

Scandals

Bush: Reagan needs black voters

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United Press International
SHREVEPORT, La. — The Reagan campaign has not worked hard enough at pulling black voters away from the Democratic camp, Vice President George Bush said Wednesday.

Bush told reporters during a campaign swing through Shreveport it will be difficult for Republicans to convince blacks to abandon the habit of voting a straight Democratic ticket.

"Black voters are tougher," he said. "Since 1932, there has been a tendency, particularly in southern states, to pull a straight lever. We want to tell

black voters, 'We are not going to let you be taken for granted.'

"We have a message for black voters. I will readily concede that we haven't gotten it out too well."

Bush said voters should question the advice of black leaders to stick with only Democratic candidates.

"Don't let some guy come running down here from out of state and tell you you have to pull a straight lever," he said. "I think the voters ought to say, 'I've been doing that for 50 years and what's it gotten me?'"

Bush toured an AT&T plant, talking with workers before joining them in a cafeteria line to get fried fish and broccoli for lunch. He later spoke to a crowd of about 2,000 at a rally outside the Caddo Parish Courthouse.

A black Republican candidate for Senate, angered because he was not invited to participate in the rally, stood at the front of the crowd waving signs and repeatedly interrupting Bush with cries of "Not fair, George."

"If some would listen instead of talking, maybe they'd learn a

little something here," Bush finally said in response to the shouts.

A group in the crowd came to the vice president's support, trading shouts of "George is fair" with those of the heckler. Bush tried to quiet the crowd after about 30 seconds of shouting.

"Hey, listen, I paid for this mike (microphone)," he said.

At a brief news conference, Bush said the Reagan campaign also must overcome the defeats of Republican governors in Louisiana, Texas and Arkansas. But Bush said he was confident Reagan could regain the lost ground through an emphasis

on his economic policies and traditional American values.

Bush criticized the three Democratic presidential candidates — whom he labeled "the trembling trio" — for emphasizing bad news and quarreling among themselves.

"They're so addicted to bad news they just can't live without it," he said. "I think the American people are tired of hearing all the gloomy predictions of these three men."

"We don't think the American people will be caught up in this air of negativism," Bush said.

Lawmakers try to avoid water crisis in the south

United Press International
DALLAS — Feuding western and southern states must re-establish "diplomatic relations" to avert a water crisis and to block unwelcome federal intervention, lawmakers from water-rich states said Wednesday.

Arkansas, Louisiana, Missouri and other "water-rich" states have staunchly resisted efforts to transfer large quantities of their water to arid regions of the High Plains.

"Each state must meet its own water needs first, before shipping it elsewhere," said Steve Clark, Arkansas attorney general. "Of course, water has a price. It will run straight uphill for enough dollars."

"I can't get excited by a national water policy dictated by Congress. Texas has 27 congressmen and Arkansas has four. Custer had better odds."

"Arkansas may be happy to trade a barrel of water for three barrels of oil."

Officials participating in a regional water-crisis forum agreed that agriculture will be the big loser in the coming battle for water.

"Water will move in the direction of the greatest money, and that's probably away from agriculture," said New Mexico state Rep. George Fettinger.

Fettinger said water-thirsty states should "talk more and litigate less," referring to his state's long-running legal battle with El Paso, which is seeking to drill and transport New Mexico water.

"This is clearly a question of dollars and cents," he said, "and will have impact on industrial development in the region. Perhaps this is a case where federal intervention is welcome."

Texas lawmakers said the state has too little water to meet basic human needs into the next century.

"We must face the consequences of a significant disaster," said state Sen. John Monford. "Water enables us to significantly enjoy the quality of life. If it disappears, the quality of life diminishes. It's imperative to display long-term vision so water will be available for our grandchildren."

Oklahoma geologist Fred Shelley said:

"It's now become the east versus the west in states like Kansas, Oklahoma and Texas. The east has the water and doesn't want to let it go, and the west is willing to try anything to get it."

"I had a lawmaker from western Oklahoma ask me to re-juggle some figures so the cost of shipping water to the west would appear cheaper."

Continental expects profits for first time since crash of '78

United Press International
HOUSTON — For the first time since 1978, Continental Airlines expects to post a first quarter operating profit, chairman Frank Lorenzo said Wednesday.

However, he said, precise figures for the first quarter are not yet available.

In the past, Continental had been showing some positive bottom-line figures by selling aircraft, real estate and other

items. But this first quarter profit will come solely from operations, he said.

Lorenzo said the carrier's return to profitability is pinned to its lower labor costs, which resulted from the company voiding union contracts when it filed for Chapter 11 reorganization in September. Employees are working for about half of the wages they were paid under the contract.

Unions have challenged the company's action on the contracts and the case is now being heard in federal bankruptcy court. A decision is expected later this year.

Since 1979, the carrier has lost more than \$500 million. Since the bankruptcy petition was filed, Lorenzo said, the company has "totally changed the cash cycle of the business" and made structural changes in its routes and operations.

"We went hub crazy," Lorenzo said, describing the period following the merger between Los Angeles-based trunk Continental and the local regional airline Texas International Airlines in October 1982. The merged Continental was feeding all of its flights at that time through Houston and Denver, which Lorenzo said was an unnecessary, expensive move.

"Now we are adding many more flights to specific destinations," he said.

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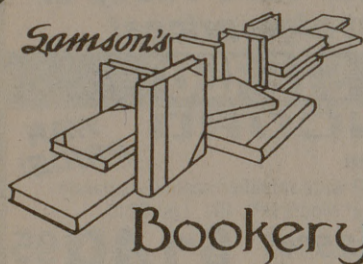
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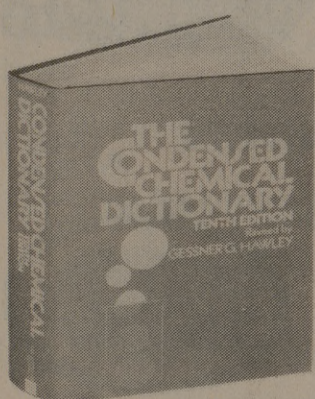
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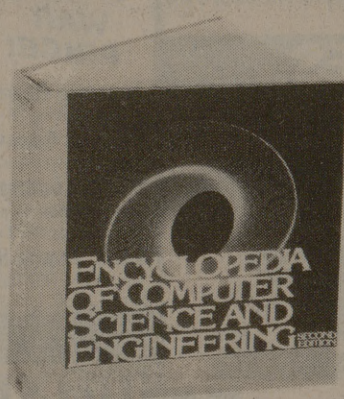
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