

The Texas Observer

The Arlington Quarterly

A Smoking Candle in the Great Dark

Arlington

Higher education, if any, in Texas has been on my mind, and I intend to say something about its fraudulent and constipated character—but not here. A description of how the youthful truth seekers, if any, at Texas colleges are exposed to nonfunction directed by nonpeople with inflated titles deserves further examination and thought before exposing the disaster to the immortality of print.

My attention at this moment is turned to what is being written in Texas, especially to what is being written in a three-issue-old quarterly here at the University of Texas at Arlington, and I shall mention as an example the hatchet piece by "a right wing New Orleans lawyer" (an editor's words) on Willie Morris' *North Toward Home*. Morris, editor of *Harper's* and lion of London, New York, Austin and Fort Worth salons, scarcely needs defense against the kibitzers and hecklers at the table where fame is the name of the game. Texas, however, is deadlocked between an anti-intellectual fear on the part of those who lead it in material endeavor and the chances for intellectual growth on the part of all citizens: the state needs an ally of men who can rise above party. Texas needs writers and it needs journals at its universities to light a candle in the Great Dark. The quarterly at the University of Texas at Arlington was conceived with this hope.

Texas has good writing men — some of the best now dead though their words are with us. Dobie and Webb and Bedichek wrote in the best grain of American timber: "man thinking" and believing that the "sun also shines on us." They cut trails by which Texas writers can find a way for themselves: an identity, an understanding, a harmony for themselves and their people in immediate facts and myths. Such is the purpose of all study and expression; but in the goose-step of our public learning the goal gets lost,

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tramped on and marched over somewhere between driver education and tryouts for twirling.

The three writers, each in his way, achieved a happy union of observation, analysis and imagination. They lived and wrote as full men. They were never the slaves of fear of neighbors or of government or of loss of their jobs or holdings. They never published in order not to perish or to starve on the payroll of a university. They wrote to explain and enrich the life that they met head on.

OTHER TEXANS have also written well in *The Texas Observer*, *The*

Tom Sutherland

Southwest Review and *Publications of the Texas Folklore Society*, in books and magazines published in New York and in the Texas big dailies and country newspapers. The Texas city press—although it is a kept institution as mindless as television, radio, church or school — has been a laboratory for talent when talent was there; and like the other media and institutions it has had its moments of achievement. Houston and Dallas have had columnists who deserve a chance to turn their gifts to something more than amusing the readers with some oddity at their breakfast coffee. Crume of Dallas and Mewhinney of Houston, for instance, are unexcelled at writing when they get hold of an idea.

There is also much young talent—such as Dugger, Morris, Brammer, McMurtry, to name but a few—who are having their say, saying it well and often with spirit and conviction. If there is anything wrong with them, it is that they went to college and took courses in writing and literature. But there is not much wrong with them that time won't improve. The Morris and the Duggers are the voices of Texas, take it or leave it.

Practically mute throughout the land are the large stables of young and older

professors who could throw light on the world we live in and on the values to be found in it. They don't because they are kept busy with trivia, called research, which they read at meetings to bored colleagues or publish in journals that nobody reads because it is unreadable, being written without desire and only to satisfy publish-or-perish policies of their indifferent masters. There they stand in a hundred doll houses or hang portrayed upon the wall like a last duchess, country Cromwells and village Miltons, waiting for an elegy in a college graveyard.

NOW COMES *The Arlington Quarterly*, a new and handsome publication edited on this third floor where I sit in what not long ago was Grubbs Vocational Academy and is today seething with the planning and politics of a power vacuum; for in the center of this mushrooming Dallas-Fort Worth complex, the University of Texas at Arlington may one day overshadow the university at Austin.

The history of this publication is intriguing, to me at least, chiefly because I have witnessed *The Arlington Quarterly* wander off the course I hoped for: reasoned good writing that reveals our place and time. If I do not mention names it is with the hope that any of those persons who may feel responsible for the bugs in this rocket will be able to do better without embarrassment.

Developments were as follows. I urged Duncan Robinson, the head of the English department, a good man and also an excellent writing talent, that we should publish a magazine or review where readers might be illuminated by any lights hidden under bushels. North Texas seemed a good place to start looking for writing. The area has a large and growing population, many scholars, teachers, merchants, politicians, actors, carpenters masons, ethnic minorities divorcees and drunks in rich variety. Isn't this about what Athens had in its palmy days, or London or Paris or Madrid or Rome? There is no doubt that we have more people than those places had when the human spirit boomed there, if you count

feet instead of heads. Surely we could publish to the general profit, whether guided by Socrates, the Humble Master or the lonely dialogue that every man carries on with his own soul.

Duncan was for it; you could never guess why — unless you teach in his department. Like Hemingway's guerrilla Pablo, his only ideology was that he could save his people—that is, by pointing to their names printed beneath titles, he could save the jobs of the teachers in his department who know how to teach. For (ponder this) being able to teach is the talent of least interest to the muddled automatons who govern higher education in Texas; but an article on the punctuation of a poet is enough for an ovation, promotion in rank and raise in salary. Students be damned to dull trivialists; administrators don't have to hear their lectures, they just listen to their flattery over, say, a game of golf.

The head of the English department went about holding private conferences and committee meetings with everybody—including the social sciences and the librarian. Most everybody was made unhappy by the idea: it wasn't his. Anyone might have supposed that a good idea for an obscure college in a raw and ignorant frontier might be applauded, encouraged, supported—that is, any optimist who didn't know the people involved.

There was, instead, a tendency to pout—and if you have not seen a doctor of

philosophy pout while meeting with his fellows in an almost empty classroom, his glasses reflecting the declining rays of the sun, you have not been witness to the full-blown positive power of pouting. Obstacles and the improbabilities of success were the theme that occurred most easily to these learned men. Social scientists remarked against the importance of articles written by English professors, who replied with hauteur.

Duncan, who is generous to a fault and worries unless everybody is happy, offered the magazine privately and separately to everybody. This is not the way to a final settlement of anything; but his intentions were the best, and if there were space here or any point in it, I would praise them further.

When he asked me to participate in the publication, I replied that I would do so if I were in a position of independence from committee control. My interest in editing had begun to frazzle, as I observed the petty power ploys of insecure faculty members. Furthermore, I believed that editing, like fatherhood, was not committee work. I said that if I edited, I did not want much advice; Duncan's was about all. Duncan looked elsewhere for editors. Those he found looked to Dallas for funds and to Dixie for ideas, which is not necessarily bad—it has just turned out to be so in this case.

LET US examine the contents of its first three issues. Is there anything

on Texas, its history, hope, art or writing in these covers? Hardly—that would be too understandable, peasantwise. (Steve Turner has a Fort Worth story and Sandra Myres an article on ranch culture.) By the third issue most of the quarterly has become a meringue of the sort of trivia that occupies the time of English teachers who are required to publish: a maggotty derivation of the better writers, words without the spirit from the anthologies. On the whole it is the kind of imported, watery, blue-John fraud that the children of this land suffer through under the deadening bureaucratic machine that bears the mistaken name of education. It is not all that bad—just most of it.

Good poetry is hard to find, let us point out, in behalf of the editors; and bad poetry is worse than anything, even bad whisky. I will quote one of the happier verses in the last issue. On page 107 you can read:

vivat amor in idea,
ne divulgetur opere.
vivam tuus, vive mea,
nec properemus temere!

This is truly noble, and the children of the plain people of Texas, who come in droves of Volkswagens to the campus, should be cheered to know that such wisdom and beauty is made available to them, even though the idea of love may have occurred to them independently.

If they wish to flip over from medieval Latin to English, on page 279 they will find under the title, "On Contemplating Corlon," a metric rendition of another feeling—or rather lack of any.

There was a time I thought me real,
The heart burned, the nerves could feel.
Now all has hardened in a block,
Symmetric, slick as bogus rock.
Eye finds it satisfactory, but
Something is gone. Who can say what?

Well, it rhymes considerably. And I hope the lady who wrote it gets well. Her statement contains a great truth if you apply it to the publication in which it appears.

The trouble with most of the writers for *The Arlington Quarterly* is that they are posing in writing instead of writing; they are composing out of the social necessity or ambition to be writers rather than out of a compulsion to take hold of some siren truth that haunts them and pin it hip and spine to the desert floor. The reason for their trouble is *not always* that as people they are too phony to do anything but gesture. The world in which they endeavor to survive makes fraudulent demands and punishes anyone who tries to tell or live the truth. Men should be busy, not think. They should say "yes" as a way of life. The stacks of our libraries are filling up with pages that no one wished to write and which, in most cases, are not worth reading. Some of the titles are more boring than the content and most of the content is more boring than the idea, if you can ever get at it. Here is a sentence from "The Fallacy of the Practicality of Liberal Arts Education":

The 'Dark Ages' view that man's proper end was the glorification of God through the perfection of self made acceptable the undeniable fact

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A Window to the South

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that there are many ways to the realization of the potential self, even as there are many individuals seeking perfection — that the liberal training of the capable mind is not a special privilege in any way other than those so schooled have been graced by special abilities.

If you do not immediately understand this sentence, do not despair. It may not be your fault. I worked on it for a long time. I tackled "The Fallacy of the Practicality of Liberal Arts," rested, waited until I felt better, tried again. I found it harder than Medieval Latin. I awoke one morning, believed my mind was clear and tore into the Fallacy again. It came to me at last by extrasensory perception: The Fallacy is to teach anyone who is not "graced by special abilities." The white man who wrote this while waiting for the realization of self and seeking perfection in Georgia may have special abilities but they are not revealed in his exposition of who deserves an education.

The writers are largely from the Old South, a worthy place in many ways, fertile in writers that have given us our best literature. For this reason, the shortcomings of *The Arlington Quarterly* are more intolerable.

MORE READABLE and less tolerable is another piece in the issue just out titled, "Willie's Gall is Divided into Three Parts, a Consideration of *North Towards* [sic] *Home*, by Willie Morris." Here we are not treated to a pale projection of Faulkner, Lawrence Durrell or T. S. Eliot, but to the long, hairy finger of George Corley Wallace. The spirit among the clubmen of New York that writhed at the politics of kinsman Franklin Roosevelt has immigrated into the magnolias by the bayous. There is nothing so detestable as a cousin who has rethought the assumptions of the family.

You may not have read *North Toward Home*. It is the autobiography of Willie Morris, aged 33, in which he describes his childhood and early youth in Mississippi, his plastic years in Texas as editor of the college paper at Austin and editor of *The Texas Observer* and his recent years in New York as editor of *Harper's*. People who live south or west of the Hudson, and I am one of them, are inclined to think that northeast is not the direction of home. Stanley Walker was in New York for a long editorial life and ended up thinking that Mason county, Texas, was home. But these are older people. At thirty, Walker and millions of other Americans on the rise thought New York was home.

In any case, I think Willie Morris has succeeded in making a statement of American experience that reveals and dignifies the present mind of our youth more than any other book, and it seems to me that the present mind of our youth is worth considering. Other reviewers at home and abroad have also liked Morris' book.

Difference of opinion is to be welcomed anywhere it makes sense. The consideration of *North Toward Home* published in *The Arlington Quarterly* differs radically from other reviews, but very

little of it is valid. Its main message is uninformed, untrue, extreme and, I suspect, intended as a political axe rather than for honest examination of the book. Its central theme is that Morris has too much to say about Negroes. This is pressed as some strange obsession. In fact, the writer has so much to say about Negroes in Morris' book that he seems more strangely obsessed than Morris. In the 17 pages of his "consideration" he calls attention 36 times to Morris' remarks on Negroes. The Morris book deals with three areas of our country where Negroes are numerous, but having them mentioned thirty-odd times seems too much for this New Orleans attorney.

The essay draws to a close, *ad hominem*, by accusing Morris of several bad things: He is not a Southerner. He has been "misappropriated by the professional, liberal intelligensia." "He is the frontman, the mouthpiece, for the monotonous and superficial diatribes against the South by way of New York." He himself is guilty of what he calls the "Manhattan Mind, rejecting civility as a substantial quality, void of tolerant and forgiving understanding; without any serious concern with real human beings in real situations and in struggle with themselves and the world; devising phony and momentarily fashionable measures of 'values'." The lawyer goes further. Morris has a personal axe to grind, he overcompensates for having been poor, he studied hard in school not because he loved to learn but because he was on the make.

No one I know would agree with these judgements. Morris is a civilized man. I asked him recently how he reached the top in New York. He thought the question over and said he didn't know. But I believe that perhaps Mississippi and Texas decided they didn't want to listen to talented, sensitive and thoughtful young men long before Willie decided to leave.

BUT LET US leave Willie and his New Orleans critic and take up the larger issue of what gets published in Texas.

Here is a magazine that I encouraged. My name is printed as "advisory editor" without my being asked. A piece I wrote on teaching—a rather mild, benevolent statement that a teacher must love his students to be successful and that he must try to teach his school's administration—was seen in draft, was requested by the editors and while I was out of the country was mailed back with the incredible statement that the editors were not sure who the administration was going to be and they were afraid to publish what they had asked for. Now I pick up the third issue of this bold journey into light and discover on the eve of the election that what had been at worst a hodgepodge of the kind of papers professors read at regional meetings is suddenly a voice for the sicker reactionary phobias.

Either way the message is clear: the colleges are targets for everybody's game but the honest working teachers. □

Troubles on the Left

Dallas, Houston and Killeen

Being a prominent new leftist in Texas is becoming both expensive and dangerous. The forces of law 'n' order are using their ingenuity to find statutes under which to prosecute activists. The following are accounts of some of the more recent arrests:

The office/residence of the Dallas *Notes* has been raided by police twice within the past month.

Stoney Burns, publisher of the Dallas underground newspaper told the *Observer* that approximately fifteen vice squad detectives and US post office inspectors first visited the newspaper office on the night of Oct. 30. The men found three inhabitants, Burns and Mr. and Mrs. Rod Delaney, plus three visitors in the living room. The six were ordered to remain in the downstairs room while the officers, who had a search warrant for pornographic literature, combed the house. "We heard things breaking as they moved from room to room," Burns said. Later he learned that the officers had broken lamps, torn the wiring from the refrigerator, dumped Mrs. Delaney's jewelry onto the floor and stepped on it, and torn up posters and unopened mail, including valuable advertising orders.

The police took Burns, the Delaneys and their guests to the station for questioning on charges of possession of pornographic material and suspicion of possession of narcotics. They carried off a truckload of printed material, including old copies of the *Notes* and the newspaper's library of books, magazines and exchange papers, some bills, petty cash, \$100 in checks which were to be deposited the next day, posters of Mao Tse Tung, Alan Ginsberg and Malcom X, the *Notes'* subscription list, as well as all of the newspaper's office equipment, pencils, paper, typewriters and the like.

Police abandoned the narcotics charge after they discovered that the confiscated pills were for birth control and Mrs. Delaney's asthma medicine. But Burns and the Delaneys were charged with possession of pornography (a misdemeanor on first offense, which, under state law, can bring punishment up to \$1,000 and a year in jail). Burns said that they had no pornography in the house. He guessed that the charge pertains to the *Notes* issue of Oct. 16 which contained several nude pictures accompanying a story on "skin flicks." The pictures are less reveal-

ing than most of those in *Playboy*.

Then, on Nov. 15 the police struck again, arresting five persons, Burns, a typist, paste-up artist, a photographer and a reporter. "The cops broke down the back door and started searching the house. We were never shown a search warrant until we were in the police car and on the way down to jail," Burns said. The warrant was for "dangerous and illegal drugs and narcotics, to wit: marijuana".

The police found no drugs, but they seized all the articles, advertising, and pasted-up pages for a *Notes* issue about to go to press, a desk, a drafting table, a typewriter stand, a rented typewriter, production equipment, the single remaining filing cabinet, more political posters and more undeposited checks.

The five staff members were booked on "investigation of possession of obscene pictures."

The young leftists are on bail awaiting trial, which Dallas authorities say may be several months away. Although the police still have the *Notes*' equipment, Burns is determined to continue publishing on schedule. An advertising agency offered the use of an office and equipment for the production of one issue of the *Notes*. Burns said he may try to get an injunction to force the police to return their equipment. He also has discussed with lawyers the possibility of filing counter charges in the name of the newspaper for destruction of property, destruction of US mail and unreasonable search and seizure.

Burns added that the telephone company has disconnected the office 'phone on the grounds that it is being used for illegal purposes.

A few days before *Notes* office was raided the first time, Bartee and Margie Haile, SDS regional travelers, and eight other persons were arrested in Denton for passing out a special election issue of *Notes* at a football game. They were charged with selling pornography. Burns said the only possibly offensive word in the newspaper was "shit."

On Oct. 31, Terry Ardrey, a worker for the New York Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee, got off a bus in College Station and walked over to a telephone booth at a 7-11 store to make a call. Local police arrested and charged him with carrying a pistol on the premises of a store selling alcoholic beverages, a felony with a two-year prison sentence.

During a gathering at the UT law school a few days before his arrest, Ardrey was asked why there were not more SNCC workers in Texas. Because, Ardrey answered prophetically, "Texas is tough."

Lee Otis Johnson, a former SNCC worker in Houston, is now serving a 30-year sentence for allegedly giving a marijuana cigarette to an undercover police officer.

In reaction to Johnson's incredibly stiff sentence, the outgoing Harris county grand jury recommended reducing to a misdemeanor possession of marijuana as a first offense. The jury contrasted Johnson's sentence with the probation of a murder conviction, saying the two decisions "surely are not justice according to our national ideals, which proclaim human life as of the greatest value."

PFC Bruce L. Peterson, editor of the "Fatigue Press," a mimeographed underground newspaper at Fort Hood, was found guilty of two counts of possession of marijuana by a general court-martial Nov. 5. He was sentenced to eight years at hard labor and given a dishonorable discharge.

Peterson, whose nickname is "Gypsy," previously served nine months in Leavenworth prison on a marijuana conviction. He has been involved in anti-military activities at Fort Hood and he frequented the Oleo Strut, a Killeen coffee house run by leftists.

The soldier and four other persons were arrested by Killeen police Aug. 23 for possession of marijuana. A small sack of marijuana allegedly was found in the borrowed car that Gypsy was driving. Later the charges were dropped for all except Peterson.

On Sept. 7 Killeen police arrested Peterson again on suspicion of possession of marijuana. The officers did not find anything on him, but they took a sample of lint from his coat pocket, sent it away for analysis, and reported that it contained traces of marijuana. The combined total of grass from both arrests was not enough to make a cigarette, so the police did not have a case against him. (Under the De Minibus precedent, pearson must

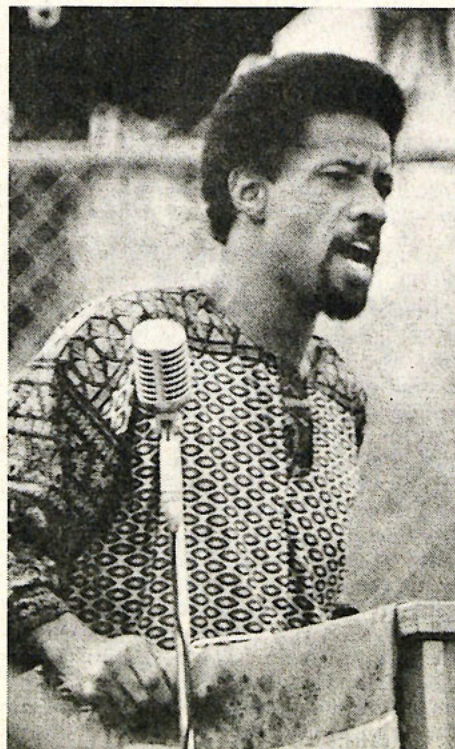


Photo by Richard Pipes
Lee Otis Johnson

possess enough dope to get high on in order to be convicted in a civilian court.) The Killeen police handed their evidence over to army authorities, and Peterson was court martialed.

During the proceedings at Fort Hood, the prosecution did not produce any marijuana as evidence. A witness from Waco testified that he had analyzed the evidence and that it was indeed marijuana. But, he added, the amount had been so small that it was destroyed during the analysis.

Tom Cleaver, a member of the Oleo Strut staff, wrote in the Nov. 15 *Los Angeles Free Press* that the two counts on which Petersen was convicted were "editing the 'Fatigue Press'—which tells it like it is at Fort Hood—and being politically active with the Oleo Strut . . . The Conviction," Cleaver insisted, "was a phoney from start to finish."

Joshua Gould, proprietor of the Oleo Strut, is out on bail on a charge of marijuana possession, but he does not expect the Killeen grand jury to indict him. The police have only a few seeds and grains of the weed which they allege to have found in Gould's car.

The unconventional as well as the political are having trouble in Houston. Dr. Clark Read, president of the Houston chapter of the American Civil Liberties Union, says he receives calls daily from teenagers who have been taken into custody for vagrancy or loitering in the Allen's Landing area. The "busts" as the younger generation call their arrests usually occur outside the hippie shops and psychedelic dance halls that mingle with cheap clothing stores and bars in a seedy section of downtown Houston.

Read said he has seen police officers enter Tony's (a cafe on Main across the street from the Continental Houston Hotel) and ask youngsters to come outside. Once on the street, they are arrested for loitering or vagrancy.

A young man named Mickey told the *Observer* he was escorted outside of Tony's and arrested for vagrancy after he gave the peace sign, two fingers held in a V, to a pair of policemen. A 17-year-old, sitting outside the "Green Groaty," a psychedelic emporium behind the Continental Houston, said he was busted for vagrancy while he was carrying \$600.

A young couple playing pool in the decrepit building which houses the Groaty said they both had been "hassled" by the police because they visit the Allen's Landing area regularly. A young woman friend, they said, was dressed in bluejeans and one of her father's shirts when she was taken to the police station on suspicion of being a runaway. After she proved that she lived in Houston with her family, the police charged her with impersonating the opposite sex, a misdemeanor in the city.

Read says he receives calls from both transients and what he calls the "plastic hippies," the middle class high school kids who affect outlandish garb only on weekends. "They [the police] seem to

make the arrests on a random basis. It's a form of terrorism in a way, but its basically an economic thing," Read explained.

On behalf of the ACLU, Read appeared before the Houston city council last spring to complain about the arrests. One councilman dismissed the police action as a way of "keeping the trash off the streets." Read also visited the Market Square Association, a group of men with business interests in the night spot area a few blocks from Allen's Landing. Read says he was told by the manager of the Continental Houston, the only new building in the area, "We're going to do every-

thing we can to run young people out of this end of the city. Any time I see young people down there, I'm going to call the police."

Actually, the police don't have to be urged to make arrests. Youngsters who regularly visit the Allen's Landing hangouts say that the cause of their troubles are the two policemen who patrol the area: J. B. Haney, not so affectionately known as "Wart Hog," and his partner, E. J. Arredondo, "Bean Man." Most of the kids interviewed by the *Observer* do not think the Market Square proprietors are behind their arrests. They believe that Wart Hog and Bean Man simply like to "hassle" hippies.

The police, of course, keep the area under close surveillance for runaways and drug pushers.

Statistics on the number of arrests made and kinds of charges in the area are not available. The majority of arrests, however, seem to be for vagrancy and loitering. Few young people taken in on these charges actually go to court, for many have money in their pockets, a home and family in a respectable suburb or a regular job. But being taken to the police station is, at the least, embarrassing and bothersome, and that seems to be what the forces of law and order have in mind. K.N.

The Case Against John White

Austin

There presently is a pause in the cross-fire which ensued when Texas Republican leaders accused Agriculture Cmsr. John White of soliciting campaign contributions from his employees. The hiatus has occurred while the Travis county grand jury considers the allegations.

John M. Stokes, executive director of the Texas GOP, convened a Capitol press conference on Nov. 13 to make the charge. White immediately called his own press conference to deny any wrongdoing. He since has told the *Observer* he will remain publicly silent on the matter until the grand jury completes its deliberations.

Republicans almost timed their allegation to precede, by just a few days, the general elections. A Capitol press conference had been scheduled for Oct. 31, then was called off 15 minutes beforehand. No explanation for the cancellation was given at the time, and no word was circulated about what the subject of the conference was to have been, though Capitol reporters and others understood it was to have involved a "scandal" in a state agency. State Republican Chairman Peter O'Donnell is represented as having been the man who cancelled the press conference, being worried, it is said, that it would only backfire on the campaign for Richard Nixon (in that conservative Democrats might become resentful of Nixon if Texas Republicans began making charges of corruption against a branch of the Connally government). Also, O'Donnell is said to have thought the charge against White wouldn't do much good for the statewide GOP candidates. Probably O'Donnell's primary concern was for the Nixon campaign, however, as the *Observer* has discussed in previous recent issues. Stokes said later that the Oct. 31 press conference had been cancelled because he and O'Donnell wanted to check their sources "and make sure." Also, one of a group of four present and former department employees, who, the GOP says, will corroborate Burnett's story, wanted that the allegations not be made before the elections. Also, Stokes

said he didn't want the matter to "get buried in the other news of the election."

Two weeks later the Republicans were ready with their allegations. Stokes introduced the sworn statement of a former Agriculture Dept. employee, Wardie Lee Burnett, 24, now of Cleburne, who worked two years running a printing machine in the state agency. The substance of Burnett's contention is stated in the following, taken from a deposition he gave in Cleburne on Oct. 16, the questions being asked by Cliff Gunter, a Ft. Worth attorney.

Q. . . . Why did you request a travel voucher last May?

A. Get the money back I give 'em.

Q. What money that you gave 'em?

A. For, well, for campaign expenses.

Q. In other words, while you were with the Dept. of Agriculture, somebody told you to kick in some money for John White's campaign. Is that correct?

A. \$75, right.

Q. Who told you to give the money?

A. James Triplett (Burnett's immediate superior).

Burnett goes on to say he was told to wait six weeks before filing his travel voucher, not filing at once because that would be too near the time the money was allegedly contributed. Burnett says the voucher—the only one he ever filed with the department—is for \$72, three dollars less than his alleged contribution. It showed two trips, as best he could remember, one to Bryan and one to Houston. He says he never travelled on department business while working under White.

White at his press conference said that records show that Burnett's only expense account filed with the department resulted in his being paid \$66.60 for round trips from Austin to Ennis and Houston in early February. White said the trips were to pick up some seed tags in Ennis and Addressograph machine ribbons in Houston. He said such trips were not rare in the department. State bookkeepers back up White, saying the March voucher of \$66.60 is the only one they can find for Burnett.

White denied that travel vouchers are used in any improper way in his department. He noted that two other employees have been suspended recently because

they couldn't substantiate items in travel expenses claimed. The employees were made to reimburse the state for the money they received for the questioned costs, White said.

BURNETT WAS vague in his deposition as to how he came to understand he would be fired if he didn't make his alleged contributions. He said he has never seen White and does not know that any money collected from department employees actually went to White for campaign expenses. He was, Burnett said, told the money would go to White for campaign expenses and that the employees would kick in according to the salary they were paid. The question of Burnett's understanding of the "pressure" to contribute to White's campaign is raised in these two passages of his deposition:

Q. Did you want to give the money?

A. No.

Q. Did you give the money of your own free will?

A. After the pressure was applied, yeah.

Q. Do you feel that if you hadn't contributed the money you would have been fired?

A. That was the impression I got, yes. . . .

Q. What type of pressure, Wardie?

A. Well, didn't come right out and say it, but, you know, you go out the front door if you don't come across with the money.

Q. In other words, everybody in your department was under the impression that if they didn't contribute their allotted share they would lose their job in one form or another?

A. Yes, sir.

Another question that arises from the Burnett deposition is the timing of his alleged contribution. Burnett says early in his statement his memory is vague on this point but guesses it was in May. Asked later by his interrogator, Gunter, if it was given in May, Burnett answers, "Sometime in May; yes, sir; when all this election stuff came up." Gunter next asks, "That's about the time the candidates have to file for election. Is that correct?" Burnett replies yes. But the filing deadline for candidates last spring was Feb. 5. And Burnett's travel voucher, produced by White at his press conference,

was dated March 4 for travel the previous month. If Burnett waited six weeks after making his contribution as he said, to file his voucher, that would have meant he gave the \$75 to Triplett either in February or April. White, who was unopposed for renomination to a position he had won nine times before, had very low campaign expenses this spring. His only expense in the primary was his \$1,000 filing fee, due by early February. Facing token Republican opposition, E. G. Schuhardt, in the fall, White won easily without campaigning. He says his expenses will come to about \$3,000.

Burnett says the impression was general among departmental employees that money he says they were being asked to contribute was going to be used in White's political campaign this year. "Everybody knew where it was going, but nobody could prove it," he says in his statement.

He goes on to say he was promised no compensation for making his deposition. Asked his motivation for so doing, he replies, "Well, it's just that it don't seem right that he's using the taxpayers' money to run his campaign on, plus the fact that he put pressure on us to—that's what rubs me the wrong way—put pressure on us to make us give it."

BURNETT WAS not present when Republican leader Stokes held his press conference in Austin; in fact, he seemed surprised, worried and annoyed at the use that had been made of his statement.

Contacted by newsmen, Burnett said he did make a deposition but didn't know it was going to be made public. Would he be available to testify before the grand jury? "No, sir, I'm not going before any grand jury. They [Republican investigators] told me they only wanted that statement for campaign purposes. That's the only reason I gave them their statement. I sure don't like this." He says he was assured by Republican workers that he would not be liable to prosecution for his role in the alleged voucher swindle.

Stokes indicated indirectly at his press conference he believes Burnett may be in line for prosecution; the Republican leader said one of the reasons he believes Burnett's story is his "willingness to admit complicity in a scheme of finance the election campaigns of White with state funds." He said Burnett has "put his neck on the line" by his admission. Stokes said that Burnett had volunteered his alleged information, coming to Republican headquarters in Austin in October on advice of an acquaintance. Stokes added that other persons had come in from "different sources unconnected with each other," and "an extensive investigation followed."

White charged that Republicans had interfered with the work in his department with their investigation. "From these hundreds of contacts they have come in with this pitiful little document

that is mainly conjecture," he said. "These charges are obviously an attempt to cover up the total flop that he [Stokes] made as a campaign organizer and his dismal failure to influence the election in Texas." He said he didn't blame Schuhardt for the attack.

White said he supposes that political contributions probably are made by his employees in behalf of his campaign. But he denied that he has accepted any such contributions directly; they would have been given, he said, to campaign committees. This, White said, is legal. He added that he has never checked to see which employees contribute to his campaigns and which have not. Most of them do not, he said. Those who do so voluntarily. He said he believes it understandable that employees of state agencies might want to contribute to the campaigns of their department heads, as they

Political Intelligence

O'Donnell May Face Republican Challenge

Republican State Chairman Peter O'Donnell faces a challenge in his leadership Dec. 8 at a closed meeting of the State Republican Executive Committee in Austin, but he is expected to survive. It is doubtful that anti-O'Donnell forces have the votes at this time to topple him from his chairmanship. However, O'Donnell is expected to resign as chairman soon and will become the new GOP national committeeman from Texas, succeeding Albert Bel Fay of Houston.

Fay, according to reliable GOP sources in Houston, has passed word to President-Elect Richard M. Nixon that he would like to be the next secretary of interior. Fay, a diligent worker for Nixon in Texas and a heavy contributor to the national campaign coffers, sent the word through Sen. John G. Tower, who is in charge of dispensing patronage in the state. Sources said it is doubtful Fay will succeed Stuart Udall as the secretary of interior, but Fay may be in line for a top post in interior. The chief reason cited for this is an apparent conflict of interest. Fay, among his other business connections, is associated with the oil industry, and he cannot be viewed as unbiased when dealing with disposal of the billions of dollars in shale oil deposits now under control of the department of the interior.

✓ O'Donnell challenged Fay last spring for re-election as national committeeman in a move that threatened to split the party just before the state convention. Top GOP leaders, including Tower,

realize there likely would be a large turnover among personnel if their boss is defeated.

Triplett, Burnett's former supervisor was asked by a reporter if it had been part of his job to ask employees for voluntary campaign contributions. "Not necessarily," he replied, declining to comment further, saying he'd tell the grand jury whatever they want to know.

Republicans have added a few dollops to their original charge against White and Triplett. Stokes told the *San Antonio Express* that "This thing may snowball," that he has learned "a few other things" since the allegations against White were made. Details have not been forthcoming, but United Press International has reported that Republicans believe their investigation of the White matter has led to the discovery of "several phony names" on the state payroll. G.O.

hurried to Houston where they hammered out a compromise whereby O'Donnell would succeed Fay some time after the election. If terms of that agreement hold, O'Donnell, whose terms as state GOP chairman have found disfavor even among his own colleagues, will move up to the national committee post.

✓ It is reported also that Tower now favors Paul Eggers, the unsuccessful GOP gubernatorial nominee, as the new state chairman, but there is no indication Eggers will accept. Others mentioned as possible O'Donnell successors include Jack Cox of Austin, former state chairman who broke with the Tower-O'Donnell establishment at the GOP National Convention and backed California Gov. Ronald Reagan for the nomination, and Jack Mabee of Odessa, another Reaganite.

Another message Tower carried to Nixon recently was one saying Peder Mondsen of Houston would like to be U.S. ambassador to Norway. Mondsen, now a U.S. citizen, is a native of Norway and is a former school chum of King Olaf VI. He also is the son-in-law of Albert Bel Fay.

✓ According to *Newsweek*, Sen. Strom Thurmond, Richard Nixon's key Dixie campaigner, recommended hawkish Sen. Tower as secretary of defense. "Diplomatically," *Newsweek* recounted, "Nixon replied the idea sounded good to him but added that Tower's appointment would mean the loss of a GOP seat in the senate."

Judgeship for RY?

✓ Rumors of an impending federal judgeship for Sen. Ralph Yarborough are increasing as the number of days remaining in the Democratic administration of Lyndon B. Johnson decrease. And the number of denials of the rumor — one of them coming from the senator himself — are just as strong and just as numerous.

✓ The senator generally is credited with saving Texas for the Democrats, and, as a result, Johnson is, to a degree, indebted to him. It is reported the president said before the election he did not care if the Democrats lost the nation as long as they carried Texas, and Ralph Yarborough's liberal forces did the job, virtually without help from Gov. John B. Connally's conservatives. Yarborough's reward will be the offer of appointment as a federal district judge before Jan. 20, sources say.

✓ The sources say the senator, who now is 66, realizes he faces probably the toughest political fight of his life in 1970 when he is up for re-election. Whether the senator, at the age of 68, will want to engage in that sort of fight remains to be seen, say the sources. Those who do not accept the idea of an offer of a judgeship for Ralph Yarborough say the scrappy politician has never ducked a good fight and that he has much to lose by not staying in the senate.

✓ It is interesting that those talking most about Yarborough accepting the judgeship, provided it indeed is offered, are Republicans, and those discounting it are Democrats (mostly liberals).

✓ But what cannot be overlooked here are the motives of Lyndon B. Johnson. If he does decide to reward RY's service with the offer of a judgeship and it is accepted, Johnson will clear the way to reward Connally simultaneously. In all likelihood, after Yarborough's resignation to accept the post, Connally would arrange to have himself appointed as successor immediately (or he will have to call a special election within five days to be held within 60 to 90 days). Having the special election would leave the way open for a Republican challenge as well as other challenges from within Democratic ranks.

✓ It is thought generally that Lt. Gov. Preston Smith, who would ascend to the governorship earlier than expected, would agree to appoint Connally as Yarborough's successor if for no other reason than to thwart Barnes' designs for higher office. There is no love lost between Smith and Barnes, who is reported widely to be using the lieutenant governorship as a stepping stone for other offices and has no intention of remaining in state government as long as has Smith.

Not only would Johnson be rewarding Yarborough with a soft lifetime appointment and be rewarding Connally, he effectively would remove Yarborough as leader of the opposition forces that are making increased gains in Texas Demo-

cratic circles at a time when Lyndon Baines Johnson is coming home to run things again.

✓ A reliable source on Hubert Humphrey's campaign staff says that the appearance of Sen. Ralph Yarborough and Gov. John Connally on the same platform during HHH's Texas tour was the result of steady telephone calls and negotiations by Laurence O'Brien. O'Brien reasoned with both the senator and the governor, but it was Gov. Connally who had to be reasoned with the most.

Brutality Charges

✓ Charges of mistreatment of prisoners have been cropping up like crab grass in the daily press. A US district judge has ordered a federal investigation into charges of brutality in the Galveston county jail. The order was made on the basis of testimony of two New York youths who said they were struck by a jail trusty as they awaited transfer back to their home state.

✓ Forty inmates of the Nueces county jail held a week-long hunger strike earlier this month reportedly in sympathy for five prisoners who were put on a bread and water diet for complaining about jail food, cleanliness and cockroaches in the cells. A sheriff's department spokesman claimed the harsh diet was ordered because the five had been bullying other inmates.

✓ Robert Edward Akridge, told a Houston district judge recently that Newton county officers harrassed and beat him until he falsely confessed he was hired to slay Dr. Robert Pendleton. Akridge claims the officers kned him in the stomach and genitals, kicked him in the knees, stepped on his toes, used a judo chop on him and threatened to take him into some woods and shoot him earlier this month, reportedly in sympathy unless he confessed. Akridge was given the death penalty after a Houston jury found him guilty as charged.

✓ During his campaign for governor, GOP candidate Paul Eggers said as governor he would investigate reports of brutal mistreatment of youngsters at the Gatesville school for boys. He was referring to a \$75,000 damage suit filed in a Houston court alleging a Houston youth, Edward Kellar, Jr., was beaten "without just cause or provocation." Eggers said testimony in the case indicated Kellar spent 46 days in a Galveston hospital after the beating.

Schlumberger Rebuked

✓ The Texas Supreme Court has dismissed a \$7 million damage claim against Schlumberger Well Surveying Corp. of Houston for allegedly conspiring in the drilling of slanted oil wells in East Texas. But the court criticized the prominent well servicing company, observing that the company knew four wells it logged for the plaintiff, Nortex Oil and Gas Corp. of Dallas, were deviated be-

cause of the length of the bore hole.

"When the official investigation of deviated wells in East Texas began, Schlumberger advised its employees to have poor memories," the opinion stated. "It also destroyed a valuable library of logs more than two years old which would have shown the depth of many East Texas wells. . . . The evidence in the record leaves little doubt that Nortex was the victim of a fraud perpetrated on it by the sellers of the leasehold estates," the court said. "We nevertheless conclude that it [the evidence] is not legally sufficient to raise a fact issue that Schlumberger was a conspirator."

✓ Dallas has appointed a Negro insurance executive, George Allen, to fill the new South Dallas-South Oak Cliff seat on the city council. Allen, who ran unsuccessfully for the council in 1963 and 1965, was nominated by a Negro group. The city's other new councilman is Henry Stuart, president of Addison Airport.

✓ The Houston city council outraged Republicans, Negroes, Mexican-Americans and white liberals by appointing Dr. Albert D. Love, a Democrat with no governmental or political experience, to the council. Love will replace Republican Councilman Bill Elliott who was elected to the Harris county commissioners court.

The Houston council met in an unannounced, closed-door session to choose Love. Mayor Louie Welch admitted the meeting was held so as to head off controversy and relieve pressure on the council. The city has never had a black or *latino* council member.

✓ The Republicans are organizing a committee to find GOP candidates for the city council election next year. (Love says he will not run.) A number of important building contractors, who insist upon remaining anonymous because they have valuable city contracts, are backing the GOP committee.

✓ Houston Mayor Louie Welch, speaking before the Texas Municipal league, urged Texas cities to abandon dual standards in the services and facilities provided in rich and poor areas. He said that within two years Houston will have eliminated its own double standard in paved streets, sewer and water services.

Highway Quandry

✓ Texas Highway Commission Chairman Jack Kultgen and Texas Cong. Jim Wright, J. J. Pickle and George Mahon are among the strongest opponents of proposed guidelines which would give the federal transportation department greater control over highway location and design. The proposed guidelines would require two public hearings on any highway project involving any federal funds. Protests made at the hearings would be referred to the federal highway administration.

Kultgen charged recently that the guidelines are an attempt by the trans-

portation department to slow the rate of highway construction and divert money from the highway trust fund to other modes of mass transportation, particularly in ghettos and eastern urban areas. "The effect of these regulations is to put us almost entirely under a federal cloak and umbrella," Kultgen said. Among the supporters of the proposed regulations are Interior Secretary Stuart Udall, conservationist and preservationist groups and many landscape and environmental architects.

The Smith Staff

✓ Jerry Hall, chief of the capitol bureau of Newspapers, Inc., the chain that owns the *Austin American-Statesman*, will be Preston Smith's press secretary. Hall, who worked a number of years for Smith's hometown paper, the *Lubbock Avalanche-Journal*, is a political moderate.

✓ Kyle Thompson, Gov. Connally's present press secretary, will take a post with the Water Quality Board when Connally leaves office.

✓ Capitol reporters speculate that other top Smith aides may be Harold Dudley, former manager of the Wichita Falls Chamber of Commerce who ran Smith's state campaign headquarters; Bob Bullock of Hillsboro, an attorney and former legislator who worked in Smith's campaign; and Larry Teaver of Lubbock, a homebuilder who traveled with Smith during the campaign.

✓ Newsman Jon Ford has printed a report that Gov.-elect Smith hopes Gov. Connally will go ahead and reappoint Frank Erwin to the UT board of regents so that he (Smith) won't have to take the blame for the controversial deed.

✓ State Sen. V. E. (Red) Berry of San Antonio, a perennial supporter of liquor by the drink and parimutuel betting, was picked up in a gambling raid on a plush Castle Hills establishment earlier this month. Berry allowed as how he was just there to visit an old friend.

✓ Sen. Yarborough said in a recent Washington press conference that the senate labor and public welfare committee, which he may head next session, will push an industrial health and safety bill. "The absence of state and national safety laws is a national scandal," he said.

✓ In an unprecedented show of solidarity, the Texas AFL-CIO, the Texas Manufacturers Association and the Texas Trial Lawyers Association have gotten together to propose a new workmen's compensation law that would raise benefits from \$35 to \$49 a week. Usually during legislative sessions, the labor group and the manufacturers group offer different bills, and often the legislators have voted both down.

✓ AFL-CIO Secretary-Treasurer Roy Evans said, "We're not happy with the increase, but most people would agree that a 40% hike is substantial."

✓ The proposed bill calls for a flat 25% lawyer's fee in workmen's comp cases, rather than the present 15% if it is disposed before the industrial accident commission and 30% if it is appealed to the courts.

Liberal Carl Parker of Port Arthur and conservative Bud Sherman of Fort Worth will sponsor the bill in the House. Liberal Barbara Jordan of Houston and conservative Jack Hightower will carry the bill in the senate.

Even with three major interest groups supporting the bill, it probably will face strong opposition in the legislature, mainly because of a provision which brings all public employees under uniform workmen's compensation provisions.

A Real Estate Note

Houston

The plight of political headquarters following an election is not a cheerful one. They usually return to being for-rent stores and/or buildings in downtown areas. Consider the lot of the once-coveted abandoned automobile dealership on a key downtown street here.

Early in the 1968 campaign, before they became discouraged with their national ticket, Democrats in Harris county eyed it for their headquarters and even appointed a committee to obtain a lease on it. But when apathy and acute foot-dragging set in, the Nixon-Agnew ticket moved in immediately and went into business.

Now that the election is over and the Republicans gone, the building will have a new tenant: Big City Newsstand. The firm is one of Houston's biggest suppliers of newspapers and magazines, including a vast assortment of girlie magazines, nudist publications and films.

✓ Sen. Tower has sent letters to all Republican senators asking for support in his bid for the chairmanship of the GOP senatorial campaign committee. The post is now held by Sen. George Murphy of California. Tower campaigned for the position in 1966, but he met opposition from Sen. Hugh Scott of Pennsylvania and Murphy was named as a compromise choice.

✓ Both Texas senators, Tower and Yarborough, were scheduled to be in South Vietnam during the latter part of November, Tower to gauge the military effect of the bombing halt, Yarborough to study military and civilian spending in Vietnam and Southeast Asia.

✎ George Wallace's American party, which polled more than 600,000 Texas votes in the Nov. 5 election, is opening a new state office in San Antonio. The party plans to run candidates for state, county and local offices in 1970, State Chairman Bard Logan says.

✓ A West Texas State University student, Joe Lackey, has resigned his part-time job as a campus cop, charging

that the security department and the student financial aids department are suppressing political and social dissent.

Lackey wrote in a letter to the campus newspaper revealing that the security department has a file on all students known to advocate such controversial actions as writing in Eugene McCarthy for president. As a security officer, Lackey said he was ordered to make a list of license numbers on campus having McCarthy-Lindsay bumper stickers. The student added that the school loan department threatens to eliminate financial aid to students who belong to the SDS, the fourth party, those who try to organize political clubs and those who participate in inter-racial dating.

School officials denied all charges.

Hunger, Si

✓ Texas Welfare Commissioner Burton G. Hackney, the man who last spring said he doubted that there is any starvation in Texas, conducted a hunger survey last summer at the request of a congressional committee. The survey, which will not be released, shows that more than 350,000 Texans are "hungry or starving."

✓ Ed Polk, attorney for the federally-funded Dallas legal services project, has joined lawyers in 25 other states in an attempt to force the department of agriculture to provide food assistance in 500 counties doing without. Polk claims that at least 20% of the nation's starving counties are in Texas. On behalf of eight plaintiffs from different Texas counties, he is suing Agriculture Secretary Orville Freeman, Welfare Commissioner Hackney, William Herdon, director of the state's commodity distribution program, and S. R. Smith, federal consumer marketing director.

The legal action is being coordinated by the center of social welfare policy at Columbia University which reasons that starvation is illegal in the United States.

✓ Chalk up a victory for Indian Power. A member of the Alabama-Coushatta tribe will replace paleface Walter W. Broemer as reservation superintendent next summer (*Obs.*, Aug. 9), Indian Commissioner Dempsey Henley has announced.

In September, Chief B. Cooper Syles-tine and 68 tribesmen sent a petition to Henley asking for Broemer's resignation. The petition said in part, "We disagree with his (Broemer's) private views and no longer feel his actions have our confidence. We have been under this kind of leadership for 10 years and we are ready to choose our own leader and work out our own plans."

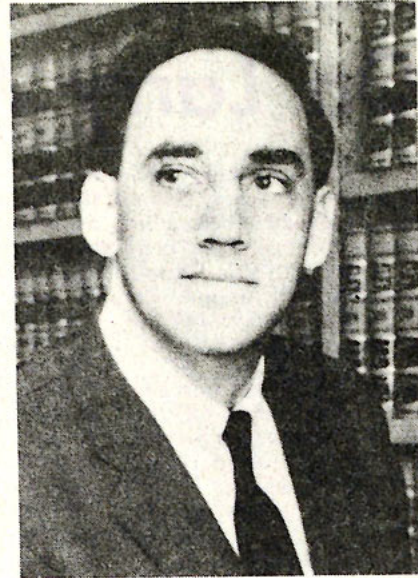
The tribe will not actually choose its own leader. The three Indian commissioners, who are appointed by the governor, will fill the vacancy with the advice of the tribal council.

William M. Kunstler

Renowned Civil Rights Attorney

*Will Appear in Texas Dec 8-12
on behalf of the*

TEXAS CIVIL LIBERTIES UNION



As an attorney he has represented some famous clients:

- * Dr. Martin Luther King
- * The Southern Christian Leadership Conference
- * The Mississippi Freedom Democrats
- * Stokely Carmichael
- * The Congress of Racial Equality
- * The Ghandi Society for Human Rights
- * H. Rap Brown
- * The Black Panthers

Mr. Kunstler is also special counsel to the Legal Defense and Education Fund, Inc.; a cooperating attorney for the ACLU; and he is active in the Law Center for Constitutional Rights . . . He has never received fees for any of his civil rights cases. Of his work, he has said: "This is what I've staked my life on—this feeling that I have a skill, I have a profession that can be used in some way for social advancement, and I'm going to use it as I see fit."

*The public is invited to hear Mr. Kunstler's talks in the following cities: **

DALLAS-FT. WORTH-DENTON

Dec. 8 7:30 p.m.
The Cibola Inn
1601 East Division
Arlington, Texas

"A Fair Trial and the Free Press"

EL PASO

Dec. 9 8:45 p.m.
Cocktails at 6 p.m.
Rodeway Inn
6201 Gateway West

"Free Speech in the Academic Community"

SAN ANTONIO

Dec. 10 8:30 p.m.
El Tropicano
110 Lexington

"Repression: An American Heritage"

AUSTIN

Dec. 11 8 p.m.
The Unitarian Church
4700 Grover (Coffee hour to follow)

"The Lawlessness of the Jury in Conscience Cases"

HOUSTON

Dec. 12 8 p.m.
Elks Lodge Hall
820 Crawford

"Rap Brown-Patrick Henry: One and the Same?"

* TCLU Chapters in these cities are planning dinners and/or cocktail parties to precede the speeches. For more information as to time and place, contact the following:

Dallas-Fort Worth: Mrs. Mary Martin, Arlington, AC 817 261-8821
El Paso: Dr. Melvin Straus, AC 915 553-8361
San Antonio: Mrs. Nancy Mottweiler, AC 512 344-7861
Austin: Mrs. Helen Spear, HO 5-1805
Houston: Mrs. Jane Gross, AC 713 NA 2-2900

On Larry McMurry's Essays

I can hear his *voice* so well: Larry McMurry's, in his essays on Texas. Some of them have been published before in periodicals, but not the two most controversial ones, and Bill Wittliff's Encino Press is to be congratulated for publishing them (*In a Narrow Grave*, 1968, \$7.50) in a plain, handsome volume.

In his novels McMurry has already declared his own independence of the matriarchs and schoolmarms who presided, in their lateral ways, over personal relations and what they deemed to be culture in Texas during the last century and the first half of this one. Now, in his sketch, "Eros in Archer County," McMurry discusses directly the way it was vs. the way it was supposed to be as he grew up.

He uses all "those words," kind of getting it out of his provincial reader's system, helping to purge the belated present

10

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of the atrophied past. Despite the national climate, this took courage in Texas, but not any more than ought to have been expected of serious writers long ago. We catch up slow in Texas, but we do catch up.

In another essay McMurry criticizes Roy Bedicheck, Walter Webb and J. Frank Dobie as writers. All three were inhibited creatures of the matriarchal Texas frontier culture, taking their freedom where they thought they could get away with it, and McMurry states this fact. He is especially good while excoriating the cult of validation-by-association that has sprung up around the graves of "the triumvirate."

Although it is a harsh stricture, I agree with McMurry that Dobie was a hasty and impatient writer; some things Dobie himself conceded suggest that he knew that only occasionally did he write as well as he might have. It is also true that Webb was blind, in his *The Texas*

Rangers, to the Rangers' racism, torturing and callous brutality on the frontier. Late in his life Webb, too, knew he had been blind, judging from a vaguely worded forenote in the book as recently republished by the University of Texas Press. I do not agree with McMurry that Bedicheck was the best of the three. Bedicheck's books were the works of a broadly read and wittily, tolerantly humane man; he was perhaps the most generally cultivated man of the three. But I think Webb was the best writer, and at his best a very good one, indeed. McMurry insufficiently appreciates Webb's *The Great Plains* and Webb's occasional lyricism, as it occurs, for instance, in that book and in his essay on the desert in *Harper's*.

Of course, I am not a judge of such matters. McMurry is on very solid ground, acidly rebuking the region's book reviewers for failing to give these men close, earnest criticism while they were working. There is no insult worse than flattery, no compliment better than just criticism. I think, though, that McMurry takes a little too much satisfaction in scoring this point; his criticism itself, based, as he records, on reading the 29 books these men wrote, is sketchy, arch, and therefore anticlimactic. As a critic he is too interested in the evaluative category.

The most of this volume is McMurry's essays on his own being in Texas — in Houston, on a car tour of the state, on the scene as his first novel was made a movie, in Austin with Bill Brammer, in the Astrodome, in his search for himself among his ancestors and family. At one point he wonders who he is writing all this for—the Texas intellectuals, maybe? The answer, I think, is that he is gravely and affectionately interested in the place where he lives, that he not only wants his novels to be fully worthy of themselves. No one who is serious about Texas and what one of its best writers has to say about it should fail to read *In a Narrow Grave*.

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Finances

We have been having some economic difficulties at the *Observer* the last year. Costs of nearly everything entailed in putting out the paper have gone up. Our circulation has continued its slow, steady increase, but the gap between income and costs has persisted, until we are now laboring under a \$3,000 deficit (our annual income and outgo is in the \$50,000 range). Last April we began absorbing the penny city sales taxes; since Oct. 1, we have been absorbing the three-cent state sales tax which then became applicable to *Observer* subscriptions. This item alone is about \$2,000 on an annual basis.

A deficit is a deficit; you have to do something about it. Cliff Olofson has launched many-faceted subscription drives in Houston and Austin. Will people who will help to do this in the other major cities please write him? I have signed a note so we can launch a street-corner newsrack *Observer*-exposure pilot program in the cities. These are strange and uneven times in the national life, yet our sense of the strong support of our subscribers is steady.

By next April we are going to be out of the woods or deeper in them, and there

are no money trees in there. We ask that you give special consideration this year to giving the *Observer* for Christmas. This helps a lot. We will be in need of volunteers to maintain the street-

Y'All Come

The *Observer* is holding its First Annual New Subscriber Beer, Bull and Ballad Party Saturday, Dec. 7, at 8 p.m. at the home of Roger and Nora Shattuck, 1607 Sharon Lane, Austin. Individuals or couples with the price of one new (\$6) subscription are invited, indeed encouraged, to attend.

A similar event may be held in Houston early next year. Persons interested in organizing other subscription drive parties in their areas should contact the *Observer*.

corner racks, on a modest commission basis. In connection with our recent mailing to 16,000 Texas college professors, would professors now subscribing please encourage their colleagues to subscribe? The *Observer's* growth has always been the consequence of this very personal

kind of advocacy. Remember that although you can save 20% buying books as an *Observer* book-plan member, the paper makes money on these sales, too. We may feel compelled to increase the \$6 annual subscription rate, and I ask that you let us hear your reaction to this.

About three months ago I read our whole subscription list, city by city, town by town. Here are so many people known to me, and who are so many people, living out life simultaneously these many places, little dusty towns, great brutal urban traffic shuffles! Feeling the limits of life, that we know so little about so few of each other, I wrote something, but threw it away.

The *Observer* makes sense; it is an institution that has integrity, and this is not ordinary. As I have said before, we have here some kind of Utopian community, some kind of still cherishable hope, a faith in the power of moral intelligence in a free place. We go on, of course. Yet our resources are thinly spread, and we need your continuing being with us. R.D.

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BERNARD RAPOPORT
President

Inspiration in the Boondocks

Lubbock, Midland

A trip last weekend to the plains of West Texas has re-invigorated my enthusiasm for liberalism and deepened my appreciation of those who, in their own, personal ways seek to advance the cause of progressivism in this, our home state. Living in Austin can spoil a liberal in a way, I think; it's easy, for those who run in Austin liberal circles, to imagine that our political and social ideology is universally admired and accepted as the basis for the way things should be done. I go days—weeks—on end without encountering a conservative in conversation. Most of the verbal swordplay here is between liberals and radicals—and one can avoid even that easily enough by choosing his seat carefully at the beer-

garden or by getting into the right traffic pattern at our local parties.

Not so in most of the rest of Texas, as I at least dimly recall from sentences served in such locales as West Columbia, Muleshoe and Richardson. There, as in Lubbock and Midland, liberalism is still viewed as a foreign ideology by far too many people, and the general level of political and social dialogue is not of an altitude sufficient to cause nosebleed.

It is—I earnestly hope—without the least trace of condescension that I value the work and dedication of out-of-Austin liberals. I almost wrote similar sentiments in this space earlier this year on returning from San Marcos, where I had been exposed to the unassuming yet passionate dedication of the liberals there, people who, probably without realizing it, are working harder than their Austin brethren have to, to advance liberalism in Texas. I have invariably come away with similar sentiments after journeys to such places as Commerce, the Valley, College Station, Arlington and Brownwood.

The Lubbock liberals I dined and drank with are all excited about the prospect of establishing their own chapter of the American Civil Liberties Union and of challenging the Texas Tech administration on the question of requiring students to reside in the many new skyscraper dormitories which that university has erected at great cost to state taxpayers. In Midland, too, there is talk of beginning an ACLU chapter, to serve that city as well as Odessa. In all those three far West Texas cities there is a verve and an abiding optimism about the progress liberals are making in what might be called, unkindly, the Texas hinterland. Liberals from Houston, Dallas, Austin, Fort Worth, San Antonio or El Paso who are losing their enthusiasm and their hope would do well to take a trip such as the one I made last weekend, to any "out-of-the-way" Texas spot. I think you'll be surprised and inspired by the vigor and dedication of the liberals you'll find there.

G.O.

Nov. 29, 1968

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And the Sun Quivered

At the *comida*,
Where everyone had come,
Under the Texas sun,
To toast the house born of the fire
Of martyred years,
The rum had come
And topped over the words
From the head of old Miguel Don Juan
The words of the rum,
Said the senior son of old Miguel Don Juan.

The brothers and the others
Took a second to smile,
But the *compadre* of Don Juan said,
Wait, let him talk a while.

What's done is done,
Said the senior son of old Miguel Don Juan,

As he and the others listened to the rum.

The English! With the English
And with the hunger in my heart
And the hunger in my head,
You know where I would be today?
Fighting with the President of these
United States,
Head to head! Unto death!

The brothers and the others
Took a second to smile,
And the sun quivered
At the sight
Of another Texas mile.

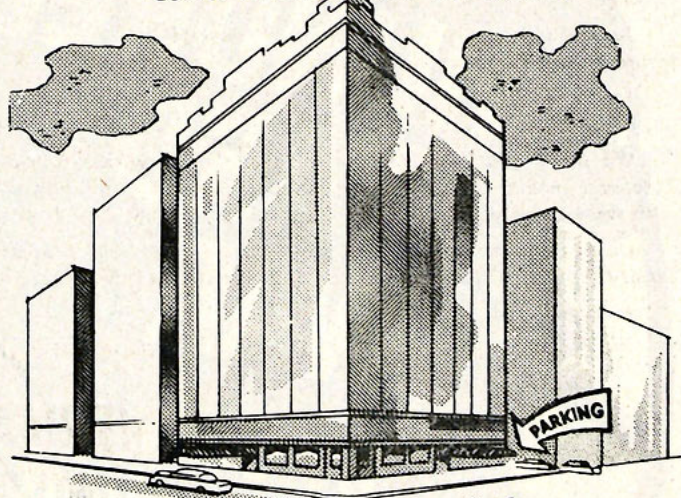
ANGEL ABITUA

McAllen

Mr. Abitua is a senior government major at Pan American College, Edinburg.

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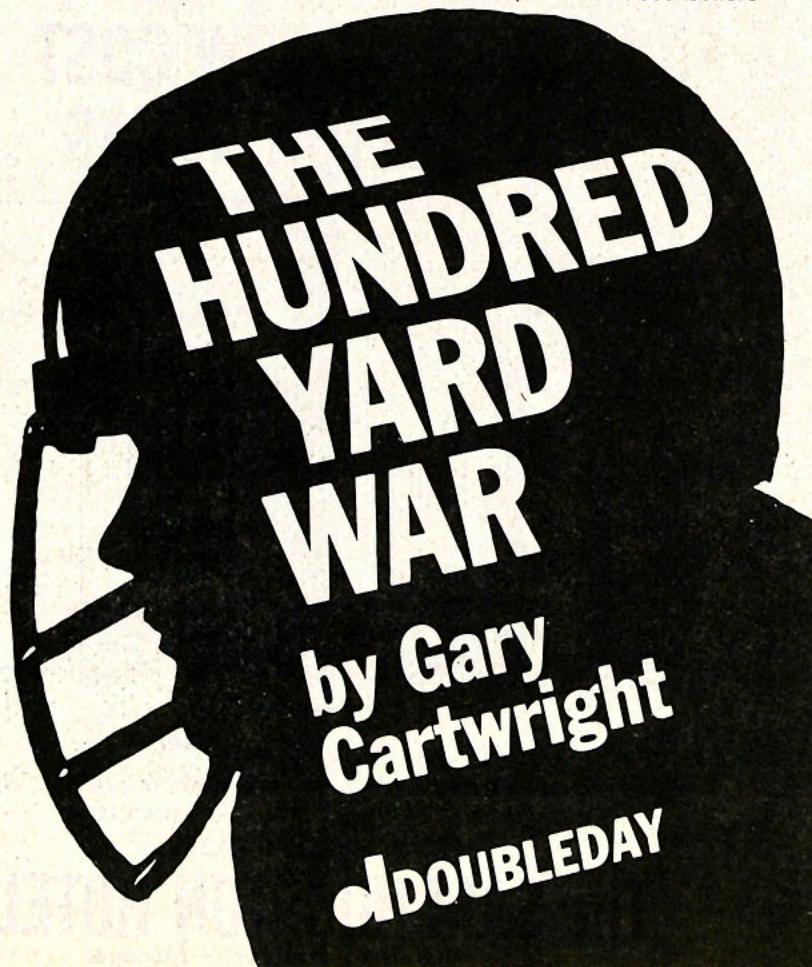
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"The best novel ever written about pro football."*

You may have read his articles on the Houston Astrodome in the *New York Times*; or his "The Confessions of a Washed-up Sportswriter" in *Harper's*; or his iconoclastic sportswriting in Fort Worth, Dallas, and Philadelphia. If so, you know that Gary Cartwright knows professional football players inside and out — how they use drugs and women, and what their arrangements are with their coaches and consciences.

THE HUNDRED-YARD WAR is about these men: Dallas Trooper quarterback Rylie Silver, who talks too much to strange women in bed the night before a game; Rufus Jones, a Negro defensive end who sweet-talks the wives of his white teammates; June Moncrief, who thinks more about black power than catching Silver's passes; Ragan Glass, a Number One draft choice who comes to football by way of the game, "Call a Spade," played in an overpopulated bed in Las Vegas.

In THE HUNDRED-YARD WAR, you'll live with these men through the deadly serious business of recruitment; the punishing games; the beery return flights from defeat; the explosively sexual world of their off-hours. "This is an accurate picture of the sort of men who play the game, who coach it, and who run it, and of what it does to their lives."* \$5.95 at all booksellers



Reflections

Legalize Pot

Austin

Lee Otis Johnson is serving a *thirty-year* sentence for supposedly giving a marijuana cigarette to a policeman.

"Gypsy" Peterson has been assessed eight years of hard labor in an army prison because Killeen police say they found traces of marijuana in the lint of his suit pocket. (See "Troubles on the Left" in this issue.)

Hundreds of other persons are serving not quite so harsh sentences for marijuana possession. The sin of most of the people serving time is simply that of being caught with a pleasant, probably harmless weed that happens to be illegal.

The only really dangerous aspect of grass is that it can get you jailed from two years to life. For a growing number of leftist activists who may or may not smoke marijuana this is very dangerous indeed.

Lee Otis Johnson would never have received thirty years, a sentence which even the Houston grand jury says is outrageous, if he were not also a prominent black militant. "Gypsy" Peterson's affinity for grass (he served a previous sentence for possession) probably would have been ignored by officers at Fort Hood if he had not been a vocal critic of the military. Friends insist that both these men knew that they were under close surveillance and insist for that reason alone they would have had better sense than to even mention the word "marijuana," let alone use it.

The leftist press charges that both men were railroaded. A Houston jury and a military court, however, held that there was sufficient evidence to warrant locking up both men for a significant portion of their lives. I don't know whether Johnson and Peterson actually had any marijuana, but even if they did, their sentences are unreasonable.

I know a number of persons who smoke pot quite openly, reasoning that if the vice squad wants to bust them on a

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The Texas Observer

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drug charge it will, even if police have to supply the drugs themselves. A fatalistic view, but not an unrealistic one. Drug possession is a credible charge against most any young person these days. And what better way is there for the police to get troublesome radicals out of circulation?

Ask most anyone in his teens or twenties and he will tell you that smoking marijuana is a pleasant, relaxing diversion, nothing more. I do not know one

person who has used the weed who has had any serious complications. At its worst, it is much more healthful than alcohol. It is not addictive. It does not ruin your liver, make you aggressive or give you a hangover.

Scientists don't yet agree on exactly what marijuana does to the human body. You can find doctors who say pot actually is pretty good for you and you can find doctors who insist it can cause convulsions, insanity and rampant im-

morality. People who smoke know that the latter allegations are hysterical propaganda, but they agree on the need for more serious research into the physiology and psychology of pot. Barring any surprising revelations, it should be legalized, possibly with restrictions such as those pertaining to alcohol. The country's inhumane penalties for marijuana use encourage a cynical disrespect for the law. And those laws can be used far too easily as a form of political persecution. K.N.

A Communication

In Defense of 'Blessed McGill'

My impulse on reading Gaines Kincaid's review of Edwin Shrake's remarkable novel, *Blessed McGill*, in the Nov. 15 *Texas Observer* is that Gaines Kincaid seriously requires a reply.

Mr. Kincaid will understand this impulse as Historical Passion: I believe he has sought to commit literary assassination upon a truly good writer ("For Shrake has fed upon secondary sources like a starving vulture in a slaughter pen"). Writers of fiction such as myself and William Brammer are obsessed with a sense of literary justice to the point that we believe Kincaid really should read the book again.

"What is historical fiction?" I asked Brammer after we had both read Kincaid's crippled attempts to draw a parallel of Shrake's work with Robert Ruark's *Grenadine Etching*.

"It's sort of like painting by the numbers," Brammer speculated.

"What did you think of Gaines Kincaid's review of Shrake's book?"

"Monstrously ignorant, in a mossy sort of way," said Brammer. "*Irrelevant!* Completely without pertinence. It's like carping at Kafka for his inaccuracies in depicting the Great Filing Clerk."

"Do you suppose," I asked, "that Gaines Kincaid is the murderer of McGill?"

"I think he might have liked to have watched."

Robert Ruark's book was bad satire of bad "historical" fiction, a two-ton mouse that except for the liberal use of the word *fiction* deserves no other comment.

Using the form of a dead man's diary found after his death, and the man's subsequent Beatification as North America's first (and *only*, according to Shrake, which is to say according to the demands of his intent) saint, Shrake created a character of fiction named Peter Hermano McGill (1850-83). If anyone is really stupid enough to look it up (as two priests in Boston did recently) they should not be surprised to learn that there never was a Peter Hermano McGill.

McGill is a metaphor from Shrake's abundant mind. He is Modern Man fighting Eternal Savage; self-seeking, vulnerable man being opposed (though not necessarily opposing) the God-seek keepers of dust. Shrake might as well have set McGill in downtown Omaha during a Rotary International convention. All those Indians with their customs and cultures which seem to fascinate the very people who miss the point might have been tribes of insurance salesmen or sheet metal workers. The most biting criticism that I can offer of Shrake's novel is that it is written entirely without the use of profanity, thereby nullifying any historical connection.

Since this is a defense not a review of both the novel and the author, I will not guess on Shrake's intent: larger minds than ours (mine and Kincaid's) may discover that, with the exception of Larry McMurtry's *Leaving Cheyenne*, there is probably not a better work of art produced by a Texan. The difference between Shrake's novel and Kincaid's presentation of it is the distinction between art and adventure. Shrake did not imitate anyone, he borrowed the words, towns, plows and smells of buffalo grease from a period in which he chose to set his poor McGill.

There is a melancholy in the sense that traditional frontier freedom challenges McGill without offering him the same odds that a man might expect crossing Central Park, but Shrake's talent breaks

clear in a sort of overpowering humor—"when I first saw their bodies (the bodies of his wife and son). I could feel nothing." McGill's only companion throughout most of the book is his faithful mule, Excelsior.

Maybe Shrake was saying that man can hardly find God for the blood and greed; but then McGill never really looks. It is God who finds McGill, finds him (at some future time) butchered by savage-friends-turned-savage.

McGill's spirit is no more his own than was his restless human form. He is martyred by Franciscan priests who love him so much they hate to see him wasted on the buzzards.

Only his diary lives to tell the tale.

GARY CARTWRIGHT

Mr. Cartwright is author of a recently published novel, The Hundred-Yard War.

Nov. 29, 1968

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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.

Dialogue

What Hope for Preston Smith?

I liked the *Observer's* sock-it-to-em endorsement of Paul Eggers and the two-party system, as much as I deplored Dugger's muddleheaded meanderings in the Nov. 15 issue. Dugger completely lost me in his statement that he holds Eggers "dominantly responsible for the emptiness and sloganeering conservatism of all the statewide Republican campaigns." Blaming Eggers for what Bush, Tower *et al* were saying makes about as much sense as blaming Hubert Humphrey for what John Dowdy and O. C. Fisher were saying. And where's Dugger's "certain hope" about Preston Smith? Smith "humanely concerned about these times"? It has not showed up during his 18 years in public office.

Those who think that there is some painless and riskless way to destroy the one-party system and replace it with a two-party system, and those who want to reap all the benefits of a straight ticket voting under the one-party system and hope that we can achieve the benefits of the two-party system should join the Harper Valley PTA. How could Dugger vote for Smith after the Lubbock Lugwrench accused Don Yarborough of a desire to appoint "weirdos" to office, whose conservatism is topped only by that of A. Shivers, and whose entire campaign was funded by the despicable Austin lobby and Dallas and Houston big rich.

Come on, Dugger, get with us when we need you.

Archer Fullingim, Kountze News, Kountze, Tex.

Mr. Fullingim, the editor of the Kountze News, was a leader of the Rebuilding Committee in 1966 and 1968.—Ed.

Editorial Integrity

Since beginning a subscription with *The Texas Observer* nearly three months ago I have, almost without exception, been pleased with its reporting of statewide

and national political news. Its coverage of the recent elections was of a high calibre. There were instances in which I found myself in disagreement with the editorial opinions. But this should be expected, particularly when independent reflection is rendered upon controversial political campaigns.

I am, consequently, deeply dismayed by the actions of those who have cancelled their subscriptions as a direct result of a disapproval of editorial opinion in the *Observer*. Editorial policy should remain a matter of individual expression, free from consideration of what is essentially a form of economic reprisal. Those who have succumbed to their emotions in this fashion have now very likely denied themselves access to political news not easily available, and are probably less informed citizens. I trust the *Observer* will maintain its editorial integrity, and I look forward to future challenges by the convictions expressed therein.

Steward Edward Sutin, 2303 Barton Village Circle, Austin, Tex. 78704.

Completed Confusion

Asking for the defeat of Hubert Humphrey (*Obs.*, Nov. 1) completes your confusion. Cancel my subscription.

D. A. Davis, 2910 29th St., Port Arthur, Tex. 77640.

Why So Late?

First of all, could you tell me why the Nov. 1, 1968, issue of the *Observer* arrived only yesterday, Nov. 8, 1968? And this issue especially should not have been late as far as I am concerned. I use the *Observer* for guidance during election time. Perhaps the next issue will arrive closer to the publication date? I certainly hope so. Please try to get the *Observer* to me on time in the future.

Secondly, I must disagree with your editorial in the Nov. 1 issue concerning the defeat of Mr. Humphrey. No, I am not going to cancel my subscription since the *Observer* is still the best source of liberal Texas politics available and I find that I use some of the material in teaching my classes in government at South Texas College here in Houston. Granted that the Democratic party needs some saving but the election of Nixon is not the way to accomplish this. . . .

David Robinson, 7923 Barberton, Houston, Tex. 77036.

Cancellation

Some years ago, labor unions were asked to support the *Texas Observer* by buying subscriptions.

At that time my local union subscribed to the paper due to the fact that it was

a paper that was fair to organized labor and needed subscriptions to keep it going.

Due to your political philosophy expressed in the Nov. 1 issue, I am requesting that you cancel our subscription and refund any unused portion that we may have.

P. W. Baham, secretary-treasurer, Local 4-228, Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers International Union, P.O. Box 548, Port Neches, Tex. 77651.

New Subscriber

I have been reading the *Observer* fairly regularly for more than a year. I want to subscribe to it now primarily because of your Nov. 1 editorial urging the defeat of Hubert Humphrey.

Carolyn Cates, 1511-B Palma Plaza, Austin, Tex. 78703.

A Renewal

Congratulations on your front page editorial refusing to back either Humphrey or Nixon. Enclosed is a check to renew my lapsed subscription.

Chandler Davidson, 1512 Rosenberg St., Galveston, Tex. 77550.

Liberalism Discredited

Your editorial of November 1, urging the defeat of Hubert Humphrey, was a fairly accurate assessment of the Democratic party. It was an illustration that the discredited state of the Democratic party is so great as to be capable of expression in liberal rhetoric, from a liberal point of view, out of a liberal attitude, and for the purpose of enhancing liberalism. As the Democratic party has continued to have the support of liberals in Texas, the editorial correctly observed the nature of Texas liberalism.

That there is a liberal editor in the state astute and honest enough to make such observations is encouraging. That you could suggest as an alternative only a wasted vote (i.e., vote for one of the other two candidates, write someone in or not vote), is a sad commentary on the state of electoral politics in America.

Undoubtedly, you will be subject to economic harrassment, in the form of cancelled subscriptions, from liberals angry at your lack of myopia regarding the future of Texas liberalism within the state Democratic party. ("We must keep the Democratic party in power because someday WE may control the machinery.") I hope the enclosed check for a two-year subscription to the *Observer* will help to offset those unfortunate losses.

Doran Williams, Box 7274, UT Station, Austin, Tex. 78712.