

Nobody campaigns here, there

Nobody was sitting on the dresser, resting after a tumultuous day of triumphant presidential politicking. Wavy Gravy, the psychedelic patriarch who knows he's Nobody's fool, wriggled around inside the hotel bed covers. Curtis Spangler, a California computer whiz who's the campaign accomplice, clicked channels to monitor the media.

"Nobody can switch the dial like Curtis can," said an admiring Gravy, as Spangler frantically flipped among the ten o'clock newscasts, searching in vain for coverage of the morning's Nobody for President rally on the State Street Mall.

Gravy, who was Hugh Romney until about a decade ago, had had mixed success so far on Monday. The reggae group Waves, which had kept him waiting by his hotel phone for an hour Sunday night — "It's like trying to get the frigging Beatles," said the man who emceed at Woodstock — decided not to play, but the sun still shone, and the crowd response was good. Now the political pranksters were seeking confirmation from the electronic media.

But though the film clips were there at six — on top of the nine delightful minutes Gravy had live at Five with Lynn Cullen — the surplus sports coverage at night cut the campaign out, leaving as the sole highlight the three simultaneous commercials with which a local clothier blanketed



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Mr. Gravy

the airwaves.

"Nobody should have commercials like that," commented Spangler.

Commercials for Nobody; the Giving Away of the President, 1980 . . . Up Close and Personal with Nobody ("Nobody knows you when you're down and out") . . . Nobody on the Issues ("Nobody has all the Answers") . . . Nobody as Leader ("Nobody should have all that Power") . . . The Spiritual Nobody ("Nobody is God").

As Gravy told the 100 frenzied non-partisans who thronged the mall Monday at one, the record speaks for itself — Nobody knows what to do, and Nobody can do it all.

The current system wasn't working, said Gravy, who knows the campaign game from his 1976 effort for Nobody, and the ground-breaking 1968 jaunt pushing Pegasus the Pig. It's just a big money popularity contest, he said; if we want an official greeter, we should get "somebody cute, like Bo Derek or Harry Belafonte;" if it's competence we're after, "let's have a civil service test and a lie detector, too."

But barring that . . . how about Nobody, driven by Spangler to the podium in a Pinto because, "nobody in their right mind drives a Pinto."

"Our leader," proclaims Spangler, delivering unto the boisterous masses a plastic set of red-and-white teeth, chattering out classic campaign rhetoric.

You must be honest to live outside the law, and the teeth had close brushes with The Man. Like the time a suspicious Secret Service agent brusquely ordered Gravy to show what that strange bulge in his pocket was . . . confronted suddenly by the clacking incisors, the agent merely sighed, "you're too weird to bust," and waved Wavy away.