



**JIM MANGAN**

Nearly three years of persistence paid off for James Mangan last summer when a former election official finally told him the story of a "stolen" election that launched Lyndon B. Johnson on a path to the presidency almost 30 years ago.

In an exclusive interview, former election judge Louis Salas described to Mangan how a few men in a small south Texas town manipulated history. And Mangan's well-backgrounded story for The Associated Press won smash Page One play in the nation's newspapers.

Salas, who told Mangan he was seeking "peace of mind," said he had certified enough fictitious ballots in the 1948 Texas Democratic primary runoff to give Johnson nomination, then tantamount to election, to the U.S. Senate. Johnson became a power in Congress and 15 years later he was president.

Salas was the election judge for Jim Wells County's notorious Box 13, which has been a subject of tantalizing conjecture since that controversial election. Supreme Court Justice Hugo Black abruptly halted an investigation into the vote count, and the principals have been silent for nearly three decades.

It was in late 1974 that The Associated Press in San Antonio picked up a rumor that someone involved in the infamous Box 13 vote scandal might be willing to talk. Because of the tight control exercised by political strongman George B. Parr in that area of South Texas, people usually kept silent about such matters. Violence was not uncommon.

After a check of AP files pointed to Salas as a key man, Dallas bureau chief Mangan instructed Gary Garrison, an AP staffer, to call upon Salas in Alice, Texas. When Garrison knocked on the door of the small white frame house on King Street and Salas opened it, the three-year project was under way.

Salas told Garrison nothing about Box 13 but hinted he did indeed have a story to tell -- sometime.

Mangan then flew to Alice and met with Salas in what was to become the first of a dozen or more such meetings. Salas' guard was up. He was worried about perjury charges, harassment by the news media, recriminations from friends and associates. His health was bad. He kept promising Mangan the story "from my death bed."

The Salases eventually sold their Alice home and moved in with their daughter and son-in-law in the Houston area. Mangan then began a campaign to convince Salas' daughter that her father should tell his story for the sake of history. As the meetings went on and as Salas' health improved, he began to let out more and more of the story.

Finally, last summer, Salas' tale was complete.

The few other individuals still alive who possibly were privy to some parts of the "Box 13" vote theft were contacted. None of these people contributed any substantial information.

Kellis Dibrell, a former FBI agent who worked as an aide to Johnson's opponent in the election, reinforced key aspects of Salas' story, particularly the aspect of adding 200 additional names to the poll list in alphabetical order.

The Salas family had known the Box 13 story for many years and had thought Salas would never reveal the details until he was near death. Ed Salas, a son, said he was in Florida when the story was released by The AP. When he heard the first word of it, he immediately assumed his father was dying. "I rushed to a phone to call," he said, "because father said he would never let the story out until the end."

The story, for Sunday newspapers of July 31, was enthusiastically received by the nation's editors. Newspapers all over the country gave it special, above-the-fold display on Page One.

Such extremely heavy usage was a tribute to Mangan's professionalism, his perseverance and determination in pursuing a story of flagrant vote manipulation done with seeming contempt for the democratic process.

# AP's 'Stolen' Election Exclusive Steals Headlines

**A balloting fraud that put Lyndon Johnson in office—reported by AP's Jim Mangan—made Page One splashes from coast to coast.**



## *'I stole '48 election for LBJ'*

By James W. Mang

[illegible]

**Rocky Mountain News**  
DENVER, COLORADO 80202, SUNDAY MORNING, JULY 31, 1997

to send

## BJ's election

[illegible]

## Problems with FICA

WEATHER:  
Partly sunny,  
in 80s.

**SUNDAY TELEGRAM.**

FINAL  
EDITION

ALL CITY NEWS SERVICE Telegram & Gazette Inc.

WORCESTER, MASS., JULY 31, 1977

ALVIN  
KULBERTSON LARSEN

SIXTY CENTS

## Polling Official: Phony Votes Stole '48 Runoff for LBJ

[illegible]

**SUNDAY** / The News and Courier  
CHARLESTON EVENING POST

## Man Says 1948 Election Was 'Stolen' For LBJ

[illegible]

## Concern

**By JERRY E. SANDERS**  
*Staff Reporter*

The United Way has been operating in a "deficit position" for the last decade.

In seven of the last 10 years, the United Way's expenditures have exceeded receipts, according to J. John Small, president of the private,

The action is necessary, however, if the country is to stay on an erratic cash recovery.

The United Way's annual fund-raising campaign, *Charitable and Co.*, raises money for alcohol-

Red Cross  
Blood Supply  
Running Low

**Director of Donor Resources**  
Verne Word said that the situation is not critical, but could become so in the next week. He said the center needs about 200 pots of blood to remain at a safe level.

**THE DALLAS TIMES HERALD** STREET EDITION

## Ex-official: we stole '48 election for LBJ

[illegible]

The Boston Herald America  
 Telephone: (617) 445-3000  
 do create  
 Privacy:

es law

**LBJ race called**

[illegible][illegible]

## LBJ's election fixer talks

[illegible]

**The Sacramento Union**  
Oldest Daily in the West

[illegible]

It's a Sunday  
morn', warm today,  
so we'll go to the  
beach. The sun-  
shine is a good  
sign of a new  
beginning. The  
beach is a good  
place to start.

# The Washington Star

SUNDAY  
EDITION

Sub. Price, 50c. 22¢  
Published by the  
Washington Star Co., 1100 K St., N.W., Wash., D.C.  
Copyright © 1978 by Washington Star Co.

## How VIP's Get Favored Mortgage Treatment Here

[illegible]

**Texan Claims He Stole '48 Election for LBJ**

**Count Altered  
in Senate Race,  
Party Aide Says**

**By James W. Thompson**  
**Los Angeles**

ALICE TAYLOR, a former Texas "ginger" who, among other "wild" ways he considered enough for a lady to avoid a sensible 19-year age gap and John Leland, has a path that led to the presidency.

The movement comes from Lela Selas, who was the director of the Los Angeles office of the John Birch Society's no-

**James Taylor, a former Texas "ginger" who, among other "wild" ways he considered enough for a lady to avoid a sensible 19-year age gap and John Leland, has a path that led to the presidency.**

**The movement comes from Lela Selas, who was the director of the Los Angeles office of the John Birch Society's no-**

The London Vigilante (left) and the Galt Vigilante (right) knew slurs during the 1930s protest.

WERE WITHOUT A STORY.

## NEWSPAPERS WITHOUT AP WERE WITHOUT A STORY.

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7AM-Box 13; BJT; 3 TAKES; 500-1; 490

7BY JAMES W. MANGAN

7ASSOCIATED PRESS WRITER

ALICE, Tex. (AP) - A FORMER TEXAS VOTING OFFICIAL SEEKING "PEACE OF MIND" SAYS HE CERTIFIED ENOUGH FICTITIOUS BALLOTS TO STEAL AN ELECTION 29 YEARS AGO AND LAUNCH LYNDON B. JOHNSON ON A PATH THAT LED TO THE PRESIDENCY.

THE STATEMENT COMES FROM LUIS SALAS, WHO WAS THE ELECTION JUDGE FOR JIM WELLS COUNTY'S NOTORIOUS BOX 13, WHICH PRODUCED JUST ENOUGH VOTES IN THE 1948 TEXAS DEMOCRATIC PRIMARY RUNOFF TO GIVE JOHNSON NOMINATION; THEN TANTAMOUNT TO ELECTION; TO THE U.S. SENATE.

"JOHNSON DID NOT WIN THAT ELECTION; IT WAS STOLEN FOR HIM. AND I KNOW EXACTLY HOW IT WAS DONE," SAID SALAS, NOW A LEAN, WHITE-HAIRED 76; THEN A SWARTHY 210-POUND POLITICAL HENCHMAN WITH ABSOLUTE SAY OVER VOTE COUNTS IN HIS MEXICAN-AMERICAN, SOUTH TEXAS PRECINCT.

THE CONTROVERSY OVER THAT RUNOFF ELECTION HAS BEEN A SUBJECT OF TANTALIZING CONJECTURE FOR NEARLY THREE DECADES; EVER SINCE U.S. SUPREME COURT JUSTICE HUGO BLACK ABRUPTLY HALTED AN INVESTIGATION; BUT THE PRINCIPALS HAVE BEEN SILENT. GEORGE B. PARR, THE SOUTH TEXAS POLITICAL BOSS WHOM SALAS SERVED FOR A DECADE; SHOT HIMSELF TO DEATH IN JUNE 1975. JOHNSON IS DEAD AND SO IS HIS OPPONENT. SALAS, RETIRED FROM HIS RAILROAD TELEGRAPHER'S JOB; IS AMONG THE FEW LIVING PERSONS WITH DIRECT KNOWLEDGE OF THE ELECTION.

JOHNSON'S WIDOW, LADY BIRD, WAS INFORMED OF SALAS' STATEMENTS AND SAID THROUGH A SPOKESWOMAN THAT SHE "KNOWS NO MORE ABOUT THE DETAILS OF THE 1948 ELECTION OTHER THAN THAT CHARGES WERE MADE AT THE TIME; CARRIED THROUGH SEVERAL COURTS AND FINALLY TO A JUSTICE AT THE SUPREME COURT."

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS INTERVIEWED SALAS FREQUENTLY DURING THE PAST THREE YEARS; SEEKING ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS THAT, SAVE FOR RUMORS, WERE LEFT UNANSWERED. ONLY RECENTLY DID SALAS AGREE TO TELL HIS FULL VERSION OF WHAT HAPPENED. IN HIS SOFT SPANISH ACCENT, SALAS SAID HE DECIDED TO BREAK HIS SILENCE IN QUEST OF "PEACE OF MIND AND TO REVEAL TO THE PEOPLE THE CORRUPTION OF POLITICS."

SALAS SAYS NOW THAT HE LIED DURING AN ABORTED INVESTIGATION OF THE ELECTION IN 1948; WHEN HE TESTIFIED THAT THE VOTE COUNT WAS PROPER AND ABOVE BOARD. "I WAS JUST GOING ALONG WITH MY PARTY," HE SAYS.

HE TOLD THE AP THAT PARR ORDERED THAT 200-ODD VOTES BE ADDED TO JOHNSON'S TOTAL FROM BOX 13. SALAS SAID HE SAW THE FRAUDULENT VOTES ADDED IN ALPHABETICAL ORDER AND THEN CERTIFIED THEM AS AUTHENTIC ON ORDERS FROM PARR.

THE FINAL STATEWIDE COUNT, INCLUDING BOX 13 VOTES, GAVE JOHNSON AN 87-VOTE MARGIN IN A TOTAL TALLY APPROACHING 1 MILLION AND EARNED HIM THE TONGUE-IN-CHEEK NICKNAME, "LANDSLIDE LYNDON."

TEXAS DEMOCRATS WERE SPLIT IN 1948. JOHNSON, THEN 39, A CONGRESSMAN, REPRESENTED "NEW" DEMOCRATS IN HIS BID FOR THE U.S. SENATE. HIS PRIMARY OPPONENT WAS COKE R. STEVENSON - 60 YEARS OLD; THREE TIMES TEXAS GOVERNOR; NEVER BEATEN AND THE CANDIDATE OF THE "OLD" WING OF THE PARTY. THEY CALLED HIM "CALCULATING COKE."

THE VOTE IN THE JULY PRIMARY WAS STEVENSON 477,877; JOHNSON 405,617. BUT A THIRD CANDIDATE, GEORGE PETTY, SIPHONED OFF ENOUGH VOTES TO DENY STEVENSON A MAJORITY; FORCING A RUNOFF BETWEEN STEVENSON AND JOHNSON; SET FOR AUG. 28, 1948.

IN THE INTERIM, JOHNSON INTENSIFIED HIS CAMPAIGN. ONE OF THE PLACES HE WENT STUMPING WAS THE HOT, FLAT, BRUSH COUNTRY OF SOUTH TEXAS; GEORGE B. PARR COUNTRY; WHERE THE MEXICAN-AMERICAN VOTE SEEMED ALWAYS TO COME; FAVORING PARR'S CANDIDATE; IN A BLOC.

THE POWER HAD PASSED TO PARR FROM HIS FATHER, ARCHIE, A STATE SENATOR WHO HAD SIDED WITH MEXICAN-AMERICANS IN A 1912 BATTLE WITH ANGLOS OVER POLITICAL CONTROL IN DUVAL COUNTY. THE YOUNGER PARR WAS KNOWN AS THE "DUKE OF DUVAL."

SALAS SAID HE WAS PARR'S RIGHT-HAND MAN IN JIM WELLS COUNTY FROM 1940 TO 1950; BUT QUIT OVER PARR'S FAILURE TO SUPPORT A FELLOW MEXICAN-AMERICAN WHO HAD BEEN CHARGED WITH MURDER.

"WE HAD THE LAW TO OURSELVES THERE," SALAS SAID. "IT WAS A LAWLESS SON-OF-A-BITCH. HE HAD IRON CONTROL. IF A MAN WAS OPPOSED TO US; WE'D PUT HIM OUT OF BUSINESS. PARR WAS THE GODFATHER. HE HAD LIFE OR DEATH CONTROL."

"WE COULD TELL ANY ELECTION JUDGE: 'GIVE US 80 PER CENT OF THE VOTE; THE OTHER GUY 20 PER CENT.' WE HAD IT MADE IN EVERY ELECTION."

THE NIGHT OF THE RUNOFF, JIM WELLS COUNTY'S VOTE WAS WIRED TO THE TEXAS ELECTION BUREAU; THE UNOFFICIAL TABULATING AGENCY; JOHNSON 1,786; STEVENSON 769.

THREE DAYS AFTER THE RUNOFF; WITH STEVENSON NARROWLY LEADING AND THE SEESAW COUNT NEARLY COMPLETE; SALAS SAID; A MEETING WAS CALLED IN PARR'S OFFICE 10 MILES FROM ALICE. SALAS SAID HE MET WITH GEORGE B. PARR; LYNDON JOHNSON; ED LLOYD; A JIM WELLS COUNTY DEMOCRATIC EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBER; AND BRUCE AINSWORTH; AN ALICE CITY COMMISSIONER. LLOYD AND AINSWORTH, LIKE JOHNSON AND PARR, NOW ARE DEAD.

SALAS TOLD THE AP:

"LYNDON JOHNSON SAID: 'IF I CAN GET 200 MORE VOTES; I'VE GOT IT NOW.'

"PARR SAID TO ME IN SPANISH: 'WE NEED TO WIN THIS ELECTION. I WANT YOU TO ADD THOSE 200 VOTES.' I HAD ALREADY TURNED IN MY POLL AND TALLY SHEETS TO GIVENS PARR; GEORGE'S BROTHER.

"I TOLD PARR IN SPANISH: 'I DON'T GIVE A DAMN IF JOHNSON WINS.

"PARR THEN SAID: 'WELL; FOR SURE YOU'RE GOING TO CERTIFY WHAT DO.'

"I TOLD HIM I WOULD; BECAUSE I DIDN'T WANT ANYBODY TO THINK I'M NOT BACKING UP MY PARTY. I SAID I WOULD BE WITH THE PARTY TO THE END. AFTER PARR AND I TALKED IN SPANISH; PARR TOLD JOHNSON 200 VOTES WOULD BE ADDED. WHEN I LEFT; JOHNSON KNEW WE WERE GOING TO TAKE CARE OF THE SITUATION."

SALAS SAID HE SAW TWO MEN ADD THE NAMES TO THE LIST OF VOTERS; ABOUT 9 O'CLOCK AT NIGHT; IN THE ADAMS BUILDING IN ALICE. HE SAID THE TWO WERE JUST FOLLOWING ORDERS AND HE WOULD NOT IDENTIFY THEM.

THE AP INTERVIEW THEN PRODUCED THIS EXCHANGE:

Q. WHEN YOU TOLD PARR YOU WOULD CERTIFY THE VOTES; HE SAID HE WOULD GET SOMEONE ELSE TO ACTUALLY ADD THE NAMES?

A. YEAH. AND I ACTUALLY SAW THEM DO IT. I WAS RIGHT THERE WHEN THEY ADDED THE NAMES.

Q. WERE ALL 200 NAMES IN THE SAME HANDWRITING?

A. OH; YEAH. THEY ALL CAME FROM THE POLL TAXES; I MEAN; FROM THE POLL TAX SHEET.

Q. BUT SOME WERE DEAD?

A. NO ONE WAS DEAD. THEY JUST DIDN'T VOTE.

Q. SO YOU VOTED THEM?

A. THEY VOTED THEM.

Q. YOU CERTIFIED?

A. I CERTIFIED. SO DID THE DEMOCRATIC COUNTY CHAIRMAN. I KEPT MY WORD TO BE LOYAL TO MY PARTY.

Q. HAD SOME OF THOSE NAMES ALREADY VOTED?

A. NO; THEY DIDN'T VOTE IN THAT ELECTION. THEY ADDED 'EM. THEY MADE A MISTAKE OF DOING IT ALPHABETICALLY.

Q. THEY ADDED THEM ALPHABETICALLY; AS THOUGH THEY HAD WALKED IN TO VOTE ALPHABETICALLY?

A. YEAH; THAT'S WHAT I TOLD GEORGE B.; AND HE WOULDN'T LISTEN TO ME. I SAID: 'LOOK AT THE A; YOU ADD 10 OR 12 NAMES ON THAT LETTER. WHENY DON'T YOU CHANGE IT TO THE OTHER; C OR D OR X; MIX 'EM UP?' GEORGE SAID; 'THAT'S ALL RIGHT.' GEORGE WAS STUBBORN. HE WOULD NOT LISTEN TO ANYBODY. BUT IT WAS STUPID. THEY WENT TO THE POLL TAX LIST AND GOT THOSE NAMES. FOR INSTANCE; ON THE A THEY GOT 10 OR 12 NAMES.

Q. PEOPLE WHO HAD NOT VOTED?

A. THAT'S RIGHT. THEY WENT ON THE B THE SAME WAY; UNTIL THEY COMPLETE 200; AND I TOLD GEORGE; 'THAT'S WRONG.'

Q. WHILE THEY WERE DOING IT YOU TOLD HIM?

A. YEAH; AND HE SAID: 'IT'S OK.'

Q. THEY SHOULD HAVE CHANGED THE HANDWRITING?

A. HOW? ONLY TWO GUYS? HOW THEY GOING TO CHANGE IT? THE LAWYERS SPOTTED IT RIGHT AWAY; THEY SURE DID.

SIX DAYS AFTER THE RUNOFF; WITH STEVENSON STILL HOLDING A NARROW LEAD IN THE STATEWIDE COUNT; A SECOND TELEGRAM WAS SENT; CHANGING JIM WELLS COUNTY'S VOTE TO: JOHNSON 1,988; STEVENSON; 770.

JOHNSON GAINED 202 VOTES; STEVENSON 1. THEY CAME FROM BOX 13.

THE NEXT DAY; THE OFFICIAL STATEWIDE VOTE CANVASS GAVE JOHNSON 494,191 AND STEVENSON 494,104.

STEVENSON PROTESTED. JOHNSON SAID THAT IF STEVENSON HAD EVIDENCE; IT WAS HIS DUTY TO GO TO A GRAND JURY. 'I KNOW THAT I DID NOT BUY ANYBODY'S VOTE;' JOHNSON SAID.

STEVENSON WENT TO FEDERAL COURT IN FORT WORTH AND; ON SEPT. 14; JUDGE T. WHITFIELD DAVIDSON SIGNED A TEMPORARY RESTRAINING ORDER FORBIDDING CERTIFICATION OF JOHNSON AS THE DEMOCRATIC NOMINEE. THE JUDGE ORDERED AN ON-THE-SPOT PROBE OF VOTING IN JIM WELLS COUNTY.

WHEN THAT INQUIRY BEGAN; ON SEPT. 27; REPORTERS FROM AROUND THE COUNTRY SHOWED UP IN ALICE. BY THEN IT WAS NATIONAL NEWS.

THE SAME DAY; IN WASHINGTON; U.S. SUPREME COURT JUSTICE BLACK AGREED TO HEAR JOHNSON'S PETITION TO LIFT THE INJUNCTION. JOHNSON'S ATTORNEY WAS ABE FORTAS; IN LATER YEARS A JOHNSON APPOINTEE TO THE HIGH COURT.

STEVENSON WAS IN ALICE THAT DAY; JOHNSON WAS ON PRESIDENT HARRY S. TRUMAN'S CAMPAIGN TRAIN. DURING A CAMPAIGN STOP IN TEMPLE; TEX.; TRUMAN BROUGHT JOHNSON TO HIS SIDE AND PUBLICLY ENDORSED HIM AS THE NEXT SENATOR FROM TEXAS. ALSO ON THE TRAIN AT SAN ANTONIO THAT DAY; ACCORDING TO SALAS; WERE PARR; WHO HAD RECEIVED A PRESIDENTIAL PARDON FROM TRUMAN IN 1946 AFTER SERVING NINE MONTHS ON AN INCOME TAX CONVICTION; AND LLOYD; THE JIM WELLS COUNTY EXECUTIVE COMMITTEEMAN.

SALAS TOLD THE AP HE HAD SUMMONED THE NEXT DAY BY LLOYD AND TOLD: 'LUIS; EVERYTHING IS ALL RIGHT. HE TALKED TO TRUMAN ON THE TRAIN. DON'T WORRY ABOUT THE INVESTIGATION.'

TWO DAYS LATER; JUSTICE BLACK; IN AN ORDER HE DATED HIMSELF IN LONGHAND; VOIDED THE TEMPORARY INJUNCTION AGAINST PUTTING JOHNSON'S NAME ON THE BALLOT AND ENDED THE INVESTIGATION. BLACK SAID; 'IT WOULD BE A SERIOUS BREAK WITH THE PAST' FOR A FEDERAL COURT TO DETERMINE AN ELECTION CONTEST.

STEVENSON HAD LOST; JOHNSON HAD WON.

THAT ENDED STEVENSON'S POLITICAL CAREER. HE RETIRED TO HIS HILL COUNTRY RANCH; INSISTING UNTIL HE DIED IN 1975 THAT THE ELECTION HAD BEEN STOLEN FROM HIM. JOHNSON BECAME A POWER IN CONGRESS; AND 15 YEARS LATER HE WAS PRESIDENT.

ARM-SALAS; 2 TAKES; 260-570

WITH Box 13 BJT

ALICE, TEX. (AP) - "SOMETIMES I WONDER WHY I DIDN'T GET THE ELECTRIC CHAIR," SAID LUIS SALAS, GENTLY SHAKING HIS HEAD AS HE RECALLED HIS YEARS AS A HENCHMAN OF GEORGE B. PARR, THE LATE SOUTH TEXAS POLITICAL STRONGMAN.

NOW 76 AND LONG RETIRED FROM HIS TELEGRAPHER'S JOB WITH THE TEXAS-MEXICAN RAILROAD, SALAS LIVES QUIETLY WITH HIS WIFE. HIS TWO DAUGHTERS AND SON ARE MARRIED AND HAVE THEIR OWN FAMILIES.

LEAN AND WHITE-HAIRED, SALAS SEEMS TO FEEL HIS AGE. IN HIS PRIME, HE WAS A TOUGH 210 POUNDS, PACKED A PISTOL AND WAS READY FOR ANYTHING.

HIS DECADE WITH PARR, CONTROLLING THE VOTE COUNT FROM BOX 13 IN ALICE, FOLLOWED AN EXCITING PERIOD IN MEXICO WHERE HE RODE WITH THE REVOLUTIONARY HERO, PANCHO VILLA.

SALAS, BORN IN DURANGO, MEXICO, LEFT SCHOOL AFTER THE FOURTH GRADE. HIS FIRST JOB WAS AS A TIME-KEEPER ON A FARM. IN 1913 WHEN HE WAS 12 HE WAS HIRED BY THE NATIONAL RAILROAD OF MEXICO TO LEARN TELEGRAPHY.

"WHEN PANCHO VILLA CAME THROUGH DURANGO, I FOLLOWED HIM FOR ABOUT 2 1/2 YEARS. HE HAD A HUGE FORCE OF ABOUT 25,000 MEN THAT MOVED BY TRAIN AND HORSEBACK. I WOULD SEND MESSAGES FOR VILLA'S ARMY."

SALAS LEFT MEXICO IN 1924, AT HIS FATHER'S URGING, TO HELP RELATIVES IN LAREDO, TEX. HE GOT A WAREHOUSEMAN'S JOB THERE WITH THE RAILROAD. TWO YEARS LATER HE MOVED HERE AS A TELEGRAPHER.

HIS INTEREST IN POLITICS CAME AFTER A DISPUTE WITH SHERIFF CHARLIE PRICE OF JIM WELLS COUNTY.

"PRICE CUSSED ME OUT AS A LOUSY MEXICAN AND TRIED TO KILL ME BUT WAS STOPPED. PRICE TRIED TO FORCE ME TO LEAVE ALICE. I TOLD HIM HE HAD THE UPPER HAND NOW BUT I WOULD HAVE MY REVENGE."

IN 1940, A PARTY WAS FORMED TO OPPOSE PRICE AND OTHERS. WHEN SALAS GOT HIS CITIZENSHIP THAT YEAR HE JOINED. "I MET WITH GEORGE B. PARR IN HIS SAN DIEGO (TEXAS) OFFICE. PARR TOLD ME: 'IF YOU HELP US I CAN GUARANTEE HE WILL GET RID OF CHARLIE PRICE.' I SAID O.K."

THAT BEGAN A RELATIONSHIP THAT LASTED 10 YEARS. "I HAD LOTS OF POWER," SALAS SAID. "I WAS A POLICEMAN AT ONE TIME AND LATER A DEPUTY SHERIFF. REALLY I WAS A TROUBLE SHOOTER FOR PARR."

SALAS AND PARR SPLIT IN 1950 AFTER SAM SMITHWICK, A MEXICAN DEPUTY SHERIFF WAS JAILED ON A CHARGE OF MURDERING A RADIO NEWSMAN.

"I ASKED GEORGE B. WHAT HE WAS GOING TO DO TO HELP SAM. HE TOLD ME HE COULD DO NOTHING SINCE SAM HAD KILLED AN ANGLO. I ASKED HIM IF THE VICTIM HAD BEEN A MEXICAN COULD HE DO SOMETHING? PARR SAID HE THOUGHT HE COULD BECAUSE AN ANGLO AND A MEXICAN WERE TWO DIFFERENT THINGS. THAT WAS ENOUGH FOR ME. I WAS THROUGH WITH PARR FROM THEN ON."

LOOKING BACK, SALAS WONDERS AT PARR'S POWER OVER MEXICAN-AMERICANS. "WHY DO PEOPLE FOLLOW LIKE SHEEP? WE ALL DID IT."

SALAS NO LONGER LIVES IN ALICE, AND DOESN'T MAKE HIS WHEREABOUTS OPENLY KNOWN. HE SAYS HE HAS NO DESIRE EVER TO RETURN.

IN 1974, WHEN THE ASSOCIATED PRESS BEGAN AN INVESTIGATION INTO BOX 13, SALAS WAS STILL IN ALICE AND IN THE PHONE BOOK.

THE PROBE OPENED WITH A KNOCK ON THE DOOR OF HIS SMALL, FRAME HOUSE. ALTHOUGH 26 YEARS HAD PASSED SINCE THE CONTROVERSIAL ELECTION, SALAS SAID HE HAD NO INTENTION OF TELLING ANYBODY ANYTHING.

BUT OVER THE YEARS - AS PRINCIPALS IN THE CASE DIED - SALAS BECAME MORE WILLING TO TALK. THE AP CONDUCTED AT LEAST A DOZEN INTERVIEWS WITH SALAS DURING THE THREE YEARS SINCE THE FIRST CONTACT AND ALSO INTERVIEWED ALL OTHERS CONNECTED WITH THE CASE AND STILL ALIVE.

THE RESULT WAS SALAS' STARTLING ACCOUNT OF HOW A FEW MEN IN A SMALL SOUTH TEXAS TOWN MANIPULATED HISTORY.

DOES SALAS FEEL BETTER AFTER DISCUSSING BOX 13? "I DON'T HAVE MUCH TIME LEFT TO LIVE. YES, I FEEL BETTER THAT I TOLD THE STORY."

1246PED 07-30

# WEATHER

MISSISSIPPI — Scattered  
ars and thundershowers  
ly in central and south-  
counties Sunday, decreas-  
Sunday night and Monday.  
s mostly in low 70s, highs  
r 90. There is a chance for  
wers and thundershowers  
esday through Thursday.

# The Clarion-Ledger JACKSON DAILY NEWS

Mississippi Owned—Missi

For Mississippians

OL. XXIII - NO. 45

ASSOCIATED PRESS

JACKSON, MISSISSIPPI

DAY, JULY 31, 1977

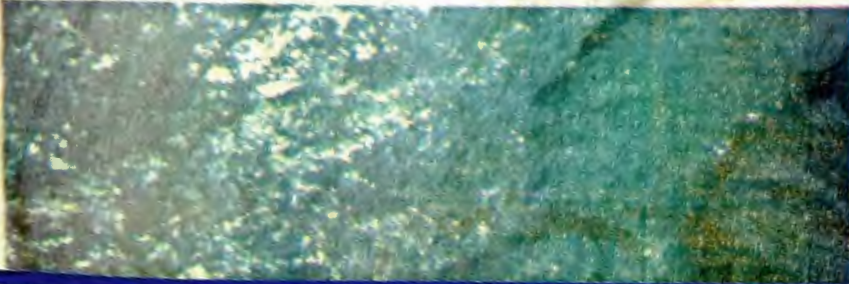
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HOME

PRICE 35c

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Parade Magazine



## Phony Votes Allegedly Won LBJ Senate Seat

By JAMES W. MANGAN

Associated Press Writer

ALICE, Tex. — A former Texas voting official seeking "peace of mind" says he certified enough fictitious bal-

IN THE INTERIM, Johnson intensified his campaign

One of the places he went stumping was the hot, flat, brush country of South Texas, George B. Parr country, where the 1948 American vote seemed almost

## Fort Worth Star-Telegram

sunday  
JULY 31, 1977

PRICE 50c

### South Texas vote fraud

## Man admits fixing LBJ's '48

By JAMES W. MANGAN

Associated Press Writer

ALICE — A former Texas voting official seeking "peace of mind" says he certified enough fictitious ballots to steal an election 29 years ago and start Lyndon Johnson's path to the

was told of Salas' statements and said through a spokeswoman that "she knows no more about the details of the 1948 election or the charges against him at that time."

## THE SUNDAY OKLAHOMAN

268 PAGES

SUNDAY, JULY 31, 1977

OKLAHOMA CITY, OK.

## Texan Claims He Stole '48 Election for LBJ

ALICE, Tex. (AP) — A former Texas voting official seeking "peace of mind" says he certified enough fictitious ballots to steal an election 29 years ago and launch Lyndon B. Johnson's path to the

the U.S. Senate. "Johnson did not win that election; it was stolen for him. And I know exactly how it was done," said Salas, now a lean, white-haired 76, then a swarthy 210-pound political henchman.

halted an investigation. But the principals have been silent. George B. Parr, the South Texas political boss whom Salas served for a decade, shot himself to death in April 1975. Johnson is dead and so is his opponent. Salas, retired from his railroad telegrapher's job, is among the few living persons with direct knowledge of the election.

she "knows no more about the details of the 1948 election other than that charges were made at the time, carried through several courts and finally to a justice at the Supreme Court."

The Associated Press interviewed Salas frequently during the past three years, seeking answers to questions that, save for rumors, were left unanswered. Only recently did Salas agree to tell his full ver-

ed to break his silence in quest of "peace of mind and to reveal to the people the corruption of politics."

Salas says now that he lied during an aborted investigation of the election in 1948, when he testified that the vote count was proper and above board. "I was just going along with my party," he says.

He told The AP that Parr ordered that 200-odd votes be added to Johnson's total from Box 13, Salas said. He saw the fraudulent votes added in alphabetical order and then cer-

ified them as authentic on orders from Parr. The AP interviewed everyone connected with the case still alive to corroborate Salas' story. One man who got a brief look at the Box vote tally in the original investigation was former FBI agent T. K. Dibrell, who confirmed Salas' statement that the last 200 votes were in alphabetical order. "It stuck out like a sore thumb," said Dibrell. "Also, the Cont. on Page 2, Col. 1

## SUNDAY TELEGRAM

WORCESTER, MASS., JULY 31, 1977

66 CENTS  
DELIVERED BY CARRIER

FINAL  
EDITION

SIXTY CENTS

## Polling Official: Phony Votes Stole '48 Runoff for LBJ

ALICE, Tex. (AP) — A former Texas voting official seeking "peace of mind" says he certified enough fictitious ballots to steal an election 29 years ago and launch Lyndon B. Johnson on a path that led to the presidency.

The statement comes from Luis Salas, who was the election judge for Jim Wells County's notorious Box 13, which produced just enough votes in the 1948 Texas Democratic primary runoff to give Johnson nomination, then tantamount to election, to the U.S. Senate.

"Johnson did not win that election; it was stolen for him. And I know exactly how it was done," said Salas, now a lean, white-haired 76; then a swarthy 210-pound political henchman with absolute say over vote counts in his Mexican-American, South Texas precinct.

The controversy over that runoff election has been a subject of tantalizing conjecture for nearly three decades, ever

since U.S. Supreme Court Justice Hugo Black abruptly halted an investigation, but the principals have been silent. George B. Parr, the South Texas political boss whom Salas served for a decade, shot himself to death in June 1975. Johnson is dead and so is his opponent. Salas, retired from his railroad telegrapher's job, is among the few living persons with direct knowledge of the election.

Johnson's widow, Lady Bird, was informed of Salas' statements and said through a spokeswoman that she "knows no more about the details of the 1948 election other than that charges were made at the time, carried through several courts and finally to a justice at the Supreme Court."

The Associated Press interviewed Salas frequently during the past three years, seeking answers to questions that, save for rumors, were left unanswered. Only recently did Salas agree to tell his full ver-

sion of what happened. In his soft Spanish accent, Salas said he decided to break his silence in quest of "peace of mind and to reveal to the people the corruption of politics."

Salas says now that he lied during an aborted investigation of the election in 1948, when he testified that the vote count was proper and above board. "I was just going along with my party," he says.

He told The AP that Parr ordered that 200-odd votes be added to Johnson's total from Box 13, Salas said. He saw the fraudulent votes added in alphabetical order and then certified them as authentic on orders from Parr.

The final statewide count, including Box 13 votes, gave Johnson an 87-vote margin in a total tally approaching 1 million and earned him the tongue-in-cheek nickname, "Landslide Lyndon."

Texas Democrats were split in 1948. Johnson, then 39, a congressman, repre-

sented "new" Democrats in his bid for the U.S. Senate. His primary opponent was Coke R. Stevenson — 60 years old, three times Texas' governor, never beaten and the candidate of the "old" wing of the party. They called him "Calculating Coke."

The vote in the July primary was Stevenson 477,077, Johnson 405,617. But a third candidate, George Petty, siphoned off enough votes to deny Stevenson a majority, forcing a runoff between Stevenson and Johnson, set for Aug. 28, 1948.

In the interim, Johnson intensified his campaign. One of the places he went stumping was the hot, flat, brush country of South Texas, George B. Parr country, where the Mexican-American vote seemed always to come, favoring Parr's candidate, in a bloc.

The power had passed to Parr from his father, Archie, a state senator who had

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Lyndon B. Johnson in 1948.