporting in the June 7 issue that Cong. Bob Eckhardt's remarks on student rights went "unreported in the Texas press." His comments were reported in the May 12 edition of the *Houston Chronicle* and the May 13 edition of the *Fort Worth Star-Telegram* (morning).

John Mort, Washington bureau, the *Houston Chronicle* and *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, 1253 National Press Bldg., Washington, D.C. 20004.

Equal Coverage

Your statement [in the June 7 issue] that "the *San Antonio Express-News* had its veteran political reporter, Jon Ford, with Smith most of the time" is false. Ford spent the same amount of time with Don Yarborough as he did with Preston Smith. He did not stay with either most of the time. He spent the last week of the campaign with Yarborough and the next to the last week with Smith.

If you will take the trouble to take a

ruler and measure the *Express-News* coverage of both candidates you will find the amount of space and the size of the headlines equal. We do not object to bias in your reporting but we do protest distortions and untruths.

Charles O. Kilpatrick, executive editor, *San Antonio Express-News*, San Antonio, Tex. 78206.

A Suggestion

According to an AP story, the owner of a Ben Franklin store in Dallas, E. O. Crawford, said he would no longer sell toy guns. He was motivated to do this by the Robert Kennedy assassination.

"We teach our children love of a gun and love of killing by giving them a toy gun as soon as they are able to walk," Mr. Crawford said.

I'd like to suggest that when *Texas Observer* readers in Dallas need something from a dime store, they buy from this Ben Franklin store.

Fran Presley, Rt. 6, Box 415, Texarkana, Tex. 75501.