TEXAS POLITICS . . .

Senate Picture Still Cloudy
As Campaign Nears Finish

By EUGENE KEILIN

Of the seventy candidates seeking the Senate seat left vacant by the resignation of Lyndon Johnson, six are generally considered to be serious contenders. The six are millionaire oilman William Blakley, Attorney General Will Wilson, Congressman Jim Wright, State Representative Henry Gonzales, former state legislator Maury Maverick, and lone Republican John Tower.

SON OF the Roosevelt-era San Antonio mayor and congressmen, former State Representative Maury Maverick has the endorsement of the Texas AFL-CIO, the Texas Observer, and scattered liberal organizations throughout the state. An Instructor of Government at St. Mary's University, Maverick endorses the Kennedy programs and has based his campaign on the issue of support for the new President.

Maverick's fellow townsman, Henry Gonzales, is the second major liberal candidate in the race. Gonzales is the product of a wealthy and influential family whose campaign has been largely aimed at attracting and solidifying various liberal and minority groups. Gonzales spends most of his time in Austin, traveling throughout the state during the weekends.

THE ONLY candidate currently serving as an elected officer of the federal legislature, Congressman Jim Wright of Fort Worth claims support throughout the state in his bid for promotion to the Senate. Wright is generally considered a liberal, although his views have become somewhat more moderate since he left the state legislature for the US House.

Running hard on his state-wide reputation and moderate platform, Attorney General Will Wilson seeks the support of voters who are not strongly committed to liberals or conservatives. Although he claims to dislike labels, Wilson has been variously pictured in his campaign literature as a "progressive" and a "conservative." Serving his third term as Attorney General, Wilson has been an Associate Justice of the State Supreme Court as well as District Attorney of Dallas County.

TOWER, WHO resigned from his position as Professor of Political Science at Midwestern University to run for the Senate, is the only Republican in the race. In general, Tower opposes the Kennedy administration and its policies, but advocates moderation in the area of civil rights.

Furthest to the right of any of the major candidates, Dallas millionaire William Blakley plans an intensive state-wide campaign to capitalize on his interim appointment to the Senate and editorial support from the Dallas Morning News, the Austin Statesman, and other influential papers throughout the state. The Senator is bluntly antagonistic to most of President Kennedy's legislative program and was one of the four Congressmen who voted to block confirmation of Kennedy's Negro appointee, Robert Weaver.

THE LARGE number of candidates and the diversity of their political views makes it almost certain that a run-off election will be necessary. Most observers concede that Republican Tower will make the run-off, but few are willing to predict his opposition.

Maverick claims support among the labor vote centered for the most part in industrial centers such as Houston, Galveston, Beaumont, and Port Arthur. Gonzales can count on much of South Texas and the support of many minority groups throughout the state.