

THE TEXAS Observer

**MOLLY IVINS
GOES TO
THE RACES**

Pg. 11

A JOURNAL OF FREE VOICES

FEBRUARY 26, 1988 • \$1.50

**THE SOUTHERN
PRIMARIES**

**REDEFINING THE
DEMOCRATIC
PROMISE**





THE TEXAS Observer

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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Calendar: Kathleen Fitzgerald

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Managing Publisher: Cliff Olofson

Subscription Manager: Stefan Wanstrom

Publishing Consultant: Frances Barton

Development Consultant: Hanno T. Beck

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DIALOGUE

Mattox on Prisons

In an editorial headlined "Boom Time" in the January 29 issue, you wrote that no major state leaders have stood up and spoken about the long-range solutions to our prison problems.

I must take issue with that. I have been speaking out strongly for a need to reform our entire criminal justice system in the State of Texas. I've testified before the legislature that the "quick fix" solutions won't do the trick. I've encouraged such organizations as the Greater Dallas Crime Council and the Combined Law Enforcement Association of Texas to push for such an agenda with their legislators. Charles and Pauline Sullivan are long-time friends of mine, and we continue to work together for a better solution to our criminal justice problems.

For too long, we have ignored the need for a statewide standardized system of such important aspects such as training for prosecutors, sentencing, and alternative punishments. Your editorial was exactly right that we're not taking the correct approach to this devastating problem. You were incorrect, however, to include me in the group of officials who haven't spoken up.

*Jim Mattox
Attorney General
Austin*

Prisons and Safer Living

The *Observer* remains the one honest, consistent voice in speaking of the Texas prison system.

We are led to believe by our officials that more prisons lead to safer living. Some day there may be more inside than outside at our increased rate of imprisonment for nonviolent crimes. The faces of the prisoners remain the same — poor white, poor black, poor brown. Most are uneducated, unemployed, perhaps unemployable, and hopeless. The causes are evident, yet our only answer is punishment.

Thanks for your January 29 issue. Hope some of the right people get copies.

*Yvonne Pugh
Waco*

From Pillory to Post

In Michael King's generally perceptive January 29 article, "The Return of Joe Bob Briggs," he says either Houston newspaper "would be greatly improved by ripping out its editorial and op-ed pages and replacing them with the musings of Joe Bob, beside

regular snaps of Sybil Danning. Instead, we get the lunatic ravings of fanatics like Pat Buchanan, George Will, William Buckley, James Kilpatrick."

I share his misgivings about those fellows, but I hope that paragraph isn't indicative of the caliber of his research on the article in general. All of the syndicated columnists he derides appear exclusively in the *Chronicle*, not the *Post*. We develop thick hides in this business and don't mind being pilloried. But we'd rather it be over our own sins, if any, and not those of our competitors.

We think, not unnaturally, that we have a good stable of columnists. If our editorial and op-ed pages were ripped out we'd be depriving Houstonians of, among others, Molly Ivins — a name that may ring a bell with *Observer* readers.

*Charles Reinken
Associate Editor
Houston Post*

Pollution Awareness

I recently read the December 18, 1987, issue of *The Texas Observer* that reported several aspects of pollution.

I truly believe the pollution of our air, water, soil, and food should take top priority with all politicians and the voters should elect those that try to protect our environment.

Our environment is precious. With your help, more people can be made aware of hazardous waste in our state.

Enclosed is my subscription for two years — looking forward to my first issue.

*Ida Lou Ames
Texarkana*



We welcome comments from our readers. Please keep letters short and snappy — 100 to 250 words is ideal. Note our new address:

**The Texas Observer
307 W. 7th St.
Austin, TX 78701**

EDITORIAL

ENDORSEMENTS

Jesse Jackson and the Populist Moment

JESSE LOUIS JACKSON has consistently promoted the most progressive and humane political and economic agenda of any of the Democratic Presidential candidates. In doing so he has altered the political landscape, bringing not only new ideas but *good* ideas into what otherwise might have been another stultifying political debate between cautious and calculated Democrats.

Jesse Jackson is the candidate who most frequently and forcefully argues that the transnationalization of the American economy is the fundamental source of the loss of our jobs and the decline of our wages. That capital is mobile and seeks out those countries in which it can be matched with the lowest wage scale might not be Jackson's Law, but it is a law that he tries to explain every time he stands to speak:

"Are the South Koreans and Taiwanese taking jobs from the U.S.?" Jackson asked AFL-CIO members gathered in Austin in January. (As he had asked Texas legislators in April and LULAC members in June.) "Lets look at that, friends. GM announced that it was closing seven plants and 30,000 jobs last November, then announced 30,000 jobs in Korea the same week. The South Koreans are not taking jobs from us. GM took jobs to them. The number one exporter from Taiwan is not the Taiwanese. It's GE, which owns RCA, which owns NBC, which advertises 'Buy American.' Make you feel guilty if you don't. While they take jobs from America to Taiwan, make the product with cheap labor there, sell for high prices here. . . ."

Jackson's program includes a revised tax structure that would provide incentives for companies to invest at home and a redefinition of anti-trust laws to discourage corporate "merging of companies and purging of workers." It is not as polished and well-defined as the protectionist packages promoted by Richard Gephardt, Al Gore and Lloyd Bentsen. But it addresses the fundamental cause rather than the symptom of our current economic crises. While conventional wisdom among the "electables" offers us a reworked Smoot-Hawley trade agenda, Jackson is addressing the root causes of economic ills. His "Invest in America" program would require certain percentages of large portfolio pension funds

to be dedicated toward public works programs that would build economic infrastructure and create employment. Jackson has argued for the application of ten to twenty percent of the existing \$600 billion in private pension funds to projects that would include the construction of affordable housing, rebuilding of obsolete industrial plants, and development of energy-efficient mass transit. "This is our money," Jackson told the legislature in April. "Why not invest it in America?"

To the AFL-CIO in January he further defined the program. A reasonable rate of return on the pension fund development bonds would be guaranteed by the federal government, which would also secure the investments. Like many of agriculture commissioner Jim Hightower's programs, Jackson's investment scheme would make better use of resources already in place, rather than increasing taxes to create programs.

Jackson has, in a more authentic way than Missouri Rep. Richard Gephardt or Republican Senator Robert Dole, addressed the crisis on the American farm. He has proposed solutions that bear a not-surprising similarity to those proposed by Jim Hightower. (Jackson has consulted with Hightower and his staff on farm issues.) And again, Jackson claims, it is the accumulation of wealth and economic power by large corporations that has distorted the economic reality of the American family farmer. Speaking before a Methodist social action group in Iowa in June, Jackson reminded them that five companies, because of mergers and acquisitions, now control 58 percent of the beef industry in this country. Jackson cited ConAgra which he said "recently acquired Montford of Colorado, a beef-packing firm . . . and just this week announced that it was buying half of Swift. ConAgra alone has bought 50 companies with sales totaling \$4 billion, including Banquet Frozen Dinners and Armour Processed Meats. In the process it has sold off businesses, slashed inventories, and raised profit margins to 23 percent."

A young farmer investing \$60,000 in land and machinery in 1975 would probably be broke today, Jackson suggested. But had that same young farmer invested, in June of 1975, \$60,000 in 6,667 shares of ConAgra

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stock, he would now own some 30,000 shares and be worth more than \$1 million. After citing statistics on farm foreclosures, declining land value, and accumulation of crop land by farm management companies, Jackson proposed a solution.

To complement the revised corporate tax and anti-trust legislation that anchors his economic policy, Jackson, in Iowa, endorsed the Family Farm Act, "a program of parity and not charity," that would allow farmers to manage the supply of the products they create. The Family Farm Act, Jackson said, would also provide for restructuring of debt, soil conservation, affirmative action problems for minority farmers and increased funding of domestic hunger programs. By speaking to these concerns and by appealing to the sense of fair-play that motivates populist upsurges, Jackson has expanded his constituency beyond the pockets of urban blacks that made up most of his campaign in 1984. In Iowa, a state with less than a one percent black population, Jackson got nine percent of the support in the caucuses

on February 8.

The term that Jackson frequently uses to describe the central problem of the U.S. economy is "economic violence." "Just as we replaced racial violence with racial justice, we must replace economic violence with economic justice," he said last October in announcing his candidacy. In a speech in December in Victoria, Jackson described the term this way, as recorded by *Austin American-Statesman* reporter Dave McNeely: "It's when oil tankers are being escorted up and down the Persian Gulf at a cost of more than a million dollars a day, and oil wells are capped in Texas. Economic violence.

"It's when 600,000 family farmers are driven from their land in America, and we're importing food from foreign countries — subsidized by the U.S. government. Economic violence.

"To be spending \$150 billion a year defending Europe 40 years after the war — when they can share the burden. . . . Old folk in our own country can't afford hearing aids, eyeglasses or dentures and have to choose between food and heat. Economic violence.

"When we spend our money chasing 3 million Sandinistas and feeding 15,000 contras, and you aren't feeding people in the Valley of Texas — that's economic violence."

Implicit in such domestic concerns is a rejection of the actual violence we have fostered in the name of the East-West struggle. In Latin America, where the Reagan administration sees anti-imperialist subversives determined to collude with the Soviet Union, Jackson sees customers. "Next door to us there are 400 million Latin neighbors/customers," Jackson said in January in Austin. "They used to buy some of their grain from us. Now they can't buy it, we can't sell it. They're starved, we have surplus. If we reduce their debt, we reduce our deficit. Our future. Our future next door . . . If we shut down that war policy in Central America, the Pan American Highway would be hummin', [with] grain, trucks, tractors . . ."

Jackson has also argued for trade with Nicaragua, a change that would do more to liberalize Daniel Ortega's government than does our current policy of underwriting terrorism while maintaining an economic boycott, which is not unlike the Eisenhower/Kennedy agenda of military pressure and economic isolation that — as Theodore Draper so eloquently argued 20 years ago — drove Castro into the Soviet camp. Jackson has also called for diplomatic relations with Cuba, understanding that commercial relations and the introduction of North American products there will do more to reform the Castro regime than what has been achieved by 30 years of economic isolation. What the mainstream press often derisively refers to as Jackson's "Third Worldism" is nothing so radical as to

suggest that North Americans must come to accept that popular democracy and socialism in the Third World are not incompatible to U.S. interests. Also on Jackson's foreign policy agenda is his commitment to the creation of a Palestinian homeland, which surely must be the cornerstone of any humane Middle East policy considered by progressive Democrats.

FEW DEMOCRATS deny that Jesse Jackson is the most articulate candidate on the stump. But many see him as merely an orator and little more. Jackson's message is "just rhetoric," one Dallas Democrat who is supporting Gore told us recently. It generates a lot of applause but it doesn't add up to a Presidential candidacy.

Aside from the fact that any politician's platform can be dismissed as "just rhetoric," we suggest that there is a lot more than rhetoric going on here. Jackson represents the most substantial effort to build the progressive wing of the Democratic party since George McGovern's candidacy. He is addressing the issues of power and poverty and real change that progressives have complained, year after year, have not been touched by mainstream Democratic candidates. But he is not just building a stronger progressive wing by making speeches; he is adding to our ranks. He is leading a delegation that will arrive at the party, enter through the front door, and say, "Our time has come." No one from the top levels of the Democratic party has actually invited Jesse Jackson to do this, nor has any other Democrat invited his followers — "the damned, disinherited, disrespected, despised," as he put it in San Francisco in 1984 — with the conviction that Jackson has.

Establishment Democrats are frightened of Jackson's politics of inclusion. What damage do they fear? Simply this: they do not want white conservatives, whom they think of as southerners, to bolt from the party. They frame the concern as a simple pragmatic strategy for keeping the party large enough to win the White House. But are they not revealing, as well, a clear preference for the white conservative wing? Are they not saying we must reject Jackson and his legions and cater to the Sam Nunn Democrats? In doing so, they are showing themselves to be men of little faith. They are fretting that white southerners can not find common ground with hard-luck farmers, urban blacks, striking factory workers, the homeless, the hungry, the disenfranchised. Jackson is saying just the opposite.

We do not think Jackson will be elected President. On the network news and in the major newspapers he would certainly be perceived as further to the left than George McGovern. And of course, McGovern couldn't get elected in 1972, even in a more liberal era. For that matter, we do not think Jackson can win the Democratic nomina-

tion. You would see party chairman Paul Kirk put on pink feathers and dance the funky chicken in front of Mario Cuomo if that's what it would take to prevent Jackson from carrying the party's banner in 1988.

So why vote for Jesse Jackson in this primary?

Because, in our view, the Democratic party is once again teetering on the verge of putting up the kind of candidate who is acceptable to the big money raisers who call themselves Democrats, the kind of candidate who does not have the ability to inspire the party's natural constituents — namely those who are fed up with the Republicans. (This type of candidate is currently campaigning in the South in the person of Al Gore.)

What is now shaping up in the party is a struggle over a moderate or conservative candidacy such as Gore's or a traditionally liberal candidacy of the kind that Paul Simon and Michael Dukakis have tried to define. Richard Gephardt is the other factor; he is known by party bigwigs to be a safe and unthreatening candidate, with the added advantage of being able to mouth lines that suggest he is not.

The idea of the Super Tuesday southern primary was to win this party struggle in favor of a conservative Democrat such as Sam Nunn or Charles Robb. But since those great white hopes decided not to cooperate, the party fatcats now pray that the primary will boost Gore or Gephardt. In our view it would be a sweet irony to see Jackson get a lift from the primary that was supposed to head off any progressive tilt to the nominating process.

We urge a vote for Jackson because we think it is time for the party to tilt. Presidential contests in America inevitably have more to do with personalities than with issues of substance. This year we have an almost dominating preoccupation with what are called "character issues." The character flaw that is most commonly attributed to Jackson is that he is in it for himself, that the drive behind his campaign is his own considerable ego. But Jackson, more than any other candidate (excepting Republican Pat Robertson), is part of an actual movement that is larger than his campaign. Working for Jackson and voting for Jackson is a way of participating in this movement that we hope will grow strong enough to change the face of politics in this country.

The movement we are talking about is driven by populist sentiment. Its concern is with the *majority* of people here who do not see their incomes rising with Reagan's "rising tide." These are the people who can not be sure a corporate decision made at the top of a skyscraper somewhere will not deprive them of their job tomorrow, who sometimes need the intervention of the government to allow them to prosper or survive, who are in no rush to send young men to fight in places they've never been to, or to finance others to do the fighting. These are people who are not interested in



LOUIS DUBOSE

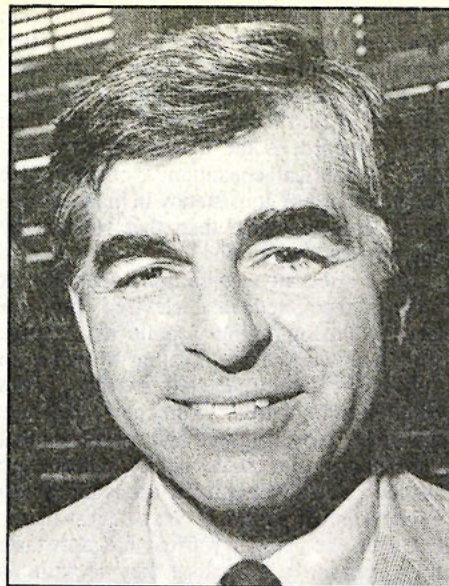
Paul Simon

tax policies that give corporations and investors a break but never the average wage-earner. They are people who can recognize "economic violence" when they see it and now need to be mobilized to stand up against it.

This is a movement that after eight years of Reaganism could turn into a political whirlwind. The Democratic party ought to be putting itself in the vortex of such a movement.

WHEN WE SAID at the beginning that Jackson is "reshaping the political landscape," we did not mean simply that he is altering equations having to do with a delegate counts as the primary season unfolds or that he is forcing other candidates to take him into account at forums and debates. Jackson is changing ways of thinking about power among people who have, in campaign after campaign, heard a mild and sometimes unconvincing liberalism from one party and a bellicose and unrealistic free marketism from the other.

Jackson widens the debate. On the campaign trail in Iowa, Jackson told a group of about 200 women in Des Moines that the problem with the other Democrats was not that any of them were not liberal. As reported by Chicago journalist David Moberg, Jackson reflected on a recent Democratic debate: "They all gave liberal answers," Jackson said, continuing, "They were not liberated. Beyond liberalism and doing things for poor people, there is liberation and people doing things for themselves. Each candidate said, 'I'll give you a tricycle, a job, day care, medical care.' What's fundamental is not programs for the rejected. What's important is for them to be empowered to generate programs for themselves. Am I my brother's keeper? No, I am not my brother or sister's keeper.



BILL LEISSNER

Michael Dukakis

I am my brother or sister's brother, and that's enough. Everything else flows from respect. . . . If people have their share of power, they will have their share of programs."

Moberg went on to quote Dixon Terry, a farm leader, on the effect of the Jackson campaign: "I really think Iowa will never be the same culturally and politically. He's had a major impact on the state like no other politician. To see what's happening with Jackson here and to see how people have been forced to change their thinking is something that goes way beyond one election."

Jackson's appeal to such voters is one way that his campaign this year is substantially different from his 1984 campaign, when he wasn't able to extend his support much beyond the black community. The "Jewish question" still follows him. His unfortunate past association with an openly racist and anti-Semitic Louis Farrakhan is, of course, a serious concern. It is one that Jackson addressed in his speech to the 1984 Democratic convention, when he said, "If in my low moments . . . through some error or temper, taste or tone, I have caused anyone discomfort, created pain or revived someone's fears, that was not my truest self." In 1988, it seems that Jackson has put Farrakhan squarely behind him. Jackson's campaign is now managed by Gerald Austin, who is Jewish. And we hope Jackson is making honest attempts to come to terms with the American Jewish community. The Farrakhan incident and Jackson's "Hymie Town" remarks leave some wondering if other anti-Semitic sentiments lurk beneath Jackson's public persona. These are no small concerns, and each of us must examine them carefully and weigh them against the good that the evolving Jackson



LOUIS DUBOSE

Jesse Jackson

movement has and might yet create.

IN THE LIGHT of the campaign Jackson is trying to run, let's consider the other Democratic candidates who are shaping the 1988 race.

Senator Paul Simon of Illinois reaffirms traditional Democratic party liberalism, and without apology. His idea that the Democrats ought to put a jobs program front and center is a good one. We are not unsympathetic with his insistence that public debt is out of hand — it results in a transfer of wealth from taxpayers to the wealthy bondholding class and it eats up too much of the government budget in interest — but he has not been able to convincingly reconcile his public spending theme with his message on the evils of debt. And the strength of his feeling about the debt seems to push him toward ill-conceived schemes: his support for a balanced budget amendment and for the odious Gramm-Rudman budget-slicing law, to name a couple.

Simon is right to say that "we have to de-escalate the arms race," and to spend "less of our natural resources on arms and to spend those resources doing all the things that we could do to enrich the lives of our people," as he said at a forum in Austin in December. But he also spoke on that occasion of "deficiencies" in the arsenal of "conventional" weapons. "We must strengthen conventional defenses," he said. "I think it has to be done." This was the same forum at which Simon declined to reject the first use of nuclear arms, saying that if the Soviets moved into Western Europe he could foresee introducing nuclear weapons into the conflict. (See *TO*, 1/29/88)

Not that we expect to agree with candidates on all issues, but we have not found Simon consistently inspiring in his political content nor in his style, which is

often so ponderous that one wonders if the "unelectable" label so easily pinned on Jackson couldn't be worn as well by Simon.

Michael Dukakis seems to us to have a better chance for the White House and, given the choice in November between him and Bush or Dole, we'd happily march right on down to the polls. But Dukakis certainly represents no movement; he is a potential Democratic option. He is, for the moment, the candidate for technocratic solutions, the sensible and cool-headed manager.

The problem with technocrats is that they often get snookered by corporate decision-makers. As we in Austin have witnessed with our city's recent seduction of Sematech, the high-tech research consortium, the game is played more on the entrepreneur's terms than on the government's. The industries that supposedly hold the key to future economic development have become expert in holding out the promise of jobs in exchange for inducements such as favorable tax structures and guarantees that economic benefits will remain in the control of the private sector. How much has Dukakis's much-touted "economic miracle" in Massachusetts followed this course? (How much has it relied upon Reagan's excessive military spending?) There is more to look at in the Dukakis candidacy than has been looked at so far.

Richard Gephardt is a career politician who saw the opportunity in Iowa to step into the populist vortex. We give him credit for forming a good strategy but we are hard-pressed to find anything more to him than that. Gephardt is the manufactured candidate, a political consultant's creation. He has no record of consistency in his Congressional career; worse than that we fear he has no real convictions.

The conservative columnist Robert Novak recently recounted, in a televised commentary, his having run into a political operative who had worked for Walter Mondale in 1984. The operative said of the press's reaction to Gephardt, "You know, they hate this guy." Novak agreed and speculated that journalists prefer traditional liberals and are suspicious of Gephardt for arousing threatening populist passions. We suggest that if it is true the campaign press has a distaste for Gephardt it is because they see him as a phony who casts himself a populist out of sheer opportunism.

If Gephardt catches on, you will be able to watch the financiers line up behind him and you will have a clue as to how threatening this supposed populist really is.

In this state, the money that was earlier being readied for Gephardt went to Al Gore. Gore has clearly become the hope of the Democratic establishment and is staking his campaign on winning the South. There are

several ironies that follow Gore like a shadow. One is that he has become the choice of the "I-want-to-finally-win-one" Democrats even though he is the most wooden and utterly unconvincing of the candidates on the lot. This is the man who will reinspire voters to put a Democrat in the White House? It takes a leap of faith. Another irony is that Gore is being marketed as the conservatives' choice. He won his Senate seat as a liberal and has a mostly liberal voting record (though perhaps cultural conservatives admire his wife's firm stand against the raunchiness of Twisted Sister and Motley Crue).

Yet Gore decided that his only hope of selling himself to the electorate was in selling himself to the money boys. So his voting record is no longer the most relevant thing about him. He's been bought, and he'll know where his debts are.

So choose your imperfections, voters. Each candidate has a full set of baggage. In all likelihood you will get your chance to vote for another Democrat like Walter Mondale — maybe this time with a little more verve than Wally, maybe not — and undoubtedly that candidate would make a better President than a Bush or a Dole. But if you are inspired by Jesse Jackson, give him your vote. If your party's primary is not the place to vote your conscience, then where is the place?
—L.D., D.D.

How the Primary Works

YOU MAY REMEMBER voting for Walter Mondale, Gary Hart, or Jesse Jackson in the Texas primary in 1984, but if you do, it's all in your head. The names of the candidates for President were not found on the ballot in 1984's state Democratic primary. Only a small percentage of the state's voters actually took part in selecting delegates to represent the three Democratic contenders at the national convention: they were the ones who participated in the precinct caucuses the night the polls closed.

This year will be different.

Not only has Texas joined other southern states in moving the primary to an earlier date, the rules of the game have been altered considerably. We have moved away from the traditional caucus system in favor of the more common method of primary voting, where candidate strength will be decided at the voting booth, not in the often chaotic and contentious late-night caucuses. This year 60 percent of the 197 delegates Texas will send to the Democratic National Convention in Atlanta will be apportioned according to the popular vote

on Super Tuesday.

But the caucuses live on. The three-tiered system of holding precinct conventions, then county conventions 11 days later, and then a state convention in the summer, remains in place. It's just that the stakes aren't quite what they used to be. Only a third of the delegates sent to Atlanta will be chosen on the basis of their candidate's show of strength in the caucuses.

Texas is using a dual-track method, mixing primary voting with caucus organizing in a way that party officials say is unique. "We're the only state in the nation using both systems," according to Jim Boynton, primary director of the state Democratic Party. Nobody is arguing that the process has been simplified, but here is how it works:

On Tuesday, March 8, voters will choose either the Democratic or Republican primary and cast votes in the presidential, statewide, and local races. The local primaries that have traditionally been held in May have been moved up to the Super Tuesday date, with primary run-offs set for April 12.

The night of March 8 voters who are

still hungry for politics may attend their precinct conventions, which begin at 7:15 p.m. Only those who voted in the primary may participate in the convention. Participants sign in for the candidate of their choice and hold caucuses to elect delegates to the county conventions, which will be held March 19.

The process is repeated at the county convention, where delegates are chosen for the state convention, which will be held in Houston on June 17 and 18.

At the state convention, delegates will be grouped according to the 31 state Senatorial districts. Each district is allotted a certain number of delegates, determined by a calculation based on the turnout in that district for the Presidential race in 1984 and the Democratic turnout for governor in 1986. These delegates will be awarded to Presidential candidates based on Super Tuesday's primary vote *in that district*. For example, the 13th Senatorial District (which sends Craig Washington of Houston to the state Senate) will be allotted six delegates. If the Super Tuesday vote in the district was 50 percent for Jesse Jackson and 34 percent for Michael Dukakis, Jackson would get three of the delegates and Dukakis would get two. If Paul Simon, Al Gore, and Richard Gephardt all got five percent of the primary vote, none

More Endorsements

CONGRESS

HOUSTON REP. Mickey Leland is the only incumbent Democrat in the Texas delegation to face a primary challenge this year; his odds of surviving it are good. Elizabeth Spates, a member of the Houston school board, is challenging Leland, claiming he has grown rich in his years of public service and has lost touch with his inner-city 18th Congressional district. Spates seems to be running at least partly to seek political revenge against Leland for his backing of an opponent to a Spates ally on the school board. On a radio debate she charged Leland with "obesity of the head." We favor **Mickey Leland** in this race. His work on hunger issues in Congress and his role as leader of the House Black Caucus have made him a worthy representative in the tradition of his predecessor, Barbara Jordan.

There are active Democratic primary races in four of the ten districts now represented by Republicans. These are the races where Democrats hope to gain ground in the 27-member delegation. One of the Republicans thought to be vulnerable is Rep.

Mac Sweeney of Wharton. Two-term Republicans Tom DeLay of Sugar Land and Joe Barton of Ennis are in stronger positions. And in West Texas, Amarillo Rep. Beau Boulter's quixotic decision to challenge Senator Lloyd Bentsen for the Senate has opened the way for Democrats to try to reclaim the seat that went Republican in 1984.

Unfortunately, the leading contender to challenge Rep. Sweeney is Greg Laughlin, an uninspiring Democrat with the potential to become another boll-weevil in the House. Laughlin is an attorney from West Columbia who came close to beating Sweeney in 1986. Laughlin perceives the 14th district (which includes southeast Texas from Houston to Austin to San Antonio to Corpus Christi) as a conservative area with voters interested in a strong military, according to his campaign manager, Ken Bryan. So Laughlin is emphasizing his military service (he has a background in military intelligence) and his stands for a strong military budget. He is also making energy and agriculture issues part of his focus.

We prefer the other Democrat in the race, **Michael Herzik**, a lawyer from Flatonia. Herzik does not yet have the money and the visibility that Laughlin has but he seems to us to represent a more down-to-earth and appealing direction for the Democratic party. His campaign treasurer, Don Buford

(who himself ran for Congress against Jack Fields in 1984), says Herzik is in the race because he thinks Sweeney is beatable and because he "firmly believes Laughlin is a phony." Herzik faults Laughlin for losing the race last time. Herzik is a plaintiffs' attorney who has represented union people and who has the endorsement of the Victoria Central Labor Council. (Laughlin has support from unionists in Brazoria County, and the AFL-CIO's Committee on Political Education made a "co-endorsement" of Herzik and Laughlin.) Buford points to Herzik's roots in the Czech and German area near Flatonia and says "he has a lot in common with the people out there." Buford says he thinks Herzik could catch on with the voters if given the chance.

There is a three-way Democratic primary going on in the 22nd district, which includes Houston and nearby Fort Bend and Brazoria counties. This is the district that sent Tom DeLay, a pest control specialist from Sugar Land, to Congress in 1984. Conventional wisdom holds that the area is solidly Republican and that Democratic challengers will have trouble getting 40 percent of the vote. But according to Richard Konrad, the leading Democratic contender, "this is a race worth paying attention to." Konrad is a 45-year-old English teacher at Texas Southern University. He holds a doctorate in philosophy from Emory University.

of them would be entitled to a delegate because the threshold is 15 percent. At this point, the two front-runners, Jackson and Dukakis, would divide up the remaining support according to their vote percentage. Since Jackson has the higher support, he'd end up getting the sixth delegate. In this manner, 119 delegates (out of the 197-member delegation) will be chosen. In addition, 38 delegates will be chosen from the ranks of party officials and elected officials. Twenty-four of these will be allotted according to the strength of candidates at the caucuses. (The other 14 are unpledged.) The final 40 delegates will be at-large delegates, who will be divvied up also according to candidate strength at the conventions. In effect, then, all the jockeying at the precinct and county and state conventions is to influence the selection of 64 delegates (32 percent of the total).

ONE EFFECT of the decreased emphasis on the caucuses may be to reduce the advantage of the well-organized candidate who is able to turn out activists to attend the caucuses. In 1984, Walter Mondale, with strong support from labor and party activists, took 47 percent of the state's delegates, compared to Gary Hart's 20 percent and

Jackson's 17 percent.

But the level of participation in the caucuses this year could well drop, making it even more the domain of the hard-core party regulars. Having had the opportunity to vote for their preferred candidate during the day, most voters are not likely to return to their precinct caucuses. Organized labor is busily organizing around the state to send as many union members to the caucuses as they can, so that in the event of a split convention there will be a solid bloc of labor delegates who will push for a nominee that they find acceptable.

This will not be the first time Texans have had the chance to vote for a Presidential candidate directly in a primary—in 1976 the party allowed a special early primary in an attempt to boost the candidacy of Senator Lloyd Bentsen. But Bentsen faded early and many Democrats found themselves supporting Jimmy Carter.

Bentsen was one of the key forces behind the current reshaping of the state's primaries and caucuses. He urged state leaders to change the system in the 1985 legislative session so that Texas could play a role in altering the course of the political season. Bentsen and other conservative and moderate Democrats regularly expressed the desire to see Texas help bring about a "more main-

stream" Democratic candidate. State Senator Chet Edwards of Duncanville tried valiantly to push the primary bill through the legislature in 1985 but ran into resistance from Republicans and some conservative Democrats and the bill died in committee. But it was revived in the special session of the legislature called by Governor Mark White in September of 1986 and Edwards was able to get it passed.

Conservative Democrats such as state Senators Roy Blake of Nacogdoches and Grant Jones of Abilene had originally opposed the bill out of fears that it would "lock in" the development of two-party politics in the state. The original bill called for a March presidential primary with local primary races still to be held in May. Blake objected out of fears that his conservative friends who would vote in the Republican Presidential primary would then not be able to cross over and vote for conservative Democrats in local races. The final version of the bill moved the local races to March as well, but of course cross-over voting will still be impossible. Voters will now have to choose either the Republican or the Democratic party in both presidential and local races. No more "Shivercrats for Eisenhower" or "Democrats for Nixon," at least in the primary season.

D.D.

Konrad is running against the Reagan record of the last eight years and against Tom DeLay's unblinking support for the President. "DeLayism, taken to its logical conclusion, spells disaster for the country," Konrad says. He says the policies of the Republicans have been "anti-government and anti-social." He is running on the theory that a good many voters in his district "are not crazy about Reagan politics anymore." Many were recent converts to the party in the early years of Reagan who will not necessarily remain Republicans, he says. In addition he claims the demographics of his district are changing, with more blacks and Hispanics moving in. "It's not like Bill Archer's district, where you've got people who *deserve* to be Republicans," he says, referring to the neighboring 7th district, which includes the posh River Oaks area of Houston.

Two other Democrats are running for the nomination — Wayne Walker, a lawyer, and Ray Lemmon, a real estate and insurance man who served in the legislature from 1969 to 1973. Walker's campaign seems nearly invisible. Lemmon says he is the most experienced contender, who already knows many of the members of the Texas delegation. "I don't know Tom DeLay from a boatload of oats, but his record reflects he is pretty far to the right," says Lemmon. He adds that he would place himself to the right of Democrat Konrad. We join the likes of Sissy Farenthold, Nikki Van Hightower, and Gertrude Barnstone in endorsing **Richard Konrad**.

For sheer entertainment value, nothing could be better than a race up in the Panhandle between state Senator Bill Sarpalius and state Rep. Chip Staniswallis for Republican Beau Boulter's seat. Two of the more comical members of the legislature, they would undoubtedly lift the spirits of all West Texans who appreciate a good political joke. But, alas, Sarpalius (who once wondered aloud in a Senate hearing whether information for farmworkers would be written "in Spanish, or American") is opposed by two intelligent Democrats and Staniswallis will have to best no less than five other Republicans in the primary.

Sarpalius began his campaign with his jaw wired shut, after he was decked by a mysterious roundhouse punch at an Amarillo nightclub. (West Texas wags say his campaign slogan is not "Where's the beef?" but "Where's the soup?") His strongest challenge is said to come from Ed Lehman of Vernon, who has the labor endorsement in the area. Lehman is in the circle of former conservative Congressman Jack Hightower. We think a better candidate would be **Randy Hollums**. Hollums, 45, has spent most of his life in Floydada, where he is a district attorney. He has been active in party politics and has the endorsement of the Sierra Club's committee on political education. According to local activists, Hollums has appeared in candidate forums and easily holds his own.

He's "the one who could stop Sarpalius," said one liberal observer. The district, with a base Democratic vote of 48 percent, could be won by the Democrats, say analysts who have looked at previous races in the district.

A much tougher race is in the 6th district, now held by Joe Barton, R-Ennis. This is an expensive district to run in because it requires advertising in both the Houston and Fort Worth markets and everything in between. In 1986, Fort Worth lawyer Pete Geren, a Bentsen-style Democrat, failed in a well-funded race against Barton. This year three Democrats are in the primary but none of them seem up to the task. We make no endorsement.

TEXAS SENATE

THERE ARE FOUR Senate seats being contested in the Democratic primary and two of the races are especially interesting. One is for the seat vacated by Bill Sarpalius of Canyon and the other is a challenge to veteran incumbent Grant Jones of Abilene.

The Amarillo area can hardly go wrong in choosing its Democratic nominee to fill Sarpalius's shoes. Any of the three candidates would be an improvement. Bryan Poff is a former district judge who has won labor's endorsement. Nancy Lou Garms is an attorney who has been active in party politics. And Mel Phillips is a real estate developer from Amarillo who says that he is irrevocably opposed to a state income tax. We endorse **Nancy Lou Garms**. Garms worked in Max Sherman's campaign for attorney general six years ago and served on Mark White's state commission on women's issues. Progressives in the Panhandle and expatriate Panhandle liberals here in Austin tell us that she is the best candidate. She has demonstrated a genuine interest in social service issues rather than limiting the focus of her campaign to the sort of Rotarian and agribusiness topics that too often characterize Panhandle races. Her election would likely improve the quality of discourse in a body that is three members away from being an exclusive men's club.

Whoever is nominated will face a strong Republican in the fall. T. Boone Pickens is reported to have picked Teel Bivins, a local fatcat, to take the seat for the Republicans. This might be the best nomination for the Democrats, who could benefit from an anti-Pickens backlash. Ron Slover, an anti-Pickens Republican, might be the more difficult candidate to beat. There are indications that many West Texans are chafing under Pickens's heavy-handed and paternalistic attempts to run things from Mesa headquarters. The election might demonstrate if he is capable of a hostile takeover of the 31st Senatorial district.

Lieutenant Governor Bill Hobby has been up to Abilene to help Senator Grant Jones in his reelection effort, but we think it's time for Jones to be retired. His voting record in the Senate is awful, siding time

and again with the interests of the business lobby. He is also not a loyal Democrat; he would probably be as comfortable with as many Republican stands as Democratic ones. His opponent, **Robert Temple Dickson**, is not a liberal, but he would be a stronger Democrat, and with redistricting on the 1991 horizon, that is important. He is a trial lawyer from Sweetwater and he has worked on workers' compensation law, so he would be less likely to side with the insurance companies on such issues as "tort reform" as Jones consistently did.

Long-time East Texas Senator Roy Blake has stepped down, leaving a fight for his 3rd district seat. Rep. Bill Haley of Center is running against David Hill, a Henderson lawyer, for the Democratic nomination. Haley has been a quirky member of the House — one is never quite sure which side of an issue he'll pop up on. He is not an intellectually consistent or profound man but he is colorful, with a gift for the deadpan humorous speech. Haley has the labor endorsement but David Hill has the Sierra Club's endorsement. The environmental group said Hill provided "thoughtful and positive" responses to their issues questionnaire, and that Haley's environmental record in the House leaves much to be desired. What is certain is that either one would be a better asset to the party than Roy Blake was. It's too soon to say that the coffee is sauced and blowed, as Haley once put it, but it looks as if he'll win.

East Texas Senator **Richard Anderson** has a Democratic challenger in Mickey Smith of Kilgore. Anderson proved himself to be a better Senator than many people — especially liberals — expected and he deserves to be returned for another term.

TEXAS HOUSE

ALL 150 MEMBERS of the House are up for reelection this year. Twenty-one incumbents are not returning for the next session, eleven of those are Republicans, including some of their most vocal and talented leaders, such as Houston Rep. Mike Toomey who has joined the governor's staff. Republicans have been speaking for years of their plans to increase their ranks in time for the 1991 redistricting; they are currently 20 votes short of a majority, with 56 members.

It's too early to tell whether the Republicans will gain ground in 1988. It will depend on such variables as who leads the Democratic and Republican tickets and, of course, what kind of candidates emerge from the primaries. Republicans have 24 districts with primary races and Democrats have 37 contested districts. Here are a few races around the state that are of interest:

Houston

In the Southeast corner of the city, three-term incumbent Al Luna has drawn three Democratic opponents in what is turning out to be one of the meaner races in the state. In 1980, Luna succeeded Ben Reyes, for

whom he had worked as a legislative aide, when Reyes elected to leave the House and run for the city council office that he now holds. Luna's big opposition will come from Raul Martinez, a 64-year-old retiring constable who was encouraged to run by Reyes after Luna endorsed his own candidate for the very office from which the 64-year-old Martinez was retiring. (Now all of this gets rather byzantine.) For several years it had been known that John Castillo, a deputy constable, had designs on retiring Constable Martinez's seat. And it was expected that Luna, as a benefactor of the largesse of the Ben T. Reyes political machine, would endorse John Castillo, the brother-in-law of Leonel Castillo, former mayoral candidate, city comptroller, director of the Immigration and Naturalization Service during the Carter presidency . . . the man who wrote the book on Houston Hispanic politics. When Luna endorsed Victor Trevino, a Houston police officer who is probably as qualified — and perhaps better — than the machine candidate, what *Houston Chronicle* political writer Lori Rodriguez describes as the Brown Machine turned against Luna.

Reyes, his sister, school board member Tina Reyes, Castillo & Castillo, state Representative Roman Martinez, and the elder Martinez who filed as Luna's opponent, all heavy hitters, have lined up against Al Luna. "Conventional wisdom says that he will lose," said one legislative staffer who might be the best race handicapper in the Capitol. "When you run against the machine in Houston you can't win." A labor leader who stays plugged in to Hispanic races across the state agrees: "The machine is impossible to beat. And it's greased; they just elected a school board candidate." And there is some talk that what all of this is about is a Congressional race in 1992, after reapportionment.

We'll go, with no reservations, for Al Luna. As much as we would like to fall in with Leonel Castillo, going thumbs down on a Ben Reyes candidate is not so unpleasant. At 64, Raul Martinez can't take the place of Luna, a high-profile member of the Mexican American Political Caucus. Martinez probably would vote right but Luna is a proven leader, a broker who can work effectively with the Speaker's clique without being seduced by it. He's occasionally carried pro-business legislation that we've disagreed with (an AT&T deregulation bill last session) but he is seldom without a vigorous defense. We respect his motives and his expertise in the legislature.

Also in the race is Adrian McGowan, a sharp young Houston attorney who is black. And Michael Yarborough, a 36-year-old, black political consultant who is taking the low road, attacking Luna for his vote on the tax package. A large turnout for Jesse Jackson might affect the down-ballot candidates here, though the district, according to the *Chronicle* is only 20 percent black.

Sixty percent of its residents are Hispanic.

Farther out the Katy Freeway are enough Republicans to make your face hurt, and a bunch of them have lined up to replace Mike Toomey, now a soldier for Bill Clements. This is an odd district; white people here live in quaint little suburban hamlets like Hunters Creek and Piney Point Village. They eat mostly paté. Eight Republicans have squared off for what surely will be a genteel fight. Often, when that many get together on the streets here, a polo game breaks out.

Houston Rep. Al Luna's race for re-election has turned into one of the meanest contests in the state.

One lonely Democrat, 58-year-old Mary Burke, is running against the whole Post-Oak-Charity-Horse-Show-Chic crowd. We can not but wish her well. There were two Dems in the race, but Gordon Quan — and it is long past time for Houston's Asian population to elect a representative — deferred to Ms. Burke and is now working on her shoestring campaign. Burke, co-owner of a small family business and a former Democratic precinct judge, is a moderate, opposed to a state income tax and inclined toward fiscal conservatism. But she expresses an interest in the new poor and is not opposed to additional spending on education. All of her children, she reminds us, attended public schools. As do her grandchildren. She will also be required to run twice, in the primary (for Quan's name is still on the ballot), then again in the special election to replace Toomey on May 7. And with eight Republicans going *mano a mano*, she might end up in a runoff and then serving as interim incumbent. And remember, these people out here are upright rich, the worst kind, smug moralists. At least in River Oaks, and we should be thankful, there is a proper sense of decadence. Send this woman a five-dollar contribution.

Three Democrats have lined up to replace Clint Hackney, who will run against Kent Hance for a place on the Railroad Commission. This is an urban/suburban district and 40 percent of the voters here will be black, Hispanic, or Asian. Two good liberal candidates, Dennis Beck and Sylvester Turner, are in the race, along with Gloria Lanier. There are also three candidates filed in the Republican primary. We endorse both Beck and Turner. Beck has labor's backing but the advantage in nominating Turner would be that the House Black Caucus could

gain another promising member. And with the way some Houston Reps., such as Larry Evans, have slacked off in recent sessions, they could use some help.

East Texas

In Beaumont, incumbent Al Price is challenged by Everett H. Sanderson, a 31-year-old attorney. Sanderson seems to be a moderate; he would probably represent the district adequately. But we endorse Al Price. Price's voting record in the House is always solid. He is not a go-along-to-get-along legislator, but there are times when Al Price seems to be the *only* one on the House floor to stand up and say what ought to be said: that legislators are taking the cowardly way out by heaping more and more sales taxes on the working citizens, for example, or that it is the state's responsibility to house prisoners, not that of private prison companies. District demographics suggest that he will win.

The good news from Corsicana is that conservative Democrat Tom Waldrop will stay there during the next legislative session. Waldrop's voting record is as bad as Republican Mike Toomey's, if one needs a point of reference. And his decision to stay on the ranch provides opportunity for improvement. Curtis Soileau receives our endorsement in a four-man race. Among his opponents are Kenneth Pelt, a Shivercrat type, and Wilbur Lee "Bubba" Pate. Bubba was the last candidate to give Jack Brooks a scare; the tenor of his campaigns in two Congressional races suggest that here is another one to avoid. (Brooks sat one race out in Washington then came back two years later to remind Bubba who his betters were.) Soileau (Swa-luh) is by far the best candidate. A liberal attorney from Sour Lake, he has received labor's endorsement. His election will improve the quality of Southeast Texas' representation in Austin. And no Republican has filed for the general election.

South Texas

Jesus Maria Alvarez of Rio Grande City opposes incumbent Irma Rangel in the Democratic Primary. Rangel's voting record would be hard to improve upon. She has served in the House since 1977; unless a challenger with some extraordinary leadership ability appeared there would be no reason to oppose Rangel. Irma Rangel gets our endorsement. And the demographics of the district suggest that she will be back in Austin next year; she lives and practices law in Kingsville, by far the largest city in the 37th district.

In the lower Rio Grande Valley, Larry Warner is in a race with two lightweights. Desi R. Martinez is a local contractor from Harlingen. And Ruben Rodriguez is a former school superintendent from San Benito. Warner's history of pro bono legal work, some on behalf of death row inmates, is almost a sufficient reason to endorse him. And in the House his voting record is good.

Though he wavered on the anti-income tax amendment last session, neither of his opponents can begin to match his record.

Another Valley legislator, **Renato Cuellar**, gets our endorsement. Cuellar almost always votes a liberal agenda. He has demonstrated a genuine interest in listening to his constituents. He wears the most colorful western scarf-ties and plays a better blues harmonica than any other member of the legislature. He is opposed by Juan Maldonado, former mayor of San Juan, and a Pharr Democrat, Leonard Pruneda. Maldonado has high name recognition and probably would vote just as Cuellar does — perhaps better on tort reform issues. Unfortunately he has squared off with just about every member of the Mexican American Caucus. At one time or another Maldonado has had feuds going with Lena Guerrero, Juan Hinojosa, Gonzalo Barrientos . . . We see no need to introduce division into the most effective political caucus in the House. This is a three-city race. In the Valley that means that each candidate begins with a local base. It could be close.

West Texas

Incumbent Larry Don Shaw is opposed by Cecil Gay Gilstrap in the Democratic primary. We go along with organized labor here and endorse **Larry Don Shaw** for a fifth term.

Jack Vowell, the four-term Republican from El Paso, has drawn an opponent in the Republican primary. There is no Democratic opponent and if there were we would still be inclined to endorse Vowell. While we can't agree with his entire voting record, he is one of the few Republicans who had the courage to say publicly that reckless social spending cuts were not the answer to the state's fiscal crisis. And a good number of Vowell's Democratic colleagues in the House would do well to take a few cues from this honorable Republican. Vowell has served on the powerful Appropriations Committee, where the voice of reason was especially crucial. El Paso Democrats should vote for him every chance they get.

It is hard to say the same about Nick Perez, another El Paso Democrat. Perez has a solid liberal voting record but exerts little influence on the legislative world around him. Jesse Glover, a school board member from Fabens, has filed against Perez. Some in El Paso tell us that he would be an improvement. We endorse **Glover**.

Arves Jones, the Republican businessman, is returning home after spending five years too many as District 71 representative. Two Democrats have filed for the seat: James T. Allen and Ron McCluskey. McCluskey supported Pat Haggerty, one of two candidates filed in the Republican primary, back when Haggerty was a Democrat. Should McCluskey win he will be faced with the unpleasant circumstance

of running against a political ally in a *ni tan tan-ni muy muy* race. Let's spare him that; we endorse **James Allen**, a mainline Democrat and the best candidate.

Central Texas

There are two races of interest in San Antonio. **Ciro Rodriguez**, the first-term representative who replaced Frank Tejada when Tejada went to the Senate, proved himself a promising legislator last session. Rodriguez put his knowledge of education issues to good use on the House higher education committee. He has a challenger in Leo Alvarado, but we endorse **Ciro Rodriguez**.

The stage is set for Lloyd Doggett to join former state Senator Oscar Mauzy on the Supreme Court.

In the wake of Lou Nelle Sutton's retirement from the House, five San Antonio Democrats and two Republicans are running for her seat. The choice is pretty clearly between Karyne Conley and Ruth Jones in the Democratic primary, but beyond that it's not so clear. Jones has been a member of the state Democratic executive committee and has been involved in Democratic politics for 15 years. Conley, a lawyer, served on former U.N. ambassador Andrew Young's staff. Jones has labor's support; the Texas Women's Political Caucus made no endorsement. One Jones supporter we talked to said frankly that Conley might make a better legislator. We would gladly support either **Karyne Conley** or **Ruth Jones**.

In the 52nd district, north of Austin, there may be a chance to unseat Round Rock Republican Randall Riley. This is a "marginal" district for the Democrats, with a base Democratic vote of about 48 percent. Three Democrats are in the primary: James McCollough of Georgetown, George Whitt of Round Rock, and Jennifer Mattingly of Hutto. **Mattingly**, who has the endorsement of the Texas Women's Political Caucus, seems the best choice here, but she may have a harder time of it, since she has a smaller home base.

In the primary race to challenge incumbent Republican Steve Holzhauser in the 32nd district down Victoria way, we favor **Glen Smith**, a local sportscaster with labor's support, over Rene Torres. This ought to be a Democratic district and a strong race by Smith might reclaim the seat in the fall.

Other Races

Among the incumbent Democrats around the state who face nominal challenges, we endorse the following:

Frank Collazo of Port Arthur, Lena Guerrero of Austin, Bob Melton of Gatesville, Garfield Thompson of Fort Worth, David Cain of Dallas, and David Patronella of Houston.

JUDICIAL RACES

THE RACE BETWEEN incumbent Supreme Court justice Raul Gonzalez and challenger Art Vega does not promise to raise anyone's esteem for the state of the elected judiciary. This one features everything from recriminations about one Hispanic taking on another (Gonzalez is the only statewide elected Hispanic officeholder) to charges and countercharges of unethical campaigning. We are not able to endorse Raul Gonzalez, who, as Vega charges, has sided more with large insurance concerns in questions of tort law and workers' compensation law than with working people. For example, last January the Court ruled that the Aetna Casualty and Surety Co. was wrong to deny and delay payments to an injured worker and that a lower court was correct in awarding treble damages to the worker. Gonzalez was the lone dissenter in the case, arguing that the company ought not be penalized, because the worker had sued under the deceptive trades practices act instead of under workers' compensation law. These are the kind of battles that are behind the inflammation of Supreme Court politics in recent years. The candidacy of Art Vega comes out of the desire of trial lawyers and labor to fill the court with justices who reliably will see such disputes from the worker's point of view. That is fair enough. But Vega, a plaintiffs' lawyer in San Antonio, seems to be little more than a cooked-up candidate to carry out the mission of the plaintiffs' lawyers. Vega is short on experience; he has been a practicing lawyer since 1978, but he has no experience in judicial or elective office.

Such is not the case with **Lloyd Doggett**, who is running for a different seat on the Supreme Court, and who has a stellar record of public service. There is no need to go on at length about Doggett, whom most of our readers undoubtedly remember as a progressive and effective state Senator in the days before he stepped down to take on the inimical Phil Gramm in the 1986 U.S. Senate race. Doggett has an insignificant opponent in the Democratic primary. We're confident he will make a fair and intellectually rigorous Supreme Court justice.

Justice **Bill Kilgarlin** deserves the support of those interested in the integrity of the state Supreme Court. Kilgarlin, as an attorney, was actively involved in prison system litigation and voter's rights lawsuits years before the current Chief Justice was working on his Junior Achievement certification. Kilgarlin's recent indictment on "60

Minutes" was not the whole story, when it comes to Supreme Court politics. Kilgarlin's bad press seems to be a result of Justice C.L. Ray's considerable ethical problems being unfairly hung around Kilgarlin's neck, making his case seem far the worse. Kilgarlin extemporaneously and articulately defends the court, particularly against a Governor who considers it a decorous chamber of commerce. He is accessible, frequently speaking at symposia and political gatherings. He is a solid Democrat and the Court's intellectual leader. Running against him is Carol Haberman, a San Antonio district court judge with a penchant for pastel judicial robes. We suggest a vote for Kilgarlin.

Ted Z. Robertson is attempting to move from an associate justice's seat to the position of Chief Justice vacated by John Hill. Robertson will be faced with a race against Clements's appointee Tom Phillips in the general election. His primary opponent is John E. Humphries.

RAILROAD COMMISSION

As much as we would like to go with John Thomas Henderson, who brings his considerable integrity to the Democratic party where he is running against incumbent Jim Nugent, we endorse **Jerry Langdon**. Langdon is a Midland oil and gas consultant. His campaign is not as well-funded as Nugent's but he stands a better chance of defeating him than does Henderson. And he would probably improve the Railroad Commission. The three-member agency creates a strange dynamic: each commissioner is always one vote away from a majority. We suggest that Langdon would complement John Sharp, who has achieved considerable success in moving the creaky commission in the direction of administrative efficiency and fairness. Nugent's record on minority hiring is deplorable; for years he has run the commission like his own fiefdom. At one time not long ago, the aging commissioner insisted on having a say on all employment decisions — the lowest clerk had to win his approval. When the agency's first equal employment officer showed up, he discovered that Nugent had not allowed for any furniture for his offices. So it has gone. We look forward to a commission of Langdon, Sharp and Clint Hackney — who will face Kent Hance in November.

—D.D., L.D.

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Handicapping the Presidential Race

MOLLY IVINS

(Editor's note: The following is an edited transcript of a speech given by Molly Ivins to an assembly of Texas peace activists who were attending the SANE/Freeze convention in Austin January 24.)

I HAVE BEEN WRITING about politics for 20 years and I have studied all the polls and I have talked to all the experts and I do not have the faintest idea who our next President will be, nor who the nominee for either party will be. Not a clue. Just beats the hell out of me.

I've never seen a race this wide open. I want to tell you one story about what it is like to be a political reporter. This is a story Jack Germond loves to tell. Do you all know about horse players? They are a dedicated and sort of fanatic and terribly superstitious group and this is the story of a horse player who dreamed about the number five. In fact, woke up, set bolt upright out of a deep sleep with the Arabic numeral five flashing in his mind in sort of day-glo colors. And as superstitious as horse players are, he went "five! five!" And it was like a message from the Big Horse Player in the Sky; he was not about to overlook it. He looks over at his alarm clock by the side of the bed and it's 5:55 in the morning. Incredible. You think the Big Horse Player's not talking to this man?

It went like that all day. The guy lives in New York City. He takes a cab to work: the fare is \$5.55. He's a salesman. His first appointment that morning was at 555 Fifth Avenue. Unbelievable. He looks at the balance in his checkbook: \$55.55. All day long, everywhere he went, five, five, five. Well this man is not a fool: He is out at the track that very afternoon, he's taken out his savings, he's got five thousand dollars on horse number five in the fifth.

And the horse finished fifth.

That's what it's like to be a political reporter. There's always a lot of evidence out there. And the question is what it really means. The wonderful thing about being a political reporter is that even when we're wrong, we're never surprised.

I have scenarios by which any of these guys can become the next President of the

United States. I have scenarios by which none of these guys can be the next President of the United States. But let me just tell you about some differences that have come out and that might be of interest to y'all.

On the Democratic side, Dukakis on Central America and the Middle East takes — basically the Democrats sort of have a generic position on all these issues and whatever differences there are are merely slight shadings, so after I go through two or three you'll sort of know what their position is. Dukakis has a slightly different approach in that he opposes involvement in Nicaragua specifically and also to some extent in the Persian Gulf — oh and also interestingly enough is against Star Wars, not merely deployment and testing but also research and development on Star Wars. For the same reasons: he considers all three of those efforts illegal. Now, if you think about it, I think you'll find it a little bit surprising that The Law should be given as a reason for doing or not doing something involving foreign policy.

Dukakis thinks that Star Wars is a violation of the ABM treaty, he firmly supports the ABM treaty and consequently is against any efforts on Star Wars. That emphasis on the law, while it is rather bloodless — which is typical of Dukakis — is interesting to me. In other words you can make such passionate arguments against our involvement in Central America. But again, it is a little astonishing and I think very telling of the man that rather than making these passionate arguments against interference in Nicaragua and Central America, he would simply say "We can't do that — it's against the law."

Paul Simon is interesting to me, particularly in his position on the Persian Gulf because this is a trap in which almost all the Democrats have been caught and I think all of you who are familiar with peace issues will recognize the problem. Simon had initially opposed the policy of reflagging Kuwaiti tankers in the Persian Gulf, as had almost all the Democrats. Now the question is not whether the policy is advisable or inadvisable, but what do we do now that we've done it? And this of course will remind you all of, "How do we get out of Vietnam?" The short answer, of course, was always, "In boats." And I suspect this same method would work in the Persian Gulf if we really applied ourselves.

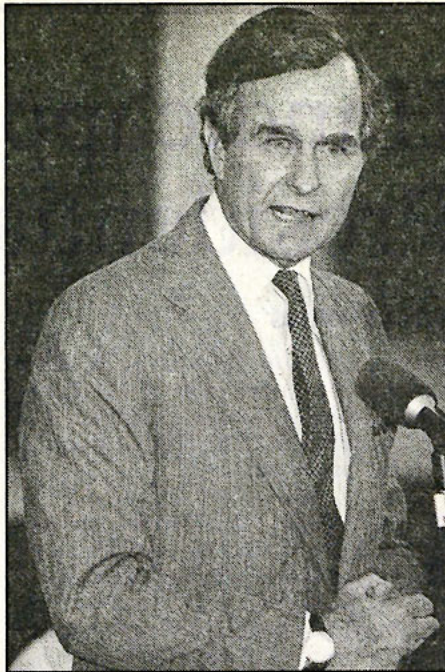
Molly Ivins is a former editor of the Texas Observer who writes a column for the Dallas Times Herald.

There is an interesting kind of political perception. The argument is, O.K., our being in the Persian Gulf unilaterally is a very bad idea. There are variations on this. You can, like Dukakis, Simon, the other Democrats, say we should replace American ships with some kind of United Nations force, we should get our allies involved, we should adjust, wiggle, what have you. But we cannot pull out because it would Look Bad. Now I am fascinated by the importance of image in international politics as well as national politics. What you have here is a concentration not on reality, not on, "Is this dumb? Is this smart? Is this good for us? Is this bad for us?" But on, "How will it look?" Now as you all know, politics is particularly a calling that is obsessed with not how things are, but how they look. And I must say perhaps the tendency, which has always been inherent in politics, has been exaggerated to the nth degree by eight years of the Reagan administration, which is a public relations administration. They have governed by public relations for eight years. So that this unfortunate political characteristic is exaggerated and has come to the fore, and we see it again in areas of war and peace. It may seem to you, as it does to me, utter folly to worry about how we *look* rather than what we're doing. Nevertheless, there it is, big as life and twice as natural.

Jackson, among the Democratic candidates, has some peace issues, some foreign policy issues that he pushes that are actually quite good. His best line is that he has met more foreign leaders than any other candidate running unless you count George Bush, who's met a lot of dead ones.

Jackson is an interesting political problem for the Democratic party. The leadership of the Democratic party is terrified of him. They're terrified of him because there are a lot of polls showing that particularly white Southerners think that Jesse Jackson has a sort of veto on the selection of the next Democratic candidate. And that sets white Southerners on edge. They don't want to have anything to do with a party where Jackson has the final say. So the leadership of the Democratic party has been dancing around Jesse Jackson, trying to make it clear that they are not paying any attention to him. To the extent that Paul Kirk, the party chairman, has on a couple of occasions literally refused to shake his hand. The symbolism could not possibly be more clear.

It doesn't seem to be changing anyone's mind, of those who thought Jackson ruled the party anyway. The fact is that Jackson's people are going precisely for a veto, they want enough troops to bring to the convention so that they can push their issues. My own reading is that it's folly for the Democratic party to try to distance itself from Jesse Jackson. To the contrary, he brings to the party not only the merits of his own case and his own talents as a politician, but he can bring into the political



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George Bush

process voters no one else can and that's tremendously important and for that reason alone he deserves to be treated with respect.

I must say that I, like the rest of the press corps, am terribly soft on Bruce Babbitt, even to the point of being a little mushy. Very few of us think that he will survive Iowa or much beyond Iowa, although, again, he could come in fifth, who knows? He seems to be at this point destined to be the *succes d'estime* of this campaign, in other words, the guy who has the courage to tell the truth and consequently gets no votes at all. On foreign policy his particular twist is to — I think correctly — say that essentially we won the contest with the Soviet Union. That capitalism has clearly proved to be a more effective economic system than communism — this is being recognized everywhere, in the Soviet Union itself, in communist China. It's not something we need to push anymore. It's not that kind of terribly tense fight; it's not even a Cold War anymore. We've won. Relax. Now, let's turn our attention to where the real problem is, and, says Bruce Babbitt, it is directly to our south. That for years now our primary foreign policy emphasis has been the Soviet Union and Europe, that kind of globalism, that kind of Atlantic alliance outlook and that this is no longer serving us well because what we need to do now, first and most importantly, is look to Mexico, Central America, and Latin America. That is a particularly intelligent line of discussion and I'm glad to see him opening that up.

Babbitt's chief problem is that he is living proof that television lies. He looks hideous on television, to an extent that it is sort of difficult for me to explain to you if you haven't watched him closely. Rick

Hertzberg wrote a description of it, how the muscles in Babbitt's face move and twitch and his tongue kind of sticks out like a Gecco lizard's, and his eyebrows start to twitch and he just sort of shakes a little bit. Your reaction is, as you watch him on television, "Is this man about to bite the head off a chicken?"

Now poor Bruce has been studying. He knows he's terrible on television and he works and works at it and they send him to television school and they give him television coaches and the poor man has to watch himself on television tapes, over and over, trying to get better. He says very earnestly, "If they can teach Mr. Ed to talk on television, they can teach me." The trouble is, Mr. Ed had some talent to begin with.

Albert Gore has been trying to position himself as the conservative in the Democratic race to appeal to the Southern vote. The fact is that Gore's record is very liberal and his efforts to paint himself as the conservative candidate are fairly . . . I mean, only a liberal would notice the difference. Conservatives certainly don't. But he has been doing a bit more flag-waving than the other candidates and the assumption is that this will stand him in good stead in the Southern primary. I have no idea whether it's going to work for him or not. Wouldn't surprise me if he won, wouldn't surprise me if he lost. Wouldn't surprise me if he came in fifth.

ON THE REPUBLICAN side, I think there are some interesting foreign policy issues and I think the way they are being debated is quite interesting.

George Bush, theoretically their front runner . . . Bush, of course, has simply fallen heir to Reagan's foreign policy and must of necessity defend it. As he declared passionately last year, "If it costs me my political career, I will not distance myself from my President." Courage like that leaves you breathless, I know.

I do have to tell you, if you all haven't been following it, George Bush's career as a twit has been proceeding apace. Monday last at a forum in Iowa some woman rose in the audience and said to Bush, "Why are you in favor of abortion?" And the Vice President was very indignant and said "I'm not in favor of abortion, I'm totally against abortion, how dare you say that, that is absolutely incorrect; I'm against abortion." And then after the forum he comes up to this woman who is standing there with a Jack Kemp flyer in her hand. He clearly assumed that she was a plant. Whether she was or not I have no information. And he takes the flyer out of her hand, rips it up and says to her, "*Fini!*" We're all going, "*Fini!*" He's speaking French in Iowa? There are days when I worry about the veep.

This is my favorite George Bush story. It was in 1984 on the worst day of George's life. You may know that at least once during

every campaign every politician has a day when nothing will go right. And George's day started in Minnesota. He had to get up at six in the morning and milk a cow to prove that he cared about the plight of the American farmer. And he showed up — traditionally when you milk a cow you have to show up wearing a plaid shirt; this indicates further concern for the plight of the American farmer. And George had on a plaid shirt but he had it on under one of those sort of Wall Street/State Department suits. So that it looked very odd. And he sits down to milk this cow, and either he's forgotten how to milk a cow or this cow was a Democrat. That didn't work worth a damn, he finally gets up and walks around the cow and forgets that cows are retromingent, a word I seldom get to use; it means that they pee backwards. So that you have to be careful when you walk behind them, lest you get wet on the leg.

He carries on, he gets to Green Bay, Wisconsin, he tells the audience how much he *loves* the Minnesota Vikings. All day it was like that. And this was two days after his debate with Geraldine Ferraro, during which, you may recall, George Bush had said that Walter Mondale said our Marines in Lebanon died in shame. Walter Mondale had never said that. What he said was, that our Marines in Lebanon died in *vain*. Bush then holds this absurd press conference with a dictionary, trying to prove that "in shame" and "in vain" mean the same thing.

And word of this gets back to the Mondale campaign. Mondale gets really hacked and says, "George Bush does not have the manhood to apologize." Word of Mondale's comment was relayed back to our group, we approach the vice president saying Mondale says that you do not have the manhood to apologize, would you comment, Mr. Vice President? And George Bush said, "Well. On the manhood thing. I'll put mine up against his, anytime." You know, we're all standing there with our notebooks and our pencils, saying, "Did you get that?"

I have to tell you that this line became instantly famous in the press corps. That night Bush was leaving to go back to Washington on a small plane and the corps was staying there and we went out to see if we could get in a couple of last questions. But he climbs up to the top of the ramp and indicates that he's not going to answer any questions and says to us all, "So long!" And this one voice in the press corps said, "How long?" Our slogan for the rest of that campaign was "How long, George?"

I'd like to say in fairness to Mr. Bush, there are days when he does not seem to be a raving twit. There are days when you talk to him and you think this person is a person of great intelligence and great experience and he is not a lightweight and why does he have this unfortunate tendency to say unfortunate things? And sort of look and act like a preppy dweeb all the time. I don't know. I wrote a column — I hate

to quote my own columns, but then, I often do — suggesting that this is a man of really enormous initial gifts and talents and advantages to whom neither time nor circumstance has been kind. Being Vice President of the United States is a castrating experience. And as Jack Garner said, the job is not worth a pitcher of warm spit. And whoever is in it tends to look silly. It seems to me though that Bush's problems go beyond his position. In other words, his tendency to be a sort of lickspittle, a sycophant, to his President is not job-related. He has shown the same tendency when he didn't have to. And I'll specifically point out that during Watergate, the worst parts of Watergate, when he was Republican party chairman, a job he did not have to take — he did not need the money — his defense of Richard Nixon was not merely kissing Nixon's ass all the time, he was just so inanely burbling about it constantly that it was embarrassing. And it seems to be something in his nature rather than in his position that causes this phenomenon.

Dole . . . I think the consensus in the press corps is that he would be the Republicans' best candidate in that he would be very hard to beat. He is knowledgeable and experienced and obviously would make a formidable candidate. His great weakness is that he has a very bad temper. Should he lose it even once in public I think it would really turn off the American people. You have no idea how much people dislike meanness. And that is Dole's worst problem. Just having dark heavy eyebrows and a Nixonian beard is a problem for him, because he tends to look a little bit brooding. And he has a sharp sense of humor. For those of us who like humor, I must point out that I think Dole is perhaps the only candidate of either party who actually has a real sense of humor. If that doesn't unnerve you, it should. Nevertheless, people are also very leery about funny politicians. In politics it is considered advisable, if you have a sense of humor, to bury it as deep as possible. And further, Dole's humor can be a very cutting, sort of waspish variety, which also tends to turn voters off.

It is an odd year. It seems to me, and I'm always optimistic to the point of idiocy, you have to understand that, that this could be the year when bullshit doesn't sell. I mean, I think people recognize they were sold a bill of goods about Reaganomics, voodoo economics. And so that even a Paul Simon, good liberal that he is, when he stands up and says "O.K., here's how we're going to have many magical new programs," and people say how do you pay for them, and he says "Abracadabra," people go . . . wait a minute. Wait a minute. And it seems to me that it might be a year when telling the truth and being realistic might be good politics.

I bet on politics and I actually make money, have made a fair amount of money over the years doing it. I never bet on any

political race further than six weeks out. I think you're insane to do that. And all these people running around saying they know that Dole will be the candidate or it's clear Bush has it, or obviously Dukakis is going to win, it's nonsense! I mean Ronald Reagan, God forbid, could drop dead tomorrow and leave us President Bush. I mean no one knows how this is going to turn out. In retrospect, of course, people will look back and say, "Well, it was clear from the beginning." Believe me, it's not clear. □

Observer Requests

Austin attorney Vivian Mahlab has agreed to consult with those interested in including the *Observer* in their estate planning. For further information, contact Vivian Mahlab, attorney-at-law, P.C., at 1301 Nueces, Austin, Texas 78701, or call 512/477-9400.

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The Jackson Factor in Iowa and Texas

BY THULANI DAVIS
AND JAMES RIDGEWAY

ON A THREE-DAY SWING through Texas and Iowa in December there were signs of the extraordinary impact Jesse Jackson is having on people he calls "Archie Bunker" whites, the vast unstructured vote that responded so dramatically to Ronald Reagan. Jackson's presence — in a black church in northwest Iowa packed with whites, at a truck stop outside Sioux City jammed with friendly farmers and packing house workers, or before a crisply starched all-white Methodist audience in Le Mars — sets people buzzing and grinning, as small town folk timidly inquire if they may shake the reverend's hand. Among uncommitted whites who get out the Democratic vote in Texas, apologetic resistance to Jackson's campaign is often complemented by anecdotes about past work for civil rights.

"White liberals are saying, 'I ought to be for Jesse Jackson,' and kind of saying to themselves, 'Why am I not for Jesse Jackson?'" says Texas agriculture commissioner Jim Hightower. Jackson is "the only Democratic nominee running who starts with a base," says Hightower. "He is transcending the fact that he is a black candidate. He is gaining white support, not from white liberals where you would anticipate it coming from, but from the kind of people who are like Willie Nelson — the sort of redneck, lower middle-class constituency that is out there, and, since Bobby Kennedy and George Wallace, hasn't been voting that much."

Jackson faces a long, uphill battle — all the way to the convention. In all, 21 caucuses and primaries (representing one-third of all the delegates), will be decided March 8. And the chances are good that Jackson will come out on top despite a primary system constructed to stop him in favor of a Chuck Robb or Sam Nunn. He could even make substantial inroads in Florida, where a *Chicago Tribune* poll in December placed him at over 30 percent. To do that, he'll have to make peace with Jewish voters, who still distrust his candidacy; and his political program, which often sounds stilted and sometimes irrational, must be pulled together.

Thulani Davis and James Ridgeway are writers for the Village Voice, where this article first appeared.

Illinois, where Jackson is running a strong second to Senator Paul Simon, is next. Although Mayor Harold Washington's death has undoubtedly had an impact, the black vote in Chicago should still be heavy and in Jackson's favor. Jackson can probably make a strong showing in Michigan (the UAW may not endorse him, but it won't strongly oppose him), New York, and Pennsylvania. Finally, in California he should also have strong appeal. But while 82 percent of the delegates go to the convention committed, they are not bound by any ironclad arrangements. That means the convention almost certainly will be brokered.

So far, Jackson's chief adversary has not been any other candidate, but the press and the political professionals. And even this is beginning to moderate. Following a recent NBC debate, Republican political consultants Douglas Bailey and Robert Goodman both came away impressed by Jackson's showing. David Broder, the *Washington Post* political correspondent, also complimented him for his performance: Jackson "asserted a claim to superior experience in foreign policy, firmness in defending America's interests and compassion for the needy at home. . . . The candidate of passion and humor was Jackson, whose lead in the race is a source of dismay to many of his party's leaders."

Already some Democratic party forces are moving to counter Jackson's potential. The attempt to draft Mario Cuomo and the possible emergence of Bill Bradley are the most civilized signs of the stop-Jesse movement. But the anticipation of Cuomo's entry is far more appealing than any actual candidacy.

And even at this early stage, there are more ominous dangers to Jackson's candidacy. Over the last decade, the U.S. has witnessed the creation of a white resistance, aimed at blacks and Jews, which has been involved in lynchings, assassinations, robberies, and racial intimidation all across the country. Evidence of repeated death threats against Jackson by the Sir Knights of Kamelia, a South Carolina Ku Klux Klan group, has been passed on to the Justice Department by the Southern Poverty Law Center. After an FBI investigation, Jackson was provided early Secret Service protection. (Pat Robertson and Vice-President

George Bush also have Secret Service guards.)

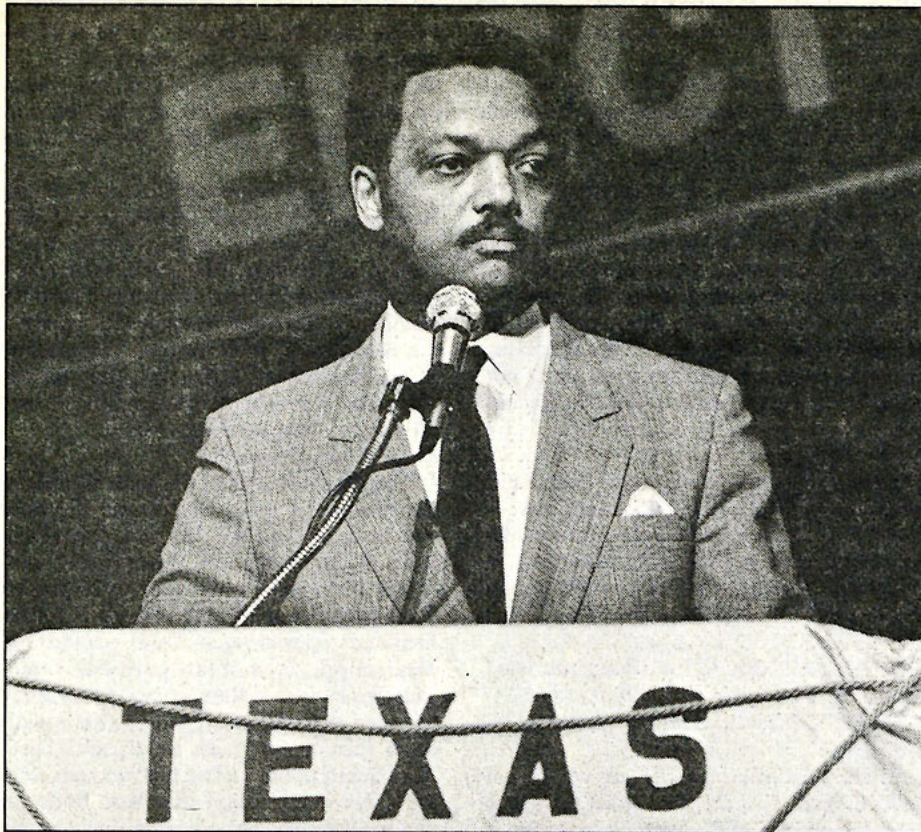
COUNTRY

RUSHING DOWN the interstate just outside Sioux City one Sunday morning in December, Jesse Jackson's entourage of Secret Service agents, state police, and a handful of reporters pause briefly and unexpectedly at R. L. Clifford's Family Café in Merrill before returning home to Chicago. Entering the diner they are swallowed up in a bedlam of farmers, truckers, elderly residents, and families out for Sunday lunch, who are excited to see the candidate walk in and take a seat. "Jesse Jackson is here, in this restaurant" a teenage girl screeches to a friend over the phone. "He's here. Right now."

A young mother excitedly nudges her little boy: "That's Jesse Jackson!" The owner turns on an ancient raspy loud-speaker: "Let us welcome Jesse Jackson." The chatter turns to applause. Soon Jackson is once more on the highway. But the next day the posters go up, and the town of Merrill has something to talk about for weeks.

It is amid this friendly confusion of white and black finding each other in the Iowa countryside that Jesse Jackson is defining his politics. Since traditional politics here lost their moorings during the farm depression, the meaning of left and right have been turned upside down. Here, the third-generation farmer drives a school bus while his wife cleans homes in the city. People in the farm belt still remember when Arthur Kirk was murdered by a Nebraska SWAT squad when he tried to keep the bank from taking his farm, and they remember the time Canadian farmers came down to throw pennies at the auctioneer in Westbrook, Minnesota.

Out in "the country," when the call comes announcing an auction, the entire family piles into the pickup and drives all night to stand with their friends. The battlefields here have strange sounding names: Chilocothe, where the farmers occupied the county Farmers Home Administration building; Puxico, Missouri, where Wayne Cryts broke into a grain elevator where his soybeans had been sealed up by a local judge; London, Ohio, where 800



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Jackson addresses AFL-CIO in Austin

farmers turned up to block the sale of Doug Dailey's farm.

These are the signposts of another America, deserted by Democrats and Republicans alike in 1984. When Tom Harkin gave Walter Mondale a speech to make about the farm crisis, Mondale threw it away. He didn't want to rock the boat. Reagan left them to sink or swim in the free market. The politicians who came to rally these people were Lyndon LaRouche, with his theories of a medieval conspiracy, Jim Wickstrom of the racist Posse Comitatus, with his dark stories of international Jewry, Jim Hightower from Texas — and Jesse Jackson. Jackson first turned up at a convention of the American Agriculture Movement in Great Bend, Kansas, in 1983. The farmers loved him. Since then he has led tractorcades, sent telegrams to support farmers facing auctions, spoken at rallies.

For a time, the sullen winds of the far right prevailed here, and then in late 1984 a populist upsurge began to take hold. While Mondale went down to defeat, two populist-style Democratic candidates — Paul Simon in Illinois and Tom Harkin in Iowa — were elected to the Senate. The fragmented farm movement came together, grew larger as it combined with labor, and in 1986 proved to be a catalyst (along with Southern blacks) in regaining the Senate for the Democrats. Today that movement of outsiders holds the key to gaining Jackson credibility as a candidate of the little guy, the unorganized, amorphous base of whites that the press

finds impossible to believe could ever vote for a black man.

CAN HE WIN?

FRIDAY MORNING Jackson is at his most "presidential," speaking before over 500 women activists done up in suits and pearls at a breakfast honoring Democratic women elected officials in Austin.

Extremely adept at reading audiences and calculating the appropriate tone and language, Jackson opens with down-home aphorisms. Unexpectedly, he is more "folksy" with the well-to-do and more plain-spoken and direct with working people. He seems aware that it's important to bring some humor to the old hands who have to sit through endless campaign speeches than to entertain small-town audiences. This morning's is a sophisticated address, outlining the basic points of his national agenda. He will draw on these same materials for four other, very different, speeches that day.

"Our boys," he says to the women, "in the Persian Gulf are being looked at down the barrel of American-made weapons." Jackson reminds them he brought new voters to the party in '84 — two million is the figure he usually cites. Applauding this crew for their role in defeating Bork, he urges them to see Super Tuesday as a chance "for the South to rise again, but together this time, the New South coalition." Lastly he exhorts them, "If I can win, any American

can win; if I cannot win. . . ." He leaves it there, and the crowd is thunderous.

Texas, which has become the centerpiece of a revived populism, could well turn out to be the turning point in the Democratic primary. Texas plays kickass politics, and this campaign will be down and dirty, with organization, party activists, and labor playing crucial roles. In 1984, Jackson, with little organizational strength, came in third in Texas with 17 percent and 35 delegates. Hart was second with 20 percent, taking 40 delegates. Mondale was the easy winner. Texas has replaced its old caucus convention system; in 1988 some delegates will be elected in a primary vote and others through caucuses. It's a complicated voting system and it's hard to base predictions on any poll.

But Jackson should benefit from a vote divided among six white candidates. With an active organization increasing voter registration and turnout, his margins with the strong black vote in Dallas and Houston should go up. He may well get an unexpected dividend among the white, working-class, populist-minded voters of East Texas where two contested elections for the state legislature are causing local candidates to spend money and organization on increased voter participation. But he faces a serious challenge among Hispanics in South Texas, where Massachusetts Governor Michael Dukakis is popular and organizing barrio by barrio. Still, Jackson got ten percent of the Hispanic vote in 1984, and Hispanics are politically responsive to the bread-and-butter issues he addresses.

Even more than in the primary, Jackson needs support from party activists and labor in the caucuses where substantial numbers of delegates will be chosen. Jackson has a strong helping hand in agriculture commissioner Hightower. Hightower is a longtime friend of Jackson's and, despite his declared neutrality, serves as an unofficial coach. Members of his staff are deeply involved in the Jackson campaign, and there are high hopes that Hightower's coalition of farmers, Hispanics, and urban consumers will respond to Jackson.

Finally, there is Jim Wright, the speaker of the House of Representatives, and like Hightower, a populist-style politician. Jackson likes Wright and frequently mentions him as a vice-presidential candidate. But in the end, kickass politics in Texas means getting out the white working-class vote.

We spent one Saturday night in an Austin bar with Democratic activists, who made every conceivable argument against voting for Jackson. His lack of experience in public office was deeply troubling to one man. A Jewish woman wanted to like Jesse but felt uncomfortable about voting for him after 1984. The Houston party regulars among the group didn't like Jackson because he had refused to make trades in the last campaign. But after a few more beers, they threw in the towel. "I don't know what

we're going to do unless we get behind that nigger," said one woman, offering up an approving quote from a redneck. "He's the only one in the race." Then she added, "Of course, if he were white, he wouldn't be where he is today."

"Six months ago," Hightower remembers, "white liberals were saying Jackson's a good guy, but he's not going anywhere. Now I hear them saying, 'I find it hard to explain to myself why I'm not on this campaign.'"

ON THE RECORD

ON THE EXPOSED third-floor corridor of Austin's Hyatt Regency hotel you can see, as if in a movie, a phalanx of plainclothes agents surrounding the candidate, moving in a swarm through the service entrance to an elevator and then to a cavalcade of cars below. Led by a sheriff's car, lights flashing, the half-dozen Secret Service and local police vehicles begin their trip to the airport. Motorcycle police wheel back and forth, blocking every road. On the interstate, a police car blocks the lanes adjacent to the convoy, and another police car rides double against the candidate's car. At the airport, the Secret Service agents dash for their own jet, heading north to Des Moines, the next stop, where the tense ritual is to be repeated.

This heavy presence sweeping through every situation and encircling the campaign is a constant reminder of how threatened black leadership can be in America. Jackson's candidacy is in many ways the legacy of Martin Luther King, Jr., Medgar Evers, and others who paid the price in the civil rights struggle: veterans of the movement who later put the Voting Rights Act into action and savvy black activists who work in coalition politics all over the country. But it is also part of their bittersweet legacy that officials must make every effort in 1987 to preserve one black man's life just because he has chosen to run for President. America, after all, has to do everything it can to prove that it is possible for a black to run for high office without getting shot — to prove it has moved beyond its murderous past.

Airborne in his chartered Lear jet, Jackson, all formality, grants an interview. Stilted questions bring stilted answers, clichéd phrases from speeches. There's coldness here, barely masked animosity. We weren't asking how it feels to have been illegitimate, or if Jackson thinks he's Jesus, or whether that was Martin Luther King's blood on his shirt. But we might as well have.

T.D. & J.R.: What do you mean when you say we can "win" in Nicaragua?

J.J.: We can win a settlement that results in diplomatic relations that are honored. . . .

Are you suggesting aid to Nicaragua?

Well, aid to Nicaragua, trade with Nicaragua, and other support that will help

them rebuild an infrastructure; take the mines out of the harbors, which is what you do with allies. . . .

Should we recognize Cuba . . . ?

Yes. If we recognize and have diplomatic ties with the Soviet Union and China we can do so for Cuba as well.

What is your view of the situation in the Persian Gulf, of Iran?

Our first objective is to protect our allies from any expansion or any attacks on them that would jeopardize them. Because we have bilateral ties with the nations of the Gulf States. We need Reagan and Gorbachev to take an initiative along with China to seek a cease-fire between Iran and Iraq.

Then, just as abruptly as he had begun, Jackson said, "Let me take a nap," put his head back, and went to sleep in the middle of the interview. When he woke up the candidate seemed refreshed, informal, and more candid.

You say "If I can win anybody can win," and then you say "If I cannot win . . ." and there's a pause. What's the rest of that sentence?

Then most Americans cannot win because of a barrier. If I can win, it means that no longer is race, sex, religion, or excessive military appetite a prerequisite for winning. If I cannot win, then really it's not likely that a woman, a Hispanic, a Jewish-American, an Arab-American, a labor leader, can win. There are a whole lot of groups there are reservations about because of historical prejudices. So my campaign is helping you bring down those walls for everybody.

But if you can't win, what is gained by your campaign?

In some senses I'm winning every day. Americans sit back watching "presidential sweepstakes '88." They see six Republicans, six Democrats. They watch my response to the questions and challenges. America is getting more used to the idea every day that of those 12, Jesse Jackson could become President.

The press says you are the front runner and then they drop it. It's as if you're not there.

It's a slander in the press. All I can do is keep focusing my eyes on the prize, on the agenda. My agenda is jobs for Americans and peace and justice. It's to motivate the people of America to lift their sights and their vision of what can be and what must be. I cannot alter my course reacting to the media's interpretation. The media will adjust more; there is a cultural lag now. It is traumatized by what is happening, but it will adjust.

Last night in Austin people said they really liked you, but . . . Is that "but" your real obstacle?

Well, I choose not to dignify that because it diverts attention away from the substance I'm discussing. That's a convenient

emotional release. Who I am is self-evident. People must finally come to grips with this campaign, and they are, slowly.

They were saying that Jesse can take stands on things, can have this agenda, because he won't have to deliver it because of the "but."

No. If I had supported Gramm-Rudman-Hollings, labor would remind me of that. Senior citizens and poor people would remind me of that. The positions I take I can defend, every one of them. The other candidates can't defend their silence about the behavior of multinational corporations or outline what our Middle East options are. They can't defend their detachment from a policy to free Southern Africa.

Do you have coattails?

That might be one of the most significant dimensions. A guy came to me the other day from Mississippi. He said, "Reverend Jackson, I want to go to Congress." He said, "With your forces and my forces I can make it. I have some people who are former Eastland operatives — real, traditional Mississippi Democrat political types. They've looked at the numbers; they know we need you and you need us. Let's work out a relationship." It's new math. That's New South politics. The number tells them the same combination that beat Bork can win for them and they were willing to make trade-offs.

And it's interesting that the people who have been stereotyped as the immovable, nonredeemable, Archie Bunker people, those people have been more willing to give a new direction a chance. And give new coalitions a chance, than their stereotypes say they are. I have a theory about that.

In the last 25 years, the rank-and-file white American has had to make adjustments in their social lifestyle. You watch Archie Bunker: he comes home from work, he's been a basic hardworking guy, veteran of World War II or Korea, with a family. At least his wife and children go to church. Whether he goes or not, he believes in basic religious values. Hard work, an honest day's work, a fair day's pay. Now, Archie Bunker complains, "They want to go to school with us now. What's that all about? Well, give it a shot."

Archie Bunker's children are going to school with blacks, either in Catholic school or public school. Then one day Archie Bunker's daughter comes home dating a black guy. "Oh, my God, what's that about? I can't stand it." But somehow in Archie Bunker's household they were not taught to hate blacks. They were really taught to be afraid of them. They're enigmas, wrapped in mystery.

But the daughter, she's been exposed, she says, "Dad, don't you understand, this is my friend. We study together." In the meantime he's complaining but he's adjusting. Next week, Archie Bunker's son comes home with a "Free South Africa" sign. "Oh, my God, what is all that about?"

I send you to school and you come back with a 'Free South Africa' sign." "But, Dad, blah, blah, blah. . . ." Each time he's expanding, he's growing.

Then he goes to the ball game, and who is he sitting beside? You know, another black who's in the same economic track, drinking beer. Who are they pulling for? Darryl Strawberry. "Our guy Strawberry." If he's a New York Mets fan, he's not pulling for a white pitcher from St. Louis to strike out a black guy from New York; he wants New York to win. So even without a lot of effort he's growing. He goes to the grocery store, he goes to the Union Hall — 25 years of this stuff, public accommodations.

But the people who've not adjusted have not been exposed. Take publishers. Their children are not in public school. They went to Westchester, they didn't go to New York schools. From Westchester they went to Harvard or Brown, Yale, to Oxford. And they're the ones speaking harsh, and imposing stereotypes on the Howard Beaches. And these are people who speak with authority. Beware of whites that call other whites racist.

I find people out here in Iowa who defy the stereotypes and we have good relationships. They ain't even superficial, they ain't even dressed up, and they don't have any trophies in their houses, any plaques on their walls about community relations. They're not professional do-gooders — basic, everyday, honest to good working people. Many of the hardhats now support Jesse Jackson. Because they believe that they're going to have a fight to get back, and they think I'm a fighter.

FROM THE PULPIT

A SUNSET FLIGHT in a battered Cessna prop reveals snow in the farmland of Northwest Iowa. The small windy town of Fort Dodge is at home having dinner as sheriffs and Secret Service and an old church bus whisk Jackson's entourage through the empty streets to the increasingly impoverished black neighborhood. Here meatpackers have been deserted by companies that used to pay \$15 an hour but have gone to more rural areas where they can pay \$5.

A small, plainly furnished AME Church, Coppin Chapel, is warm and bright as the crowd packs in. The blacks here have chiseled faces, almond eyes and high cheekbones that hint of Indian blood, plain sturdy clothes. The whites, especially the older people, have weathered, heavy faces. The men wear western shirts and string ties. The minister, who knew Jackson back in his school days in North Carolina, introduces him like an old family member. "Don't you think he looks pretty good?" he asks. Instamatics flash.

Jackson is reaching for what Jim Hightower called "the unstructured vote," and these are his people. He asks how many

have not voted lately; half the hands in the room go up. A man mutters, "No, I haven't voted *lately*," as if chuckling to himself about a gap of many years. He gets up to sign a registration form, along with the others who had raised their hands.

A white couple that runs a farm has joined the jaunt across Iowa. They had been leaning towards Gephardt until Jackson came to Iowa on an earlier visit. What changed their minds? "Meeting the man." Indeed meeting Jackson has brought them all the way into Jackson's project for feeding the hungry in Ethiopia and they have begun to organize other farmers to participate. They have the wildly pleased look of the newly converted.

In icy Sioux City, Nebraska, at eight in the evening Jackson has tailored some thoughts on the civil rights movement for a Iowa-Nebraska NAACP banquet. The middle-class black and white diners are reserved, even stiff. Though an effort has been made to bring some splendor to the gathering, these office managers, teachers, and black seniors don't know quite how to warm up to their visiting presidential candidate. Later Jackson explains that no group or candidate has ever come to these people for support and that they have not been engaged by anyone to jump into Iowa's caucuses. "They've been forgotten," he says.

PARABLE

WHATEVER JACKSON'S strengths or weaknesses, it is hard to imagine another black candidate, especially one now in office, who could work so well with so many different people in the course of a day. He's hard to ignore, and his celebrity brings out the curious as well as the persuaded. He does not try to efface his blackness and blend in as some black politicians have, and so he has to rework his strategy at each stop, take into account how his race could appear as a positive to different elements in his base. This was never so clear as in a local TV interview where he was asked about his race and electability, and in a Sunday morning sermon he gave at Westmar College, a white Methodist school in Le Mars, Iowa.

To the TV interviewer he said that any question about his campaign being unwinnable "presupposes that white Americans are not fair enough to choose me. It does not reflect on me. The burden is on white America. I can't be anything but black." With the audience at the worship service, he turned to his advantage that black Christian morality that persuaded so many in the early civil rights days, the religious authority that endows black ministers and the gospel music whites everywhere in America have heard.

Decades ago if a black man came to a home in Iowa he might have been asked to sing spirituals because blacks were assumed to have, by virtue of suffering, some power with hymn. A black minister

today, especially one who marched with King, is still expected to be able to preach and to articulate the fervor in their hearts for these pristine, Amish-looking Christians.

"I remembered about when Jesus healed the blind man. I suppose Jesus was excited too. The masses were. It was on the Sabbath. When the scribes heard about it they got upset 'cause they were taking off to the seashore and they heard they'd missed the news story — that Jesus had healed this blind man. They went running to the senate. 'Uh, Jesus, uh, we understand this man was blind all his life and that you healed him, but why did you do it on the Sabbath?' When you are doing these peacemaking things, you are always challenged from some perverse angle.

"And I've seen Christians interpret that story by saying that the blind man was an ingrate. While they were harassing Jesus, the blind man was not there to defend him. But the truth does not need a defense. The blind man was not there because though he was blind he was not crazy. He understood because he'd been listening to people talk all his life. He knew if he had stood around there while they debated they may have voted him back into blindness because of procedure.

"Finally the scribes called him. They said, 'Blind man, this guy Jesus that had healed you, what was his motivation?' 'I don't know.'

"They said He was born under questionable conditions, some say out of wedlock. 'You think Jesus did this because he was running for political office, trying to get famous?' Blind man said, 'I don't know.' 'You think Jesus did it because he had a certain kind of ego problem?' Blind man said, 'I don't know.' They said, 'Well, you got to say *something*.' He said, 'Well, all I can say is I once was blind, but now I see.' That's all we can really say: 'I see.' "

Jackson later spoke candidly and eloquently about how the Bible is a living language for religious people and how the press, often less well acquainted with biblical text, frequently mistakes a black hymn for a Freudian giveaway. "I used to always quote the old church song that most blacks know anywhere, 'I want to be a little more like Jesus every day,' and then I read in the paper that I was saying I'm trying to emulate Jesus." This understanding of hymns, proverbs, and text is an indispensable tool in the Bible Belt, as most black organizers know. But Jackson has also used to great advantage its appeal to whites who put religious faith first.

Jackson knows that the tongue that was once a slave's code and solace is also, in a slightly different dialect, the language of many rural Americans who had never even seen a black man until this one decided to run for President. □

Research assistance by William Hollister and Frédérique Pressmann.

'Going Critical'

South Texas Prepares for Nuclear Power

BY LOUIS DUBOSE

SOME MORNING in February, technicians at the South Texas Nuclear Plant in Matagorda County will begin the process by which the uranium pellets in the Unit I reactor are moved close enough together that they will begin to react. Then, in the words of Glenn Walker, spokesman for Houston Lighting & Power, "we will let the plan hum for a couple of weeks before requesting a full power license." If all goes as planned, Walker said, the plant will be generating electricity by late winter, or at the latest, early spring.

If the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) approves the license for the South Texas Nuclear Project (STNP) at a hearing that could occur in late February or early March, one unit at the power plant, conceived in 1972 and then estimated to cost \$1.2 billion dollars, will finally go on line. The STNP's cost, much of which could be passed on to consumers, is most recently fixed at \$5.7 billion dollars; many consumer advocates warn that the real meltdown will occur in the rate base, once the Public Utility Commission grants the utility the right to pass along to consumers prudent construction costs.

But there are some who insist that the plant is not ready for operation and that serious safety hazards exist in the pipes, joints, gauges, and structures that make up the huge sprawling reactors and generators. In Washington, lawyers for the Government Accountability Project (GAP) requested that the NRC complete an extensive review of some 400 alleged safety-related violations that GAP, a public policy law firm based in Washington, has made available. (GAP files include 700 STNP allegations, 400 are safety-related.) The allegations, all made to GAP by whistleblowers whose identity has been withheld from the agency, range from serious — "20 percent of the valves in the plant are installed backwards" — to amusing — "C.L. Williams insurance is openly being sold by employees at the plant site."

But the NRC considered the charges serious enough to establish a special ten-person team and conduct an on-site inspection at Bay City in mid-January. A report from the inspectors has not been issued but Houston Lighting & Power (HL&P) is proceeding with final tests, certain that the plant will not be found unsafe. HL&P, according to Walker, considers all safety concerns resolved. In Walker's words, it is time to "go critical," that is, to begin the fusion process that will ultimately

produce the steam to power the generators. "The allegations by John Corder, on all the safety items," Walker said, "have been looked over two or three times in the past year." Walker describes John Corder as an angry man, a man with a vendetta against his former employer. Walker insists that the time has come for the South Texas Nuclear

Concerns about safety continue to plague the state's first nuke.

Project to get on with the business of generating electricity.

JOHAN CORDER does not agree. For 27 years, Corder has worked for Bechtel, the contractor who came in behind Brown & Root after it became evident that the Texas-based contractor was in over its head on the South Texas Project. Until November of 1986, Corder was a Bechtel materials foreman, with 17 years experience in construction of nuclear plants — five years at STNP. Corder had previously been responsible for quality control at 12 other Bechtel-built nuclear plants. For four years and seven months, Corder had worked "on the periphery" of the South Texas Project, supervising three separate crafts working to prepare materials used in plant construction. Then, in August of 1987, Corder was moved inside Unit I on special assignment. What he discovered there, in a plant described as almost ready to go on line, was to him very disturbing. Corder related his concerns about safety violations to his immediate supervisor, who referred him to the project leader, a man that Corder had known since Corder had been hired at the South Texas Nuclear Project. The project leader, Corder said, told him to go to the Safeteam, a quality control agency mandated by federal law on all nuclear project sites. Within a week, and before Corder could get to the Safeteam, he was dismissed. According to Corder, he was told that his dismissal was part of a routine reduction in force, a claim that Corder does not accept; others, he claims, with less seniority than him have kept their jobs.

Corder drew up a bill of particulars, detailing items that he claims represent safety violations. He showed the Safeteam representative 132 separate safety-related items at the plant. His allegations include claims that:

- Pumps are installed under tanks so that pump valves are not accessible and maintenance is impossible.

- Instruments are installed in positions where they can not be read during operation.

- Valves are installed on the wrong sides of pipes and are difficult to operate and maintain.

- Access to a critically important pump in the fuel handling building is blocked by pipes and electrical conduit.

- In many of the cells that contain radioactive piping, protective coatings or radiation barriers have been broken by bolting heavy materials to the floor, thus causing crevices where radioactive debris could accumulate and expose workers to radioactivity.

Corder, and GAP attorneys with whom he is now working, were encouraged when told that Corder would be permitted to enter the plant with the NRC special inspection team to point out specific safety hazards. Yet on January 21, when Corder joined the team for a walk through inspection of the plant, officials at Houston Lighting & Power, the utility company managing the plant, denied Corder access to Unit I, the unit in which he had worked and where he had detailed specific hazards. Corder was allowed to enter Unit II to point out similar hazards. In Unit II, where he had not worked, Corder directed inspectors to improperly fastened electrical gear boxes.

"Let's go look at some of them," Corder said he told the inspectors. "And there it was, the same problem as in Unit I." The problem with the boxes, Corder contends, is that covers are not properly attached and this creates a possibility that dust can accumulate in the boxes. Dust in electrical gear boxes, which distribute power to various systems, can cause electrical arcs and fires in the boxes.

While in Unit II, Corder was only allowed to point out one specific infraction. He claims that during the three hours in the plant, he directed the NRC inspection team to other violations: "While we were looking for the fastener [bolt] problems I pointed out a number of other violations," Corder said. "But they weren't interested and said

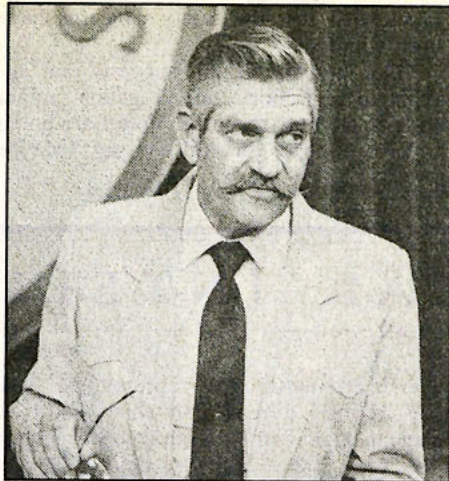
they were only interested in fastener items." While walking through the plant, Corder said that he observed 14 specific violations that he later reported to the NRC and to the Occupational Safety and Health Administration.

Houston Lighting and Power officials admit that they refused to allow Corder to enter Unit I. They insist that allowing him to enter, even in the company of the NRC inspectors, would be dangerous. "We have an obligation to our workers and to the public," Walker said. "We could not let someone with an obvious vendetta into the plant. If he knew what he was looking for, he could tell the inspectors."

Corder, and Tom Smith of Public Citizen, the Texas office of the national consumer advocacy group, claim that the incident demonstrates the extent to which HL&P controls the government inspectors, an allegation that Walker, speaking for HL&P, denies: "The NRC has charged us with the responsibility of seeing that the plant is safe. Those issues have been adequately dealt with. The NRC has taken a careful look at the allegations and we are certain that they have been dealt with." The utility characterizes Corder as a man trying to settle the score with the company that fired him. Yet Corder contends that he never would have been dismissed, had he kept quiet on the safety issues. Corder's long tenure with Bechtel, and the timing of his dismissal, suggest that he could be right.

Quality control at a nuclear power plant requires employee access to company officials, government inspectors, and the Safeteam that is established by the federal Energy Reorganization Act. These projects, GAP attorney Richard Condit said, are so vast and complex that NRC inspectors and company quality control superintendents can not see everything. NRC inspectors will actually *inspect* between one and three percent of a nuclear plant's hardware. Once employees fear that a complaint to a quality control officer might threaten their job security, the system breaks down. According to Smith, at STNP, the system has broken down.

FOR LONNAL WILHELM, the system never worked. Wilhelm was employed as a supervisor in the measuring and testing laboratory at STNP from 1978 - 1984. At an Austin press conference in January, Wilhelm told a room filled with reporters that critical notices sent to quality control officials were answered with false or misleading statements. Consequently, he claims, many of the safety tests performed with any number of 57 types of instruments that his lab was required to certify, are not valid. Instruments used in testing, Wilhelm claims, were out of calibration. And his allegations about the integrity of the quality control process are as disturbing as his allegations about faulty instruments.



LOUIS DUBOSE

Whistleblower Lonnal Wilhelm

According to Wilhelm, at least one quality control official ordered him to stop filing the required deficiency evaluation paperwork. A proper reaction to these notices required retesting of systems checked with deficient instruments — a practice that cost the contractor time and money. Wilhelm was, he insists, pressured to cover up the deficiencies: "I was called into the office of the quality control supervisor, [whom he names] on several occasions and told, 'Stop issuing, sending these deficient notices. You're making your brother quality control departments look bad. Come up with some fancy words and make this go away.'" On another occasion, Wilhelm said that he was told by an NRC official that, "You might end up in a ditch." Wilhelm does not consider the statement a threat; it was, he said, the official's assessment of the danger in which Wilhelm was placing himself. He became more cautious and began to pay more attention to the safety of his family. However, he refused to refrain from issuing quality control reports unless ordered in writing to do so.

In August of 1984 Lonnal Wilhelm was dismissed. One month later, he said, the wife of his former supervisor was promoted to Wilhelm's position. Wilhelm said that in 1985 he took his complaints to Dan Tomlinson and Jack Kendt, representatives of NRC's Region IV office. He received no response from the NRC until December 1987, after he had retained an attorney and gone public with his complaints. He also said that he feared for his life and for the safety of his family. Wilhelm is currently unemployed and has moved his family to South Texas. "The safest place in the state," he said, "South and west of the plant."

Among the 400 complaints included in the GAP allegations turned over to the NRC are 75 claims of stifling of employee criticism and 43 alleged incidents of employee harassment. Employees allege that after voicing safety concerns they were subjected to urine testing and at times dismissed or reassigned. One worker com-

plained that there was a violation of confidentiality: worker safety complaints that should have been read only by Safeteam members were first seen by supervisors to whom employees were required to report safety concerns. Others complain that employees were told to "keep your mouth shut" and "don't look into areas where you know what the problem is."

GAP attorneys Condit and Billie Garde have filed a petition with the NRC requesting that the agency defer licensing until a complete investigation of all allegations by GAP whistleblowers is completed. They also asked the commission to release to the public a report explaining how each of the safety allegations is resolved. The petition describes the NRC's January inspection as inadequate. Among the GAP allegations is a claim that a draft of the inspection team's findings was prepared at NRC headquarters before the team returned from its inspection tour. Information concerning the premature draft of the report was leaked by an NRC employee. GAP attorneys have also complained that when they made their files available to the NRC inspectors, after carefully depersonalizing them to protect the identities of informants, NRC inspectors reviewed only the abbreviated summaries of complaints rather than the more extensive background material in the files. (Identities of whistleblowers are routinely withheld to protect them from industry blackballing.)

In Austin, where the city-owned utility company holds 16 percent interest in the project, the City Council has been asked to conduct public hearings on plant safety prior to the NRC hearing. But the city, according to Mayor Frank Cooksey, is involved in very delicate negotiations with other owners of STNP. For years, Austin has been trying to litigate its way out of its partnership in the project. Cooksey told his councilmembers that they should refrain from discussing or acting on the request for safety hearings lest they jeopardize the settlement negotiations.

Condit and others who oppose February licensing recognize that few options remain once the plant is granted permission to go to full power. "There is a slim chance that they [NRC] will delay licensing further to investigate," Condit said. If a license is granted, GAP's only remaining recourse will be a lawsuit filed in the U.S. Court of Appeals in Washington, D.C.

Corder claims that he took the matter up with Congressman Tom DeLay at a Brazoria town meeting. DeLay, a Houston Republican whose district includes the STNP, assured Corder that he was concerned about the allegations, Corder said. And he said that if Corder could provide him with a list of specific complaints, he would accompany Corder into the plant to inspect them. "That's on the record," Corder said. "The Congressman said it at the town meeting."

But a spokesperson for DeLay's office said that the Congressman is now satisfied

that all safety concerns have been addressed. And that it is unlikely, barring some change in the nature of the allegations, that DeLay will tour the plant with any whistleblower. "The Congressman is in favor of this project," his spokesperson said. "And he

is satisfied that the safety concerns have been addressed."

GAP attorney Condit suggests that appeals to legislators, and litigation, might soon be the only recourse. Voters are going to have to come forward and say, "Maybe

I should call up my Representative or my Congress people to see what they can do," Condit said.

"It's unfortunate that you have to mount a grassroots movement. But at this point, that's all we have left." □

POLITICAL INTELLIGENCE

✓ **HERE IS HOW** things were lining up in the month before Super Tuesday, according to activists around the state who were contacted by the *Observer*. Liberal Democrats were dividing support between three candidates, Simon, Dukakis and Jackson, with moderate and conservative "establishment" Democrats in Gore's corner. Richard Gephardt had been to Texas early and had received, according to Houston activist Billie Carr, "big money from the money people, but most of those who gave him money are now for Gore." Carr said she sees old-line liberals supporting Simon, with some labor support such as from some steelworkers' locals. Dukakis has a strong base with the state's Hispanics and has some white liberal support and labor support from AFSCME, the government workers' union. Jackson, of course, is strong with the black community and with a smaller collection of white liberals. Carr is supporting Dukakis.

Dukakis was said to be the most visible candidate in Dallas and San Antonio, as well. The Massachusetts governor is the favorite of Democratic activist Lon Burnam in Fort Worth and Kathleen Voigt in San Antonio, both of whom said Simon was almost invisible in their regions.

✓ **GIB LEWIS** put it probably as well as anyone when he told the *Fort Worth Star-Telegram's* Kaye Northcott in January that "Gore is a true moderate that Democrats and even some Republicans can rally around." The House Speaker continued, "I've said a Gore-Gephardt ticket would be excellent for Texas, no matter which is on top or bottom."

Lewis's protege, Rep. Hugo Berlanga of Corpus Christi, was supporting Gore, as was state party chairman Bob Slagle. Northcott noted that the conservative Austin consultant George Shipley was working on Gore's national campaign.

✓ **AMONG THE HOT** local races around the state is the challenge launched against Tarrant County Commissioner Dick Andersen. "This is the progressive race to watch in Tarrant," according to activist Lon Burnam. Andersen is a 20-year veteran of the commissioners court who, Burnam says, is the epitome of the entrenched old boy pol. Andersen's opponent is Dionne Bagsby,

a civic activist who may represent the "last, best chance to get a non-white, non-male candidate in Tarrant County office before the year 2000," Burnam said. The two candidates are running from the Southwest part of Tarrant County, which is 40 percent black, he said. In 1984 and 1986 Republicans nearly swept all the Democrats out of county office. Andersen may be vulnerable in the Democratic primary because of some trouble he had last fall; he was assessed a \$50,000 judgement in a sex discrimination suit brought by Tarrant County's human service director.

✓ **THE CONTRA VOTE** in January split the Texas Congressional delegation along familiar lines, with a handful of conservative Democrats joining all ten Republicans in siding with President Reagan. The six Democrats who voted to approve the \$36.2 million package for the contras were: Jim Chapman of Sulphur Springs, Ralph Hall of Rockwall, Marvin Leath of Waco, Solomon Ortiz of Corpus Christi, Charles Stenholm of Avoca, and Charlie Wilson of Lufkin and Afghanistan. Albert Bustamante, D-San Antonio, who had voted in favor of aid to the contras on previous occasions, this time voted no. Chapman, however, flip-flopped the other way: on at least one occasion he has voted against aiding the contras. The House vote was 219 against the aid with 211 in favor. Speaker Jim Wright, in a strong speech urging Congress to reject Reagan's plan, said, "None of us came to Washington to preside over Central America." Wright said the tendency of Congress to look down from "a lofty perch" at the people of Central America "sometimes leaves the unfortunate impression that we consider them to be our inferiors."

✓ **SENATOR BENTSEN** stood with Republican Senator Phil Gramm in supporting Reagan's contra aid package, as he has in the past. The Senate vote was 51-48 in favor, even though the House vote had already doomed the plan.

✓ **NO MATTER HOW** steamed liberals are at Bentsen for his pro-contra stance, there is little to be done about it, at least in the electoral arena. Few members of Congress are as entrenched as the senior

Senator from Texas. Bentsen's end-of-the-year financial report showed that he had \$4 million on hand to defend his seat. A Washington dispatch in the *Houston Chronicle* quoted political observers saying Bentsen "has the clout to raise close to \$15 million" if he faces a strong threat from the Republicans. Amarillo Rep. Beau Bolter and former state Rep. Milton Fox are squaring off in the Republican primary for the right to challenge Bentsen. Bentsen faces Joe Sullivan, a little-known challenger from San Antonio, in the Democratic primary.

✓ **THAT WAS** San Antonio's own William Sessions, former federal judge, distinguishing himself in February as new FBI director by defending the agency's past surveillance of domestic peace groups. Documents obtained by the Center for Constitutional Rights showed an extensive FBI spying campaign on the Committee In Solidarity with the People of El Salvador (CISPES) as well as nearly 100 other peace groups, and church and labor groups. Sessions said the primary emphasis had been on monitoring CISPES, due to information he said the bureau received that CISPES was involved in supplying arms to Central American guerrillas. A lawyer with the American Civil Liberties Union was quoted by the *New York Times* rebutting Sessions's defense: "Whatever the basis for this investigation, it is clear that it should have closed early on and that it should not have continued for two years, essentially collecting information about lawful political activity."

✓ **ALEXANDER HAIG** may not have distinguished himself in his run for the Presidency but he had one of the more interesting comments on the troubles of Attorney General Ed Meese. Haig said he told Reagan years ago that Meese should resign. "You can't have fleas around the Presidency," Haig said.

✓ **AN EDITORIAL** in the San Antonio *Express-News* February 4 suggested that adding more prison space may not be the answer to the prison problems. The editorial advised getting rid of "some of the thugs" among the prison guards and replacing them with professionals. Citing recent evidence of guard brutality, the *Express-News* said,

"Prisoners are not angels, but they shouldn't be treated like rats."

✓ **AT ABOUT THE TIME** John Connally was back in the national news because of his bankruptcy sale in Houston, his face started popping up in advertisements for financial institutions. In a recent full-page ad in the *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, a twelve-inch high mug of the former governor stares out above the caption: "John Connally on the importance of saving." The ad copy has Connally saying that even though "things haven't quite worked out like we'd planned," there is "no better place than Texas to start over and to save a little something." The ad was on behalf of Houston-based University Savings.

Connally will also pick up an extra \$24,000 a year for serving on the board of the Coastal Corp., to which he was recently elected.

Chicago newspaperman Mike Royko had a little fun with Connally in a syndicated column in which Royko's font of barstool wisdom, Slat Grobnik, speculates that Connally's new life might not be terribly difficult, in light of his \$60,000-a-year pension and his continued possession of his ranch house. "Put me in a big house on 200 acres with 60 grand a year, and I'll keep my chin up and start a new life, too," says Grobnik.

✓ **GARY'S CHEATING HEART**, a *Star* investigation, was a prominent feature in the San Antonio *Express-News* on the day before the Iowa caucuses. The newspaper blurbled the story on the top of the front page with the headline GARY HART'S 15 YEARS OF ADULTERY. The story in the *Star*, the tabloid insert to the newspaper, purported to tell "Why his wife tolerated his escapades with topless starlets, a ski bunny . . . and an airline stewardess."

✓ **H. ROSS PEROT** is donating one million dollars to Southern Methodist University in Dallas, the university announced this month. Perot gave the money to improve SMU's academic programs (not the football program) saying, "Dallas must have a world-class university."

✓ **GRIFFIN AND BRAND**, the McAllen-based agribusiness giant, surfaced a few months back in the pages of the *Kansas City Star*. In a series on food and toxic hazards, *Star* reporters discovered that Griffin and Brand zucchini shipped to Kansas in 1986 had been dumped in a county landfill. Landfill disposal documents led *Star* reporters to believe that the produce had been treated with Monitor, a pesticide not approved for use on zucchini.

✓ **ANOTHER AWARD** for the Governor, this time for his characteristic support of working women, men and children.

Texas farmworkers, members of the United Farmworkers Union, voted Gov. Clements the first recipient of the Short-Handled Hoe Award. During the last session, the Governor, who is known to regale friends with anecdotes about his own working days as a roustabout, vetoed legislation that would have outlawed the short-handled hoe. The hoe, which many growers insist that farmworkers use, causes damage to the lower back. Its purpose is to allow supervisors to see that field laborers are stooped and working. □

PUBLIC CITIZEN

Public Citizen needs your help in fighting the South Texas Nuclear Project. Please call (512) 477-1155 for more information, or send your contribution to Public Citizen, 1611 E. First, Austin, Texas 78702.

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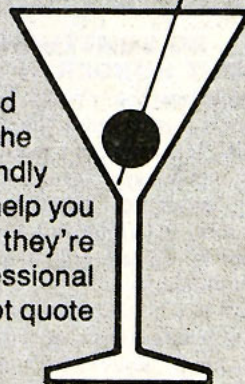
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SOCIAL CAUSE CALENDAR

POLITICS/LITERATURE LECTURES IN SAN ANTONIO

New York Governor Mario Cuomo will speak on **March 1** at 8 p.m. in Laurie Auditorium on the Trinity University campus in San Antonio. Writer Joyce Carol Oates will present a reading and discussion of her work on **March 10** at 7:30 p.m. in Laurie Auditorium, Trinity University campus. Admission to both events is free. For more information, please call (512) 736-8406.

TOUR NICARAGUA AND EL SALVADOR

The Central America Peace Initiative (CAPI) is planning their second annual summer trip to Nicaragua and El Salvador from **June 20** to **July 2**. The traveling group will be small, approximately 12 people from across the Southwest, and will visit government officials, church activists, refugees, labor officials, human rights workers, opposition group members, farmers, and others in rural areas. The final itinerary will be partially chosen by those going on the trip. The cost is \$1,015, which includes round-trip airfare from Houston, food, lodging, administrative expenses, guides, translators, and information packet. A \$150 deposit will be due by May 1. For more information, please write or call CAPI at 1022 West 6th Street, Austin, TX 78703, (512) 474-5318.

DO SOMETHING ABOUT HUNGER IN TEXAS

In 1986 at least four million Texans were in need of emergency food. At least 800,000 Texans were spending part of each month hungry. Texas doctors report seeing cases of kwashiorkor and marasmus in children — nutritional diseases we usually only associate with the Third World.

There is a hunger crisis in Texas and existing public assistance programs are inadequate to address the need. Private

OBSERVANCES

February 28, 1877 • U.S. government seizes Black Hills from Lakota Sioux in violation of treaty.

February 28, 1906 • Upton Sinclair's *The Jungle* published.

March 1, 1954 • Bikini Island H-bomb test irradiates 7,000 square miles of Pacific Ocean and contaminates Japanese fishermen.

March 3, 1919 • Supreme Court holds freedom of speech does not apply to resisting the draft.

March 5, 1927 • U.S. Marines — on break from Nicaraguan occupation — land in China.

March 5, 1946 • Winston Churchill gives "Iron Curtain" speech at Fulton, Missouri.

March 6, 1857 • Supreme Court upholds slavery in Dred Scott decision.

March 10, 1951 • President Eisenhower states willingness to launch first-strike nuclear attack.

March 11, 1833 • U.S. troops intervene in Nicaragua.

March 11, 1973 • Formation of independent Oglala Sioux Nation proclaimed at Wounded Knee, South Dakota.

organizations are taking up some of the slack but their resources too have been exhausted by the magnitude of the problem. In 1986 the state's 18 largest food banks distributed over 60 million pounds of food, but they also reported that the demand was at least twice what they could serve. In some areas, particularly rural South Texas, demand exceeded supply by six to 12 times.

Observer readers can do something — volunteer time, money, food. Here is a list of some of the largest food banks in the state:

Food Bank of Abilene
Abilene
915-695-6311

High Plains Food Bank
Amarillo
806-374-8562

Capital Area Food Bank
Austin
512-448-2111

Brownsville Food Bank
Brownsville
512-542-5642

Food Bank of Corpus Christi
Corpus Christi
512-887-6291

North Texas Food Bank
Dallas
214-330-1396

Paso del Norte Food Bank
El Paso
915-544-5592

Food Bank of Greater Tarrant County
Fort Worth
817-625-1673

Houston Food Bank
Houston
713-635-3700

Laredo Regional Food Bank
Laredo
512-723-3725

South Plains Food Bank
Lubbock
806-763-3003

Permian Basin Food Bank
Odessa
915-368-0232

Concho Valley Food Bank
San Angelo
915-655-3231

San Antonio Food Bank
San Antonio
512-226-6334

San Marcos Area Food Bank
San Marcos
512-245-2430

Food for People
Waco
817-754-4339

Wichita Falls Area Food Bank
Wichita Falls
817-766-2322

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Hard Times in the Land of Plenty

BY JAMES SALLIS

OFFHAND I DON'T know Arlington's population, but they were all at the mall last Saturday.

My idea had been to get in some walking after five hours of apartment hunting and a consolatory dinner, and I suppose, since the nearest parking was a mile away, I did accomplish at least that. Parking lot, entryways, stores, and mall corridors were all filled with people, hundreds upon hundreds of them, alone, in pairs, in tribes, prides, schools, and herds, as though Paradise had opened its doors to all comers — but only for five minutes.

I still believe dozens of would-be shoppers had given up already and moved into abandoned cars to live.

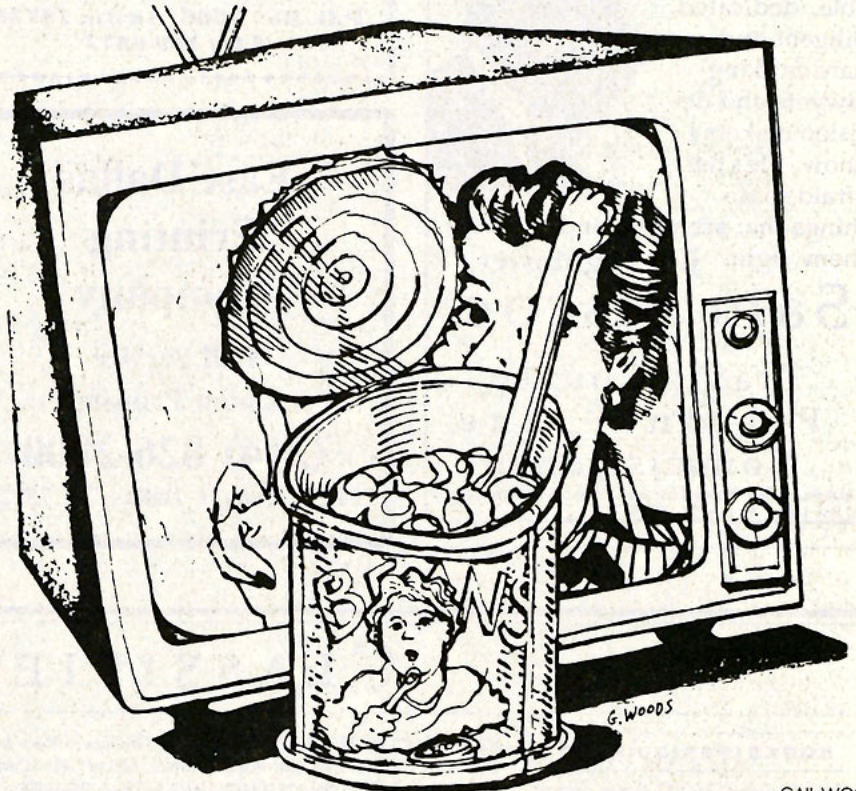
It would be difficult to come up with anything more symbolic of America than these malls in which we figuratively and in some cases almost literally live. They rise from their seas of cement full of inbound riches, of adventure and the hope of new lands, themselves little Americas.

It all reminded me of a story I used to tell my children Katie and Carey, about a baby left behind in the mall who grows to manhood there in its corridors and crawlspaces, wearing whatever clothes it finds on benches or in bathrooms, living off leftover junk food. From time to time late at night a wanderer on the fringes, or a lost child, spots him in shadows, and stories of The Mall Man begin to spread. Then there are sightings in other malls. . . .

I never did write any of that down, but it kept the girls entertained for several nights running, and it seems altogether a very American story. I suppose in the film he'd become a celebrity, fall in love, move into a home in the suburbs. And two or three nights a week, or maybe on Saturdays, he and Mrs. Mall Man and the kids would all pile into the station wagon and head out for the clean, well-lit aisles of Plymouth Park or Pioneer Woods or Indian Way Mall. End of story.

One of the problems with being a writer is that you can't help making everything into stories, that you're always, even during life's most calamitous or enjoyable mo-

James Sallis is a writer in Arlington.



GAIL WOODS

ments, standing back from it all, watching and trying to make sense out of it.

Leaving the mall, I drove to a nearby deserted park not far away and walked a while among its trees and rummaging birds. I was thinking, for some reason, about the best meal I ever had in my life.

It was in New Orleans, I guess in the Sixties, and I'd been waiting for checks from several magazines for weeks, living off air, a Christmas care package full of smoked oysters and fancy cheeses from a relative, and the comforting weight of the 20 cents I had left in my pocket.

Days went by. Days and more days.

Hunger and I held long conversations.

Until finally I took action.

Entering a Safeway, I strolled for hours (at least it seemed so, hunger ever more acute) among its bountiful shelves, at last selecting a can of beans — 17 cents plus tax. At my apartment, I opened and ate that can of beans and it was the finest meal I've yet had, absolutely the *finest*. I was almost

certain I heard bells ringing all over the city as I ate.

Part of the message of that Saturday at the mall, and of my memories, I think, is that it's not hunger that is so terrible, but that hunger occurs in the midst of such plenty. Surrounded by the mall's quick, teeming population, we are surrounded as well by the homeless, the hopelessly ill, the helpless and defeated.

We are all guilty of everything, Dostoevski once wrote. There are many things we cannot correct, cannot fix. But we can, we must, acknowledge them, and in the privacy of our hearts we must deal with them.

Perhaps the best life instruction we could give our children is this: Find beauty. . . . Try to understand. . . . Survive.

Meanwhile, I'll see you all at the mall next Saturday. This time, *you* bring the beans. I'll be in the green car at the south edge of the lot, the one up on blocks. And I'll have a fire going in the back seat. □

THE TEXAS Observer

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