Controversial lawyer wants to be governor

By JACKIE KLEIN
"James Wells law offices," the
secretary responds to a phone call.
"Sorry, Mr. Wells is in court.'
What newspaper did you say you
were with? Does this call concern
the Ku Klux Klan, the stadium or
the governorship?"

If someone is totally unfamiliar with Wells or his reputation, he swears the secretary is a bit strange.

It helps to be aware of the 43-year-old Southfield attorney's battles for unpopular clients like the Klan and against more popu-Jar causes like the Pontiac Football Stadium.

BUT THE "now" issue is the governorship. The controversial Wells, a member of the Conservative Party of Michigan, is tossing one of his hats into the Democrating in this year's governor's race.

"If we don't get the neccessary

16,000 signatures on our petitions, I'll go the American Independent Party route," the persistent law-yer avowed.

Wells, a mild-mannered, unruf-fled, soft-spoken, subtly sarcastic enigma, insists his would-be Democratic opponents are hanging their hats on a "punish Nixon" platform.

platform.
"Democratic candidate Sander
Levin is running a negative campaign," Wells said. "He's reaping
the harvest of Watergate which
has nothing to do with the Michigan governorship."

Wells, a conservative Democrat and Wallace backer, said he voted for President Nixon's policies, not the man, because he would only be "buying some writer's package.

"I believe the president can only be removed from office if he is guilty of treason, bribery or other high crimes," Wells stressed. "In my opinion, there are insufficient

grounds for impeachment of Nixon.
"The president of our government is more important than one man. You can't let a two-century system go down the drain because of a Nixon."

wells craw a wol-entity of the horace of a Nixon."

WELLS REPRESENTED

Wallace Democrats in the last presidential election when Labo Democrats beat Wallacites to Lansing to file for the name "Michigan Democratic Party."

That incident still sticks in Wells craw. "Even after Wallace's astounding Michigan victory in May 1972, Wallace delegates were ignored by union leaders," he claimed. "The union doesn't represent the rank and file. In the last election, union dues were appent on Sen. George McGovern's campaign. It was a choice between Tweedledes and Tweedleded uni, McGovern or Nixon.

"This time I want the Wallace Democrats to get a fair shake. I'm sick of the unions running the show in this state."

snow in this state."
Wells is a study in paradoxes. The same man who last year took on the Ford empire single-hand-edly in the stadium case "because I have a thing against large corporations", said, if elected governor, he will create a better climate for business.
"This state is anti-hir histonee"

"This state is anti-big business."
Wells said. "Private enterprise is getting the brunt of discriminatory taxation. You can't kick out the goose that lays the golden egg."

WELLS IS QUICK to tell you he takes a client who's a loser and tries to make a winner out of him and let his viewpoint be known. He readily admits the odds are stacked against his victory, but the campaign will give him a chance to say his piece.

"I've got some pretty good ideas about stemming the inflationary spiral," he said. "I believe 25 per-cent of the extraneous government employes should be removed.

"I've got some pretty good ideas to be identitied as running a one about stemming the inflationary spiral," he said. "I believe 25 percent of the extraneous government employes should be removed. "Instead of hiring outside contractors for public works, what wrong with reducing the heavy welfare load?"

Wellare load?"

Wells, who made headlines as a Wells, who made headlines as a Wells, who made headlines as a legal consultant to NAG-and other cated bureaucracy. The central anti-busing factions, doesn't want board should be dismantled."



TENNIS LESSONS

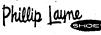
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'Watchdog' Wells: a candidate again

eld. Now he wants to live in the gov-rnor's mansion. The 43-year-old

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Attorney James Wells cut his legal and political teeth in Southfield. attorney, who practices general law solo in Detroit, is a member of the Conservative Party of Michi-

But he plans to run on the Dem-

But he plans to run on the Democratic ticket and if he can't round up enough petitions, he'll enter the political arena as a member of the American Independent Party.

A former engineer, Wells left the family business to enter law school at the age of 31.

"I was motivated by the raw deals Southfield homeowners were getting from local officials," he said. "It still hasn't been proven to my satisfaction that you can't beat

said. "It still hasn't been proven to my satisfaction that you can't beat city hall."

Among Wells' first clients was the "watchdog" Southfield Tax-payers' League, a conservative group he continues to represent.

WELLS WAS involved in the WELLS WAS involved in the leagues' first lawsuit against the City of Southfield. The group succeeded in halting the installation of sewer lines west of Telegraph.

Since then Wells has been on the losing end of a series of lawsuits against the city. But that doesn't really bother him.

"I always felt Southfield was a microcosm," he said. "If violations of public trust could happen here, it could happen all over.

"I've been involved in attempts to limit officials' expenditures. Liberties begin in city hall. They don't end there.

"Corruption starts with little things like public funds for flowers for private purposes and unnecces-sary junkets. We've nipped these practices in the bud in Southfield.

"If you bring inequity out into the open, it results in some unrest. The ballot box remedy takes care of shady politicians and shoddy practices."

In 1969, Wells ran unsuccessfully for mayor of Southfield against former Mayor Norman Feder. In 1972, he ran for state school board on the Conservative Party ticket.

HE MAINTAINS the party's a "Mickey Mouse Club" but believes it deserves recognition on the ballot for what it contributes to the system."

In 1971-1972, Wells was instru-mental in establishing 12 Neigh-borhood Academies in Pontiac, fi-nanced by tuitions, citizens and businesses as an alternative to busing for integration.

"The academies did more for kids than Irene McCabe's marches," he contended.

Wells popped into the news



JAMES WELLS

when he represented five Ku Klux Klan members charged with the bombing of school buses in Pon-

bombing of school bombing of school bombing of school bombing of the College Breakthrough's Donald Lobsinger and the White Panthers who promoted the black militant

wno promoted the black militant cause.

"I accept a little of the left and a little of the right," he said. "I can ascribe to liberalism and conserva-tism, but they both suffer from monomania."

Hospital names new officers

The Providence Hospital Advisory Board installed its 1974 officers at a

Board installed its 1974 officers at a recent meeting.

The new officers are: chairman,
The new officers are: chairman,
Frnest W. Anderson, treasurer of Federal Mogul Corporation: vice chairman, Sidney McKenna, director of labor relations for Ford Motor Company; and secretary, Patrick A. McDonald, Detroit attorney, Outgoing Chairman, A.A. Agnello, vice president of Kelly Services, Inc., was presented with an engraved plaque in appreciation of his services by Sister Gertrude, hospital adminis-trator and president of the board of trustees.



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