

JERRY GOLDBERG

Billy Mills left to right

There is a Los Angeles City Councilman named Billy Mills who used to have some very good liberal credentials. In fact, there was even a time when he was considered possibly the militant of the three black members of the City Council.

The reeducation of Billy Mills started about six years ago when he decided a black man could and should replace Supervisor Kenneth Hahn. He found a great deal of unrest about the Hahn tenure among the social worker's union and several other union people within county government.

He got a pledge for support from the Los Angeles Newspaper Guild when he agreed to put in an anti-strikebreaker ordinance to counter the bringing of strikebreakers into town by the *Herald-Examiner*.

A very good lobby job was carried on by reporter members of the guild who were able to twist some very unwilling arms. They had the eight votes necessary to get the bill passed. Suddenly, Sigmund Arywitz, executive secretary of the County Federation of Labor, came to the guild leadership and said to lay off the councilman because the vote might embarrass some of "labor's friends."

This was very confusing to Billy Mills who thought he was helping labor. It was more confusing when he discovered that Hahn wasn't willing to be as friendly to his friends in labor. Later, Mills started seeing a strange picture of discrimination within the building trades and fire fighting union which gave him even more cause to doubt. Then he ran for Congress with the same exceptional record for liberal causes. The liberals went elsewhere and the councilman had a change of heart. He refused to endorse George McGovern and has been voting the conservative line on the Council ever since.

Word has it that he is voting conservatively because he has a promise from the governor that he will be made a judge. The promise was apparently made several months ago with little action seen since that time. He has at least been appointed by Reagan to a major statewide body working in the criminal justice field.

* * *

It is very difficult to understand the difference between the words and actions of Assemblyman Walter Karabian. For several years, the Monterey Park Democrat has been touting the women's movement theme. He has also been a great defender of the downtrodden Spanish-surname. He was very happy in this role until the last several weeks when he chickened out of the attorney general's race, announcing his intention of running against two very competent women — March Fong and Cathy O'Neil. His goodfriend and leader of the Spanish-speaking community, Herman Sillas, also happens to be in the contest.

Last week some of the backroom wheeling and dealing used by Karabian and his close associate Assemblyman Richard Allatorre to get Sillas out of the race started to surface. Both Karabian and Allatorre disclaim any wrongdoing. There certainly was no illegal action; however, there is a question of the morality of the attempts to buy or scare Sillas out of the race. Everybody knows politics is a dirty game, but when the "Knight on the Big White Horse" does something terrible, it's shocking.

* * *

Assemblyman Frank Holoman apparently intends to use a series of hearings of his joint subcommittee on community development, being held just before election day, as an instrument to get the publicity he needs to win the new state senate seat in his area. The hearings will deal with the role of state government in developing local and regional financial plans. An ideal issue when inflation and the job gap very well will be the major issue of the spring campaign, in addition to Watergate, energy and "putting faith back into government."

* * *

Speaking of dirty pool, the Republicans are all aghast over the maltreatment of Newton Russell by Mike Antonovich. Both of their districts were merged with the recent reapportionment. Russell has been a loyal party supporter for years. He avoided getting into a Congressional seat he might have taken when Barry Goldwater Jr. filed for the job. He is well liked in Republican circles because he has really attemped to avoid the battles which could have torn apart the minority party in California.

Most of the party regulars feel Antonovich should have moved to Lancaster, leaving the district to Russell who has been representing most of it for 10 years. Antonovich has only represented the district for a year.

The flack from the primary battle, along with the Watergate blues, might very well bring this conservative Democratic registration district back into the Democratic fold.

* * *

During the past two weeks, the *Free Press* has been playing musical chairs with several members of the Los Angeles Community College Board. It stems from the removal of a *Free Press* newsrack from the Pierce College campus. Dr. Monroe Richman, Dr. Ralph Richardson and Arthur Bronson have each assured the *Free Press* of their enthusiastic support for the rights of a newspaper under the First Amendment. Apparently, the dean of students is the one who doesn't believe in the First Amendment. He claims nobody on the campus wants the paper. To date, the *Free Press* has discovered that all three gentlemen talk big with a very small stick.

The RTD has been playing the same game with the El Monte station. In this case, the RTD simply forgets to answer *Free Press* communications. Also mad at the *Free Press* is Granada Hills Hospital which got upset over something in our medical series. □

19 DEAD IN BLYTHE

School buses built-in death traps

STEVE RAND

How many California children will be driven to school tomorrow morning in what one member of the U.S. Senate has described as "a veritable death trap"?

Does the same fate await them as that of the 19 New Mexico children who died a horrible death in a school bus crash in 1971?

These queries became pertinent in recent weeks when U.S. Senator Charles H. Percy, R-Ill., made public on the Senate floor the results of an investigation into the Jan. 15, 1974 bus tragedy near Blythe, Calif., which took the lives of 19 farm workers and injured more than two dozen others in the crowded bus that morning. The bus, which was intended to carry no more than 44 persons on this occasion, held 47 men, women and children.

Tin Coffin?

In his speech, Sen. Percy called such buses "tin cans"; but over the years, farm workers have had a more descriptive and, as it turned out, a more accurate name for them — they called them "coffins." On altogether too many occasions in California's past, that is precisely what they have turned out to be.

According to the California Highway Patrol in 1972 and 1973, there were 42 accidents involving farm labor buses — the same type as those used to transport school children — and injuries were sustained in 17 of them.

The "death trap" bus had a 1955 body manufactured by Ward Schoolbus Manufacturing Co. of Conway, Ark., which was placed on a General Motors frame. About one-fourth of all school buses in the United States are manufactured by this firm.

Bus company president, Charles D. Ward, has been credited by Sen Percy's staffers, and in interviews, with vainly pressing the U.S. Department of Transportation for stronger safety rules on all buses. To do so unilaterally, he has said, would place an undue economic burden on his firm and would make it lose out in bids for new bus orders.

California the Worst

California practices are worse than those of any other states, he has said. As a result, it has more older and unsafe buses than any of the other states, Ward charged. While some other states require replacement of school buses after eight years, California encourages school districts to maintain their buses for at least 15 years, thereby fully paying off the value of the vehicles.

"Many California buses are 30 years old," Ward explained in a press interview. "If the government started requiring more emergency exits, California (school) districts might wait many years to buy buses — such as padding back rest iron bars that have damaged the teeth of many children on sudden stops."

The flippant, if not criminal, ignoring of ordinary safety precautions by California authorities is illustrated in a number of the events surrounding the ill-fated accident near Blythe in the early morning hours of Jan. 15. Within minutes after the mishap, almost every one of the persons seated on the left side of the bus drowned in less than four feet of water when the bus flipped over into a salt water ditch alongside the road. The only emergency door on the death-trap bus was on the left side, thereby leaving only the windows for emergency exits.

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Chicano women — Dollars or liberation?

MAXWELL KING

SACRAMENTO — There's women's liberation and there's Chicana liberation — and neither does enough for the Latin American women, particularly Mexican-American women, of this country, at least in the opinion of some of them.

That's why a handful of Latin American women, most of them Mexican-American, a year ago organized the Latin American Bilingual Secretaries Association in Sacramento.

The original group now has some two dozen members, and a first membership drive is scheduled for this spring. While there is as yet no formal statewide organization, there is a group almost as large in Stockton. Others have started in Los Angeles and San Jose, with still another just being launched in Fresno. Inquiries have been received from other Latin American population centers across the country.

"It's easier today for an otherwise qualified Latin American woman to obtain an office job," Ms. Rachel Sidhu, "freelance bookkeeper," national secretary of the Mexican American Chamber of Commerce and sparkplug and president of the Sacramento group, told the *Free Press*, "but too often it's still a case of 'Mexican American woman who sits by the door,' just tokenism."

Moreover, she feels those Mexican American women who do obtain office jobs are overworked and underpaid for the work they do.

Double Load

"Bilingual office workers are expected to act, as needed, as interpreters, but they don't usually receive any extra pay for

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CHICANA WOMEN

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this added ability. Instead, too often they are expected to take time out from their other work to act as interpreters, then catch up on the same work load as others unable to handle two languages."

Another handicap, she feels, is that more than other women, Latin American women are considered by employers poor risks for promotion, likely to abandon a career for marriage and family.

Ms. Sidhu, who has openly used her position with the Mexican-American Chamber to spread word of the organization and its aims, freely admits that other minority-group female white-collar workers face similar problems, but sees the problems faced by Latin American women the most serious for a number of reasons.

"One is sheer numbers," she explained. "Here in California, 'Spanish surnames' come to some 15 per cent of the population, and the national figure is five per cent. We are concentrated in a crescent along the Mexican border and in a number of big cities across the nation. Most are of Mexican descent or from Mexico, except along the East Coast where there are also large numbers of 'Spanish surnames' from Puerto Rico.

"Spanish-speaking people are this country's largest minority language group, not evenly scattered but found in heavy concentrations."

Education Important

She feels Latin American women also face particular problems of culture and prejudice, and she speaks from experience. Rachel Sidhu is the youngest of a migrant farm worker's 13 children, and "from the time I was a little girl, I knew I didn't want to spend my life working out in the fields in that heat day after day. I was lucky — my mother pushed me to get an education."

Even migrant farm workers, she says, realize the importance of an education for their children — if and when possible — but they don't often see it as important for daughters as for sons. "Hands" are needed to support the family, and it is usually the girls who are pulled out of school first.

If the daughters do go to school, "there are too many counselors who see no reason to encourage Latin American girls to study hard and aim high. It's accepted these girls will marry young and raise big families; and if they work, it will be like their mothers — in the fields and factories."

The Latin American Bilingual Secretaries Association has plans to meet this — in Sacramento they've already held one seminar for junior high and high school girls, "mainly but not entirely Latin American.

"We gave them hell — but we also gave them images of successful Latin American men and women they can look up to and identify with. Some said, later it was the first time they had known a Mexican-American could be somebody."

Another aim of the association is to show employers their need for bilingual office help, "and we show both public and private employers how much an asset a Spanish-speaking secretary can be, we'll also act as a clearing house for information on available jobs."

At this stage, the Latin American secretaries plan local independent organizations, in close contact, cooperation on various projects. State organizations and even a national group may come later.

If the group in Sacramento and the newer groups plan to remain Latin American-oriented, "that doesn't mean," according to Ms. Sidhu, "that we can or won't cooperate with other women's and minority groups on projects where our needs or aims coincide."

She doesn't have to say it. Even alone, much less in cooperation with other organizations, a group representing the Latin American women, particularly the working women, of California and the nation could carry a lot of clout. □

FAVORITE MOVIES

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opening nights, that Richard Burton almost went to her hotel room for an interview.

Through all of her movie colony trivia she remains the same nicely naive collector of trivia she was when she started the racket. And why anyone outside of the immediate Slotkin family would be interested in these lukewarm reminiscences is beyond me. Still, any writer who would take readers directly from interviews with The Manson Family to a jolly account of a *Tonight Show* appearance with Joan Rivers, deserves at least our partial attention.

Ms. Eder says she likes everyone in show biz except Raquel Welch who snubbed her a couple of times. Marilyn Beck, on the other hand, doesn't seem to like anybody in the industry and fails to even mention La Welch in her book.

Ms. Beck, who is a syndicated columnist for the New York *Times* Special Features, whatever the hell that is, is sort of the Clifford Odets of the gossip mongers. The portrait she paints of *Marilyn Beck's Hollywood* is as bleak and barren as the Adobe Salt Flats. She is bitter about the promiscuity, dope-dealing, and despair offscreen and the pornography and violence onscreen. The industry is going to hell in a greased handcar. The new breed of performer is like the porverbial serpents incisor. The new breed of producer is a panderer to base public taste.

She ends with a pessimistic paragraph that warns filmmakers that unless the "bloody, immoral" movies stop, the industry will cease to exist. The irony is that the poaragraph was written by some old fuddy-duddy way back in 1909. But the thought is essentially the same one Ms. Beck has been tossing out for 250 crepe-draped pages. Why would someone write a book and then poke fun at it? What are her real convicitions?

No matter. The point to all this is that you should star as far away from the collected works of Mss. Eder and Beck as possible. Bring on the "A" and "B" party lists! □

GOLDBERG

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the third house than the grass-roots trouble makers who seldom provided any funds.

Hard Times

The organization never really died but it certainly came on hard times. Too often the conventions ended in bitter self-righteous debates over obscure issues, and personality tantrums dominated the organization on every level. The group stayed in the precincts only in a few counties like Contra Costa, Alameda and San Francisco and in the districts of Congressman George Brown Jr. and Senator David Roberti.

Last weekend the CDC endorsement became important to everyone, including old-style politician Joseph Alioto who a year ago wouldn't have been even interested in associating himself with that label. Independent political action has come back in vogue and the political bosses in Sacramento are willing to use any weapon at hand.

Congressman Jerome Waldie, with strong help from the remnants of the McGovern organization, has spent weeks building clubs all over the state to support him at the endorsement convention. The only problem they faced was that Assembly Speaker Bob Moretti has a built-in club movement and was successfully able — with a little help from opponent Secretary of State Edmund G. Brown Jr. — to pull together a pretty good grass-roots organization to stop Waldie. The dust cleared with Waldie only getting 48 per cent of the vote. Moretti looked a little better than Brown and Alioto but, in spite of his inspiring pieces to CDC'ers about working together for the great Democratic victory, still fell on his face.

Convention Casualties

David A. Roberti and Cathy O'Neil may have become the casualties of the conventions for really not being able to convince the women's caucus of the convention. Roberti has one of the most consistent liberal voting records on every issue but abortion. He has gone into one liberal group after another sticking to his principles in spite of the cost. The women's caucus killed him on the issue. On the other hand, the women's caucus watered down between Cathy O'Neil and March Fong, apparently giving up on Ms. O'Neil in the secretary of state voting.

The big bad guy of the day was Assemblyman Walter Karabian who was booed off the stage for coming out in one direction on civil rights and women only to leave the attorney general race because he thought he could beat a couple of women and a Chicano.

Vincent Bugliosi was the heads-on favorite against William Norris for attorney general. Then the word got out about his view in favor of capital punishment, which wasn't softened by his view against prosecuting in victimless crimes.

When the storm was over, only Senator Cranston, the founder of CDC and still its champion, got an endorsement. This may mean the Democratic Primary will be open; and it may mean that it will not be shattered to the point where, as Mayor Tom Bradley pointed out in the closing session, "The only way the Democrats can lose the next election is to give it away." □

• WHAT IS "PLANETARY ACUPUNCTURE"?

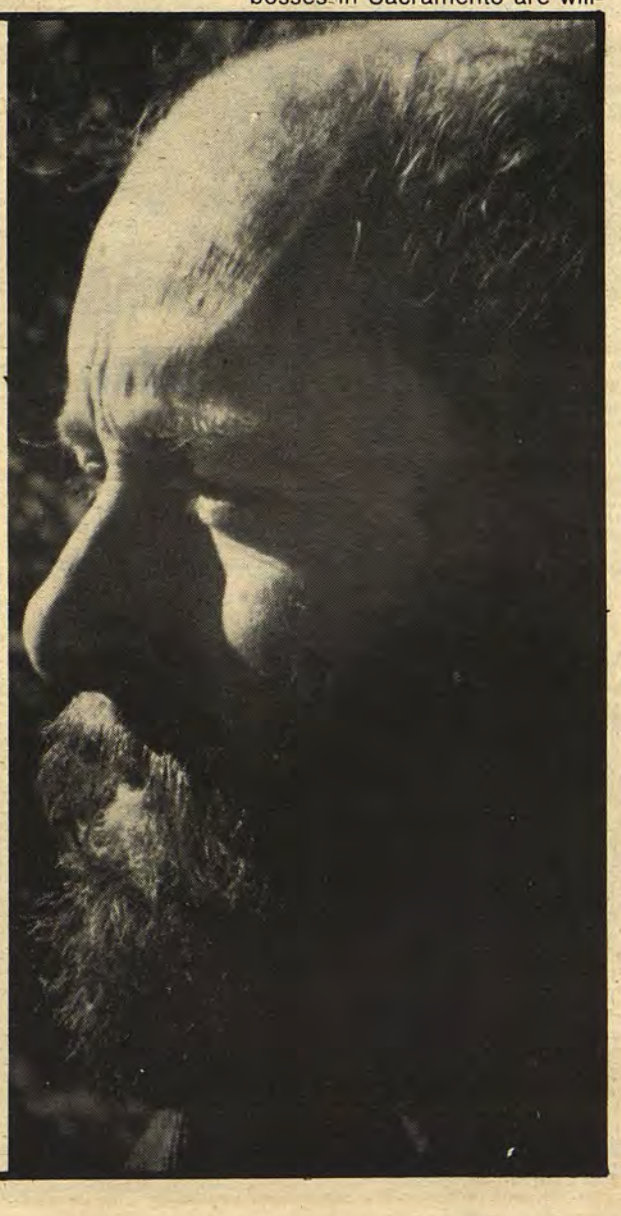
• WHO ARE THE "PHYSICIANS OF THE EARTH"?

• WHY DO THEY USE "DOWSING"?

• WHAT IS BEING DONE TO HEAL THE EARTH?

RESHAD

& shaping-in person



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