

# POLITICS

Wednesday, October 28, 1992

The Battalion

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## Bush faces obstacles in election

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

WASHINGTON — Americans' economic worries and desire for change are proving stiff obstacles to a comeback for President Bush, who is making late progress in a handful of traditional Republican states, but in others has stalled or even slipped.

In two states, Washington and New York, the incumbent president has even slipped below 20 percent in some recent overnight tracking polls, according to poll-

### Polls show economic problems hinder incumbent president in race for office

sters in both parties who are not involved in the presidential campaign.

They predicted Bush ultimately would fare better in those states, but said the numbers underscore the president's troubles in the final days before the election. Several pollsters interviewed Tuesday said Bush's standing is remarkably stagnant in national surveys because so many voters are con-

vinced he is not the best choice to run the economy.

"The feeling was that he wasn't paying as much attention as they wanted him to pay to the central thing — which is jobs and the economy," said Andrew Kohut, director of surveys for Times Mirror Center for The People & The Press, which re-pollled 1,200 voters 10 days apart this month and found no movement toward Bush.

"The economy is the key issue and President Bush has not focused to the voters' satisfaction sufficient attention to answering the question, 'How is the second term going to be different and better?'" said pollster Lee Miringoff of New York's Marist Institute.

One alarming sign for Bush: pollsters in New England say Clinton has stretched a tiny lead over Bush in New Hampshire to double digits in recent days. New Hampshire last supported a Democrat for president in 1964.

## Undecided voters hold key for Lena Guerrero

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

AUSTIN — Railroad Commission candidate Lena Guerrero cast a "straight Democratic ticket" vote Tuesday, then said she was encouraged by polls showing large numbers of undecided voters in her race.

But the Democrat who resigned from the commission last month also said the race has taken its toll.

"It has been very tough on me. It has been very tough on my family. It has been very tough on my friends," said Guerrero, who resigned after acknowledging that she lacked the college diploma she had claimed for 12 years.

But Guerrero said "it seems worth it" when she can discuss issues such as state energy policy, natural gas markets or trucking deregula-

tion.

"I'm very proud of the record I've established on the Railroad Commission. And no one's been able to criticize that record. I think that's real telling."

Several polls published this week showed Republican candidate Barry Williamson leading Guerrero by margins ranging from 4 to 17 percentage points.

"I remember all those polls in 1990 showed Ann Richards trailing, too. I think people are overpolled, probably. . . . But seven days is a lot of days," Guerrero said.

"I'm very encouraged that there's still a lot of people who haven't decided who they want to vote for. It means that Barry Williamson hasn't convinced them he's the best man for the job. Even with all they know about Lena,

they're stilling wanting to consider what they want to do."

Williamson campaigned in Corpus Christi, where he visited an oilfield service company.

Earlier, Williamson said the polls showing him leading indicate that "my message of creating jobs is being welcomed across this state."

"People are excited about getting our rigs up and running again, about reinvesting in our energy industry, and about creating a better business environment," he said.

In the final pre-election campaign finance reports filed this week, Guerrero reported raising \$210,265 between Sept. 25 and Oct. 24. She spent \$1.26 million, mostly on TV commercials. Williamson reported raising \$636,912, including nearly \$270,000 in loans of which \$200,000 was from himself.

## Bentsen vows to fight for air defense

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

FORT BLISS — A Texas senator Tuesday warned the Air Force that it would face his fierce opposition should it attempt to diminish air defense operations at Fort Bliss.

Sen. Lloyd Bentsen, D-Texas, toured Fort Bliss, the nation's air defense center, and was given a quick overview of the elements of the Army branch and its contribution to the city of El Paso.

The Air Force has said it is better suited to carry out air defense, which includes operation and



Bentsen

Staff, currently is reviewing the roles and functions of each branch of the military. The review is expected to conclude in December.

training on such weaponry as the Patriot missile, which became known as the "Scud-buster" during the Persian Gulf War.

Gen. Colin Powell, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of

Powell would submit any recommended changes to Secretary of Defense Dick Cheney, Gen. Merrill McPeak, Air Force chief of staff said in an Oct. 20 letter to Bentsen.

"I would oppose any diminishing of the effort that is being made here," said Bentsen, chairman of the powerful Senate Finance Committee.

Bentsen said that which ever branch of the military is operating the center, leaving the air defense operations at Fort Bliss "would sure ease the hurt."

But he added that the Air Force

would have to prove its reasonings, "because the Army is doing an effective job of it now."

An Air Force spokeswoman refused to comment, saying it would be inappropriate to do so while Powell is reviewing the military missions.

But in his letter, McPeak said "transferring some portion of the theater air defense mission from the Army to the Air Force is only one option being considered."

McPeak proposed an Air Force take over in August, but the takeover of air defense long has been a goal of the Air Force.

## Republicans owe vendors 2 months after convention

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

HOUSTON — Two months after the Republican Party wrapped up its national convention, the GOP still owes vendors nearly a half-million dollars for such items as phone service and audio-visual equipment.

Although the party was allocated \$11 million in federal money for convention use, the GOP has unpaid bills to the Harris County-owned Astrodome, AT&T, Southwestern Bell, the Xerox Corp. and several smaller companies, the Houston Chronicle reported Tuesday.

An Oct. 15 filing with the Federal Election Commission shows the party still owes vendors \$467,000.

Several vendors say they have sent multiple bills to the Republican Party.

Ed Nawracaj, president of General Audio Video, said the GOP has not responded to numerous phone calls and letters demanding payment for sound and lighting his Illinois company provided for the convention.

"I can't get them to talk to me. Mum's the word,"



Nawracaj said. "We are close to taking legal action."

According to FEC documents, General Audio Video is owed \$84,000. Nawracaj, however, said he is owed \$133,125, which includes the \$11,000 tax owed the city of Houston.

Southwestern Bell sent an initial bill for the convention six weeks ago. Last week, they sent a second bill by registered mail, according to Gloria Delgado, Southwestern Bell spokeswoman.

"We're still waiting on the money," Delgado said.

Southwestern Bell is owed \$80,000 for phone service during the convention.

Delgado said company records show a different amount, but she would not divulge the figure.

## Commissioner reports quicker spill response

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

AUSTIN — Land Commissioner Garry Mauro said Tuesday that Texas has advanced "light years" in oil spill response and cleanup but still is not ready to handle an Exxon Valdez-size spill.

"Our ability to deal swiftly and surely with those spills that do occur has increased exponentially," Mauro said during a three-day oil spill conference and trade show.

The conference brings together more than 100 companies selling a variety of oil spill equipment and technology.

Mauro said 1991 state legislation has increased the state's ability to respond to oil spills. The bill was passed after two major oil spills near Galveston.

The measure made the General Land Office the lead agency in fighting spills, and established a cleanup fund that is financed through a two-cent per barrel tax on oil loaded or off-loaded in Texas ports.

The tax funds have been used to buy equipment, operate oil spill response offices in Nederland, League City and Corpus Christi, and pay for cleanup costs.

"We've moved light years in a very short time," Mauro said.

Since the law took effect, there have been 1,520 oil spills in Texas waters, most of them minor, he said.

The largest of those spills was a 3,000 barrel discharge from a tanker docked in Texas City.

Mauro said the cleanup contractor recovered about 78 percent of that spill.

An important part of cleaning oil spills is having funds to provide up front cleanup costs, Mauro said. He said that's when the cleanup fund, now totaling \$15 million, helps most. The state pays for the cleanup and then charges the responsible party, he said.

But Mauro said that Texas still lacks the resources to fight a spill the size of the one in 1989 in Alaska when the Exxon Valdez dumped 11 million gallons of oil into Prince William Sound. It was the nation's worst oil spill.

"Make no mistake about it, it's not a case of if there'll be another oil spill catastrophe but when it will happen," he said.

He said the state will probably not be ready for a major spill until federal regulations that require vessels and dock facilities to have oil spill fighting equipment on hand take effect by 1995.



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Sore Throat/Strep Throat Individuals at least 13 years old needed to participate in a sore throat (strep throat, tonsillitis) research study involving an investigational oral antibiotic in capsule form. \$100 incentive paid to those chosen to participate upon completion of the study.

Asthma Study Individuals, age 18-55, with asthma wanted to participate in a clinical research study for approximately 9 weeks with an investigational medication in capsule form. Individuals must be using inhaled steroid medication to qualify. \$300 incentive paid to those completing the study.

ADULT SKIN INFECTION STUDY Individuals age 13 and older wanted to participate in a research study for bacterial skin infections such as infected wounds, earlobes, infected burns, boils, infected hair follicles, impetigo, infected ingrown toenails and others. Investigational oral antibiotic in capsule form. \$100 incentive for those chosen who complete the study.

CHILDREN'S SKIN INFECTION STUDY Children, age six months to 12 years, wanted to participate in a research study for bacterial skin infections such as: infected wounds, bug bites, earlobes, burns, boils, hair follicles, ingrown toenails, impetigo and others. Investigational oral antibiotic in liquid form. \$150 incentive for those chosen who complete the study.

SINUS INFECTION STUDY Individuals age 13 and older with a sinus infection to participate in a clinical research study for 3 to 5 weeks with an investigational antibiotic in capsule form. Minimum incentive of \$150 paid to those who complete the study.

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