

LaRouche's 'Mass Effect' Organizing Principle Confirmed

by Natalie Lovegren

The Dec. 12, 2006 run-off election in Texas's new 23rd Congressional District provides an elucidating example of the method that sparked what Lyndon LaRouche has called the "New Politics." The campaign waged by the LaRouche Youth Movement (LYM) was a physical experiment that catalyzed a landslide Democratic victory.

In the Nov. 7 Congressional elections, with a wide field of candidates, no one received a majority in the 23rd CD (which includes part of San Antonio, and emerged after the courts overthrew former Speaker of the House Tom DeLay [R-Tex.] gerrymandering of the state's Congressional Districts so as to increase the GOP's representation in Congress). A special run-off election was scheduled, which pitted Democrat Ciro Rodriguez (who had lost his former Congressional seat as a result of the redistricting) against seven-term Republican incumbent Rep. Henry Bonilla. Until the last days of the campaign, Bonilla was almost universally expected to win. But when Election Day came, Rodriguez gained 55% of the vote to Bonilla's 45%.

LYM leader Natalie Lovegren, who was a member of the seven-person LYM organizing team in the district, gave this report Dec. 15 to the EIR staff in Leesburg, Virginia. It has been slightly edited for publication.

If you look at the map, you'll see that this district is larger than a lot of the states east of the Mississippi. When we went there, we said, "Okay, there are seven of us. We have this much area to cover!" We found out that there were three colleges that were in the district, with a significant student population. So, we ended up looking at how we were going to mobilize the student vote. Then the other thing we ran into is, that most of the students were then in finals, or there were pre-final "dead days," where no one was on campus, so we had to figure out how to deal with that.

We concentrated mainly on three universities or colleges in the district. You have the University of Texas at San Antonio (UTSA), which is in the north; and this was where a professor from the law institute had put out a report saying that there were potentially 12,000 student votes at this campus, out of a student population of over 20,000—that there were potentially 12,000 voters that could vote for the Democrats.

But the likelihood of them voting—probably less than 300! So, that would have created the margin, even there, to be able to win the election.

That was the first school we went to. We started out by saturating the classrooms with literature early in the morning, before anyone was there, putting pamphlets and flyers all over the desks in large classrooms and auditoriums, or wherever we could. We did that at several schools. And then, also, the first campus where we were able to have discussions with the students, was at the University of Texas at San Antonio. At first, hardly anyone knew that there was an election. Some people said, "Oh yeah, I already voted. Nov. 7, right? Yeah. I voted Democrat, don't worry." So, we had to figure out how to raise awareness of the election, first of all, and then give the students a reason to vote.

But after a couple of hours we were asked to leave. They told us that we needed a student organization to sponsor us, so we went on a mission to figure out how to get permission to organize for the next couple of weeks on that campus, which was one of the biggest universities in the area that was in the district. We had a meeting with the president of the College Democrats, who was *very* enthusiastic, seemingly, initially very helpful.

She said, "I know people from campuses all over the city. I'm going to get you permission to be able to set up on all of the campuses." So, we briefed her on some of the work that we had done on the anti-DeLay campaign in Houston, and what the Franklin D. Roosevelt Legacy Club was doing in Los Angeles, and she was very excited, and began calling up people right there—people she knew from the campaigns last November and area Democrats, in order to set up a regional meeting for us to work together. She said she had to talk to her supervisor to get permission, but that she was willing to work with us. "You can use our table; we'll have it set up for you, just let me know when, and then we'll be done." So, initially, we had a very welcoming response.

A Sudden Shift

That evening, there was an event at which I saw the College Democrats' president, and she was kind of reserved, and said, "I have some questions and some concerns. I talked



EIRNS/Stephanie Nelson

The LYM organizing at a busy intersection in San Antonio. Two days before the election, the Rodriguez campaign picked up the idea, and began to hand out literature at the intersection too.

to our vice president. There's a rule that we're not allowed to sponsor you. But I told them you were nice, and there was no problem, so I don't understand." The next day, she told me that there was a memo put out, by someone on the state level of the College Democrats, that throughout the state the College Democrats are not allowed to associate with the LaRouche Youth Movement, or they'll get their charter revoked, and won't be able to be College Democrats, ever again!

So, we had a situation where the students were largely unaware that this election of national importance was taking place, the campus political organizations were unwilling to publicize it, and we were being denied the capability to organize for it. Yet, it was perfectly permissible for an atheist group to set up a table on the campus, to baptize students, and engage in a program that they call "smut for smut," where they would accept any religious text in exchange for pornography: meaning, if you bring them the Bible, the Book of Mormon, the Quran, etc., they will politely check your ID, and give you a piece of pornography. There was no problem with the Board of Regents at the University of Texas allowing that type of activity on campus, but we weren't allowed on campus to organize for the election.

This was an ongoing battle, and we were trying to get around it, figure out if there was another student group that could sponsor us. Meanwhile, we were organizing at different campuses. We stopped organizing on what was technically UTSA campus property, but began to hold rallies at traffic

intersections just off the campus, to catch the student traffic. We infiltrated and saturated the student dormitories, housing, and off-campus apartments with material about the election. We left pamphlets about the David Horowitz-Lynne Cheney operations to stop political activity on campuses ["Is Joseph Goebbels on Your Campus?"], and with them, these leaflets about the election—they were pretty good:

"Thirty Five Bush Puppets Down, One to Go!"

"On Dec. 12, in U.S. Congressional District 23, continue the Democratic landslide and stop Cheney's perpetual war!"

"Representative Bonilla is George W. Bush's lapdog: on the war; on the destruction of our economy; on our future!"

"Get your Congressman off Bush's lap: Vote Bonilla out! Vote Democrat in the December 12 Special Election."

We blanketed all the housing with that leaflet. Every time we did anything

like that, I got a call from this student president, claiming that we "broke the rules. You can't do that, you're turning people against the candidate, we're going to lose the election because of you." She had told me the College Dems were not going to organize at all for the election, nor is any other student group. So, I told her that therefore, it seemed the seven of us were responsible for getting students out to vote. We didn't intend to break the law, but were having to come up with creative ways to stir up some discussion about it.

Another factor, is that UTSA is under the jurisdiction of the University of Texas at Austin, where Lynne Cheney's "Campus Gestapo" is at work, where you do have a couple of professors on David Horowitz's hit list.¹ We received a report from one of the students at the downtown campus who said that Horowitz had been there to give a presentation. The students couldn't take it after about half an hour of his speech, and they started interrupting him, saying he was full-of-it, racist, etc. Right before we put out the Goebbels pamphlet, Yaron Brook² had visited San Marcos, to spew his genocidal rhetoric; and then apparently in that same time period, Horowitz visited the UTSA downtown campus, and the student

1. David Horowitz, *The Professors: The 101 Most Dangerous Academics in America* (Washington, D.C.: Regnery Publishing, Inc., 2006). See *EIR*, Oct. 20, 2006.

2. Brook is the president and executive director of the Ayn Rand Institute. See "Lynne Cheney's Circles Call for Mass Murder," *EIR*, Oct. 27, 2006; "War Party Exposes Itself as the Campus Gestapo," *EIR*, Nov. 3, 2006.

that we spoke with was from the Progressive Students Organization. And she said that when they found out he was coming, they notified professors who had been under attack by Horowitz, and they organized an event on the same day to counteract what he was doing, and there was also a walkout from his speech. So this is some of the political environment we were dealing with on the campuses.

The Tejano Dems Join the Fight

About a week before the election, the Tejano Democrats (Tejanos are Texans of Mexican descent) called a town meeting in the district, and invited Harley Schlanger, LaRouche's Western States spokesman, and LYM member Kesha Rogers, who had run for chairwoman of the Texas state Dems, to speak. This meeting was a reaction to how the party leadership had handled the campaigns for the Nov. 7 election, especially the lack of funding for statewide candidates; many lost by a very small margin just because they were completely underfunded. A lot of people were really unhappy with the direction of the Texas Democratic Party, and the discussion was generally about how to change the direction; what's the future of the Texas Democratic Party going to be? And a couple of the most important points were: We have to tell the truth about Republicans; that has to change, don't hold back on that. And we need to have outreach: It's not going to function just to focus on known voters.

The people there were generally pessimistic about how the Rodriguez campaign was working, because you had the DNC (Democratic National Committee) and the DCCC (Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee) come in on Nov. 18 and say, "Okay, yeah, we will give money, but most of it's going to go to robo-calls. So we're going to have massive robo-calls, and no debates. A discussion of ideas, debates, not allowed." They advised Rodriguez against debating Bonilla. And so a lot of people at this meeting were upset that you had this attempt to "professionalize" what they said—the DCCC had to come in to professionalize the Democratic campaign, because it was just being run by volunteers. Schlanger presented a panel on LaRouche's idea of the "New Politics," and Kesha Rogers spoke about the role of the Youth Movement, and the importance of the work on Classical music and science that we're doing to uplift the level of discussion politically. And people were very responsive to their speeches.

So, we did get a buzz going on about the election. We found a very good traffic intersection—high visibility for our banners, where we could get out election flyers, and pamphlets on LaRouche's Economic Recovery Act (ERA). We probably hit a total of 10,000 cars or so, in terms of the cars that passed through there. We did some stats on the cars: You had 95 cars per light. It was very good, because it was right on the South side of town, right in the middle of the Democratic base, and there was constant traffic. So we went out there with a few big banners, and one that said, "Henry Bonilla

Is Nothing But Tom DeLay With a Tan." A teacher took a whole bunch of the ERA pamphlets to put in the teachers' lounge. We were discussing the potential of a real economic recovery after we get these crooks out of the Congress. People were taking extra copies. We had another large shower curtain banner about Bonilla being a puppet of Bush. And then there was a media report saying saying that Rodriguez was turning to trash-talking and negative campaigning, because he called his opponent a "Bush Puppet." I don't think he ever said that—that was us.

After we had so much visibility at this intersection—we had been doing it fairly consistently—after President Clinton came in (see below), the Rodriguez campaign came to do the intersection, two days before the election! They weren't just holding up signs: They had a LYM-style truck with a megaphone, signs all over it, people briefing the crowd on the campaign. They had the candidate come out in a van, waving to people and talking. They were having fun. Those were the anti-professionals that the DCCC wanted to get rid of.

San Antonio's German Classical Culture

Then, Palo Alto College. There's this really interesting culture to San Antonio, because you have a huge German population and German Classical culture scene there. So, we were staying with a supporter, and next to his house, is the Beethoven Bar. They have a "Männerchor" (men's chorus) and a "Damenchor" (women's chorus), and they have several German choruses and German singing societies that practice there. And there's a beer garden, and then there's several rooms for practice, where each singing group will practice on a different night. One of the nights we went over there, we ended up having a good time, singing in the bar, and people came over and started singing some of the German canons with us. And we met a professor who sang in these choirs, and he taught at a college in the South, which Clinton ended up visiting. So, we ended up working with him, and he invited us to his class the next morning, and we had a lively political discussion with the class. Then he gave us tips on which other classes to go to, which other professors that would be interested. And he's someone who has been a civil rights activist his whole life—he's 68; he did some work with the Cesar Chavez movement, the Valley farmworkers strike, the labor movement down there. He got fired from teaching at a college for participating in that.

So, he helped us out, and a group of us stayed at his house for a bit. And we ended up at that campus, which was small, about 8,000 students; we briefed about a dozen classes. And when we first got there, I talked to some professors who hadn't even heard about the election; by the day before the election, many students were very excited about voting.

So, that was good. The students were kind of wide-eyed and optimistic about the briefings we were giving them, about the responsibility of our generation, that this is something that we have an opportunity to do. That it's not just up to the older

How 'New Politics' Won in Texas

Democrat **Ciro Rodriguez** won a landslide victory 55-45% in the Texas 23rd Congressional District in the Dec. 12 runoff—a stunning upset of seven-term incumbent Republican **Henry Bonilla**, which experts in the “old politics” had pronounced impossible, based on Bonilla’s \$2 million war chest versus a nearly broke Rodriguez campaign, and the supposedly assured turnout of Bonilla’s informed, relatively better-off Republican voter base.

The 23rd district comprises 21,000 square miles, running from San Antonio west to El Paso, along the Mexican border. However, 65% of the newly drawn district’s vote occurred in the C-shaped rim comprising the north, west, and south portions of the city of San Antonio in Bexar County.

The LaRouche Youth Movement arrived on the scene on Nov. 28, and began a two-week organizing blitz at Palo Alto College, a commuter college of 800 students on the south side of town, in Precinct 1046, and the huge University of Texas at San Antonio on the north side of the city, in Precinct 3134.

The LYM organized at Palo Alto, and in the precinct directly north of the campus, 1047, at the South Park Mall, and its nearby intersection, Military Road at I-35, getting out thousands of pieces of literature. The LYM’s distribution of thousands of copies of the “Is Joseph Goebbels on Your Campus?” pamphlet, commissioned by Lyndon LaRouche, on the nationwide, university-based mind-control gestapo set up by Lynne Cheney (Campus Watch), along with “Organizing a Recovery from the Great Crash of 2007,” LaRouche’s Nov. 16, 2006 webcast, and brutal humor directed at Bush-Cheney, began to change the polit-

ical environment immediately. On Dec. 4, eight days before the election, an independent poll by SurveyUSA/WOAI-TV, showed Bonilla ahead 53-46. A few days later, private Democratic polls reportedly showed the race even, at 44-44, and then, Rodriguez pulled ahead by 47-44, according to reports. Around Dec. 8, President Bill Clinton made the decision to come to speak at Palo Alto College on Dec. 10, which event lifted the idea of youth taking action for a future over the top.

As the map shows, the precincts where the LYM organized, voted heavily for Rodriguez (the eight precincts on the south side), with a voter turnout ranging from 17-21% on Dec. 12.

On the north side, historically the Republican stronghold, the LYM organized around the University of Texas at San Antonio, with its 20,000 student commuters. Bonilla won the precincts in the north handily. By Dec. 12, ten of these precincts shown northwest of the city, had become “War Zones,” where the vote was now virtually 50-50.

And, in very hard-core Republican areas such as precincts 3030, 3044, and 3075 (see map), the vote remained overwhelmingly Republican on Dec. 12, but the turnout was cut in half from Nov. 7. For the first time ever, the Republicans lost the “early voting” phase of an election—an eight-day period, from Dec. 2-9, which Republicans had always won. As the *San Antonio Express* reported Dec. 12, “Defying every political truism of Bexar County politics, Bonilla started the night by becoming the rare well-known Republican to not only lose early voting, but to lose it badly.” Bonilla’s voters had become demoralized, in the environment of the LYM addressing the demise of the nation under Bush-Cheney, while the LaRouche youth mobilized what will become the dominant factor in future elections: youth, and a youth-inspired vote for a future.

—Anita Gallagher

generations to direct the future now, it’s up to us, and you should take part in it—it’s fun. There was a kind of excitement, but also a recognition of the severity of it, that this takes a lot of responsibility. And the professors responded pretty well, too. We essentially had an open invitation to speak at these classes. We weren’t turned down by professors.

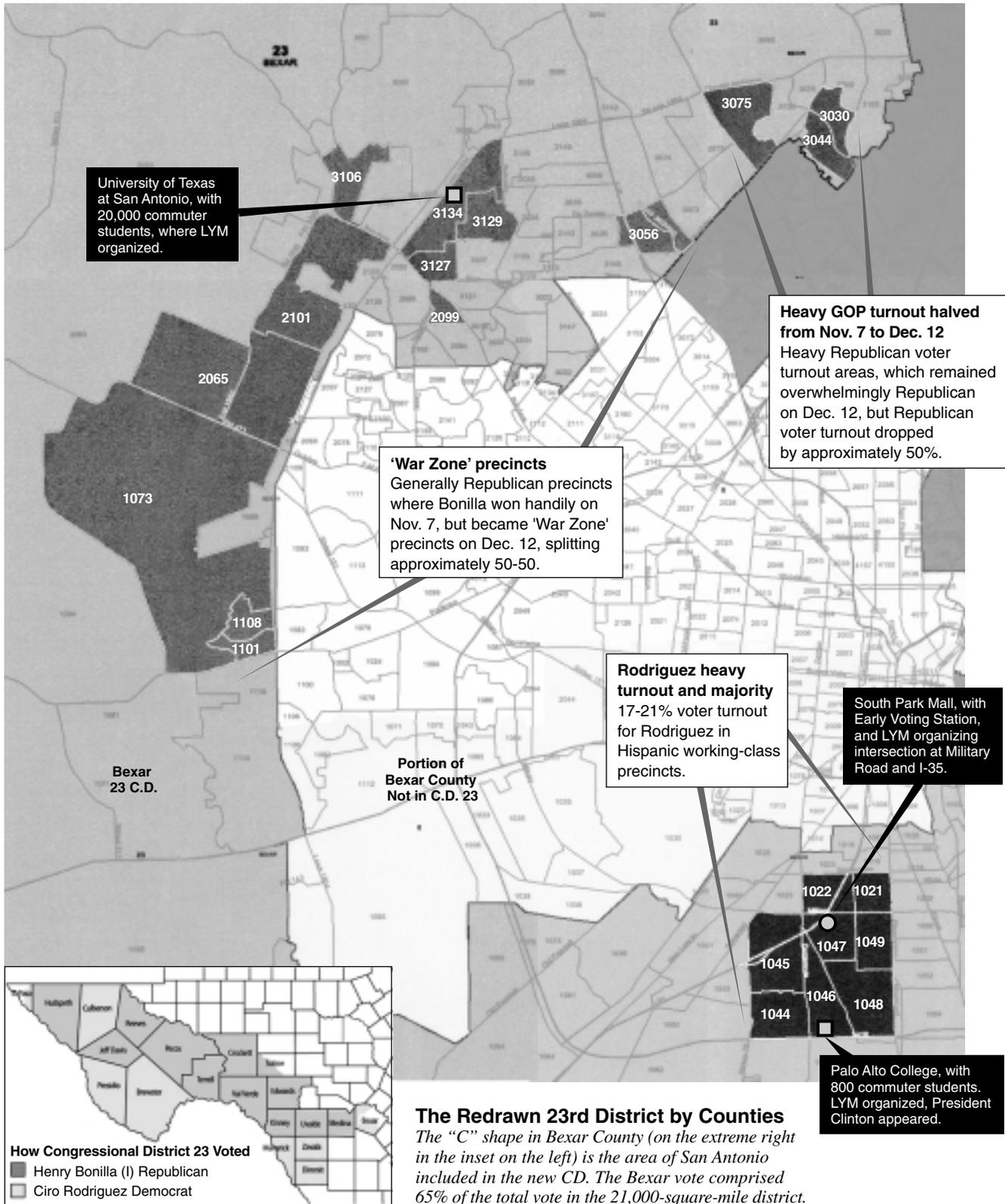
Bill Clinton Joins the Fight

Palo Alto College was the only campus where we were able to set up a table whenever we wanted, so we did a lot of organizing there. And then, Saturday morning [Dec. 9], we found out that Bill Clinton was coming to the campus on Sunday at noon. So we called all the contacts we had made

there, called all the contacts we had made at other universities, and everyone I talked to was super-excited about Clinton. His name—I just haven’t seen a reaction like that, from our generation to a public figure. After his appearance, when we talked to students about the upcoming election, some would say: “Aw, whatever. It doesn’t make a difference if I vote. It’s just a stupid run-off election.” And we’d say, “Oh really, did you know Bill Clinton was here, that he thought this election was a pretty big deal, so he came out to your college?” Then they’d turn around: “WHAT!?! Clinton?! Here?! I can’t believe it! Why didn’t I know about this!”

And Clinton’s speech was very hard-hitting. I’m glad the College Democrats were there. His speech should have orga-

Texas's 23rd Congressional District, Precincts in Bexar County Where the Election Was Decided



Sources: Congressional District Plan 01438C; Bexar County Elections Department; EIR.

nized them. The president of the College Democrats had actually told me, “Well, we’re not going to organize for the election. I think that education comes first. So I’m not going to encourage the members of the club to organize for the election, because they already did so much in the November election and it just wouldn’t be fair to ask them to do this. Sorry! Education comes first!” So, I’m glad the students were there, that they were organized by Clinton: Because he was making it very clear; he went through the comparison between the current administration—“the man in the White House”—and what the Democrats had done, what his administration had done. He started off developing this irony: He said, “Ciro [Rodriguez]’s opponent said he was glad I was coming to town, because the voters of District 23 have nothing in common with me, and they wouldn’t really care. So, I got to thinking, what didn’t they like about what we did? What didn’t they like about Democratic policy?” And then he compared the difference in the country, the dramatic difference in peoples conditions of life, between his administration and the current Bush Administration, and made a really stark contrast.

“Now,” he said, “the reason I’m going through this, is because whether you understand this or not, is what’s going to determine the election. So, think about it, and go out and organize, and look people in the eye and tell them to get out there and vote. That this is about the future.” He said that we won 29 seats in Congress in November, but there were 10 more that were really close, that were within 1% of winning. So are we going to make this one one of the 29 or one of the ten? He then mocked the idea of the Bush administrations attack on “the reality-based world.” He said, “They think were lesser mortals, because we—I’m not joking—are stuck in the reality-based world. They think that state of denial is a compliment, because that just means that you’re strong enough to be able to ignore any facts that are inconvenient to your ideology.” It was very good.

Another key component, another key organizing force was LULAC (League of United Latin American Citizens). They were the ones that filed the suit against the governor, against Perry, about the redistricting in the first place. The Supreme Court ruled that they needed to change the maps, because 100,000 Latinos were disenfranchised. And then they organized to allow for early voting, because the Republican Secretary of State was not going to allow it. The idea—this is something that I heard, I don’t know if it was actually the strategy—that they wanted the higher income people to vote,



EIRNS/Tauron Jones

The LYM is known for its beautiful, choral singing, including in San Antonio (author Natalie Lovegren is on the right). They joined German choruses in a local “beer garden,” as well as singing in an acoustically excellent tunnel by the river.

because they would vote Republican; and if you had early voting, you were going to give more of a capability to the lower-income people who would have to go out after work to vote, and you would give them more opportunity to vote. So, LULAC really fought to get the early voting. And then we even got an extra day, so we had all through Saturday, before the election on Tuesday to do early voting. In one instance, we made up a flyer that said, “Early Vote Today at This Location” and then put some fun political stuff in there, and then blanketed a mall where one of the early voting polling stations was. We stuck it on hundreds of cars in the parking lot, and then went inside and distributed these leaflets to a bunch of people in the mall.

So, we were just really figuring out how to get things moving. We did some singing that was fun. There’s a place called the River Walk that was built during the New Deal, along the river; it’s stone, and there’s some bridges, and the river is below the level of the downtown, so you have to go down these stairs, and there’s bridges and tunnels and restaurants all along the way. And so, we found a tunnel that had really good acoustics, and we were singing political canons and German songs, and we drew crowds. They were coming out and listening, and watching from across the river. We were passing out leaflets about the election while singing, so that created an interesting dynamic. There wasn’t really any downtime; we thought, “Well, let’s just keep going, and think of every creative thing we can to get people political. And create a buzz.”