

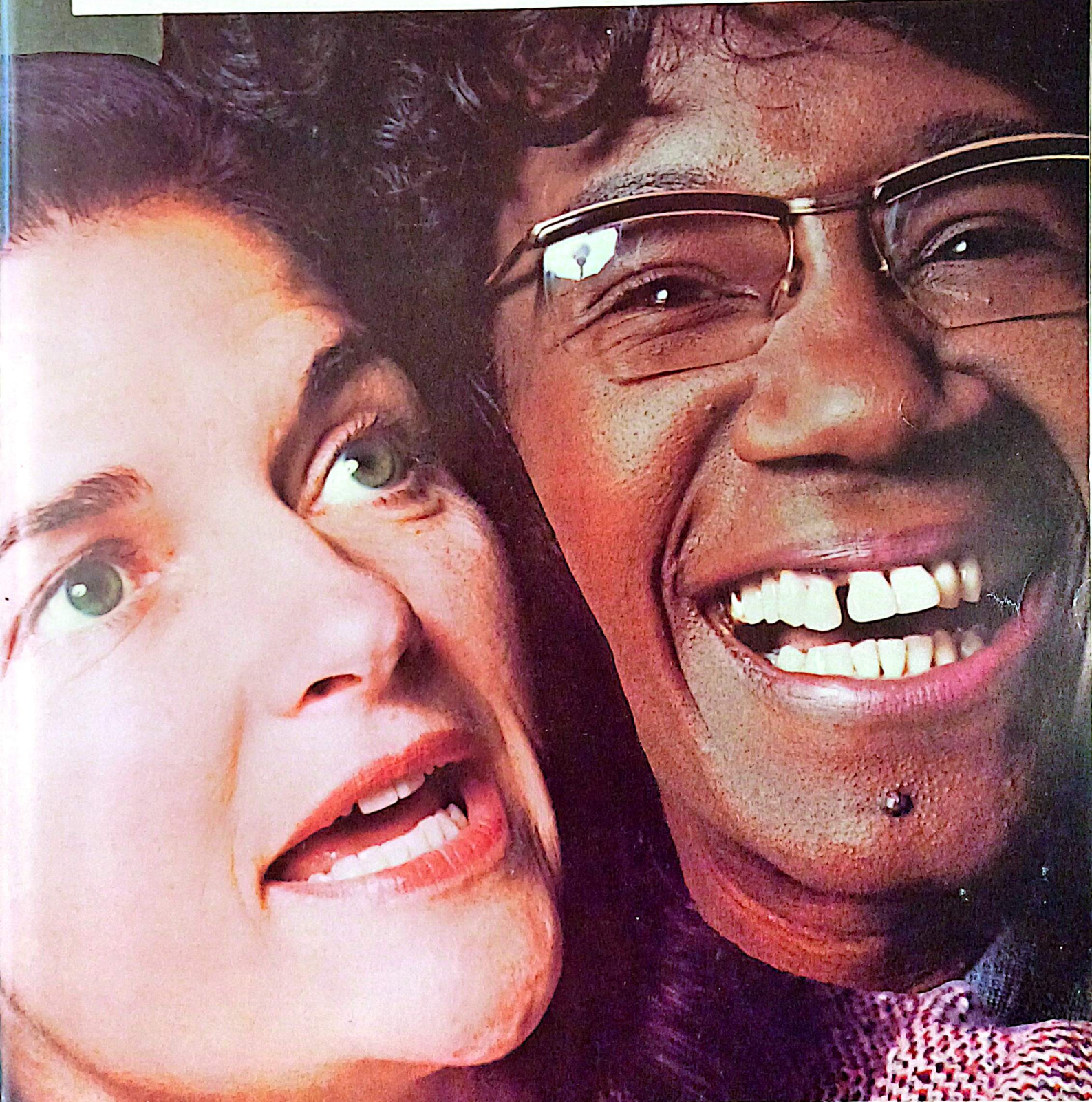
Now & Future
Heroines
Alice in
Cosmeticsland

Ms.

Stewardesses
Against
Coffee-Tea-
Or-Fly-Me

JANUARY / 1973 / \$1.00

Chisholm / Farenthold:
THE TICKET THAT MIGHT HAVE BEEN





THE TICKET THAT MIGHT HAVE BEEN...

PRESIDENT CHISHOLM

I am a candidate for the Presidency of the United States. I make that statement proudly, in the full knowledge that, as a black person and as a female person, I do not have a chance of actually gaining that office in this election year. I make that statement seriously, knowing that my candidacy itself can change the face and future of American politics — that it will be important to the needs and hopes of every one of you — even though, in the conventional sense, I will not win."

—June 4, 1972

The election is over, and there will be a familiar face, a familiar white and male face, in the White House for four more years. The months of feverish work and hard-earned dollars that went into the Presidential candidacy of Shirley Chisholm are only memories now. Sometimes it seems they are discussed seriously only when veterans of her campaign happen to get together and reminisce.

In fact, there is some uncertainty and even disappointment in those discussions, too. What effect did the

Chisholm campaign have on the country? On the excluded groups it was meant to help and encourage? What ideas did it launch or lives did it change? And finally, the heart of all the questions: was it all worth it?

From reading the post-Convention and postelection reporting, it's impossible to tell. The Chisholm candidacy was rarely analyzed while it was going on, and even less so in traditional postmortems. Before and after the primaries, there were occasional tantalizing hints of Chisholm's significance. The Harris poll of last February, for instance, found the Congresswoman getting 35 percent of the vote among black Independents and black Democrats, and a support among women of all races that was three times greater than her support among men. (From this, the Harris summary concluded, "Ms. Chisholm must now be considered a distinct threat to Mayor Lindsay, Senator McGovern, and former Senator Eugene McCarthy in vying for the liberal and left-of-center vote.")

Of course, Chisholm herself had stated her intention of "keeping the other candidates honest," of being one of the few forces pushing them to the left, not becoming a devisive force or a threat. But traditional analyses deal only with winning or losing in the traditional sense. Even Senator Hubert Humphrey was amazed by the showing Chisholm made in the Florida primary, and said often that, with a little money and organization, "she might have defeated us all." But neither of these

clues to the significance or strength of the Chisholm campaign was pursued in deeper reports, or taken very seriously in the press. (In fact, air time for the major pre-primary speech quoted above was made available by court order under equal time provisions of the Federal Communications Commission, because of clear network failure to fairly cover the Chisholm candidacy.)

Perhaps the best indicator of her campaign's impact is the effect it had on individual lives. All over the country, there are people who will never be quite the same: farm women in Michigan who were inspired to work in a political campaign for the first time; Black Panthers in California who registered to vote, and encouraged other members of the black community to vote, too; children changed by the sight of a black woman saying, "I want to be President"; radical feminists who found this campaign, like that of Linda Jenness in the Socialist Workers' Party, a possible way of changing the patriarchal system; and student or professional or "blue-collar" men who were simply impressed with a political figure who told the truth as she saw it, no matter what the cost.

The Chisholm candidacy didn't forge a solid coalition of those people working for social change; that will take a long time. But it began one. If you listen to personal testimony from very diverse sources, it seems that the Chisholm candidacy was not in vain. In fact, the truth is that the American (continued on page 120)

THE TICKET THAT MIGHT HAVE BEEN...

VICE-PRESIDENT FARENTHOLD

Many of the Convention delegates, 40 percent of them women, had never heard of her. Neither had television anchorman Walter Cronkite, who commented disdainfully, "A lady named Farenthold wants to be Vice-President." The CBS network then blacked out Sissy's nominating and seconding speeches with commercials, reinstating part of the nominating speech only after phone calls from women viewers and Congresswoman Bella Abzug's vociferous complaint on camera. By the end of that session, however, after tedious hours of speeches and floor maneuverings, Sissy Farenthold had emerged as the surprise victor. She received over 420 delegate votes, a total second only to that of Senator Thomas Eagleton and far surpassing former Governor Endicott Peabody of Massachusetts and Senator Mike Gravel of Alaska, both of whom had campaigned openly for the Vice-Presidential spot for months. Eagleton, McGovern's ill-fated choice, pulled ahead because of duty votes, committed-to-McGovern votes. Sissy's main support came from women delegates, who finally had a positive way of demonstrating their solidarity, and from black, Spanish-speaking, and youth delegates—many of whom saw her candidacy as a rallying point for excluded groups.

Before the Convention, Sissy had run in the Democratic gubernatorial primary in Texas, and that's when I

On the last night of the 1972 Democratic Convention in Miami, there was officially put in nomination for the Vice-Presidency of the United States the name of Frances Tarlton Farenthold, commonly known as Sissy; a 46-year-old Texas state legislator, a reformer, and a woman.

By Elizabeth Frappollo

first heard of her. Had I been a student of the baroque intrigue of Texas politics, I would have known all about her long ago. Elected to the State House of Representatives in 1968, Sissy had become a member of, and indeed a leader of, a group of liberal legislators who eventually earned the tag of Dirty Thirty, referring to their number and, ironically, to their tactics. They did not play the game the way it has always been played in Texas state politics. Following the Federal Securities Exchange Com-

mission's unmasking of a cozy financial swindle known as the Sharps-town Bank scandal, the Dirty Thirty were so unaccommodating as to vote for an unsuccessful resolution introduced by Sissy calling for an independent investigation. The Sharpstown scandal grew out of a scheme in which laws were introduced for the hidden financial benefit of various state officials and their friends, but not for the benefit of the public. Everyone from Governor Preston Smith down was tainted, at least by association. The Dirty Thirty's relentless clamor resulted in public distrust of almost anyone connected with that legislature except the Dirty Thirty themselves, and led to the defeat in the '72 primaries of Lieutenant Governor Ben Barnes, the favorite of Lyndon Johnson and John Connally.

In 1971, Representative Farenthold got so tired of Texas politics-as-usual, that she made a very controversial decision: to run in the gubernatorial primary. To everyone's surprise, that primary, held in early May, 1972, was so close that it resulted in a second runoff election between Farenthold and Dolph Briscoe, a former legislator and millionaire rancher of mature years whose chief distinction lay in having remained back on the ranch long enough to avoid any suggestion of involvement in the Sharpstown Bank shenanigans. Briscoe was so bland that his oppo-



nents referred to him as a bowl of pabulum, but he had few enemies, and few people were surprised to see him do well in the primary. Sissy, on the other hand, put together a brand-new coalition of excluded groups and garnered votes that astonished virtually everyone.

"I was seeing the reform movement in Texas that I had worked so hard for go down the drain," said Sissy later, describing her dismay at the choice facing the voters and her reasons for running. "I just had to do something about it, though most everyone discouraged me at first." Among the few who didn't were husband George Farenthold, Belgian baron and long-time naturalized American citizen; and Liz Carpenter, former White House Press Secretary to Lady Bird Johnson. Liz Carpenter had presented the first campaign contribution to Sissy at a Washington party in December. And it was Liz Carpenter who invited me to come along on Memorial Day weekend campaigning, a week before the gubernatorial runoff primary last spring.

Frances Tarlton Farenthold, granddaughter of the first woman school superintendent in Texas, had received her professional training at the University of Texas Law School, where the library is named for her lawyer grandfather. She was an honor student and good-looking enough for her male colleagues to nickname her "Wolf Girl." She enjoyed the work, but it was in law school that she first ran head-on into prejudice against women. The professors were helpful, but the students—nearly all men—were often hostile, demanding to know what she was doing there and watching her performance in class and examinations, expecting her to fail and not liking it when she didn't.

Now, more than 20 years later, here was Wolf Girl, still breaking precedent and doing the unladylike, zigzagging across the Lone Star state from Houston to Dallas to El Paso, to the High Plains and back to Houston again, aboard an aging DC3 plane called the Sissybird. The statewide campaign aroused national curiosity and drew startled headlines in the lo-

cal press. "Texas politics," wrote one local analyst with no pleasure at all, "will never be the same." But, while newspaper publishers endorsed Briscoe in a monotonous daily parade of editorials, local reporters loved Sissy, carried her bags, and sent sympathetic reports to their papers.

Sissy is bright, straightforward, easy to be with, and considerate. The traveling press discussed politics with her, gave her advice, worried about her. And I never heard her say a cross word to anyone, even under great pressure. Perhaps it's her air of gentleness, even uncertainty, that protects her from some of the usual political-female charges of aggressiveness and personal ambition.

She got as far as she did in the

"I object to your implying that housewives are uninformed"

Texas election by being a good candidate who only incidentally was female. Although Texas had one woman governor—Ma Ferguson in the twenties, elected after her husband was impeached—she was not selected on her own merit, nor did she preside over a period of particularly good government in the state's history. Sissy, worried about losing votes by the accident of her sex, repeated over and over in her speeches: "There are more important issues in this campaign than my gender." Nevertheless, more than once I heard elderly men in towns like Odessa and Lubbock in West Texas, caught under Farenthold's spell, mutter: "Well, I voted for a woman the first time around, guess I could do it again."

But questions and needling about

her gender made it one of the issues in spite of all the candidate's efforts. At a press conference in Dallas (30 male reporters and two female, one of whom was a society-page editor) someone asked, "What percentage of your vote comes from uninformed housewives?" Laughter, then awkward silence. Sissy hardly flinched. She smiled at the television cameras and said smoothly, "I object to your implying that housewives are uninformed." Next question. It did not seem to bother her at all. She would always handle such questions as though she merely wanted to set the record straight, taking them at face value and showing no signs of annoyance. But this was merely for public consumption, part of her campaign strategy: while she did not deny her feminist feelings, they were not allowed to occupy center stage. In private, however, Sissy would spend hours talking with Liz Carpenter about, say, the plight of the middle-aged woman in America. And as we left a meeting of the Junior Bar Association of Dallas (250 young men, three young women, two of whom were secretaries), she commented bitterly but very quietly to me, "I'd a thousand times rather run for office than be a woman practicing law in Texas."

Local campaign managers enjoyed a degree of autonomy in planning operations that led their candidate to observe, "We're setting new highs in local control." Like advertising copywriters, the campaign managers made the most of what they considered their candidate's unique qualities. "It takes a *woman* to clean a House," proclaimed banners in El Paso, referring to Sissy's reform record in the legislature. Mexican-American workers in the towns of the High Plains prepared tamales at fundraising rallies, all the while wearing stickers on their backs that said, "Male Chauvinist Pig for Sissy." And before the runoff election, cars all over the state sported bumper stickers: "This time we're voting for THAT WOMAN." Sissy points out that women have always done the real work in political campaigns for men, but during (*continued on page 116*)

VICE-PRESIDENT FARENTHOLD
CONTINUED FROM PAGE 76

the primary, she felt that for the first time she was getting support from women because she was a woman herself.

But Sissy was quite clearly more than a woman's candidate. "There are more important problems than the discontent of the middle-class white woman." Much of her support came from blacks and Chicanos, with strong backing from several labor unions, including the steelworkers' union. That might be considered startling, since Sissy's husband is associated with the steel bosses, but Sissy proudly explains that she had worked with union members locally in various social causes for years. "They know I keep myself divorced from my husband's business," she explained, "and they supported *me*, not my husband." Sissy, the Southern belle with the finishing-school background, made women living in expensive Dallas suburbs see that they might share their problems of limited occupational choice and feelings of personal pointlessness with the unschooled agricultural laborers of southern Texas, and that they could work together in a coalition for change.

But, inevitably, there were betrayals and innuendos, especially on the abortion issue—a red-hot question in Texas. Sissy, a Roman Catholic, is inclined to be personally antiabortion. She does not advocate it. What she does advocate, and did continually throughout her campaigning until the distortion of her position by her opponents forced her to avoid discussing it, is that the state should not interfere with what is a private, perhaps religious decision. She has been backed up in this by some Catholic theologians who see great danger in any precedents allowing the state's legal authority to intrude into what they consider to be religious areas. The ponderous Church hierarchy, however, did not seem to approve. A priest who had promised to appear at a Farenthold fund-raising rally backed out at the last moment because of pressure from his superiors.

The thing that hurt most—even more than the radio station that ran anti-Sissy commercials over the sound of a fetal heartbeat—was the nuns at the school that all Sissy's children have attended: they sent home with each student a notice calling Sissy a "babykiller." In spite of all this political and personal suffering, however, she has refused to compromise her stand on abortion, believing it to be the only honorable stand for a Catholic legislator in a secular state. At the Democratic Convention she was courageous enough to speak in support of putting a reproductive freedom plank in the party platform.

It pains her that the furor over abortion has made it difficult to practice her religion. "I even got back into public life through the Catholic

**A radio station
 ran anti-Sissy
 commercials
 over the sound of a
 fetal heartbeat**

Church," she recalls, half sad, half amused. "They asked me to be president of the mothers' club. The school was just down the block, and the Monsignor and I used to direct traffic together. What a picture we were. . . ."

After graduating from law school, Sissy worked in her father's law firm for a year or so. Then she married and had five children in four years, including a set of twins. She didn't really decide to have so many so fast, she says, but it just sort of happened—perhaps because it was the pattern in her family and she was very much into "the role of housewife and mother." Role-playing, she realizes now, is something she, like many women, has spent much of her life either doing or trying not to do.

Unhappily, it was discovered that all the children suffered from a form

of hemophilia and needed constant watching. So Sissy was kept at home even more than other mothers of five children, although she did have help. Every injury was a potential disaster, and one of her two youngest, a twin boy, died when he was five.

By the time the children were a little older, and had learned to be more careful of themselves, Sissy was caught up in the fifties and was a victim of the "corporation wife" syndrome. "I tried so hard," she remembers, "having little dinner parties and that whole bit. The big thing was to help one's husband succeed in business by being a good wife, but I resented that concept tremendously. I was a disaster and I knew it." She began to move into community service activities, agitate for better schools, better housing. She took "grubby jobs that other people didn't want." She did some legal work for her husband, and served on charitable committees. In 1964, she became Director of the Nueces County Legal Aid Program, with an office "half the size of a normal room, and an ex-shower stall for a filing room."

Working for Legal Aid for four years spurred her to run for state office. Her aversion to the ideal housewife role of the fifties had kept her going during the difficulties experienced by a woman moving up from acceptable roles like mothers' club president and regional officer in Catholic women's groups, to helping in other people's political campaigns, to a position where she had seen at firsthand how her Legal Aid clients had suffered from inefficient, uncaring, corrupt state government. The logical next step was to run for state representative.

Of her first campaign in 1968, she recalls that she found campaigning itself difficult, so she went first to the place where she was most at home—the local laundromat. (She did have a washing machine at home, but it was apt to be out of order most of the time.) "We used to pass out little cards with my name on them, and I'd talk to the women over the washing machines," Sissy recalls. She's still prone to dash into laundromats; there seems to be a special bond between

Sissy and the eternal female who learns to wait and serve, in or out of laundromats.

Finding herself last spring doing the bidding of one of her campaign aides who had a rather aggressive, "masculine" personality ("I need an ashtray—Sissy, get me an ashtray"), she walked the length of the campaign plane, brought the ashtray, but then stopped, grinned and said, "Wait a minute, I'm supposed to be saving my strength, I'm the candidate." But the nurturing instinct was incurable. On a late-night flight from El Paso back to Midland with the 15-strong entourage of aides and press, all exhausted and couldn't-care-less, it was Sissy who paced the aisle fretting because she was sure we had left a member of the press behind. Only she, after a day far more grueling than anyone else's, really cared. She wasn't content just to assign one of her reluctant helpers to the problem; she had to do it herself.

Her highly developed sense of responsibility for other people's troubles, no matter how small, is not always an advantage. Sometimes it causes her to lose sight of the main object. Just after the Miami press conference announcing her candidacy for Vice-President, for instance, with hardly any time left to do the necessary organizing, Sissy had to be persuaded not to spend a precious hour getting gallery passes for young friends of the Texas delegation. She agreed, reluctantly, that someone else could do it.

One of the recurrent problems of her gubernatorial campaign days was Sissy's hair. It was and is unruly, and she was always trying to do something about it. "Sissy goes to the hairdresser the way Clark Kent ducks into a telephone booth," someone remarked, and it's true. When faced with tricky situations, Sissy does not shirk. She does, however, tend to think of her hair or consider what clothes to wear for the next day's campaigning; a kind of charm to help her deal with difficult events. "Oh, God, tomorrow it's—" she would sigh, naming some town where her last visit had been less than a success. "I think I'll wear my Oscar

de La Renta to cheer me up." She was referring, I hasten to add, to an inexpensive ready-to-wear dress. Still, the concern seems to be more for other people's sense of propriety than for her own vanity.

There have been times when Sissy's interest in things political and her devotion to her family have been hard to mesh. On one occasion, her husband was in bed—in traction with a bad back. Sissy inquired what he wanted for breakfast and was told, she says, broiled sausages. "So I went downstairs and put the sausages under the broiler and went out for the paper. And I was reading Walter Lippmann's column, and you know you had to concentrate on that, and before I knew it, there was smoke all over the house and George was yell-

"I am the husband of your soon-to-be-Governor Farenthold"

ing away upstairs." No harm was done, but the fire trucks arrived, and George insisted he had asked her to *boil* the sausages, not broil them.

George is apt to remind his wife of such incidents from time to time, but on the whole he appears to have placidly accepted his wife's public career and her absences from home. "I haven't seen her for six months, another month won't make much difference," he will say in his unique French-Texas accent. But a family friend says, "George doesn't really like any of this. He would rather have her stay home and cook. But he's a European aristocrat, and as long as she *does* do it, he's her husband and he'll go along with her and say the right things." One of Sissy's standard campaign answers about her husband was to say firmly, "George has said he will not be a consort." This seemed always to satisfy her

audiences, reassuring establishment chauvinists that "Mr. Sissy" was a real guy who didn't take this nonsense too seriously, and her emancipated women supporters that her husband was not about to interfere and that she didn't take his actions too much into account in the public sphere. Privately, the situation worries her a bit more. "The American myth of the happy domestic life of the politician just isn't so," she frets. "First George encouraged me, then disparaged me. Finally he saw how much it meant to me. But it's very difficult for anyone to be married to a politician."

Memorial Day weekend, just before the runoff election when talk had begun about George's absence from the campaign and rumors were circulating that Sissy had not only four children but four husbands, he joined the Sissybird in Fort Worth. Tagging along solidly, he introduced his wife, sometimes in his fluent Spanish. "I am the husband of your soon-to-be-Governor Farenthold," he would explain, his somewhat corpulent figure bending forward as he beamed and the audience cheered. He would do short fund-raising speeches at rallies. And he would sometimes get carried away: one time he told the attentive audience he had been married to Sissy for 35 years, while Sissy hissed at him in vain. He had confused his syntax and his wives, having indeed been married for 35 years, but for only 20 of them to 46-year-old Sissy.

It wasn't long after the Texas runoff that Sissy's young supporters, unwilling to let her new prominence diminish, began to talk of the Vice-Presidency. But it was clear that one of the first problems would be Sissy herself. "Whatever would George say!" she had exclaimed, laughing at the mere idea, and leaving forever unspecified whether she meant her husband or the junior Senator from South Dakota.

At the Convention, Sissy, who was leading the McGovern faction of the Texas delegation, had her hands full. She was preoccupied with tactics, afraid of (*continued on page 118*)

VICE-PRESIDENT FARENTHOLD
CONTINUED FROM PAGE 117

what might happen if the McGovern forces lost on the California challenge, worried that Humphrey and the other stop-McGovern forces would succeed in creating a stalemate. Although she remained loyal to McGovern throughout the Convention (and she was ready to turn her votes over to Eagleton, should her Vice-Presidential candidacy be used to embarrass McGovern), she had grown increasingly less cautious once McGovern's nomination was assured. She became more interested in opening up the Convention on the Vice-Presidency.

And as Sissy's desire to run grew, her roster of supporters increased. John Kenneth Galbraith—economist, liberal eminence-at-large, and Sissy-supporter—received a telegram from Sam Houston Johnson (Lyndon's maverick brother) urging Sissy to run. The National Women's Political Caucus had been supportive of Sissy, but they were morally committed to help Shirley Chisholm should she decide to have her name put in nomination for the Vice-Presidency. The Caucus was also ready to help Congresswomen Patsy Mink of Hawaii and Martha Griffiths of Michigan should they decide to run. Finally, on Thursday, the Caucus was told by Chisholm that she did not plan to run for the Vice-Presidency, and that Patsy Mink and Martha Griffiths had not filed the necessary petitions. The women were free to throw all their energies behind Farenthold.

At this point, the real work began. Galbraith had to jettison his plans to make Sissy's nominating speech; having used his influence with McGovern to argue against some of the other Vice-Presidential possibilities, Galbraith did not feel he could publicly launch Sissy against Eagleton, McGovern's final choice. Instead, he became one of the floor leaders during the balloting and delivered 27 delegate votes from his Massachusetts delegation for the woman he describes as the most effective female politician he has met, with the possible exception of Eleanor Roosevelt.

Meanwhile, the Women's Caucus leaders had only a few hours to launch the candidacy of this woman whom few delegates knew. They scheduled a press conference for midafternoon at the Doral Hotel, but found themselves upstaged by McGovern's decision to announce Eagleton's selection in a press conference at the same time. The only thing to do was to ride with the blow and, judo-like, turn it into an advantage: as the assembled press was finishing its questioning of Frank Maniewicz, McGovern's press secretary, Sissy's growing band of supporters announced a press conference of its own, thus garnering national coverage for Sissy Farenthold, the first Democratic woman nominee for Vice-President in 20 years.

**She had
 put together
 a spirited coalition
 of women,
 blacks, Chicanos,
 young people
 and workers**

Even the skeptical male press, many of whom would not have covered the Farenthold announcement at all had it not accidentally followed Eagleton's, was impressed with Sissy's record and qualifications. McGovern had chosen Eagleton partly for his ticket-balancing qualities: he was a Catholic from a border Southern state who had good relations with labor and was an impressive campaigner. Sissy could duplicate each of these advantages, and was no more obscure at the national level than Eagleton himself. Furthermore, she had put together a coalition of women, blacks, Chicanos, young people and workers—exactly the sort of traditionally excluded groups that McGovern would have to forge into a political force if he were to win. "If she can do it in Texas," one of the reporters admitted grudgingly, "she can do it anywhere."

Next step for Sissy and the Women's Political Caucus was planning strategy. There was very little time. The elevators at the Doral, jammed with emissaries to and from the McGovern headquarters upstairs, were surrounded by crowds a dozen deep, so the Doral's first-floor powder room became the site of the first strategy session. Sissy, Gloria Steinem, Congresswoman Bella Abzug, Betty Friedan, Edith Van Horn of the United Auto Workers, and others discussed the problem of who should make the nominating and seconding speeches. Betty went off to telephone Senator Fred Harris of Oklahoma, who refused: Eagleton was a brother Senator and McGovern's choice. Gloria went upstairs to find Congressman John Conyers of Michigan, a member of the Black Caucus, who was sympathetic but refused on similar grounds. She then phoned Congressman Ron Dellums, also an important member of the Black Caucus, who was incapacitated with the flu, but he did agree to endorse Sissy, and to have that endorsement announced at Convention Hall.

When Sissy heard the gloomy news that there was still no replacement speaker for the prestigious Galbraith, she had to be persuaded not to withdraw. With only two hours to go, how were the delegates even to learn of her candidacy? It was finally decided that all the speakers were to be equal in their importance, and that, since there was little time to lobby individual delegations, each would have to serve as a living signal to a particular caucus. Gloria Steinem, spokesperson of the National Women's Political Caucus at the Convention, was to go first as the technical nominator, in order to signal the largest bloc of votes. David Lopez, a McGovern delegate from Houston, would go next to represent the Spanish-speaking caucus; then Fannie Lou Hamer, a brave and respected black leader from Mississippi, to signal the black caucus; and finally, Allard Lowenstein, the anti-war leader, president of the Americans for Democratic Action and adviser to the Youth Caucus, to activate the young delegates, as well as to sym-

bolize Sissy's long-time stand against the Vietnam War.

That made four speakers where legally only three were allowed; and Fannie Lou Hamer couldn't be located by phone. But the group headed for Convention Hall, where they hurriedly lobbied delegations, wrote speeches, and put this miniature campaign together in the brief time that remained.

Once there, Congresswoman Bella Abzug activated the NWPC's floor operation; Sissy's young supporters turned up with posters left over from Texas; dozens of women began to lobby their delegations. Gloria found Fannie Lou Hamer, and introduced Sissy to groups of delegates. Getting four people through platform security where three were expected made some last minute excitement, but it was done—and Fannie Lou Hamer brought cheers when she announced Shirley Chisholm's endorsement of Sissy's candidacy.

When the voting finally got under way and large blocs of votes began to be cast for Farenthold, the networks started paying attention. Sissy pulled far ahead of Gravel and Peabody, and the women's and other caucuses were jubilant. Texas liberals were jubilant. People who knew Sissy personally were jubilant, too, because most people just like her a lot. Pierre Salinger, Shirley MacLaine, and other McGovern staff members were furious: Sissy's candidacy sparked the independent spirit of a Convention willing to stay in line only until McGovern had the nomination, and the resulting flurry played a large part in delaying McGovern's acceptance speech until prime-time television hours had passed.

But Sissy's supporters wouldn't give up. In mid-balloting, when it was evident that there was a chance for second place, Gloria got the women of the California delegation to surround Willie Brown, chairperson of that delegation, and persuade him not to switch Sissy's votes to Eagleton, as had been originally planned after the first symbolic round for Farenthold.

Brown laughed and threw up his hands. It was the Convention's most

open and independent moment. Many delegates felt that this was the way the Vice-President should be chosen: collectively by the whole Convention, rather than by the traditional method of allowing the Presidential nominee to handpick his personal choice.

In any case, the country had met a new woman. The media, however, never really treated her with seriousness. (It was, Sissy felt, like the first time she ran for office and had difficulty raising money. "Sissy," one of her aides had said then, "let's face it, if you were named Frank Farenthold, you'd have the money you need by now.") The press virtually ignored her all through the Convention, through the ensuing Eagleton debacle, and through McGovern's frantic search for a Vice-Presidential re-

Sissy's candidacy sparked the independent spirit of a Convention willing to stay in line only until McGovern had the nomination

placement. At no point did the press—with the exception of Nicholas von Hoffman in the *Washington Post* and a couple of New York City reporters—suggest that it would at least be sensible, not to say courteous, to take another look at the person whom the Convention delegates voted second to Eagleton. McGovern's staff obviously wanted a politically safe and solid person: one catastrophic decision was enough. They never seriously considered the woman from Corpus Christi, Texas, whose political qualifications matched those for which Eagleton was ostensibly picked in the first place. During those days of searching for a new Vice-Presidential nominee, Sissy was something of a reluctant candidate. She urged that Eagleton be dropped from the ticket as too large a political risk, emphasizing that she was not speaking out just to push her own name as sec-

ond choice. But the Women's Caucus kept putting her name forward to McGovern and the press. Whether or not she was chosen, they didn't want the country to forget that she was there—and obviously well qualified.

This support from the Caucus and from women meant a lot to Sissy. Her personal feminism had been suppressed for so long by political reality that the formation of the Women's Political Caucus on national and state levels in 1971 heralded an enormously important change in her political life. "It was a wonderful new experience. I never had such a feeling of support for me as a woman until this year. And I'm forever grateful to the Caucus because it's perfectly obvious to me that the Vice-Presidency thing at the Convention would never have gotten off the ground without them."

When Sargent Shriver was chosen as Eagleton's replacement, it wasn't much of a surprise to the Caucus, to women around the country, or to Sissy Farenthold. She was disappointed, somewhat hurt, but not really surprised. The political establishment—the people who appoint people, or those who support campaigns with big financial contributions—have never taken her seriously. One of her earliest memories of her political career is of a cousin who told her, the first time she ran in 1968, "Sissy, if you were serious about this, I'd support you."

Some weeks after the Convention, McGovern appointed Sissy co-chairperson of Citizens for McGovern. She flew around the country speaking endlessly to community groups, women, and students, explaining the crucial political differences between Nixon and McGovern.

Her own future plans were undefined. There was a course she had been asked to teach at a law school in Houston—aptly enough, on the legislative process. She needed time to rest a little, digest the events of an election year, and decide what to do next.

At this writing, she has announced no definite plans for the future. But the country has not seen the last of Frances (*continued on page 120*)

VICE-PRESIDENT FARENTHOLD
CONTINUED FROM PAGE 119

Tarlton Farenthold. Clearly, her public career has just begun.

Driving back with her husband and two of their friends from a Labor Day weekend on a ranch near the Mexican border, Sissy fretted about a special session of the Texas legislature on insurance regulation, and the finer points of the law course she was preparing to give, while a voice on the radio sang:

*"The sound of women's voices is rising in the land...
Brother, won't you stand beside us
In our righteous cause..."*

"Uppity women," said Sissy's weekend host, smugly, as he passed through a county Sissy carried in the primary by a 4 to 1 margin. The woman nearly a million Texas Democrats think should be governor of one of the most populous states in the Union—the woman a good proportion of the delegates to the Democratic Convention thought should be Vice-President of the United States—just smoothed down the white jeans she had been wearing for the past three days, and laughed—very quietly.

Elizabeth Frappollo is a staff reporter for "Life" Magazine.

PRESIDENT CHISHOLM
CONTINUED FROM PAGE 73

political scene may never quite be the same again.

Carolyn Reed, household worker, New York City: "In the beginning, I thought her candidacy was a joke. When I discussed it with a group of friends—some other black women who meet pretty regularly just to talk things over—a few of them were upset because Shirley hadn't let a black man run for the Presidency first, or because she didn't go to the Black Political Convention in Gary, Indiana, to get their endorsement.

"But then we started to notice the total indifference of some black male leaders at that convention, and the kind of childish reaction of others who seemed to be whining, 'But why couldn't I be first?' We began to see the sense of what she was trying to do; to admire her for doing it as a black and as a woman; and to say to



ourselves, 'Well, why shouldn't she be first?' The more we hashed it over, the more it made sense.

"If Shirley Chisholm had made it to the ballot in November, I would have voted for her."

John Lindsay, Mayor of New York City: "Shirley Chisholm's candidacy shared with George McGovern's a great spirit of reform that distinguished the Democratic Convention's selection process in 1972. She gave voice to the aspirations of millions in a system that excludes women and minority groups from full expression and equal opportunity, not only in politics but also in the economic and social life of the nation.

"She also gave voice to the needs of this city and the great urban areas of our country. She was a fighter for change, and made me prouder than ever of our friendship."

Florynce Kennedy, lawyer, black activist, a founder of the National Organization for Women and the Feminist Party: "The Chisholm candidacy not only freaked out the Establishment and the niggerizers, but it also confused and unsettled the

niggers—and by niggers, I don't mean just the black niggers, but also the student niggers and the women niggers and the poor niggers—plus a whole lot of other people who thought they were revolutionaries but discovered they couldn't dig her wig.

"So what if she didn't win? If you've been lying on the ground with a truck on your ankle, you don't jump up and join the Olympics. The first step is to walk at all."

Mary Young Peacock, from Fort Lauderdale, Florida; self-described as "a white, middle-class, middle-aged American housewife": "Most politicians seem to spend their time playing to so many different points of view—the Poles and the Czechs, the people for busing and antibusing—that they don't come out with anything realistic or sincere.

"The important thing about Chisholm's candidacy was that you believed whatever she said—it combined realism and idealism at the same time—and that's the combination I'm looking for. Shirley Chisholm has worked out in the world, not just gone from law school straight into politics. She's practical."

Osborn Elliott, editor of "Newsweek": "I do believe the Chisholm campaign effectively raised the national consciousness on the issues of blacks and women. But what comes to mind when I think of her candidacy is the Convention. The absolutely top moment, the epitome of those days in Miami was her speech before the Black Caucus. The audience was rocking in the aisles. I remember her explaining why she had chosen to run, and using a phrase over and over again. Something like, 'I did this because I had the courage to do it. I did this because I had the guts to do it. I did this because I was the only one who had the balls to do it.'

"Marvelous."

Marjorie Thomas, executive assistant in a black-run community development corporation, Brooklyn, New York: "I'm from her community, and for a local black female legislator to gain recog- (continued on page 124)