

# 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 popular 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 Democratic ring in this year's governor's race. "If we don't get the necessary

16,000 signatures on our petitions, I'll go the American Independent Party route," the persistent lawyer avowed.  
Wells, a mild-mannered, unruffled, soft-spoken, subtly sarcastic enigma, insists his would-be Democratic opponents are hanging their hats on a "punish Nixon" 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 REPRESENTED Wallace Democrats in the last presidential election when Labor 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 spent on Sen. George McGovern's campaign. It was a choice between Tweedledee and Tweedledum, 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."  
Wells is a study in paradoxes. The same man who last year took on the Ford empire single-handedly 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-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 percent of the extraneous government employees should be removed."  
Instead of hiring outside contractors for public works, what's wrong with reducing the heavy welfare load?  
Wells, who made headlines as a legal consultant to NAGrand other anti-busing factions, doesn't want

to be identified as running a one issue (busing) campaign.  
"That issue is temporarily dormant," he contended. "I advocate the decentralization of large school districts in Detroit and the suburbs as an alternative to cross-district busing for integration."  
"Many blacks want local control of their own school boards instead of a 'remote, insensitive, duplicated bureaucracy. The central board should be dismantled."

## 'Watchdog' Wells: a candidate again

Attorney James Wells cut his legal and political teeth in Southfield. Now he wants to live in the governor's mansion. The 43-year-old

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attorney, who practices general law solo in Detroit, is a member of the Conservative Party of Michigan.  
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 city hall."  
Among Wells' first clients was the "watchdog" Southfield Taxpayers' League, a conservative group he continues to represent.

"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 unnecessary 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.



JAMES WELLS

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."

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 instrumental in establishing 12 Neighborhood Academies in Pontiac, financed 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

when he represented five Ku Klux Klan members charged with the bombing of school buses in Pontiac.  
Other controversial clients include Breakthrough's Donald Lobsinger and the White Panthers who 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 conservatism, but they both suffer from monomania."

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## Hospital names new officers

The Providence Hospital Advisory Board installed its 1974 officers at a recent meeting.  
The new officers are: chairman, Ernest 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 administrator and president of the board of trustees.  
The Advisory Board welcomed two newly appointed members Marvin Novick, a certified public accountant and Harry S. Benjamin Jr., retired assistant general council for General Motors Corporation.

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