THE TEXAS OBSERVER

December 4, 1981 A Journal of Free Voices 75¢

In Houston, it's 'Her Honor'

How She Did It

By Wade Roberts

Houston

Downtown Houston. High noon. Unrelenting fall sun. No shadows. Dead quiet.

(Cue music. The theme from "The Good, the Bad and the Ugly" would be nice.)

Dust swirls around the base of the Texas Commerce Tower. A tumbleweed bounces through Tranquility Park. Somewhere, around the corner of One Shell Plaza, a lonesome dog yips. From the distant Englewood switching yard drifts the wail of a SoPac locomotive.

It's showdown time. Election Day in the Bayou City.

(Fade music. Cut to Martha Hermann Square, in front of City Hall.) A short figure appears on the steps of City Hall, facing the reflection pool. At the other end of the still water is another unmoving figure, this one considerably larger.

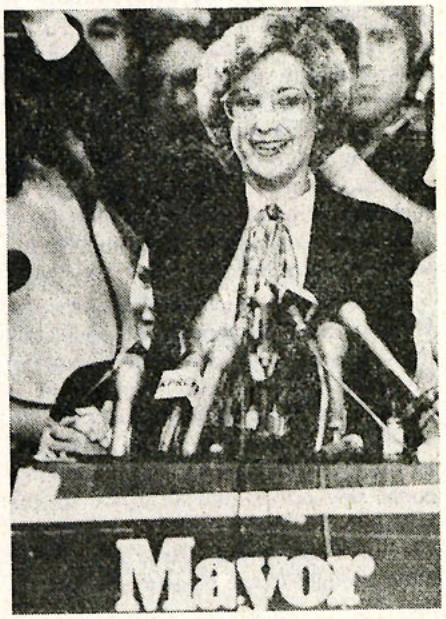
(Couple of close-ups, now. The short figure is the Widder Whitmire, the large one, Sheriff Jack. Wide shot again.)

Slowly, the two figures move a few steps closer. There's a jingling as they walk. Not spurs, though – campaign money. Sheriff Jack jingles a lot louder.

They stop, eyes glinting toward one another. Suddenly, there's a commotion. The dust is kicked up, clouding the two figures.

Finally, it settles. Only one figure remains. It's the short one.

The Widder fought the Sheriff. The Widder won.



Kathy Whitmire

SORRY, just couldn't resist. I don't know about the rest of Houston, but I had a grand ole time during the recent city elections. I haven't had this much fun since . . . well, since Jack Woods discovered an obscure unfilled office and ran unopposed in 1976 to become Harris County inspector of hides and animals.

The 1981 mayoral election had everything you'd want. Name-calling. Mud-slinging. Million-dollar campaign chests. Mysterious Mailgrams. Even a real shoot-out; in River Oaks, no less. We sure as hell reinforced a few Texas Wild West stereotypes this go-round: "Buckshot, Mud and Money," maybe?

And if all that wasn't enough, the damned thing even had its serious side, for those so disposed. Besides being great fun, the election signaled that the nation's fourth-largest city may be chart-

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What To Expect

By Paul Sweeney

AT HOUSTON'S city hall on a recent afternoon, the press secretary for Mayor-elect Kathyrn J. Whitmire exhaled a stream of cigarette smoke, gritted her teeth and spoke sternly into the telephone. On the other end of Twila Coffey's line was Marvin Zindler, the quixotic TV newsman who blew the whistle on the Chicken Ranch. "Marvin," she snapped, "my name is not 'Honey.' "

It was not really an important event, but it was one more signal, if one more were needed, that the nation's fifth largest city will no longer be a stronghold of "good - old - boy," Southern-drawl government. At 35, Kathy Whitmire, a diminutive winsome widow with solid feminist credentials, is taking over Houston's helm after four distinguished years as city controller.

Not only will she be the first woman to assume the $81,000-a-year post, thus becoming the nation's best paid mayor, but she does so after soundly defeating a field of masculine opponents. First she turned Jim McConn out of office, bury-

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OBSERVATIONS

And Now, Solutions

New York City

The voters' rejection of Proposition 4, the Clayton-Clements Water Slush Fund, was a substantial, although a negative triumph for the public interest.

Instead of stashing away billions of state dollars for unspecified water projects, the voters decided the state should leave the state surplus alone. Voters who oppose boondoggles, new taxes, and right-wing schemes to hobble state government united to say no to the Speaker and the Governor. The main practical effect will be the continuing availability of state surpluses to fund education, health, welfare, and other state services.

There were political implications, too. If Gov. Clements thought he could talk the voters into the plan on the strength of his unlimited popularity, perhaps he is reassessing the relationship between his seven million dollars and his governorship. If Speaker Clayton thought he could ride into statewide office on the strength of public approval of his Clayton Plan, perhaps he is now giving more thought to the pleasures of private life.

It is not enough, though, to exult in limited negative victories. The triumph of the right in America and in Texas is also the failure of the progressives to articulate convincing and practical solutions to such problems as the coming water shortage.

The exhaustion of the Ogallalla aquifer is proceeding apace. Unless this stops or a solution is found, the great American breadbasket will become dead land, waving fields of grain will become fields of waving dust. Nor is this just a problem of ours. Shortfalls in U.S. food production will mean famine in the world.

What is happening is the result of non-planning. One of the historic resources of the American continent, the geologically ancient aquifer that sustains farm production in six or eight states (including West Texas), is being pumped dry simply because society — that is, people acting through their government — has done nothing to stop it. Should not some check, some regulation, be introduced into the exhausting of the aquifer?

Amy Johnson, in her work on water for the *Observer*, properly has focused, too, on the neglect of water conservation. Profligacy in the use of water may lead directly to food shortages. As long as the progressives leave issues like this alone, we can be sure the hustlers will rush in with their profiteering plans, wasting all our energies in trying to defeat them.

The national body politic should address the question of the redistribution of continental water supplies. We cannot trust such a gigantic subject to the water hustlers like Clayton and their allies like Clements, representing simply the vested financial interests that are in place or hovering for position.

If one takes a common-sense overview, it is apparent that the surplus waters of the Mississippi and the Yukon should be redirected to areas where they enhance food production and human welfare. Why let these precious waters gurgle out to sea? But such an undertaking cannot be addressed sideways or part-way. Problems of engineering, equity, political jurisdictions, the distribution of costs, the regulation of water use — these are challenges for the next Congress that is broken free of the negativism of the Reagan period.

Something can be done in the Texas legislature right now. Perhaps now that the voters have twice told the water hustlers no in a big way, the politicians will start telling the people the truth. You cannot persuade a people to spend billions for new public works if you don't

THE TEXAS OBSERVER

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

A journal of free voices

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

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

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let them in on the action and tell them the truth from the start.

In rejecting the statehouse power structure's plan to get control of the budget in years in which the legislature doesn't meet, the voters once again refused to trust a few insiders to do what the legislature should do. Let, then, forward-looking politicians renew the call for annual sessions of the legislature so that budget-making can be done annually.

Positive Plans, Please

The national newspapers paid attention when the voters in Austin decided, 58 percent to 42 percent, to authorize the city council to sell the city's 16 percent interest in the South Texas Nuclear Project. But this, too, is a negative achievement, and here, too, the progressives are challenged to produce positive solutions.

There was another liberal majority on the Austin city council in recent years, and it was a disaster. Politicians who were skilled in criticizing conservative solutions came forward with no program of their own.

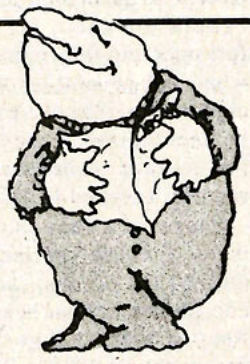
We can hope for much better this time. The present council majority is especially interested in developing solar power and conservation as alternatives to nuclear power. The practical difficulties of selling the 16 percent interest are the first question, of course, but the second question is a real challenge.

In what arenas, now that Reagan has ravaged Washington and the Congress, are progressive social experiments to go forward? In the states and cities. The wisdom of Andrew Young in returning to Atlanta to run for mayor reflects this fact. The demoralization of the central government by a reaction without parallel in this century means that the cities and the states must now step into the social vacuum.

If the council members in Austin will proceed imaginatively, practically, and carefully, they can set up demonstration projects on energy conservation and solar power that will inspire the country. The success of, say, publicly-funded neighborhood solar energy generating and distribution systems could spread from Austin to anywhere. Everything must have a dollar-cost assigned; the state of the art must control. The cost of photovoltaic cells cannot be reduced rapidly until the central government, especially the military, start using them in large numbers, as Barry Commoner has made clear. But the urgency of the energy need in Austin and the high-mindedness of the new council together provide an opportunity that must not be missed, an opportunity for the city council to create new energy forms in a city whose people have showed they are ready for a future freed, at least somewhat, from the national corporate energy systems.

Social Security

We cheer the 18-14 majority of the U.S. House subcommittee on Social Security that defeated Cong. Jake Pickle's program to cut Social Security benefits. Democratic Majority Leader Jim Wright is correct: Social Security benefits should not be cut at all, and if it takes a nickel more on cigarettes or a quarter on a fifth of whiskey, why not? First things first, and the contract the government has made with the citizens about Social Security benefits must be honored. All the rhetoric about responsibility, crises, and shortfalls in the Social Security system's funding conceals the brutal determination of Ronald Reagan to cut, and perhaps to abolish, Social Security. For what he believed were good reasons, Cong. Pickle became the leader of the Democrats who were trying to mollify the Reaganites on this topic. Bipartisanship on Social Security was the watchword of the Pickle approach. The right watchword is, Fight. No doubt in part because of the hard-line positions now being taken by Wright and Speaker Tip O'Neill, the majority on the subcommittee did fight. It's about time. R.D.



The $10 Program

We invite organizations and individuals to sell new one-year *Observer* subscriptions. For each subscription the selling organization or individual will receive $10 commission.

Like most publications, the *Observer* spends almost that obtaining a new subscription by mail. We prefer, however, that the money go to hard-working groups or individuals instead of to the post office and paper companies.

Organizations and individuals authorized to sell subscriptions under the program will be provided with forms and sample copies. The only requirement is that individuals who wish to try this must have their own subscription paid up at the regular $20 rate. Commissions on subscriptions to be billed will be paid on receipt of the bill payment. Neither renewals nor subscriptions for a period shorter than a year receive commissions.

If you want to take part in this program, contact the *Observer* at 600 W. 7th St., Austin, Tx. 78701, or phone 512-477-0746. No PAC's or campaigns, please.

Who Will it Be?

"I don't want another cliffhanger like in 1978 — once in a lifetime is enough," Bill Clements told supporters in Corpus Christi the other day during his three-day swing around the state to announce his re-election bid. "This time I want to win by a large margin."

And he will too — unless a Democratic candidate soon emerges with brains and brass enough to take the fight to the governor. I guess we're getting restless around here. We saw little merit in Bob Slagle's plan to avoid a Democratic bloodbath with some kind of unofficial mini-convention, but we're ready for a candidate to step forward — a candidate who, in the best of all possible worlds, will engage the issues, force Bill Clements to run on his record, and who will articulate a principled progressive alternative to what we have known for the past three — or is it thirty? — years. With Peyton McKnight — an unabashed conservative now making strategic shufflings toward the center — the only announced candidate, with John Hill and Bob Armstrong wearing Alphonse and Gaston disguises, and more private planes than usual flying into Uvalde, Democrats are off to a less than auspicious start.

What we're looking for in the governor's race is another Jim Hightower. Agriculture Commissioner Reagan Brown, who recently announced for re-election, claims never to have heard of Jim Hightower, but he's already beginning to realize he's in the fight of his political career. Mustering a measure of bravado the other day, he proclaimed, "I beat the Medfly, and now I'm going to beat the gadfly."

"We're going to do something real ugly to him," Hightower responded. "We're going to make him run on his record. It's like Joe Louis said of one of his ring opponents, 'He can run, but he can't hide.' "

Now if only the governor's race will be as interesting — and as fun — as the race for agriculture commissioner promises to be. J. H.

Nuclear Warfare Examined

'What's more important than this?'

By Nina Butts

Friday *Houston*

"This is an unorthodox group — unfortunately," John Henry Faulk tells us as he surveys the small hotel banquet room where maybe a hundred of us are gathered on this Friday night in Houston. We've paid our thirty dollars and we'll be here all weekend learning about neutrons and megatons, fission and fusion, bombs and fallout. Sponsored by a non-partisan group called the Gulf Coast Council on Foreign Affairs, the gathering is billed as a "public conference to help you learn about the nuclear question."

Faulk's eyes are bright, his cheeks a healthy pink. He wears a neat gray suit. So far, he says there has "really been no open dialogue in the media or among the American people . . . no complete examination" of our nuclear policy. "All of Harris County ought to be here," he tells us, "because there's not a man, woman, or child on the face of the globe, let alone in Harris County, that's not affected by the implications of the uses of nuclear power, military and peaceful."

Nina Butts is a writer and artist living in Austin.

Helen Caldicott

He offers a brief history lesson on the First Amendment, reciting parts, and he says of its authors: "Those men could pass on to us, in their documentation, the benefit of their great wisdom and foresight, but they couldn't pass on to us what each generation of Americans must capture for themselves: the courage to be free, the courage to think for yourself, the courage to demand that your government respond to your demands."

Every American should find out how many U.S. submarines are swimming through the oceans, each equipped with enough nuclear warheads to destroy 224 Russian towns, before deciding if Russia has surpassed us militarily, he says. About Alexander Haig, he says, "It scares the jumping daylights out of me when the Secretary of State starts saying, 'You fire a coupla warning bombs and boy, they'll hunker down!' This is reckless, almost criminal insanity. The world stands today poised on an abyss. We could write all that is beautiful on this globe off."

He encourages us not to despair, but to get to work. "Certainly the nuclear crisis isn't the first crisis the American people have confronted. . . . I can't escape the feeling that if only a dialogue was opened, if only the American people knew the pros and cons of the issue, I could sleep at night because the American people in their wisdom have time and again, after long, long approaches to domestic and foreign problems, resolved them. . . . So it is a matter of great moment that we, the people of the United States, should open a dialogue on something that not only affects the generation we represent, but all the generations that follow us, if there are indeed to be any," he says. "I congratulate you for being here."

Discussion groups, scheduled after each speaker, convene. Group Three in the Panhandle Room (big table, linen tablecloth, goblets, pitchers of ice water) looks like an adult Sunday School class. There are a Bell Telephone employee, a social worker, a woman wearing stacks of diamond rings who says "I have a bunch of kids and grandkids and am concerned about what kind of world they'll live in," a high school senior, a chemical engineer, an organizer for the Ecumenical Peaceforce of Houston, a mechanical engineer, two nurses, and a Hunt Company ("oil services") employee.

They are full of questions. How do we find out what the Russians have? Who's ahead — we or they? Have we been lied to? Why are we building all these weapons? "It's a racket," says one man. "It's a global manifestation," says another, "of our lowest feelings — distrust, hate. We have to feel differently before we can begin to act differently." Over and over they call the arms race insane.

They ask: Can we do anything? What should we do? "The good old things, I suppose," says the mother and grandmother. "Sign petitions, write your legislators, talk with your neighbors." We talk about whether any of that works. "We could take a lesson from the Moral Right," says one man. "They're less than one percent of the population, but they're well-mobilized."

They are not activists, nor do they seem accustomed to politics. The oil services man speaks with some confidence about Reagan's plan to "negotiate from a position of strength." The rest seem enormously frustrated.

I leave for the night, stopping at McDonalds for coffee. I sit at a plastic table and think. The people at the conference, mostly white and college-educated, represent a base of society I assumed was indifferent to the nuclear threat. I find instead they're hungry for information. Dunfey's Motor Hotel, instead of a church or a university, seems the right place for this meeting. Einstein said that the nuclear question should be debated in every village square. We have gathered at one of Houston's village squares, and we are talking.

Saturday

The daytime speakers saturate us with information, and I grow numb to the words "utter disaster," "insanity," "holocaust." Stephen Baker of the UT-Austin government department traces the evolution of U.S. nuclear weapons policy from our threat of massive retaliation in the 1950s to "mutually assured destruction" (M.A.D.) in the 1960s and 1970s to our present assumption that there could be such a thing as limited nuclear war. He calls for an end to our hot-tempered foreign policy: "Remember," he warns, "nuclear war will be triggered by some unlikely small event."

David Cortright, director of a peace group named SANE (not an acronym), explains where we are: the U.S. has

30,000 nuclear warheads; the Soviet Union has 20,000. Four hundred nuclear bombs could destroy either country "as a functioning society." Reagan proposes to build at least 14,000 more nuclear warheads over the next ten years. Cortright quotes George Kennan: "We have gone on piling weapon upon weapon, missile upon missile, new levels of destruction upon old ones . . . like the victims of some sort of hypnosis, like men in a dream."

"How did we get into this mess?" Cortright asks. Not by simply responding to the Soviet Union, he answers, because the U.S. has led almost every major step in the arms race. What keeps us on this "insane course," he says, is the sheer bureaucratic momentum of the Defense Department (strengthened by a fierce Army-Navy-Air Force rivalry) and the thirst for money. He defines the incredibly powerful Iron Triangle: the Pentagon, the arms contractors, and Congressional military committees. SANE employs one full-time lobbyist, he tells us, and the Pentagon has 2,000 "Congressional liaisons" — lobbyists with their own office in the Senate Russell Building.

The key to getting out of this mess, he says, is citizen action: "The future is in our hands." Both he and Baker remind us that grassroots organizing in the 1950s led to the Nuclear Test Ban Treaty.

All day, ideas fly in Group Three: we talk about visiting Soviet citizens, making nuclear war a local issue and pressing city councils to take a stand, working on the national Nuclear Freeze campaign for a halt to U.S. and Soviet nuclear weapons production. We don't seem as tiny in the face of this huge problem as we thought last night. All three speakers have told us how powerful we are, how Congess follows the people.

In the afternoon Frederick Gorbet, a black-bearded man from the International Energy Agency, speaks about nuclear power. All energy sources are risky and "there is no free lunch on this issue," he says, pushing nuclear business-as-usual. "He had blinders on," the woman with the diamonds says afterwards.

I talk to Brenda Hardt, the soft-voiced Methodist who is organizing the Ecumenical Peaceforce of Houston, which includes Catholics, Presbyterians, Quakers, Episcopalians, Baptists, and Unitarians — both lay and clergy. She is pregnant and wears a silver cross. "I see a strong trend in this country to equate faithfulness to God with faithfulness to your nation. . . . God and nation being confused," she says. "I can't see Jesus approving of nuclear weapons . . . while people are dying of hunger."

After dinner, the speaker is Helen Caldicott, a heroine of the anti-nuclear movement. She is an Australian-born pediatrician who heads Physicians for Social Responsibility and has come to Houston to start a P.S.R. chapter. (Caldicott's group is working on Dallas, too. San Antonio has the only Texas chapter now.)

We give her a standing ovation when she is introduced. She wears a tailored silk dress and speaks in short, matter-of-fact sentences and a crisp accent, sounding like an efficient British schoolteacher instructing children, patiently, carefully, knowing that they must learn this lesson. She juxtaposes the horrible "medical effects of thermonuclear war" and the fallibility of the people who have the power to start it.

"We are trusting the Russians every minute not to press the button and annihilate America," she says. "We have put our lives and security into the hands of the Soviet Union . . . they're very paranoid, and when you have a paranoid patient, you don't push them and get angry with them. It makes them worse and they do irrational things. . . . It would be distinctly unpatriotic to provoke Russia to kill all of the Americans."

She goes on: "Now, I've heard statements recently that America is behind. You can't even say who's ahead or who's behind when they can overkill each other so many times. When you hear General Haig and Caspar Weinberger, they are speaking from a basis of total irrationality . . . it's become a societal irrationality that nobody questions."

Her language is direct; she never says "defense," she never gives us a "scenario." She tells us what these bombs are built to do.

"Now, let's drop a twenty megaton bomb on Houston. Medically it would do this. It would dig a hole three-quarters of a mile wide and eight hundred feet deep, converting all human beings, all buildings, and the dirt that was in it to radioactive fallout. Out to a radius of six miles from the center, every person would be killed, many vaporized, and all buildings totally demolished. Out to a radius of twenty miles, every person

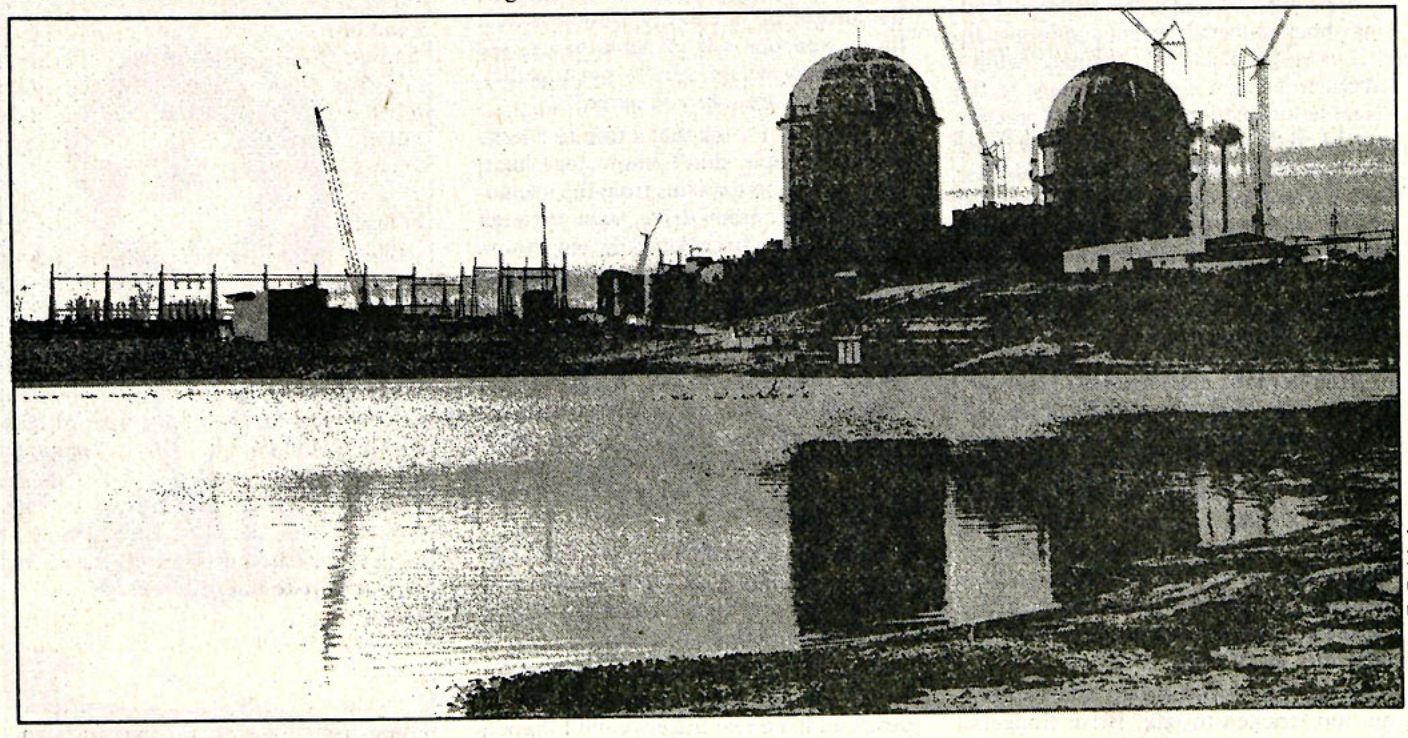


Photo by F. Baldwin

Comanche Peak Nuclear Plant

would be killed or lethally injured, and the injuries are specific to nuclear weapons.

"There's a tremendous blast wave causing overpressures which would suck all of you and all the furniture out of the buildings and you would be thrown against other solid objects. It would rupture your lungs. It would rupture your eardrums to make you deaf. If you happen to look at the bomb exploding by reflex glance, your eyes would be melted.

"There would be shocking internal injuries of chest, abdomen, and thorax. There would be fractured limbs, of course, and there would be most severe burns. Now, there would probably be hundreds of thousands of these burns, and you should know that one severely burned patient takes about six months to a year to treat . . . with the most meticulous medical care, and often then the patient still dies. There are only one thousand acute burn beds in the whole of the country.

"A huge firestorm would be created as liquid natural gas facilities, gasoline facilities, oil facilities ignited and coalesced to form a firestorm of about 1500 to 3000 square miles, so that if you were in a fallout shelter, the fire would use up all the oxygen and you would asphyxiate, and the blast and the heat would be so strong that the shelters would be converted to crematoria. So to talk about fallout shelters in the nuclear age is medically unethical, because it's letting people think that they could maybe survive a nuclear war."

She says that she hopes we're all feeling shocked, because that's appropriate. "It is appropriate to compare what's about to happen if we do nothing to the Nazi holocaust, only that was a practice run. And do you know, by all of us being passive we're being like the good Germans watching the Jews being taken off in the cattle cars to the gas ovens. We are paying for the gas ovens with our taxes — we pay for the bombs — only we're going to be killed too. It's going to be our global gas oven."

After her talk, a woman asks Caldicott to list everything she can think of that one person can do. Caldicott refuses. She has already suggested educating yourself, communicating with lawmakers, and joining a group; now she says, "If I tell you what to do, you mightn't like it. Use your own creativity and initiative; just get out there and do it. It makes you feel terrific, because there *is* a little tiny bit of hope."

In my discussion group afterwards I am too stricken to talk. Brian Rodgers, the twenty-five-year-old mechanical engineer, says that he came here because he's interested in foreign affairs, "but I think I've been converted." The group talks about unilateral disarmament. Brenda Hardt says that she has to go to church the next morning, when we are to come up with group resolutions, and Rodgers exclaims, "What's more important than this?"

Sunday

The oil services man, Fritz Francis, tells me that this conference "knocks (the nuclear threat) home and keeps it there." Our discussion group is tired, but we sip coffee and write out resolutions, all of them strong: we call for disarmament talks with all countries, an international phasing out of nuclear power, a halt to the production of cruise missiles.

When I leave, the conference is deciding on final resolutions to send to Ronald Reagan and Kurt Waldheim. I find out later that they did not finish their work that day, and decided to meet again the next Saturday.

I say good-bye to Brenda Hardt and David Cortright and head towards Austin, where I live. It is gray and raining hard; the Houston freeway is crowded. Democracy and the Iron Triangle and our global gas oven pound in my head. Outside of town the rain stops, and as the sun goes down I drive through a mist that settles on fields and cows. I think about Brian and Fritz and Brenda. I think about Helen Caldicott's saying you're not allowed to feel hopeless unless you've spent every waking and sleeping minute of your life trying to stop it. Then it is dark, the night is clear, and I can see stars and a three-quarter moon. I do not feel hopeless. □

Counting beans is not where it's at

An interview with David Cortright, director SANE.

David Cortright is the director of SANE, a twenty-five-year-old "citizens' organization for a sane world" with 25,000 members. SANE was instrumental in defeating the original MX basing plan, and Cortright stumped hard in West Texas during the MX fight. Speaking with impeccable grammar, stacking up grim facts and responding to them with a balance of emotion and intellect, he fits the name of his group.

Butts: It's said that one reason Americans have been so slow to respond to the threat of nuclear weapons is that those weapons are invisible to us. We don't know where they're put together, where they are. Do you agree?

Cortright: I think that's true to a large degree. People don't know that high-level radioactive wastes from the nuclear weapons program drive right through Texas, coming from Amarillo and Pantex on their way to South Carolina or up north to Washington. Those caskets go by. When the warhead was blown out of a silo in Arkansas, they trucked it across Oklahoma and Texas to get it to Amarillo. In general, I think Americans view the nuclear weapons threat as an abstract issue that doesn't directly affect their lives . . . they shunt it out of their consciousness.

Butts: Noam Chomsky says that U.S. weapons spending provides a guaranteed market for our high technology waste. What do you think about that?

Cortright: Weapons are the principal *outlet* for our high technology activities. . . . It's a real tragedy, and I think a terrible moral dilemma for students of

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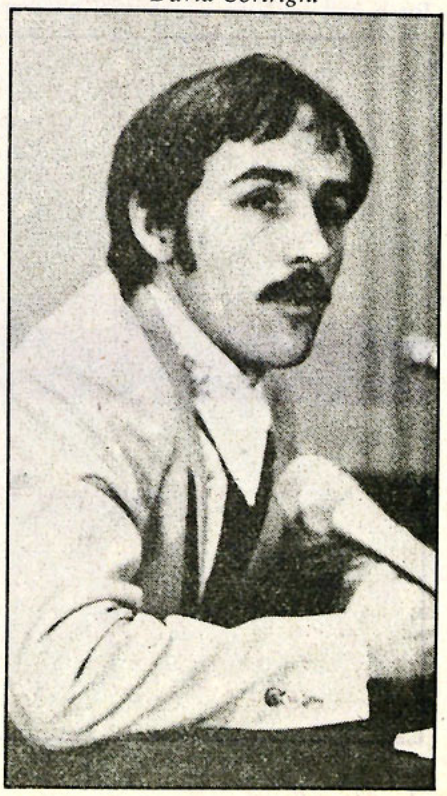
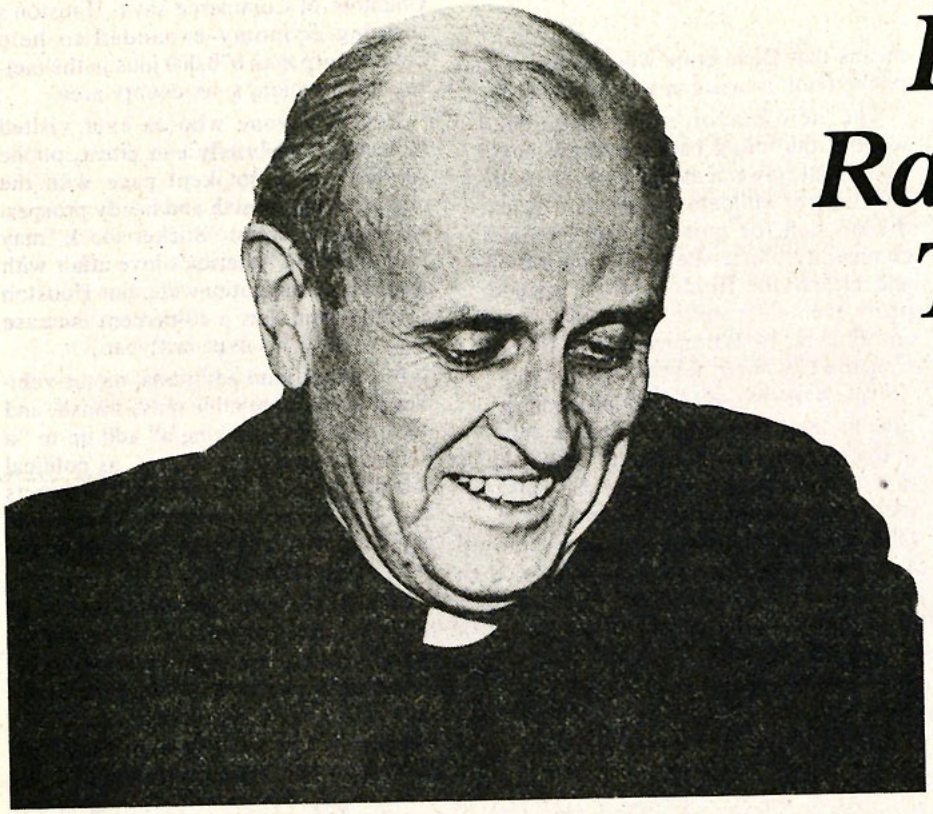
David Cortright



ADA in Dallas

Drinan Rallies the Troops



Father Robert Drinan

By Dick Collier

Dallas

"Ronald Reagan is one of the greatest things that has ever happened to us. . . ."

No, those words weren't spoken during one of Eddie Chiles' board meetings. They didn't come booming down from James Robison's pulpit to lather the ears of his congregation. The remark came from Father Robert Drinan, national president of Americans for Democratic Action, as he began his address to the newly formed Dallas County ADA chapter on Nov. 20. Because of Reagan, Drinan explained, the ADA is growing faster than ever before with 30 chapters and a membership numbering 55,000 nationwide. After the meeting 25 new members enlisted in the cause bringing the month-old Dallas chapter's membership to 127.

The chapter was re-established in Dallas after a long hiatus. The old Dallas ADA was disbanded shortly after the Vietnam war ended. Interest had waned, the progressive battles seemed over and there was at the time a strong Democratic party that represented the ADA's viewpoint.

Love Johnson, a Dallas businessman and president of the new chapter, resurrected the Dallas ADA because he felt the Democratic party could no longer articulate that viewpoint. "The Democratic party has been as quiet as an intimidated field mouse," Johnson complained. Citing U.S. Representative Phil Gramm as an example of the party's inability to reflect traditional Democratic views, he asked rhetorically if the "Boll Weevil" was a true spokesman for the Democratic party's ideals. "Our purpose," Johnson said, "is to serve as a voice of reason, justice, compassion and equality in the Dallas area and the country."

That voice was amplified by Drinan, a member of the U.S. House of Representatives from Massachusetts from 1971 to 1981, who came to Dallas to inaugurate the fledgling organization, deliver its charter and rally the troops for the struggle ahead. The ANA's growth was about the only good news he had to offer the more than 200 people attending the meeting. Claiming the Reagan administration was "wrong on virtually everything," the Jesuit priest and lawyer launched a blistering attack on Reaganomics, the administration's foreign and domestic policies and the Moral Majority. "We must organize to say something terrible has happened in our land," he said, "You have the vision to see that something has gone wrong in this country."

Drinan assailed the Reagan economic program's redistribution of $32 billion from social programs to the military. "Not even Stockman believes in it," he said referring to *Atlantic Monthly's* recent interview with the Reagan economic wizard and bringing a round of laughter from the audience. He listed other areas of the Reagan administration's insensitivity. "Look at CETA," he said, "It had its limitations but at least it was an effort by a just and conscious society to help the chronically unemployed." He criticized the administration's opposition to the ERA ("Women will say this administration killed the great dream of 50 years of women in this country."). He warned of plans to eliminate Affirmative Action, relax enforcement of civil rights, and gut the En-

(Continued on Page 21)

Dick Collier is a free-lance writer living in Arlington.

'She put together the old Democratic coalition' (Jim Hightower)

ing the bumbling, two-term mayor in the general election in which he finished a dismal fourth. Then the slight five-foot-tall Whitmire trounced Jack Heard, the 63-year-old Harris County sheriff who campaigned on a pledge to restore law-and-order, capturing 62 percent of the vote in the November 17 runoff.

By any measure, Whitmire's victory is clear-cut, her support broad-based. Positioning herself as a candidate with liberal leanings on social issues who nonetheless holds hard-nosed views on spending and taxation, Whitmire won herself 90 percent of the black vote, 60 percent of the Hispanic electorate and split the Anglo ballots about evenly with her opponent.

She also courted — and got — the early support of Houston's Gay Political Caucus. At the tail end of the campaign she fended off as "scurrilous" charges in an unsigned letter that she endorsed the instruction of "homosexuality as an alternative lifestyle" as part of the public school curriculum. "The smear campaign failed," observed Tom Curtis, former editor of *Houston City* magazine, adding, "in an earlier era such things might have worked."

For many here, Whitmire's election means that "Houston isn't what it used to be," in the words of Marilyn Primeaux, a county social worker. At least one astute observer, meanwhile, suggests that Whitmire's election means more than destruction of yet another barrier to women or greater tolerance for the gay community.

"It's just a whole new political realignment that goes against all the Sunbelt city lifestyle cliches," argues Jim Hightower, a Democratic candidate for Texas Agriculture Commissioner. "All we hear about ourselves is that we're a bunch of rednecks and John Connally types living in a growth community with no limits, wearing five-hundred-dollar cowboy boots."

Hightower noted that the Houston mayoral election followed by only a year Ronald Reagan's sweep here and added: "But here comes little Kathy Whitmire. She put together the old Democratic coalition. It shows that it's too early to say Reaganomics is being swallowed wholesale at the grassroots level. It also means that Democrats who stand up on pocketbook issues can win in Texas."

The new mayor also campaigned without the initial backing of the city's traditional power centers — real estate developers, builders, major law firms, the oil-rich, or most of the financial community. Once she was in the runoff and clearly the frontrunner, of course, many eventually shifted their allegiance, and dollars, to Whitmire. Even so, the *Houston Chronicle* never sided with her.

"It's a real break with precedent," says Richard Murray, a political scientist at the University of Houston. "She's the first elected mayor with no establishment support." Murray attributes the establishment's later turnabout, an eventuality that took place between the general election and the runoff, to widespread fear that the sheriff's victory could plunge the city into a period of racial polarization. But there were other reasons, "not the least of which," Murray says, "was that she was going to win."

Better Administration

For her part, Whitmire regards her ascendancy as having few grand implications. "I don't see as much of the society change significance that people outside Houston want to read into this," she says. "I keep reading in the *Washington Post* and *The New York Times* that Houston has grown up and that all these outsiders have changed our way of thinking. And I guess I don't really believe that."

Interviewed in her sparsely-decorated controller's office, its walls adorned with prints by Albrecht Durer and Cezanne and a framed sketch commemmorating 1975 as International Women's Year, the mayor-elect contended that Houstonians simply voted for better public administration. The public's demand for improvements in the areas of traffic management, public transportation, flood control, air pollution, police performance and even garbage collection, she believes, catapulted her into office. "There is only one reason I ran for mayor," she declared. "That's because I was so disappointed in the way the city was being managed. I was appalled."

In the decade between 1970 and 1980, U.S. Census figures show, Houston opened its doors to more new people than any other American city, gaining 360,000 newcomers and swelling to 1,594,086 souls. In that same period, the Chamber of Commerce says, Houston's thriving economy expanded to help create more than 670,000 jobs in the metropolitan region, a six-county area.

But as anyone who as ever visited Houston even briefly can attest, public services have not kept pace with the city's speedy growth and heady prosperity. Take car sales. "Sticker shock" may be dampening America's love affair with the automobile nationwide, but Houston dealerships report a 10 percent increase in new car sales over last year.

But a thousand additional motor vehicles a week, unreliable mass transit, and scarce offstreet parking all add up to "a horrendous traffic problem," as political scientist Murray describes it. The streets are crumbling, moreover, and some press reports have cited Houston as the nation's pothole capital.

Indeed, nearly every sunny feature of this city seems to bring in its shadow a train of difficulties. The building boom, for example, has meant more than $2 billion in annual construction since 1979 and resulted in building trades jobs, office space and added housing. But the new development, much of it unplanned and all of it unzoned, has also contributed to millions of dollars of flooding damage, random fires, and urban sprawl.

Growth has also meant deteriorating air quality, so bad quips state representative Paul Colbert that "some days you have to watch where you're going or you're liable to bump into it." The crime rate is so monumental that one newspaper reporter who covered the police beat refers to convenience stores as "Stop-and-Robs," and the homicide count has topped 650 the last two years in a row. The understaffed police department, meanwhile, has been charged with brutality and civil rights violations by the U.S. Justice Department.

Whitmire hopes to impose some sense of rational order to all this. "The entire goal of this operation has to be getting the most public services that we can have for the dollars available to us," she says. "That really has to be what the city hall operation is all about."

Houston's new mayor is, by all accounts, extremely capable. She holds both a bachelor's and master's degree in accounting and, before achieving public office, served as audit manager at Coopers and Lybrand, a top Houston accounting firm. With her fierce intelligence, toughness and political skills, she has been not only a competent controller but a popular one.

Paul Sweeney is an Observer *contributing editor who wrote this story on assignment for the* Boston Globe.

Pothole Issue

Recently, for example, she blocked Mayor McConn from pursuing what she ridiculed as a "pothole study" — the planned expenditure of $1.35 million for engineering consultants to determine the location and condition of city streets. "You can't legally use capital improvement bond funds to study street repair," Whitmire explained. "That's why I never certified the ordinance and (the city council) never voted on it."

It was a campaign issue made to order. Voters perceived her as a faithful guardian of the public purse. And she made the mayor, her political rival, look silly and ineffective. "She showed she wasn't scared to take on the fatcats at city hall," says staunch supporter Jo Dickson, president of the University Club Women's Association. "She stopped them cold on the pothole issue."

As mayor, Whitmire's abilities will be sorely tested. "She'll face bureaucracies in city government that are set in their ways," says Morgan. They're autonomous and resist centralization. Over the years they've developed their own ways of doing business, impervious to change."

The city's tax department has compiled a particularly scandalous record. It took a lawsuit filed by Noble Ginther Jr., a city council member (who was also an unsuccessful mayoral candidate), to place more than $410 million in taxable business and personal property on the tax rolls. Since September, thanks to court action, city coffers have been fattened by $2.3 million.

"The tax department is small and understaffed," Murray says. "Like the rest of the bureaucracy here, it looks like a medium-sized Southern town that grew up too quickly. The downside of all this private sector expansion has been that it's hard for government to hire and keep competent people when they can earn more in private industry."

As Whitmire sets up house at city hall now, she's already shown that she plans to enter wielding a stiff broom. She announced at a press conference that eight mayoral executive assistants had better find new jobs: she's eliminating the positions altogether. The city bureaucracy faces a shake-up too. She plans to streamline the 25 city departments by reducing their number.

Without executive assistants acting as "go-betweens," department heads will now report directly to her. It's a model based more on private management techniques than on a cabinet form of government. "I really believe that the best thing I can do is set up a structure in city government so that government can be held accountable," she says. "That's my first goal — the reorganization of the management structure. And reform of the civil service system. So that people in government no longer believe that a job in city hall means a job for life."

With a voting majority on the city council squarely behind her, Whitmire hopes to embark on a series of innovative policies. On mass transportation, she'll propose smaller buses and crosstown routes; at present most routes are to - and - from downtown and that's not always in keeping with the city's centers of activity.

"Another thing we need to do is have more taxis," she says. "If you go to Washington, D.C. you don't have to have your own car because you can get a taxi. The same is true of New York. But you can't do that very well here." She says "it's simple" to put more cabs on the streets; the first step is to eliminate the artificial monopoly created at city hall by past refusals to grant more hackney licenses.

To fight crime, she'll insist on more police on street patrol, fewer on desk duty. Police tensions with the community can be eased, she argues, with greater minority representation on the force and more accountability. "We have a public integrity review group that reviews allegations against any city employee except a police office for wrongdoing," she says. "I think the same group ought to hear allegations against police officers."

Environmentalists are being listened to on air pollution issues. Largely based on the counseling of Sierra Club members, for example, Whitmire promises to beef up the enforcement practices of the health department to crack down on polluting industries and individuals. To curtail flooding, she hopes to widen the authority of the city planning commission and employ stricter deed requirements to better manage new development.

She plans to make vigorous use of all the mayor's powers: appointment of department heads, control of the civil service commission, administrative decision-making, and selection of board and commission members. "The mayor really has the authority to run the city," Whitmire says. She intends to set policy. Should a department head act contrary to her aims, she says flatly, "that person will be fired immediately."

As this small articulate woman prepares to take office, of course, the national media machines are rubbing their hands in delight. The television networks have been calling. Magazines like *People* and *Savvy* want interviews — the latter publication even proposing that it select her wardrobe and do her makeup in preparation for the long photography sessions.

But elsewhere in this city, away from the limelight, more bruised male egos are being nursed than in a Houston Oiler post-game locker room. Taking note, political scientist Murray warns that, should Whitmire falter or her armor develop chinks, big money is available for the right sort of candidate.

"The next time she probably won't have the opportunity to run against a couple of klutzes," Murray says. "She may have to face somebody like this new city council member, Jim Greenwood, son of a River Oaks surgeon. He looks good, handles himself well, sort of a cross between David Stockman and a young George Bush." □

. . . from Page 1

ing a new future, a heading that may take it away from its anything-goes, growth-is-great past.

Come the first of the year, as you more than likely already know, Kathy Whitmire, two-term city controller, will become mayor of Houston. In a runoff Nov. 17, Whitmire, 35, beat out Jack Heard, 63, three-term Harris County Sheriff, by a resounding margin: 62-38 percent, to be exact.

A couple of weeks earlier, Whitmire and Heard had upset two-term Mayor Jim McConn and outdistanced a crowded field of 12 other candidates, including former City Councilman Louis Macey, who lost to McConn in the 1979 runoff.

From the beginning, McConn was in trouble. His two administrations had spawned some juicy scandals revolving around his role in the awarding of lucrative cable television franchises, and his acceptance of loans from businesses with city contracts, loans he used to pay off Las Vegas gambling debts. Diamond Jim, people began calling him.

And just as the campaign got underway, a suit filed by mayoral candidate Noble Ginther (one of the also-rans) uncovered allegations that the city had grossly undervalued assets of major corporations, including Brown & Root Inc. The city's tax department then was placed under court supervision.

Something much more troublesome, however, plagued McConn's reelection campaign. Potholes. Not potholes, re-

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Wade Roberts is a Houston Chronicle *reporter.*

ally, but what they stood for: declining city services in a very rich city.

Houston has the third highest per capita income among the nation's major cities and unemployment runs around 4 percent. Residents may gripe, but city property taxes are very low. Civic groups refer to the city as the "golden buckle" on the Sun Belt. But the rapid, unfettered growth has come at no small expense.

In 1980, police estimated, one of every 11 Houstonians was the victim of violent crime; the city's 3,100-officer force, police say, is far undermanned. On any given day, one-fourth of the city's buses do not run; mass transit is laughably nonexistent. A constant crush of cars jams freeways. Garbage collection in parts of town is erratically sporadic.

But, as McConn once pointed out: "We may have potholes in Houston, but at least you've got enough money in your jeans to get the damn tire fixed." For years, Houstonians were willing to make that trade: foregoing adequate city services for a couple of bucks more in their pockets.

In the first election, McConn was alone in proclaiming the health of the city. Vote for me, he said, and we'll grow, grow, grow together. Bigger is better. Quantity is quality. Damn the potholes, full speed ahead.

But the serious contenders among his opponents were preaching a different message, and they were reaching a growing congregation. They had perceived what McConn had not: that the city's ranks, swelled by immigrants dissatisfied with the tarnish they found under the gold, had decided that, well, maybe it'd be worth exchanging a few dollars to avoid those damn potholes in the first place.

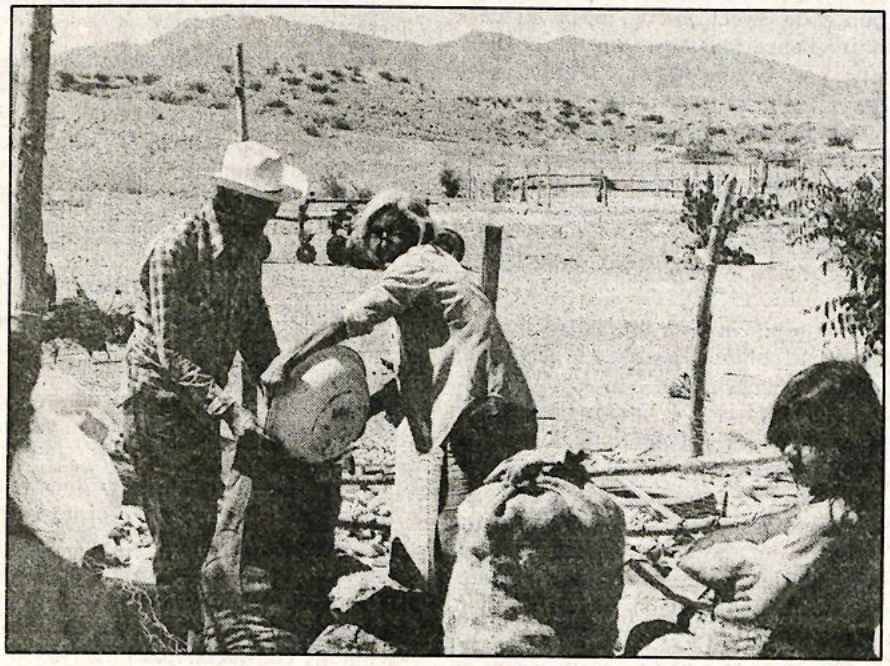
Faced with that disenchantment among voters, McConn's opponents took positions damning the city's haphazard, unbridled growth and called for a restrained approach to further expansion.

In the general election, McConn enjoyed the support of much of the city's traditional downtown business establishment. There were a few defectors who had sensed McConn was doomed, but not many. In addition, the mayor had the support of some of the city's old guard minority groups (such as the black Harris County Council of Organizations, which decided for some reason not to endorse Al Green, a black justice of the peace and long-shot mayoral candidate).

It wasn't near enough.

Bucking the line, many blacks and Hispanics crossed over to Whitmire, who also attracted the young, the liberal and many of the moderates McConn had counted on. Heard — splitting some, but not many, with Macy — got the conservative, older, richer, Republican vote, pulling away some of the borderline conservatives McConn had hoped to get.

After the count, it was Whitmire,



The Social Cause Calendar

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

HAZARDOUS WASTES WORKSHOP

The Houston Toxic Substances Task Force, the Texas Environmental Coalition, and For the People, Inc., will present a free public workshop on "Protecting Groundwater from Hazardous Wastes" on Dec. 5 at the Univ. of Houston, Univ. Center, Lafitte Room, 9-5. Agenda includes discussion of hazardous wastes disposal operations, laws and regulations concerning disposal, and public involvement in monitoring and assuring safe on-site disposal of wastes. 228-0037 for more information.

BUDAFEST CHRISTMAS BAZAAR

Fine crafts, entertainment, and food specialties such as German sausages and Mexican dishes will highlight the 2nd annual Budafest Christmas Bazaar, Dec. 6, 10-5, beneath the live oaks of the park facing Buda's main street. 50 area craftspeople will be displaying their handmade wares while jugglers and puppets entertain. Buda is 15 miles south of Austin, just off IH35.

BEANS AND CORNBREAD BENEFIT

The Austin Lesbian/Gay Political Caucus will hold a beans and cornbread benefit on Dec. 6 at Austin Lambda, 603 W. 12th, 5:30 p.m., $5 admission.

DALLAS CISPES DINNER

A benefit dinner for the Committee in Solidarity with the People of El Salvador (Dallas chapter) will be served on Dec. 15, 6:30 p.m., at Lucy's, 3136 Routh St. (in Chelsea Square). The $5 charge includes Mexican dinner and speakers who will discuss current legislative and political events in or about El Salvador. Cash bar. Advance tickets at 375-3715 or 526-7967.

AUSTIN HOUSING ORDINANCE

The Citizens for United Austin, the broad-based coalition that is campaigning to defeat the Jan. 16 initiative that would allow landlords to deny housing to lesbians and gays, will receive all proceeds from the Dec. 16 production of "Greater Tuna," a comedy satire about small town Texas life, at TransAct Theater, 222 E. 6th, Austin, 8 p.m., $6 admission.

Progressive Organizations

In no hurry, the *Observer* is building up lists of the political organizations we regard as progressive, their meeting evenings where that is applicable, and a phone number for each, in Texas cities. The editor invites communications recommending organizations for inclusion, by city.

AUSTIN

ACORN, 8 nghbrhood groups, 442-8321; **Amn. Friends Service Cmte.**, 474-2399; **Amnesty Intl.**, Group 107, Cindy Torrance, Bx. 4951, Aus. 78765; **Anti-Hunger Coalition of Tx. (ACT)**, 474-9221; **Austinites for Public Transportation**, 3rd Tue., 441-2651; **Aus. Lambda**, every Mon., 478-8653; **Lesbian-Gay Pol. Caucus**, 4th Tue., & **Lesbian-Gay Demos. of Tx.**, 478-8653; **Aus. Nghbrhood, Ccl.**, 4th Wed., 442-8411; **Aus. Nghbrhood Fund**, 3rd Mon., 451-2347; **Aus. Tenants' Ccl.**, 474-1961; **Aus. Women's Political Caucus**, 1st & 3rd Tues., 472-3606; **Black Aus. Demos.**, 478-6576; **Brotherhood of Viet. Vets.**, every Sun., 443-4830;

Central Aus. Demos., 3rd Wed., 477-6487; **Central Tx. ACLU**, 477-4335; **Central Tx. Lignite Watch, Travis Co.**, 479-0678; **Citizens' Coalition for an Economical Energy Policy**, 474-4738; **Cmte.**

Heard and, a good ways back, McConn. The mayor who for four years had presided over the Boom City's boom, the mayor who had championed growth for growth's sake, was finished.

The general election pretty much was something of a referendum. McConn or no McConn. A policy of unrestraint or one of, well, let's slow down a bit, see where we are, where we want to go, think it over a bit and then move slowly and certainly.

OK. That was decided. Wild growth was out; planned progress was in. McConn was out; now, who would be in?

It'd be either Whitmire or Heard. With only a couple of weeks between the general election and the runoff, both camps prepared to do war. Whitmire had an image as something of a social liberal, so her supporters were quick to point out that she was a fiscal conservative. Heard's people characterized their man as, well, as a conservative's conservative.

Endorsements in the runoff were pretty much as expected. Heard got the nod from conservative groups and business; Whitmire was supported by liberal groups and minorities. There were exceptions to the case, though. Heard picked up some scattered support among blacks and Hispanics, while Whitmire won the endorsement of one of several police officers' groups.

In something of a bizarre note, a person who claimed to be a representative of the Ku Klux Klan had endorsed Heard in the general election. The person — or his endorsement — did not surface during the runoff.

Both Whitmire and Heard had supported some arrest of the city's wild growth. Whitmire had said she would seek outright restraints on growth in some areas and even promised she'd seek the deannexation of some areas. While promising an orderly slowdown in Houston's cancer-like sprawl, Heard indicated he wouldn't go quite that far. Instead, he said, he would seek to defeat new annexations until services were improved in existing parts of town.

Other than that difference, the platforms of both candidates were surprisingly similar. They both said they'd raise the level of city services without increasing taxes by improving the efficiency of city government. Yes, they'd both improve the morale of the police department. Yes, they'd both improve mass transit. They both even hemmed and hawed when asked whether they'd fire Police Chief B. K. Johnson, whose big problem seems to be that he regularly places one, sometimes both, of his feet in his mouth.

WITH SO many similarities, Whitmire and Heard took to extollng their own qualifications and attacking those of the other. What were those qualifications?

in Solidarity with the People of El Salvador (CISPES), 477-4728; Demo. Socialist Organizing Cmte., 2nd Wed., 453-2556; Ecology Action, 478-1645; El Centro Chicano, 477-7769 or 476-3747; Gray Panthers, 4th Thu., 345-1869; IMPACT, 472-3903; LULAC, 2nd Wed., 451-3219; Magnet Coalition (managed growth), 441-2651; Max's Pot (appropriate technology), 1st Sat., 928-4786; Mxn.-Amn. Demos., 1st Mon., 444-7688 or 472-9211; New Amn. Movement, every other Sun., 454-2888 or 478-2096; NOW, 2nd & last Wed., 472-3775;

Nurses' Environmental Health Watch, 454-3932; Northeast Aus. Demos., 2nd Tue., 836-3533; Phogg Foundation, Box 13549, Aus.; Save Barton Creek, every Tue., 472-4104; Sierra Club, 1st Tue., 478-1264; Socialist Party of Tx., 2nd Tue., 452-3722; South Aus. Demos., 447-4091; Tx. Abortion Rights Action League (TARAL), 478-0094; Tx. Consumer Assn., 477-1882; Tx. Mobilization for Survival, Sun., wkly., 474-5877; Travis Audubon Scty., 3rd Thu., 447-7155 or 477-6282; Travis Cty. Demo. Women, every Fri., 453-3243; Travis Cty. YD's, 453-3796; Univ. Mobilization for Survival, wkly., 476-4503; UT YD's, 452-8516; West Aus. Demos., 2nd Thu:, 454-1291; Zilker Park Posse, 472-1053.

SAN ANTONIO

Demos. for Action, Research & Education (DARE), rsch. volunteers needed, 4th Wed., 674-0351; Fellowship of Reconciliation (FOR), 432-5715; ACLU, 224-6791; Amnesty Int'l., U.S. Group 127, Julia Powell, 828-4141; Women's Political Caucus, 2nd Tues., 655-3724; Civil Rights Litigation Center, 224-1061; Citizens Concerned About Nuclear Power, 1st & 3rd Weds., 655-0543; Communities Organized for Public Service (COPS), 2nd Th., 222-2367; Demos for Action, Research & Education (DARE), rsch. volunteers needed, 4th Wed., 674-0351; Latin-American Assistance, alternate Sats., 732-0960; Mxn.-Amn. Demos., 3rd Mon., Walter Martinez, 227-1341; NAACP, 4th Fri., 224-7636; Organizations United for East Side Development, last Tue., 824-4422; People for Peace, 2nd Th., 822-3089; Physicians for Social Responsibility, 1st Mon., Dr. Martin Batiere, 691-0375; Poor People's Coalition for Human Services, 923-3037; Residents Organized for Better and Beautiful Environmental Development (ROBBED), 3rd Tue., 226-3973; S. A. Demo. League, 1st Thu., 344-1497; S. A. Gay Alliance, last Wed., Metropolitan Commnty. Church, 102 S. Pine; Sierra Club, 3rd Tue., 341-5990; United Citizens Project Planning and Operating Corp. (federal funding), 3rd Mon., 224-4278.

DALLAS

ACLU, 2001 McKinney, Suite 330; ACORN, 823-4580; Amn. Friends Service Cmte., 321-8643; American Indian Center, 826-8856; Amnesty Intl., U.S. Group 205, 361-4690; Armadillo Coalition, 1st Wed., 349-1970; AMIGOS, 339-9461; Audubon Society, 341-2534; Bois d'Arc Patriots, 827-2632; Bread for the World, Dist. 3, Joe Haag, 741-1991x298 & 495-1494; Brotherhood of Viet Vet., 224-9750; Brown Berets, 337-4135; Citizens' Assn. for Sound Energy (CASE), 946-9446; Citizens for Comm. Health, 1st Fri., 363-2979; Clean Air Coalition, 387-2785; Comanche Peak Life Force, Wed. wkly, 337-5885; Cmte. in Solidarity with the People in El Salvador (CISPES), 375-3715; Dallas Gay Alliance, 2nd Mon., 528-4233; E. Dal. Nghbrhood Assn., 3rd Mon., 827-1181;

Fellowship of Reconciliation (FOR), 1-370-3805; Frederick Douglass Voting Council, every Fri., 426-1867; Love Field Cit. Action Cmte., 526-8481; Low Income Housing Security Cmte., 748-5861; Nghborhood Info. & Action Service, 827-2632; Neighbors United for Quality Ed., 823-6713; NOW (Dallas Cty.), 1st Mon., 742-6918; NOW (North Dal.,) 3rd Tue., 690-8971; No. Lake Col. Solar Club, 659-5254; Progressive Voters League, 372-8168; Sierra Club, 2nd Wed., 369-5543;

Save Open Space (SOS) 1st Mon., 750-9736; S. Central Civic League, 375-5038; S.E. Dal. Nghbrhood Club, every 4th Sat., 421-7931; Sound Transportation & Rapid Transit (START), 321-6960; Txns. for Handgun Control, 528-3985; Tx. Cmte. on Natural Resources, 352-8370; Tx. Tenants Union, 823-2733; Dallas UN Assn. (DUNA), 526-1853; Urban Affairs Center (Bishop Col.), 372-6801; War Resisters League, 337-5885; W. Dal. Nghbrhood Group, 3rd Wed., 631-1586.

FORT WORTH

ACLU, 534-6883; ACORN, (11 nghbrhd. groups), 924-1401, board meets mthly; Armadillo Coalition, 927-0808; Bread for the World, 924-1440 (Dist. 12), 923-4290 (Dist. 6); Citizens for Fair Utility Regulation, 478-6372; Coalition of Labor Union Women, 469-1202. Dist. 10 Demos., 2nd Sat., 535-7803; First Friday, 1st Fri., 927-0808; F.W. Tenants' Ccl., 923-5071; IMPACT, (telephone chain, works largely through progressive Protestant churches), 923-4506, meets on call; Mental Health Assn., 2nd & 4th Tue., 335-5405; NOW, 3rd Th., 336-3943; Precinct Workers Cl., 3rd Th., 429-2706; Senatorial Dist. 12 Demos., 2nd Sat. or 2nd Wed., 457-1560; Sierra Club, 3rd Wed., 923-9718; Students Against the Draft (UTA), 261-1935; Tarrant Cty. Demo Women's Club, 2nd Sat., 451-8133, 927-5169; Tx. Coalition of Black Demos (F. W. chap.), 1st Tues., 534-7737; Women's Political Caucus, 1st Wed., 336-8700.

GREATER TEXAS

Bryan: ACLU, Box 4523, 77805; Alta Loma: Brotherhood of Viet. Vet., 925-6405. Amarillo: ACLU, 373-7200; Panhandle Environmental Awareness Cmte., 376-8903; Northwest Tx. Clergy and Laity Concerned, 2nd Tue., 373-8668. Bastrop: Central Tx. Lignite Watch, Bastrop Co., 321-5250. Beaumont: ACLU, 898-0743; Amnesty Int'l, group 221, Karen Dweyer, 420 Longmeadow, Beaumont 77707. Brownsville: ACLU, 541-4874. Bryan: ACLU, 823-5543; Brazos Society for Alternatives to Nuclear Energy, 822-1882. Denton: ACLU, 387-5126. El Paso: ACLU, 545-2990; Amnesty Int'l, Group 189, 584-4869. Lubbock: ACLU, 765-8393. Midland: Brotherhood of Viet. Vets., 684-3768. Nacogdoches: Pineywoods Coalition, 218 W. Austin St., Nacogdoches. San Juan: ACLU, 787-8171. Waco: ACLU, 755-3611.

HOUSTON

ACLU, 524-5925; ACORN, 523-6989; Amns. for Demo. Action, 522-9544; Amnesty Intl., Group 23, Anne Chastang, 6006 Saxon, 77092 & Eileen, 869-5021x42; Brotherhood of Viet. Vet., 728-4857; Citizens' Anti-Nuclear Info. Team (CAN IT), 522-3343; Concilio de Organizaciones Chicanos, P.O. Box 9, Houston 77001; Demo. Socialist Organizing Cmte., 921-6906; Gay Political Caucus, 1st and 3rd Weds., 521-1000; Harris Cty. Concerned Women, 674-6798; Harris Cty. Demos., quarterly, 528-2057; Houston Area Women's Center, 528-6798; Lesbian and Gay Demos. of Texas, 521-1000; Mxn.-Amn. Demos., 6944 Navigation, Houston 77011; Mockingbird Alliance, 747-1837; NAACP, 1018 Clebourne, Houston 77001; PASO, 6716 Fairfield, Houston 77023; Senate Dist. 15 Demo. Coalition, 862-8431; Tx. Coalition of Black Demos., 674-0968; Tx. Demos., 667-6194; UofH YD's, 749-7347; Westside Demos., 464-2536.

Heard made much of his law enforcement career, playing on the fears of crime-weary Houstonians. His ads prominently mentioned his three terms as county sheriff, three years as Houston police chief, his 15 years as assistant director of the Texas Department of Corrections and his service on panels such as the Texas Commission on Jail Standards, Texas Organized Crime Prevention Council, Assembly of American Correctional Association and International Association of Chiefs of Police. "A big man for a big job," his ads read.

Whitmire, a relative newcomer to political life, played up her four years as the city's financial manager and her background in accounting and business. Houston is big business and needs a businesslike manager, was the message her ads delivered.

The attacks? Heard's ads cited Whitmire's inexperience in law enforcement. "If you're frightened about crime," said one frequent ad, "you'd better be frightened about Kathy." (Notice the use of the familiar first name there. Mayor Jack could deal with the police department, it seemed to say. What about a mayor named Kathy? Huh? A woman?). Whitmire countered with ads arguing, "Houston can't afford a one-dimensional mayor," pointing out that Heard lacked experience outside the field of law enforcement.

THE CLOSER it got to runoff day, the weirder, and dirtier, the campaign got. Growth, crime, mass transit — the real issues were eclipsed by a couple of off-the-wall questions: 1. Which candidate was most willing to meet in a public debate? and 2. Which candidate was the most moral?

Right after the general election, Whitmire had challenged Heard to meet her in a televised debate. Heard agreed, and then spent the next couple of weeks laying low, trying to avoid debating his opponent, all the time saying he'd be more than happy to oblige. "Jack Heard, come out and fight like a man," urged one of Whitmire's newspaper ads.

A few days before the runoff, it appeared the debate would never materialize. Then, a tape surfaced of Heard's appearance before a closed meeting of a Houston police officers' group. During the gathering, a question was asked about the debate. Heard admitted avoiding a public forum with Whitmire, saying he "had nothing to gain and everything to lose."

When a *Houston Chronicle* reporter called Heard to check on the quote, the sheriff allowed as how he must've misspoken himself; he had no recollection of saying such a thing, Heard said. Later the same night, he announced he was ready at last to debate.

The second question revolved around Whitmire's endorsement by the Houston Gay Political Caucus. Although she had been only one of several GPC-backed candidates in the general and runoff elections, Whitmire alone was the target of a vicious smear campaign. In some of his speeches, Heard alluded to what he described as Whitmire's "different lifestyle," and talked of "morality at City Hall."

But things did not stop there. The weekend before the runoff, a four-page tabloid was distributed in parts of Houston, courtesy of the Young Conservatives of Texas, a group that had split from the Young Americans for Freedom because its members felt YAF was too liberal. Under headlines such as "Kathy 'pleased' at 'gay' backing" and "Homos finding 'gay mecca' in Houston," the paper carried a variety of hysterical anti-gay, anti-Whitmire stories.

And still more. The day before the runoff, some 100,000 Houstonians opened their mail to find a Mailgram attacking Whitmire. Among other things, it alleged that "many" San Francisco homosexuals had organized her campaign and that Whitmire had agreed to seek the mandatory teaching of homosexuality in public schools starting in kindergarten. Of course, it did not mention that Houston mayors have absolutely no say over public school curriculum.

The attack was signed by something called Houston Concerned Citizens. The day the Mailgram appeared, Houston attorney Walter Pink filed papers to designate Houston Concerned Citizens as a political action committee. Pink refused to disclose any information about the group, but said he represented an individual who had spent $203,000 to send the Mailgrams.

Early the next day, election day, a *Chronicle* reporter and photographer went to the River Oaks home of a 38-year-old real estate investor, William C. Morris III, to ask him about reports he was associated with Houston Concerned Citizens. As they stood on the front porch, a man pointed a shotgun through a window at them and said, "You want a story, I'll give you a story. Don't leave."

As reporter Paul Reyes and photographer Buster Dean retreated, the man fired two shots in the air. Morris later was identified by Macy, one of the losing candidates in the general election, as the man who had offered to take care of his campaign debt in return for an endorsement of Heard.

Heard, by the way, disavowed all knowledge of either the tabloid or the Mailgram.

Whew! Well, that brings us up to the runoff, where, as we've said, Whitmire emerged the victor.

Statistic time. More than 90 percent of the blacks who went to the polls voted for Whitmire, as did about 60 percent of the Hispanics. A little more than half of the blue-collar vote went to her.

Heard did a little better among whites, pulling roughly 55 percent of that vote — not even near what he needed to overcome Whitmire's lead. Voter turnout in both elections was a record high — almost 40 percent of the registered voters went to the polls both times.

The final count on expenditures isn't in yet, but Heard appears to have spent well in excess of $1.5 million in his campaign, compared to Whitmire's thrifty budget of about $650,000.

So, Heard now goes back to fulltime sheriffin', at least until 1984, when his term expires. He says he's undecided whether to seek reelection to a fourth term as sheriff or to run again for mayor in 1983.

Either way, he may find the going rough. Although the mayor's race was non-partisan, Heard, a conservative Democrat, played a hot and heavy game of footsies with Houston Republicans in his runoff campaign. In doing that, he may have alienated the folks whose support he needs in the partisan sheriff's race.

And Whitmire . . . who is this woman who soon will become Houston's mayor? She's a native Houstonian. She's widowed and lives alone. She's energetic, low-key and efficient. She's smart and serious. She seldom laughs or smiles in public. She is articulate and quick to fashion solutions to problems she perceives. She was Houston's first woman elected city official at 31, and will be Houston's first woman mayor at 35.

Finally, she means business. The day after her victory, she announced she would seek the deannexation of Clear Lake City, an area annexed by Houston in 1977 over the strong objections of its residents. Although the city charter forbids the deannexation of areas in which the city has spent bond funds for improvements, Whitmire points out it also requires the city to maintain a certain level of services. The level, she maintains, is not being met.

That, folks, was the city election, 1981, in Houston. Still big and growing. Just maybe not as wild now. □

POLITICAL INTELLIGENCE

Democrats Getting Organized

✔ The success of the recently formed Austin Democratic Forum has encouraged Texas Democrats to get them started in other cities. Dwayne Holman, Texas Democratic Party executive director, said organizations designed to expose young business and professional people to Democratic public officials were getting organized in Waco and Amarillo, and he expected to see them in all the 80,000-plus cities in the state in the next two months.

Barbara Vackar, Travis County Democratic Party chairman, got the Austin Forum started. "I realized there was a void in the county party in participation by business and professional people," she said, "and tried to think of a way that void could be lessened."

Austin lawyer Shannon Ratliff is president of the Austin group, and officers and board members include Dulie Bell, Deane Armstrong, Roy Butler, S. A. Garza, George Christian, Pike Powers, Roy Spence, Jane Hickie, Les Gage, Robb Southerland, Joe Longley, and Vackar.

The Austin Democratic Forum held its second meeting recently, where it heard from Bob Strauss, and plans to hear from Virginia governor-elect Chuck Robb and wife Lynda Johnson Robb on Dec. 21.

✔ Garry Mauro, as we reported recently, was hoping he wouldn't have an opponent in his quest for the land commissioner's job, but it looks like that won't happen — even if Bill Clayton decides not to run. Another West Texan, Midland Sen. Pete Snelson, commissioned a poll recently to assess his chances, now that he's decided to forego the governor's race, and will decide within the next few weeks. Other potential entries are Rep. Don Rains, a four-term Democrat from San Marcos, and Rockdale Rep. Dan Kubiak. The most prominent Republican mentioned is Rep. Milton Fox, the ultra-conservative petroleum engineer from Houston.

✔ The Attorney General's race is also attracting a crowd of potential candidates. Interested Democrats include Cong. Jim Mattox of Dallas; Railroad Commissioner Mack Wallace; state Sen. Ray Farabee of Wichita Falls; state Sen. Jack Ogg of Houston; and John Hannah, former Lufkin state representative and now special prosecutor against county officials allegedly involved in kickback schemes and other wrongdoing. State Sens. Tati Santiesteban of El Paso, Carl Parker of Port Arthur and Lloyd Doggett of Austin are also mentioned, but none of the three is very likely.

One person mentioned on the Republican side is state Sen. Bill Meier who was elected as a Democrat but supported Ronald Reagan and later announced his own switch to the GOP. Chet Upham told Dave McNeely of the *Austin American-Statesman* there's a good chance that Meier will run. Meier says no.

✔ Former congressman and special ambassador to Mexico Bob Krueger has made no bones about intending to run again for the U.S. Senate, but he will probably have some company in the Democratic primary. Political watchers in San Antonio say that Mayor Henry Cisneros has ambitions.

✔ Meetings between House and Senate conferees trying to hammer out a farm bill have been far more confused, acrimonious and exhausting this time because of tighter budget ceilings, the *New York Times* reports, and it was in a cramped Capitol meeting room, H130, "thick with tobacco smoke and the sort of weary shorthand favored by all-night poker players," where the following exchange took place:

"I move to do whatever it was we just decided to do," Cong. Kiki de la Garza, chairman of the Agriculture committee, declared at one point in the confusion.

The topic under consideration was goat research.

"Goat research?" inquired Jesse Helms, the Senate agricultural chairman who, as the *Times* pointed out, "has been on guard aginst esoteric spending, particularly when proposed by liberal northern Democrats." The Senator wanted to know where this goat research was taking place.

"Texas," said de la Garza. (The program in question is at Prairie View A&M University.)

"Senate recedes," Sen. Helms replied instantly.

✔ The Reagan administration has decided against the controversial appointment of a conservative political theorist, Prof. M. E. Bradford of the University of Dallas (*TO* 10/9/81), to head the National Endowment for the Humanities. Bradford, an English professor, is a Republican who formerly was a Democrat and once supported the presidential candidacy of George Wallace. He drew opposition from many Reagan supporters, especially those now described as neoconservatives.

Instead of Bradford, the White House plans to appoint William Bennett, president of the National Humanities Center in North Carolina. Bennett, a Brooklyn native who grew up in Washington D.C., has a Ph.D. in philosophy from UT-Austin and a law degree from Harvard. Before joining the research center in North Carolina, he was an assistant to John Silber at Boston University. Bennett is a Democrat.

✔ The clean-cut young men you've probably seen at places like Houston's Hobby Airport handing out bumper stickers with such sentiments as "Feed Jane Fonda to the Whales" are part of a nationwide organization called the Democratic National Policy Committee. Founded by Lyndon LaRouche Jr., the independent political activist usually identified with the U.S. Labor Party, the group professes to be pro-growth, pro-technology, and Democratic.

Complaints and confusion among Democratic workers about the LaRouche group caused Charles T. Manatt, chairman of the Democratic National Committee, to stress that the Democratic National Policy Committee did not speak for and was not an arm of the Democratic Party.

LaRouche, who ran in several presidential primaries as a Democrat last year, denies fostering the confusion that Manatt is concerned about, but he argues that his group has an "indirect connection" to the Democratic National Committee and should be admitted to membership in that group. The LaRouche workers often appear outside various Democratic functions, and, according to the *New York Times* they were pamphleteering outside the Averell Harriman birthday celebration, handing out fliers about interest rates and about what was described as an attempt on the life of Mr. LaRouche's wife. □

Recalling Nuremburg

Bradley F. Smith, *The Road to Nuremberg*. New York, Basic Books, 1981, ix + 309 pp., $14.95.

By Robert H. Abzug

Austin

Our moral imaginations would like punishments to fit crimes. No wonder that moral imagination has suffered such paralysis in this century. Under the guise of war, revolution, colonialism, and genocidal eugenics, the world has witnessed the largely unpunished slaughter of one hundred million or more persons in eighty years. No wonder too that the word Nuremberg still resonates with moral force thirty-five years after an international tribunal passed judgment on twenty-two Nazis accused of crimes involving the deaths of tens of millions. The Nuremberg Trials stand as the single major instance of an international community bringing perpetrators of mass death to the bar of justice.

Nuremberg's compelling symbolic appeal has given the trials a kind of double image in our historical consciousness. We wish them to have been swift and dramatic applications of self-evident principles of law, and we often remember and symbolize them that way. Yet the historical record tells us a different story. By most accounts, the trials themselves were a grisly bore. Drama did occasionally sear the courtroom, as when the defendants faced a motion picture screen filled with surreal newsreels of Dachau, Buchenwald, and Belsen. However, the ennui of legal procedure dominated. Hastily prepared cases, highly innovative readings of international law, and the need to rule on motions and objections about this new kind of trial in four languages and in the terms of five legal systems — all this dragged out the proceedings over ten months. "The symbol of Nuremberg," observed eyewitness Rebecca West, "was a yawn."

Bradley F. Smith, whose widely acclaimed *Reaching Judgment at Nuremberg* (1977) recounted the "inside" story of deliberations among members of the international panel of justices with a clarity and liveliness the trials themselves never attained, has now turned his energies to tracing the origins of the trial itself. *The Road to Nuremberg,* rather than chronicling wartime debates in legal and popular journals over the parameters of international law, focuses on the behind-the-scenes story of policymaking. Smith demonstrates that the trials emerged from rough-and-tumble struggles within the Roosevelt administration, with precious little participation by the Allies. Indeed, one of Smith's major themes is American dominance in war crimes trial planning and the knotty problems that resulted from this single legal and cultural perspective.

Serious consideration of war crimes policy began among the Allies as reports of Nazi military and civiilian atrocities mounted in 1943 and 1944. By early 1944 the United Nations War Crimes Commission had been created to formulate postwar policy. However, the War Department in Washington created its own plans in the months after D-Day, as victory seemed imminent and an orderly occupation policy for Germany crucial. It came up with an occupation handbook, one that ordered the detention of certain classes of Nazi officials (based on outdated and incomplete knowledge of German governmental administration), but otherwise left much of the economy and infrastructure of the old regime intact. That would make for a smooth occupation. This approach was fine at least with the British, who feared that any wider roundup of Nazis for legal processing might move beyond the accepted boundaries of international law.

Neither the War Department nor the British took much cognizance of the genuine outrage felt in public and official circles regarding Nazi atrocities, and soon objections to the occupation handbook surfaced. In particular, Henry J. Morganthau, Jr., Roosevelt's Secretary of the Treasury, agitated for a harsher peace. His own program, the so-called Morganthau Plan, advocated the virtual levelling of German industry, massive arrests of Nazis and, in some cases, their families, in short the transformation of Germany into a weak, "pastoralized" state purged entirely of its former elites.

Critics seized upon the severity of the Morganthau Plan; still, it captured and translated into policy Allied moral indignation as no other proposal had. It challenged, by its very existence, others in power to create an alternative that would satisfy moral sentiment but would not dismantle German society. A group of War Department legal planners, led by Lieutenant Colonel Murray C. Bernays, worked out such a plan. They would spare Germany as a whole but would try select individuals and the "Nazi Government and its Party and State agencies, including the SA, SS and Gestapo" for "conspiracy to commit murder, terrorism, and the destruction of peaceful populations in violation of the laws of War." This basic charge, aimed at organizations and their members and specifying conspiracy as the crime, became the basis for the trials at Nuremberg.

Smith tells the story of the conspiracy/criminal organization approach in a brisk yet subtle narrative. He wends his way through fascinating details of political maneuverings, clashes of personality, and the intermeshing of war crimes decisionmaking with the ever-quickening pace of the war itself. He shows how crucial were the revelations of the Malmedy Massacre and the openings of Dachau and Buchenwald to the cementing of public and official opinion in favor of the trials. Smith also outlines some of the major shortcomings of the trial plan — for instance, the concept of "conspiracy" did not exist in a number of legal systems involved in the trials and created problems for prosecution and defense alike.

Not so strangely, Smith falters when he attempts broader judgments. He is uneasy about the trials. He credits them with preventing an anti-German bloodbath by creating a focus for anger and vengeance; perhaps, he argues timidly, the precedent of Nuremberg might become an important turning point in the history of international relations. Mostly Smith sees shortcomings and blames them on the American planners. The trials, he states with more certainty, were unrealistic in their aims; they cast the net of projected prosecutions too widely and at the same time let off too easily some of those actually tried. Finally, in its inception and form, the Nuremberg plan suffered from that moralistic strain in American foreign policy that saw international relations in terms of sin and atonement. "The idea that the gigantic atrocity of Nazism and the Second World War," he writes, "could have been moved before a court, examined, and judged is at least very odd. The belief that it could have been done quickly and without violence to customary principles of law, is breathtaking."

But what is Smith's alternative? Any war crimes prosecution or occupation policy would have produced its own pe-

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culiar set of moralisms and tortured traditions. The extraordinary nature of the crimes themselves made for such problems. Only doing nothing would have met the firmest criteria of tradition and, under the circumstances, would have provided a definitive case of moral abomination. Rebecca West, easily as wise an observer and critic of Nuremberg as Smith, caught a truer essence of the trials, their task and the source of their deficiencies: "Brave [were] the men who, in making the Nuremberg trial, tried to force a huge and sprawling historical event to become comprehensible. It is only by making such efforts that we survive." This reviewer, at least, finds West's a more profound judgment on Nuremberg than Smith's tally sheet. Nonetheless *The Road to Nuremberg,* through its narrative reconstruction of policymaking, brilliantly humanizes a little-known aspect of the war crimes story that, as Smith demonstrates, had an enormous impact on the trials themselves. □

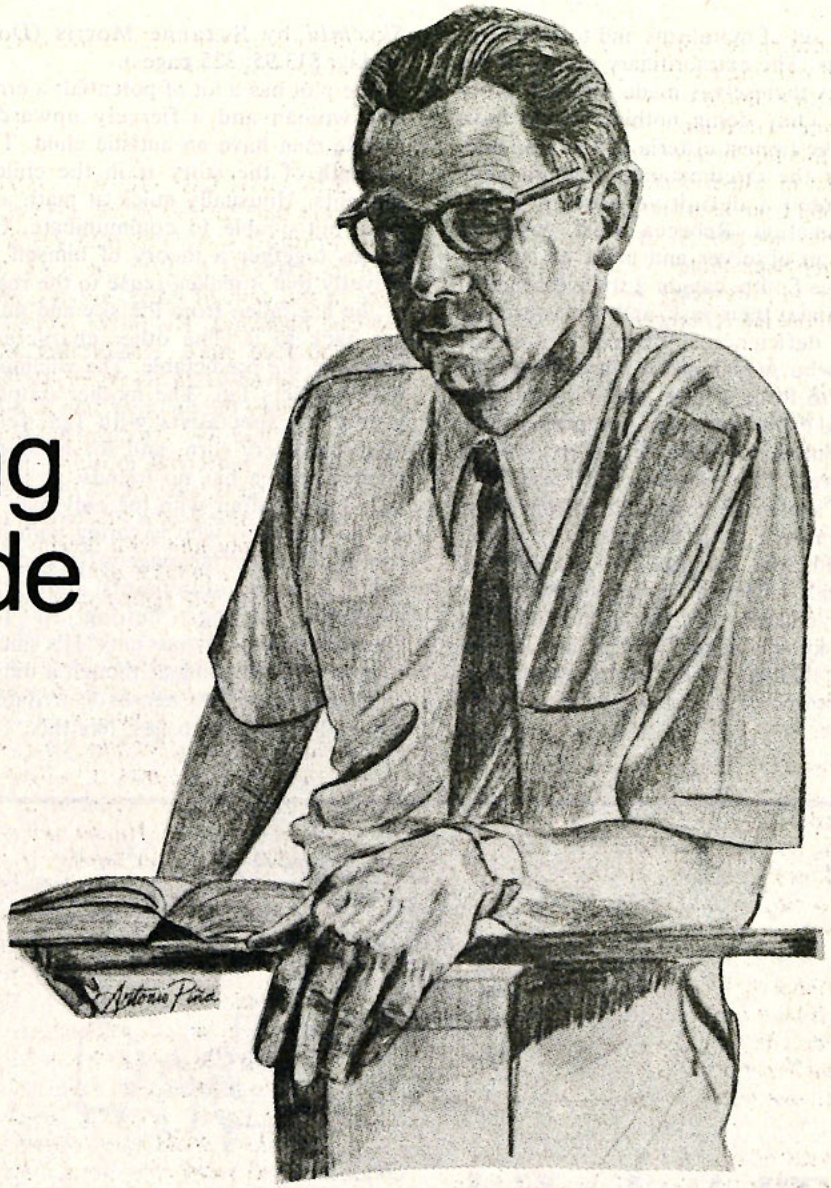
Skychild by Suzanne Morris (Doubleday; $13.95; 325 pages).

The plot has a lot of potential: a creative woman and a fiercely upwardly mobile man have an autistic child. The strength of the story is in the child's thoughts. Unusually quick at math and logic but unable to communicate, Ian pieces together a theory of himself so cleverly that it makes sense to the reader: he has fallen from the sky and must get back to it. The other characters, however, are predictable. The villainous father rejects Ian. The mother traipses around to specialists with Ian, feels guilty at every turn, and for an unexplained reason has no friends, so naturally has an affair with the only man — an old friend — who is caring with her son. Much of the language is flat and unoriginal; some statements about the mother's feelings belong in the welcome-to-the-obvious bin ("His smoothing over everything as though it didn't exist grated on her nerves"); irritating elipses sprinkle the pages, like this. . . . The book is interesting, but not satisfying.

The Bonner Boys by Campbell Geeslin (Simon and Schuster; $11.95; 191 pages).

The story of five Texas brothers in their fifties and sixties. Geeslin hints at the real matters of growing old: introversion, fear of death, loneliness; but he does not get past the shallow pursuits of these big boys, who variously chase sex and power and worry about their fat midsections and overdrinking. The brothers and their stories are mildly interesting, but they are not developed well enough to be more than that; their random childhood memories do not add up to anything, although some of them are affecting. The dialogue is stiff as shirt cardboard and the obsession with genitalia — men's and women's — is tiresome. The book is about boys who never grew up, but it does not explore the reasons why they never grew up, or involve the reader enough to make her want to know why. *Nina Butts*

Assessing Elroy Bode



Drawing Courtesy of Texas Western Press

By Richard Phelan

McGregor

When I first met Elroy Bode, in El Paso in 1962, he had published little and of that little I had read seven pages. I liked what I read, so I called him up. Since then he has published five books. He is a writer of short-non-fiction — sketches, mostly, but also reportage, reviews, and works that are perhaps non-fiction short stories. Four of the books contain a total of 255 separate pieces, ranging in length from a few lines to a few pages. The fifth is a notebook in which, along with much else, he says that he is not a novelist or a short-story writer, that he has "no ability to sustain a work beyond a page or two."

What he does sustain is a concern with certain classes of material: animals; childhood; strangers on streets and park benches; poor Mexicans; The Hill Country (where he grew up); the curious fact that things and people exist; and the effects that various forms of music have on those who play it, hear it, and dance to it. About each of these subjects he has written many sketches. In the way that certain poems add up to an entity called *Leaves of Grass,* Bode's sketches make up a series of longer works.

Some day it will occur to a publisher to gather, for example, the Hill Country sketches from a dozen magazines and the five books, and the new volume will contain more about that part of Texas than a novel. It will document and celebrate the Hill Country more completely than any other piece of writing has done.

For a writer of sketches can be comprehensive in a way that makes a "panoramic" novel look small-screen. When he has finished with some Schreiner cadets on a late afternoon in spring, he goes on to a camp meeting in a country tabernacle; then to a group of Boy Scouts who smell "intercourse" in the air and set out on their bicycles to find the source; to Aunt Annie, taken from her ranch and dog and garden and put in a nursing home; to a jackrabbit mortified because a rancher has seen him stumble and fall; to a madam and her most reliable girl doing business in a nice old farm house near Fredericksburg and raising guineas and ducks; and so on, sketch after sketch, comic, loving, scourging, sad, until a sort of coral reef of material about a time and place has been constructed.

Bode has constructed several, some larger than others, all done with the same mixture of exact observation, wonder, and sheer liking for the world and its imperfections.

Richard Phelan has worked as a police reporter for the Houston Press *and the* Houston Post *and as a staff writer for* Sports Illustrated. *He is the author of a book called* Texas Wild *and of stories and articles which appeared in* The Yale Review, *the old* Saturday Evening Post, *and other publications. At present he lives in McGregor.*

According to Borges, ". . . the mere fact of existing is so prodigious that no misfortune should exempt us from a kind of cosmic gratitude." Some men finally learn this for themselves, they tell us, as they sit in wheel chairs on porches, recovering from heart attacks. Stressed at last into awareness, they discover that commonplace things — trees, twilights, cracks in sidewalks — are suddenly worth looking at, powerful tokens of being.

They would make good readers of Bode, who has found existence prodigious since about the age of two. Many of his sketches celebrate such ordinary things as five o'clock shadows, or walking in a pasture on an autumn day. "There is no heirarchy of things in life," he says. "Everything is of value simply because it *is*." Existence is the central marvel. His steady effort at the typewriter is to r'ar back and pass this miracle himself, to give things a second, intensified existence on a page.

Though he reads and sometimes admires other people's fiction, Bode is so hooked on reality that it bars him from writing fiction himself. The French used to call newsreels *les actualités*, suggesting (to me, anyway) that they regarded the movie which followed them as something of a different, lesser order. Bode too seems to feel that reality is sovereign. If he turns away from it, if he starts to invent, he gets into a region of malaise and malfunction that only artists know about: disloyalty to one's creative impulse.

A year or two ago there was a "big" movie about the Texas Panhandle from which Texas and the Panhandle were entirely missing. The producers, apparently believing that if you've seen one wheat field you've seen them all, filmed it in Canada with hills and the wrong trees beside the wrong river. Bode will not play such games of Let's Pretend, or the prose writer's version of them. He can't apply fictitious names to real characters, he says, and involve them in plots that he made up himself. They would be dummies, "sweated into action from my brain." Most of what he writes is short because it would be a form of dishonesty to "blow up a thought into something more than it really is."

Yet he doesn't disapprove when other writers do these things. It isn't a question of morality or even aesthetics, it's a question of what you know your territory to be. Nelson Algren couldn't leave Chicago, he told somebody, because his material was there. Bode's territory is not a place, it's actuality. He can write, and has written, about almost anything anywhere so long as he saw it, didn't make it up. Almost every line of his work is, in addition to being what it is, a jigsaw piece of autobiography.

HIS CHILDHOOD was something more than happy. By the evidence of his writing it was damn near perfect. Born in Kerrville in 1931, he grew up there in the days of radio, movies, and two-lane highways. His father owned a grain and feed store. His brother was more than seven years his senior, so that he was at times the younger son, at others the only child. Twenty miles out from town lay his maternal grandparents' ranch, where there was not a living creature, a sight, a smell, or a blade of grass that didn't supply him with delight and wonder. It was a notable example of a privileged life, of the right boy growing up in the right place.

Some of this is recorded directly. In *After The Parade*, a teen-age Bode walks home from town in his band uniform. His mother has something for him to eat. He plays Stan Kenton records, then reads a book by the kitchen window at an oilcloth-covererd table. His mother gets supper ready, waters her flowers in the yard. From these bits of normality, almost banality, he constructs something fundamental that you envy: why was I never allowed to be that secure, that confident, that content?

At seventeen, at the University of Texas, he "walked, flat-footed and whistling, into a brick wall called life." The college years were not golden. Probably nothing could have topped the childhood and youth that were already past. He graduated from the university with highest honors; became an Air Force officer; taught for a year or two in Sinton and Kingsville; and worked for awhile in Dallas. For twenty years he has taught high-school English in El Paso, which, along with Juarez, has supplied him with many kinds of material.

The fifth volume of Bode's work, *Alone In The World Looking*, is a notebook of some 700 entries. It records, along with much else, his efforts over many years to figure out what life is and what to do with it. Fairly early, he concluded that he wasn't going to crack the big code either. "God, order, truth — such finalities may exist, but they cannot be dealt with by any of the human resources." Still, he went on, and produced a set of reflections notable for their idiosyncrasy, their occasional originality, and their many different moods, from glad to grim:

> "Why must children first know joy — equate joy with life — and then learn afterwards that they are supposed to do without it?"

"A man with a purpose does not think — is not free to think."

"If there is indeed a God . . . what in the world does He want? What can we do to repay Him — or make Him stop?"

"When a person who is content with what he has finally becomes discontent because of what others lack — that is the rare act of becoming involved with humanity."

"The pursuit of happiness is not a pursuit at all but a perceiving, a witnessing, an embracing."

"Everyone is a cripple."

Mostly by letter, Bode and I have maintained our friendship for nearly two decades. Once or twice a year we meet for an afternoon to drink and talk. I do not know the restless, searching man, the part-time loner, who is the author and sometimes the subject of *Alone In The World Looking*. I know a humorous, sociable man who delights in his children and in some of his students; who has kept for years a backyard menagerie of chickens and lambs and ducks and dogs and cats; who loves good writing and becomes an outright fan of living writers he admires; and who talks a lot about other people's books and hardly at all about his own.

In his own he uses language directly, declaratively; nothing flashy, no straining at the seams of grammar and syntax. He uses it to transmit exactly what he wants the reader to (1) know and (2) feel. Within those limits he shifts sometimes into an eerie extra dimension: a perch which looks "as if painted in the water"; a woman in a bar "not born by normal processes but simply proliferated in her chair, perhaps out of spilled beer." And he sometimes uses symbols offhandedly, like throwaway lines in a play.

No, for example, is a sketch about a young man and a girl, filled with symbols of lost purity, regret, and the draining of desire. The two are sitting in a car in front of a roadside cafe in South Texas. The things around them are perfectly ordinary — a mimosa tree, a lone light bulb with banging insects, cars going south in the darkness toward Mexico — yet each in turn becomes a quiet, just-right symbol of something in the boy's and girl's relationship. All together they double, triple the content of the words. It is a perfect piece of work — 38 lines that yield the equivalent of several pages.

South Texas apparently seemed to Bode to require metaphors and symbols. It's in South Texas that he makes the "loud, blunt horn" of a freight train at night into what may be the biggest phallic symbol yet achieved in English. When he turned his attention from Kingsville, these devices faded from his work and he returned to the steady stare, the thoughtful setting down of exactly what he saw.

AMONG HIS various subjects, my favorites are Mexicans, music, and the Hill Country. I never feel very comfortable with his bus station and street people. I wouldn't if I met them in person. He delivers their behavior, afflictions, possessions. Most of them he knew by sight alone; he never spoke to them and does not know their names. He doesn't neglect the other four senses, but mostly he looks. *Alone In The World Looking* is a title not idly chosen.

The attentiveness that is useful in setting down what he sees betrays him sometimes when his characters talk. As a writer of dialect he stands somewhere between George Bernard Shaw and Joel Chandler Harris, who worked too hard at it too. Like them, Bode produces something closer to phonetic transcription than to human speech. Women (Eudora Welty, Marjorie Kennan Rawlings) seem to understand, as men do not, that dialect needs a light touch, that it is not a matter of precision but of suggestion. For me Bode's *Ranch Woman on the Phone,* for all its high fidelity, rings like a tin bell, the only false note in his Hill Country work. It isn't his ear that fails, it's his typing so to speak. He nearly always knows *which* lines to quote. A ten-year-old boy, showing his pig at a livestock show says, "Last year my pig was Wilbur, and he was just as *gentle*." The line tells more about the boy than it does about the pig.

The animals in his sketches seem to have been interviewed, or perhaps known socially. Many of them have more personality than some writers' men and women. In a twenty-line sketch, Bode, bedding down a sick cat for the night in his garage, is joined by a pet lamb and a bantam hen. The four of them make a social unit as neat as a table of bridge, the animals on a par with their owner. He seems to assign some value to life even when something other than a human possesses it, and this extends down to bugs and weeds and worms. When he writes, "A young willow tree needs watering," you know that this doesn't mean today is the day to water it. It means he's well enough acquainted with the tree to sense its thirst.

His liking for Mexicans, on either bank of the Rio Grande, is based perhaps on a feeling that they are closer to life, or are handling it better, than the soft-living Anglos. This dates not from his arrival in El Paso, but from childhood on his grandparents' ranch, where there was a "Mexican house" with a family in it. Of El Paso he writes "'I sit among Mexicans after dark in the downtown plaza, calmed by their poverty, their humanness." On another page he notes a girl's "bare, lonely Mexican dignity." He seems to say, though never explicitly, that people who try to wring happiness out of possessions are in some important way poorer than the poor who merely lack money. In Juarez, he says, "the world seems very much lived in. It is good to walk down a street there in the mornings and see the dust, the bits of orange peel, the stray rocks scattered beside the curbs. . . . Life is a stuff, an essence in the air, heady and strong." In Dallas, on the other hand, ". . . the old, dull feeling persists: that in Dallas nothing is desirable, not even life itself." Some of his saddest characters live in Dallas.

When he does dislike one of his people — a local TV performer, an old, prospecting homosexual on a park bench — he himself becomes less likable. One feels that a different man is sending different currents through the typewriter. Some writers (Mary McCarthy, for example) are cheerful, healthy haters, and you like them for it. Bode's gift is for celebration, approval.

He doesn't exactly defy literary convention. He's just indifferent to it. His works take whatever form they seem to him to need, and if the form doesn't officially exist, that's OK. What, for example, is *Out-Of-Town Game?* It's about a small-town hardware dealer driving his wife and younger son eighty miles to a high-school football game. His older son is on the second team. His daughter Jenevelyn plays clarinet in the band. It's a showpiece of precise observation, and a trip inside a contented small-town head. It is neither story nor article nor sketch; it's just itself. Quite a lot of Bode's work is like that. Even his magazine articles (five or six thousand words long — he can write at length as long as there's something out there to report) are blends containing elements of essay and of autobiography.*

A sketch in its entirety is small to begin with. It may deal with a dog in a yard, a child in a chair, a tree. But within these little celebrations Bode puts other, even smaller, ones, nice bits of the past that otherwise might soon be gone forever. Clabber; the sound of emptied dishwater hitting the ground; the noise turkeys make pecking at an empty pie pan. They don't run ranches like that any

*Two of his magazine articles, "The Making of a Legend" and "Requiem for a Wasp School," won the Stanley Walker Award from the Texas Institute of Letters. Both first appeared in the *Observer*.

more. Nor do drug stores deal with the summer heat by means of ". . . a ceiling fan going lazily around, blowing a little Dr. Pepper sign at the end of a string."

For some of us he has created a handful of archetypes. Years ago I read: ". . . in the filling station down the street, that exquisite and gradual circling down of the hubcup to the concrete floor as the garageman changes a tire." Even now, when I hear that sound, I measure it against Bode's version to see if it did itself justice.

A few years ago I sat on the porch of the house at the Duderstadt ranch while Bode pointed out the spot, miles to the west, where the tops of big trucks can now be briefly glimpsed on a stretch of Interstate 10. For him it was a fatal crack in the ranch world, which otherwise stretched to the horizons essentially unchanged. It was somehow worse than the fact that the house had been unoccupied for years, though still completely furnished down to sheets and ice cubes and family photographs; worse than the decay of the pens and barns and the leasing of the pastures.

The ranch as his grandparents had run it was not a tax dodge or a status symbol. It was perhaps one of the best ways ever devised for human beings to live contentedly on the earth. In *The Ranch: An Ending* Bode records gravely, with almost sociological detachment, the passage of his grandparents into old age, the slow shutting down of the ranch, and his grandfather's death. The words are calm, but beneath them is a flow of feeling that is transmitted to the reader without any loss whatever to friction or ineptitude. No one has ever written better about grief, loss, the end of something good.

All of this work is quiet, done because it had to be done, not for celebrity. ("Even if what I wrote was never published, it would nevertheless be *down*, it would be *said*.") People who like it are, like lacrosse players, never a majority. Bode's readership will grow large (if it ever does, if books survive) by accretion, over decades and generations.

Borges imagines Carriego when he was young and poor discovering ". . . that the universe, which gives itself completely in each instant, in any place, and not only in the works of Dumas, was in the present, too, in Palermo, Argentina, in 1904," and being able thereafter to write about his own real world. Bode didn't have to learn that. It came as part of his original equipment. It is in fact his message. He sees the marvel and mystery of the universe in his father's feed store, in a Mexican child, in a weathered cedar post; and then he arranges for us to see them too. □

Cortright, continued . . .

science and technology, because as they come out of their graduate training they discover that the best-paying, most exciting, frontier-related jobs are in the arms business. That's where the action is.

Butts: Do you see any way out?

Cortright: It has to be a systematic and long-term approach. One of the perspectives needed in the long run is what we call economic conversion. You have to plan for the job security and the income support of those people who are now unfortunately bound up in this whole military system. . . . SANE and the Machinists Union and other groups have been working for economic conversion over the years. We have legislative proposals which would ease the transition from a military to civilian economy, would provide income support for the workers, would provide planning grants to the communities and employees in a weapons production facility so they could look into what civilian alternatives might be developed at that particular facility using the same work force.

The economic side of the peace question is critically important. Unfortunately, it's ignored a lot of times by peace activists who tend to emphasize the moral issue. That's not adequate; we really have to address this economic issue very seriously.

It's paramount for the peace forces to emphasize over and over again that the decline that we are now facing economicially and the problems that we face generally with inflation and declining competitiveness in the world are related to this excessive arms race, as are the budget problems. These cuts on human services are directly connected to the increases in the arms budget. . . . Reagan says he's cutting back government spending; well, he's not cutting it at all; he's simply transferring it from one column to another.

Butts: I've been thinking about language and the catch phrases that are directed towards the American public to make us think that we've got to spend more money on weapons. Are there any that are favorites of yours?

Cortright: The most horrendous example of Newspeak today is "rearmament." It's absolute falsehood. . . . We're only arming at a faster rate now than we were three or four years ago. That's hardly rearmament. I wish there were a word I could use to capture and turn the word around — hyperarmament, perhaps. It's a gross fabrication that convolutes reality.

Another word is "defense." It's not the defense budget, it's the arms budget. One of the most loyal SANE members wrote to me about two years ago, quite an angry letter, and he said, "You spot the opposition fifty points every time you refer to their work as 'defense.' "

Butts: Do you have a recommended reading list?

Cortright: Well, I think one of the most powerful documents that I've seen recently is *Protest and Survive,* which came out of Europe. It includes E. P. Thompson's indispensable essay, "Protest and Survive." The American edition is by Monthly Review Press.

One of the best classics is Richard Barnet's *The Economy of Death* — very small, but hits the nail on the head with regard to the economic determinants. On the history of the arms race, I recently read *Shattered Peace* by Daniel Yergin. . . . It shows very well that while the Russians are not without blame, the Americans blew it in a lot of ways all along the way and got ourselves into this bind.

The best single source of information on the U.S.-Soviet military policies is the Center for Defense Information in Washington. . . . People should subscribe to that newsletter.

Butts: What other periodicals?

Cortright: The publications that come out of the Institute for Policy Studies are good. They've done a whole series of booklets. One was *Counterforce Syndrome* by Robert Aldridge and they had a book by Fred Kaplan called *Dubious Specter: A Skeptical Look at the Soviet Nuclear Threat,* in which he pierced a lot of the mythology about supposed Soviet advantage. I.P.S. is better than C.D.I. politically; they have a more radical perspective.

Butts: Tell me about SANE's "Consider the Alternatives."

Cortright: That's something we're very pleased with. It's a half-hour public affairs broadcast which is distributed now to about 150 radio stations around the country and has a listenership of about a million people. It goes very widely to stations in Texas and the Southwest and South that normally peace groups can never communicate with.

Butts: Einstein said that the atomic age has changed everything about people except their way of thinking. How can we change our way of thinking?

Cortright: People are still in the sticks and stones mentally. I was on the radio here in Houston last night, and people were saying, well, we have forty beans and they have thirty, we have to have more — not recognizing that counting beans when you come to nuclear weapons is not really where it's at. . . . The central challenge that we all have to face is this: how do we get people to recognize how our world has been molded by these atomic weapons? We can no longer afford to think in terms of simplistic competition and military rivalries and war planning.

It's a long and painful and difficult process of political education, of talking to people about what the bomb represents — the kind of message that Helen Caldicott has been sending out and that SANE presents has to be repeated over and over and over again. There can't be too much education around the consequences of nuclear conflict and the need for a new mind set in this world. □

These are the organizations mentioned in the article and interview with their addresses:

Center for Defense Information, 122 Maryland Avenue NE, Washington DC 20002

Ecumenical Peaceforce of Houston, 10723 Inwood Drive, Houston TX 77042

Gulf Coast Council on Foreign Affairs, 8001 Palmer Highway, Texas City TX 77591

Institute for Policy Studies, 1901 Q Street NW, Washington DC 20009

National Freeze Clearinghouse (for the Nuclear Freeze Campaign), c/o IDDS, 251 Harvard Street, Bostom MA 02146

Physicians for Social Responsibility, PO Box 144, Watertown MA 02172 (Non-physicians may join as associate members.)

SANE, 514 C Street NE, Washington DC 20002

Women's Party for Survival (a second Caldicott group), PO Box 218, Waban MA 02178 (Women and men are invited to join.)

Most of the books mentioned by David Cortright are available from the American Friends Service Committee, 1022 West 6th Street, Austin TX 78703 (telephone 512-474-2399). Helen Caldicott's book, *Nuclear Madness: What You Can Do,* is published by both Autumn and Bantam. SANE's "Consider the Alternatives" is broadcast on these Texas radio stations: in Austin KCSW-FM, KNOW-AM, KOKE-FM, KUT-FM; in Dallas WRR-FM, KZEW-FM; in Edinburg KVLY-FM; in Houston KILT-AM; in Paris KPLT-AM; in Prairie View KPVU-FM; in Pleasanton KBOP-AM, KBOP-FM; in Victoria KVIC-FM; in Wichita Falls KKQV-FM; in Denton KNTU-FM; and in Midland KCRS-AM, KWMJ-FM.

(Continued from Page 7)
vironmental Protection Agency and the Occupational Safety and Health Administration.

In the area of foreign policy Drinan lambasted Reagan's return to cold war politics with the Soviets. "We thought we had detente," Drinan said. "We had a stand on human rights under the last administration. Now we have confrontation." He attacked the government's attempt to become "king of Latin America" by supporting oppressive regimes. "We don't want to go back to Somozas and Shahs," he said. "We don't want to go back to what they're dragging us to. We don't want to be the merchant of death." Challenging the contention of the U.S. ambassador to the United Nations, Jeane Kirkpatrick, that America must deal with moderately repressive governments, Drinan wanted to know just what a moderately repressive government was supposed to be. "Do they torture people every other day?" he asked.

Some of Drinan's more fiery remarks were saved for the New Right and the Moral Majority, the latter of which he claimed was neither moral nor a majority. (The Sacred Dimension, an all-woman Baptist chorus providing entertainment during the meeting had been forewarned about the night's political slant, but the women were still squirming uncomfortably at the remark.)

"There is a force in American life that the administration listens to and that is un-American, unhealthy and must be eradicated," Drinan said. "People across the country are doing what you're doing here tonight. They're rising up and saying we are not going to tolerate these people taking away our government." He deplored Reagan's I-know-you-can't-endorse-me-but-I-can-endorse-you remark at the National Affairs Briefing in August 1980 (Drinan said after the meeting that he felt that NAB was a setup for Reagan and orchestrated by his people). He expressed concern over the growth of right-wing Political Action Committees claiming they were a threat to public financing campaigns. It has become easy for big business and the wealthy to funnel their money through PACs and thereby "purchase the Congress," he said.

Drinan also denounced the growth of anti-Semitism that seemed to be tied in with the rise of the New Right and referred to various anti-Semitic remarks by Jerry Falwell and other electronic evangelists. "This group is frightening," Drinan began, "because of their arrogance and ignorance. They leap from Bible passage to legislative enactment." While he made it clear moderates and liberals had to see the New Right for what it really was, he stressed the need for dialogue as opposed to derision in dealing with them. "We must first love those we would change," he said. Drinan predicted the November '82 congressional elections would be the test of the nation's soul and that the ADA's task was to rise out of a silent majority and show the Moral Majority they wouldn't dominate the elections.

Quoting Archibald MacLeish, Drinan said in closing, " 'There are those who would say that the liberation of humanity and the freedom of man and mind is nothing but a dream.

" 'You are right, it is a dream, The American dream.' " □

Looking Beyond the False Choices

By Senator Gary Hart

The following address was given in Dallas on November 7, 1981 at a dinner honoring Congressman Martin Frost.

It's always a pleasure for me to come to Texas, and I'm particularly happy to appear on behalf of my friend, Martin Frost.

You may think it presumptuous for a Coloradan to remind Texans of their great political tradition. But as some of you may know, Texas and Colorado were part of the same territory — back before Texas was admitted to the Union. I'm not sure whether that makes me part Texan — or you part Coloradan.

You have a great tradition, one you've been proud to share with the nation. Sam Rayburn, Lyndon Johnson, Jim Wright — and now new, young leaders like Martin Frost. His roots in the Texas tradition go back over a hundred years, back to the 1870's when his family first settled in East Texas. Martin's told me how, during one of his many visits to Austin last year to work on redistricting, he came across a portrait of his great-uncle, Charles Brachfield. Uncle Charlie, Martin told me, was President pro-tem of the Texas Senate in 1909. And Martin thought, "Uncle Charlie, where are you now that I *really* need you?"

I'm confident that, even without Uncle Charlie's presence, we're going to return Martin Frost to the Congress of the United States.

I'm also confident we're going to return the Democratic Party to its rightful position as the majority party and progressive party of this nation.

And I'm confident that people like us — Westerners *and* Democrats — are going to be at the forefront of that effort. Because turning this country around is going to take grit, and determination, and hard work — all the things that are second nature to those of us from pioneer stock.

And it's going to take something else — confidence, the belief and vision we *can* move forward. That spirit is ingrained in Westerners. Our great-grandparents and great-great-grandparents were pioneers. Their confidence is what built families and farms and towns where none had been before.

And Democrats have been a major source of that spirit too. Franklin Roosevelt; Harry Truman; John Kennedy and Lyndon Johnson — they were always willing to tackle problems because they were *sure* they could solve them. And we share that confidence today.

Now I know there are some who say today's Party lost its spirit and its vision. That we're defeated, dispirited, and in disarray. I wish they could be in this room with us tonight to see our spirit, our pride, and our strength.

And I know there are those who say the clock has run out on the Democratic Party — that we aimed too high — that the dream is dead. They'd have us believe the time has come when we can't afford compassion, we can't afford generosity, we can't afford vision.

And they too are wrong.

The vast majority of Americans still believe — and always will believe — in a fair and just and equitable society.

They know we can achieve that society — if we encourage productive, profitable enterprise. Business creates jobs, and jobs create income. *That's* the way to build a society that works for all of us.

A society not dominated by concentrated wealth — not driven by personal greed — not based on devil-take-the-hindmost economics. A society where charity is more than the crumbs that fall from the rich man's table. A society that not only believes a rising tide lifts all boats — but understands as well that this doesn't matter, if you have no boat at all.

And then there are also those who say the Democratic Party is divided today. They are wrong — totally and utterly wrong.

If there is division, it is false division. If we don't agree on answers — it's because we are asking the wrong questions. If we don't choose the same path — it's because both choices are wrong.

And that's the challenge for Democrats today. To find new ways of looking at old problems. To cast off the old "either/or" choices that confused us in the past. And to use all of our resources — our courage and our confidence and our creativity — to serve this country and to lead it into the future.

Now, I know the current Administration is in favor of creative thinking too.

They want people who've worked for 40 years to think creatively about how they'll retire when their Social Security benefits are cut.

They want people who enjoy our national parks and forests to think creatively about sharing those natural resources with bulldozers.

They want Israel — our strongest ally in the Middle East — to think creatively about its security, while we arm its enemies.

They want our children to think creatively — and believe ketchup is a vegetable.

This is not the kind of creative thinking I'm talking about. Let me give you one example of how we can use creative thinking to overcome false choices in a vitally important area — national defense.

Since Vietnam, our discussions of defense have been more monetary than military, more about quantity than about quality. For fifteen years, we — this party and this nation — have been divided on the issue of defense spending. Some have called for more, some for less.

But spending more or spending less isn't the issue. National security *is*. And where our national security is concerned, more isn't better, and less isn't better — only better is better.

For military effectiveness cannot necessarily be produced by more spending. One quick example. In combat, soldiers don't fight for ideas — they fight for their buddies. But soldiers need time to become buddies, and right now, we don't give them that time. We rotate them from company to company. We have the highest rate of personnel turnover in the world — about 25 percent per quarter. So our troops remain strangers to each other — and strangers do not fight well together. More spending won't solve this problem.

Or another example — for years, we've been buying equipment that is more and more expensive per unit. So we're forced to buy fewer and fewer for the same money. This year, as a result, we'll buy fewer airplanes and fewer ships than last year — even though we're spending *more*.

We need to change the kinds of weapons we build to get them in the numbers we need. Last week, I'm proud to say, the Congress adopted my proposal that we begin to design smaller aircraft carriers which we can afford in greater numbers — so in the 1980s, we'll have more ships at sea.

Democrats are becoming the party of military effectiveness because we are insisting on:

- buying weapons that meet our *real* military needs, instead of giving every defense interest an arbitrary, bureaucratic "slice of the pie";
- paying less attention to organization charts in the Defense Department and paying more to battlefield effectiveness;
- promoting creative and imaginative officers who understand combat;
- and, spending our money on what we need to fight and win. Spare parts, fuel, adequate training aren't glamorous, but they're vitally important for combat readiness. Spending for the readiness of our armed services must not be cut.

Spending issues are often the wrong issues. And they lead to false choices with profound consequences for our Country. Let others seek the biggest defense money can buy; we will seek only the best defense.

False choices plague our economy as well. Now I don't want to say too much about economics. I remember Will Rogers' saying, "Medical science has two ways of actually tracing insanity. One is if the patient cuts out paper dolls, and the other is if the patient says, 'Hey, listen, I will tell you what this economic business really means!' "

What on earth would Will Rogers have said about an Administration that in 90 days has created a recession out of a gigantic tax cut?

I don't believe — and Democrats don't believe — that we have come to the point where we must choose the rich over the poor, tax cuts for the wealthy over lunches for our children, or pie in the sky theories over sound economic policies.

Those are false choices. They distract us from the real issues — jobs and prosperity.

You in Dallas and we in Denver have seen our cities transformed by a surge of new business activity. Electronics firms, communications firms, a whole range of businesses dealing in services and technologies that didn't exist a decade or two ago. Now our challenge is to stimulate that same kind of growth throughout the country.

- First, we can encourage the growth of the most vital sectors of the economy, by removing the barriers in our corporate tax system. Right now, these biases divert capital to slow-growing, traditional manufacturing industries and private corporate takeovers — at the expense of more dynamic service and high-tech industries. And our tax policies penalize small business as well — even though they are the source of most new jobs.
- Second, we must expand our international trade, by reducing trade barriers and permitting our businesses to compete effectively abroad.
- And third, we can maintain our world leadership in science and technology — one of our greatest strengths — by promoting Federal leadership in basic research, giving better tax breaks for research and development, and ensuring we train enough scientists, engineers, and technicians.

Of course, rebuilding our economy will require much more than this. It will take budget restraint *and* sensible growth in our money supply. It will take true tax reform to spur saving and provide relief for *all* families.

But most of all, it will take a new way of looking at our economy — a new sense of what our strengths are — a new understanding of where the business opportunities and jobs of the future will be.

Democrats are moving beyond the false choices in other areas as well.

We know, for example, that we don't have to rape our public lands, pollute our beaches, and destroy our natural heritage to meet our economic goals.

We know we can meet our energy needs here at home without paying billions in tribute each year to the oil sheiks of the Middle East.

And we know we can stand firm against Soviet expansionism without currying the favor of right-wing tyrants and dictators.

We're here tonight to support — to help reelect — a Democrat who sees beyond the false choices. A Democrat who is confident about the future. And a Democrat who is being recognized as one of the bright, young leaders of this Party. Here is *another* Texan who is commanding the respect of his nation — the second freshman Democrat appointed to the House Rules Committee this century.

I've worked with Martin Frost. I know his commitment, his courage, his confidence. And I know how he values and respects our Democratic tradition.

This is a party founded on a bedrock of human values and principle. And, as Martin knows, those principles remain a source of our strength. We must never abandon them.

We are proud our party stands for civil rights and equal rights for women, for as Americans, we have a common bond in liberty;

We are proud our party stands for economic opportunity in a fair society, for as Americans, we have a common bond in justice;

And we are proud our party stands and fights for human rights and against dictators and tyrannies, for as Americans, we have a common bond in freedom.

We share a unique vision of America. A vision of abundance, not want; freedom, not tyranny; peace, not war; and hope, not fear.

We hold the heritage of hope.

That is our dream.

That is our vision.

And that is our promise.

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DIALOGUE

The Lack of Etc.

I am here in prison. . . .

Overcrowding is too nice a word. . . . Brutality, perhaps unreasonable brutality, describes the violence here. . . . Crime in prison? Yes! But perpetrated by guards as well as prisioners. . . . Rehabilitation, yes. However, no inmate or prisoner is rehabilitated by school programs or teachers. (They do help tremendously, though, towards that goal.) . . .

In my opinion, within the next few years it is most probable that there will be terrible violence within the prison labor camps here in Texas. The lack of etc., etc., etc., etc.

Mark Kirby, #247090 Ramsey I Unit, Rt. 4, Box 1100, Roshason, Tx. 77583.

Off Your Duffs

Please accept my check for $50. . . . Let me congratulate the new *Texas Observer*. It is back to where it was ten or fifteen years ago. It's wonderful. Now if the Democratic Party and organized labor will get off their duffs and start becoming active, instead of trying to live up to their past glories, the people of Texas will reach their full potential of greatness.

. . . We can't sit on our brains and get the job done. We need better communication among our leaders and the people in the precincts. . . . Let's use the ideas of everyone, not only the high and mighty. . . .

Henry (Hank) Appel, Greenbrier Apts. #230, 8535 Greenbrier Dr., San Antonio, Tx. 78209.

Hypocrisy

I made a collage of your July 10th article "A Tour of a Texas Prison" and sent it out to be fotocopied. Had a small hassle but TDC finally "allowed me" to send one to the Angolian, Louisiana State Prison. This is my last copy; but just wanted you to see my thoughts on hypocrisy.

Hope I didn't make you mad.

Enjoy your paper. Read it when I can. A friend subscribes. The TDC library doesn't have it to my knowledge.

S. J. Wilburn, TDC 294680-A, HV-Unit: 17-B-13, P.O. Box 32, Huntsville, Tx. 77340.

Demos in Mexico

A special message for *Observer* readers who might work or reside in Mexico in the future. The Democratic Party is alive and well in Mexico!

"Democrats Abroad Mexico" is composed of housewives, reporters, professors, teachers, students . . . as well as established business persons. Most are progressives. The members polled before I left for the Democratic convention in New York voted overwhelmingly for Edward Kennedy. The "Democrats Abroad International" delegation voted 3-Kennedy, 2-Carter, and 1-Dellums. (We have six votes in the national convention.)

"Democrats Abroad Mexico" is also a lobby group. One of the main issues is the double taxation of U.S. citizens living abroad . . . other problems we are concerned with are voter registration, medicaid (not available for U.S. citizens outside the U.S.), and citizenship problems. . . . Last year we met Edward Kennedy prior to the national convention. More recently we met with Ambassador (John) Gavin to offer our individual talents as knowledgeable Mexicanists. . . .

For more information, in Mexico City contact Richard Sibley, Becquer #14-4, Mexico 5, D.F., tel, 531-71-87 (home), or Jeff Teague in Puebla and Cholula, Tel. 41-32-64 (work in Puebla), or me in Austin, 5203 Beechmoor, 928-2900.

Virginia Newton Mounce, Rio Lerma 100-A-501, Mexico 5, D.F.