

House passes 'winner-take-all' primary bill

AUSTIN, Tex. (AP) — Sen. Lloyd Bentsen's presidential campaign got a little help from his friends Thursday with House passage of a "winner-take-all" presi-

dential primary bill. An 83-52 vote sent it on to the Senate, which is generally favorable. Bentsen, junior senator from

Texas, has announced as a candidate for the Democratic Party's presidential nomination in 1976. He has stated that a Texas presidential primary would help him.

A primary receives national news coverage, and the bill as it passed the House probably would give him nearly all of the big Texas delegation to the Democratic national conven-

tion. The bill Bentsen wanted and got would put on the ballot only the presidential candidates who actually pay a filing fee to run in Texas.

There would be no head-to-head test of candidate strength, since voters would vote directly on national convention delegates from congressional or state senatorial districts. Presidential candidates' names would appear only in parentheses following names of delegates pledged to support them. If a district is entitled to three delegates, then the top three vote-getters would be elected to attend the convention—hence the "winner-take-all" label.

At least 75 percent of the Texas delegation to a convention would be chosen by in that manner. The rest would be elected at a party's state convention.

The big fight in the House — which probably will be repeated in the Senate — was waged by those who believe all candidates for a party's nomination should be on the ballot, with each candidate's delegate strength directly proportional to his popular vote in the primary.

House members first voted for that proportional representation

approach, but enough votes were switched Wednesday to restore "winner-take-all."

Rep. Wayne Peveto, D-Orange, explained his switch by saving Bentsen's legislative troops convinced him it was more important to have a Texan in the White House than a delegate distribution that reflected the voters' preferences.

"This is the only way we can stop Wallace," he told a reporter.

House members added an amendment, 92-41, enabling a delegate to become a free agent if the candidate to which he was pledged failed to win at least 20 percent of the convention vote on the second ballot.

"This prohibits one man, even a native Texan, from controlling all the Texas delegates in a convention that might have become deadlocked," said Rep. Carlyle Smith, D-Grand Prairie.

Sen. Don Adams, D-Jasper, the Senate sponsor, said he had no timetable to get the bill moving in that chamber.

Department heads resign

DR. VERGIL G. STOVER has been named acting head of the Department of Urban and Regional Planning at Texas A&M University.

Dean Raymond Reed of the College of Architecture announced the appointment Thursday, effective until a permanent department head is named to replace Dr. J.H.

"Chuy" Hinojosa who is on leave of absence.

C.J. LEABO has stepped down as head of the Journalism Department, effective Sept. 1, 1975.

His successor has not yet been named.

Leabo resigned has administrative post in favor of teaching and research.

Tower holds split views on industry tax policies

Congress should not repeal the percentage oil depletion allowance or pass a windfall profits tax on the nation's oil industry, Senator John Tower of Texas stated in a press release this week.

Tower said oil companies could be forced to cut back on exploration and production of oil and gas. Loss of the depletion allowance, he said, would fall more heavily on the independent producer. Many of the small producers have said they cannot afford to stay in business if the allowance is abolished, Tower said.

The allowance given oil companies by the government is 22 percent of the selling price of oil and gas products and is intended to represent recovery of the capital invested in oil and gas production. The allowance was 27½ percent until 1969, when it was lowered to its present level.

Tower said it is the small producers in the nation which develop most of our domestic sources of oil and gas. He said the depletion allowance provides an incentive for increased production by such companies.

If the allowance were abolished,

he said, the additional cost of oil and gas products would have to be paid by the consumer through higher prices.

Tower said he is opposed to the windfall profits tax because those profits are poured back into more production and not "into the pockets of fat-cat oilmen." The senator said the tax is based on the assumption that oil companies are earning excess profits and that such profits are not being utilized.

Chase Manhattan Bank, he said, reported that in the last five years the nation's major oil companies have invested more than 80 percent more money in domestic operations than they made in profits.

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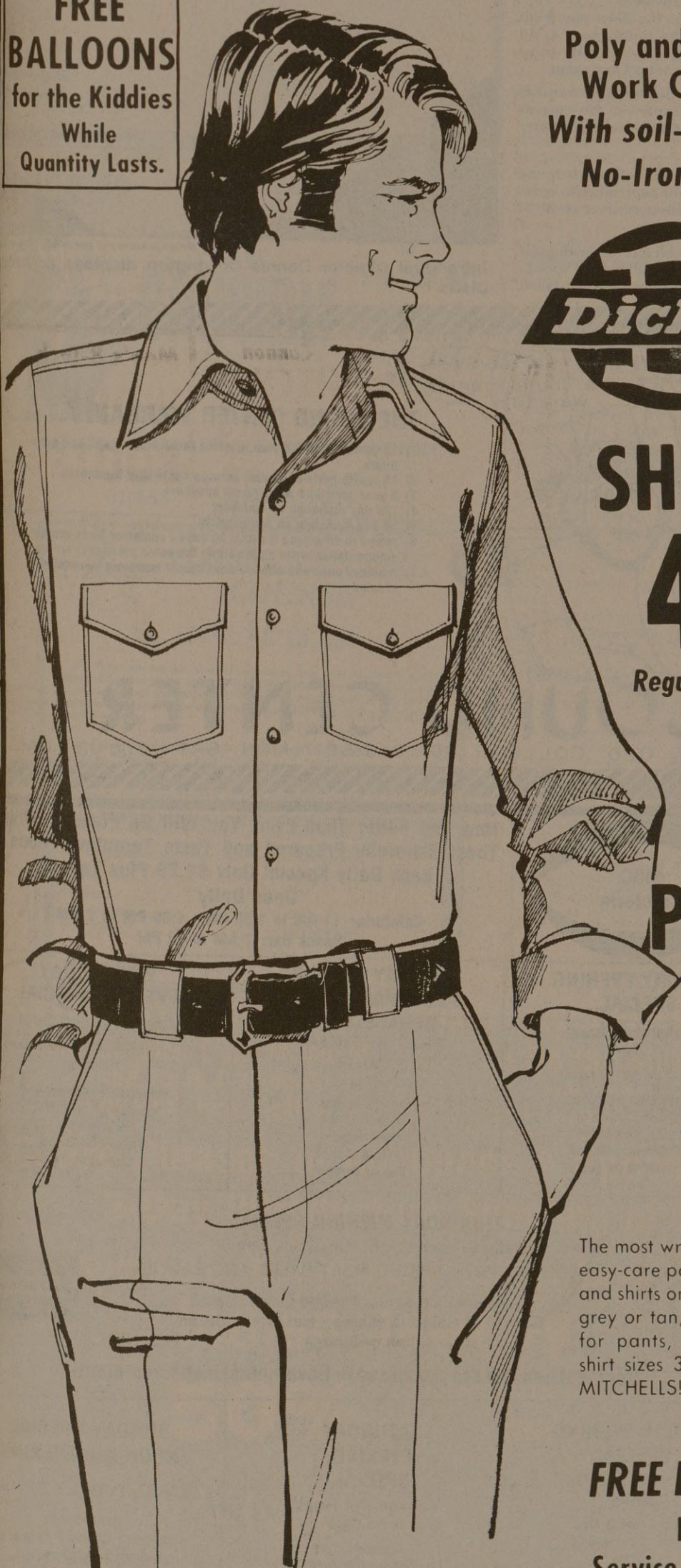
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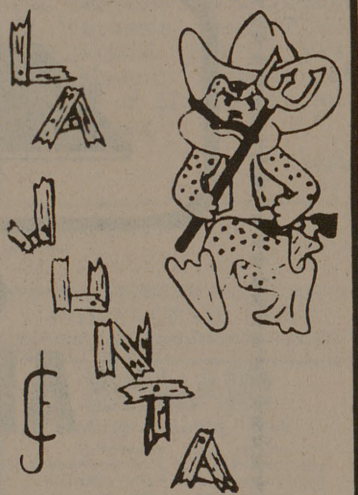
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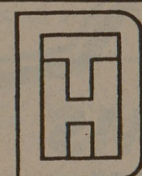
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