

Special Sixth Week Back-to-School Issue

# CR

## CALIFORNIA REVIEW

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, SAN DIEGO VOLUME XII, No. 1

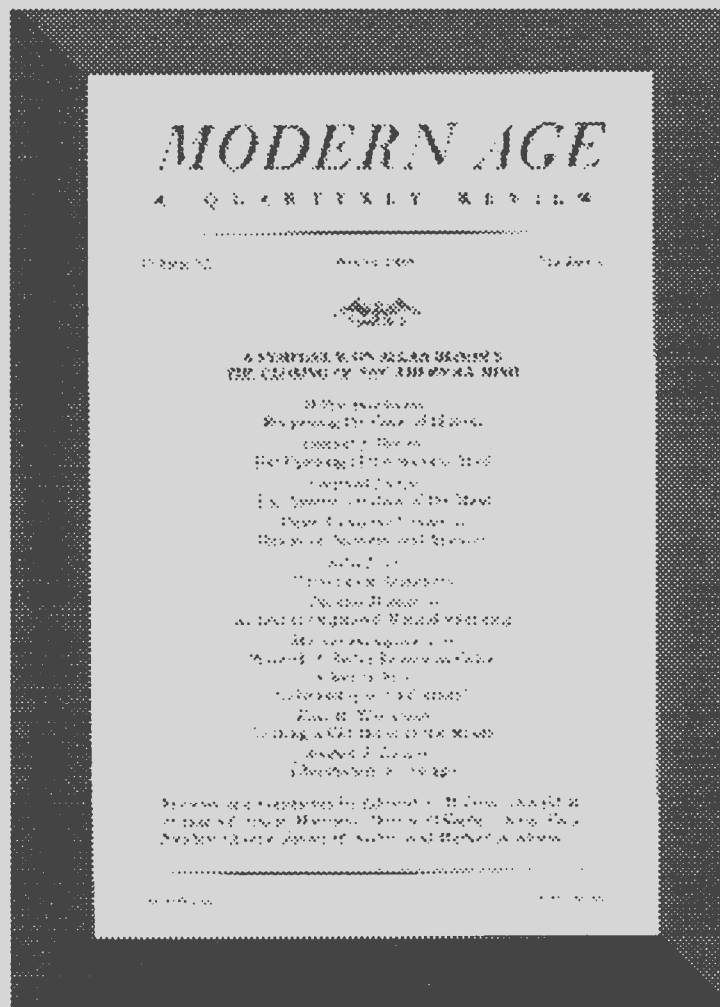


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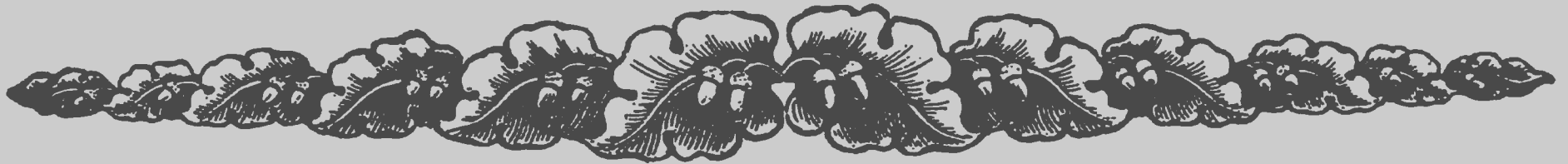
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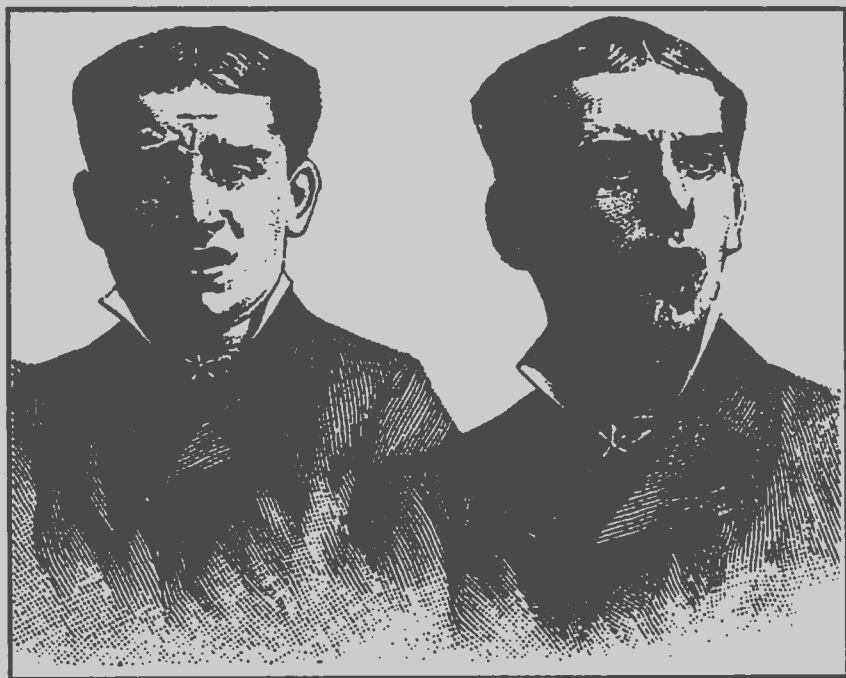
# .C.O.N.T.E.N.T.S.



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# Feedback...

◆ Insights and insults from the masses

## Does Anybody Remember The Laughter?

◆ UCSD's alleged "humor paper" may have been funny once — before it was invaded by a locker room mentality

By Thomas F. Artibekle

A comedian once said that great comedy is comparable to great art; the amount of effort required to produce either is equally considerable, and the rewards — both great satire and great art are immeasurable. On the opposite side of the coin, bad comedy is neither difficult to produce, nor in any way comparable to art. Poorly executed comedy is simply wretched drivel.

When one considers the case of the *Koala*, which is rumored to be the campus humor newspaper, the relationship between bad comedy and unsalvageable waste is made especially vivid. The *Koala* has never been the habitat for particularly intelligent satire. Once in a while, the paper has been able to produce some bright spots, the majority of which last appeared some two or three years ago. But the general format of the *Koala* is remarkably consistent. Issue after issue, the *Koala* is content to pander to the lowest common denominator of its readers with crass and plentiful references to drugs, bathroom humor, and the balm of the *Koala* crowd, beer.

The *Koala* was probably created with some sort of noble purpose in mind — to create a humor newspaper that was filled with wit and vigor. Yet, by plagiarizing the recent offering of *Koala* "satire," it is obvious that this purpose has long since been forgotten. The *Koala* has degenerated into a cheap and self-indulgent exercise in crudity. The content seems more appropriate for a seventh grade boys' locker room than for a newspaper put out by college-educated adults.

Just by flipping through the pages of the *Koala* at random, one can find a never-wavering series of references to vomit, flatulence, feces, and genitalia. For instance, the December 5 issue of the *Koala* features an article with the headline "UCSD Girls Like it Up the A\*\*." There is no joke contained in the ensuing article — only the opportunity for the author to mention anal intercourse for some sort of shock value. It appears as if the author, like some immature 10-year-

old, was simply impressed with his ability to use the word "ass" in print.

Most of the *Koala* staff appear obsessed with all things male. A January 22 article entitled "The Mystic Art of Fecology" explores the dubious comic premise of telling the future through the characteristics of human feces. A recurring "Tidbit" has readers dare someone named Crazy Larry to insert various objects up his rectum.

This is typical of the consistent pattern in the content of each issue of the *Koala*. An article is unprintable, it seems, unless it is laden with profanity and involves drugs, alcohol, trite stereotypes, or sex. This is the same paper, after all, that saw fit to devote an entire issue to bestiality.

An article is unprintable, it seems, unless it is laden with profanity and involves drugs, alcohol, trite stereotypes, or sex. This is the same paper, after all, that saw fit to devote an entire issue to bestiality.

The reason for this unrelenting coarseness is simple. Credibility requires little effort, as listening to a group of 12-year-old boys speak so clearly indicates. Rather than put in the effort of creating new and daring types of comedy, the *Koala* staff is content with generating the same old tired format.

The fact that the *Koala* would print such tripe is not nearly as insulting as the fact that the writers seem to believe that crude humor is the only humor that the reader will understand. And the *Koala* does not care that it no longer reflects the desires of its readers. In the October 23 issue, the editor writes: "There was a lot of good response to the last issue, with our only major complaint being that the issue was too crude. We like to be responsive to our readers. Just hear all of this after we already decided on Bestiality as our theme, so f--- off."

Perhaps the greatest disappointment of all is that the *Koala* didn't have to be like this. As an alternative newspaper, it had the chance to present truly creative and much needed satire. There are things on this campus which beg to be attacked with wit and intellect — oblivious administrators, the mindlessness of political correctness, the stagnant La Jolla community. But the *Koala*

chooses not to pick up the gauntlet. A typically inadequate piece of satire ran in the March 6 issue. This cover letter and resumé of Richard Atkinson was most notable for its feeble execution and general impotence in criticizing the chancellor. If this is the best the *Koala* can manage, then the paper is truly a wasted opportunity.

The *Koala* is entitled to have its own voice regardless of how worthless and ineffectual that voice is. The writers of the *Koala* have a right to be as crude and insipid as they wish; however, a problem arises when student fees are financing the *Koala*'s plunge into the depths of mediocrity.

The *Koala* receives an annual allocation of \$11,862.50 from the Associated Students. This sum is the second highest total for all alternative media on campus, topped only by the equally worthless new indicator. Given the amount of drive churned out by the *Koala* each issue, one wonders if this allocation is at all appropriate. But really, for most students to subsidize a paper which a wide majority find offensive and lacking in any redeeming value?

What the *Koala* has become is a tragedy not only because it is a waste of money, but because the writers of the paper just don't care. It is truly pathetic to think of the *Koala* writers as they wrack their brains to create jokes about flatulence and urination. It is even more pathetic to realize that these writers probably think that what they're doing is funny.

There is one positive thing I can mention about the *Koala*. It seems to be coming out less frequently. This is certainly a cause for celebration. The garbage is finally being dumped on us, but at least it's being dumped less often.

## Student Government for Beginners

By Paul W. Eykamp, Esq.

With all of the campaigning and bizarre election practices going on this time of year, it is occasionally useful to look at how the various Councils, Boards, and Committees decide how your various student fees are spent, and how you are represented to the Board of Regents, Administration, regents, and state legislature. Therefore, here is a short guide to some of the major representative bodies at UCSD.

**The Associated Students**

The A.S. is comprised of four Senators from each of the five colleges, four commissioners, one SAAC representative, and four (non-voting) executive officers, as well as a number of non-voting ex-officio members. This body determines how your \$13.50 per quarter activity fee is spent, appoints dozens of people to dozens of campus committees where they represent students on issues such as housing, parking, academic affairs, and nearly every other issue.

The A.S. also represents the undergraduates in Sacramento and to the Regents through the University of California Students Association where they have one eighteenth of the vote (each campus gets one undergraduate and one graduate vote). This year they also hold the vice-presidency.

**The Graduate Students Association**

The GSA is comprised of two members from each academic department plus four executive offices (who may also be representatives) who determine how the \$5 per quarter graduate fee is spent and does the same thing the A.S. does, except for graduate students.

**The University Center Board**

The UCB is made up of one representative from each college, the A.S., the GSA, SAAC, and the Coops. It is independent from both the A.S. and the GSA, though they have a combined veto power over its \$3 million budget and changes to its operating charter. The UCB determines how your \$37.50 University Center Fee is to be spent and oversees the operation of the Price Center, Student Center, and the Ché Cafe building.

**College Councils**

Each of the five undergraduate colleges has a College Council which is elected from each college and determines how money from the vending machine pool and an allocation from A.S. is spent for the college. They, like the A.S., also conduct programming and appoint a number of people to various committees around campus both academic/administrative, and other student boards such as the UCB and Registration Fee Committee.

Each college also has commuter boards which look out after commuter interests and residence hall boards which program and look out after resident's interests. There is also an all-campus residence board ICRAH which coordinates this activity on a campus wide basis.

**The Registration Fee Committee**

The Reg. Fee Committee, like the UCB is made up of one representative from each college, A.S., and GSA as well as voting representatives from the faculty, staff, college Provosts, and non-voting representatives from the finance office. This committee helps determine how your Registration Fee will be allocated.

Historically, it has only helped the Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs determine how "new" money (increases) will be allocated, but as enrollment growth ends and budgets tighten, it may soon advise on the continued relative worthiness of a variety of programmes. It is also the penultimate overseer of the new RIMAC facility, though there may be a subcommittee delegated more week to week responsibility.

There are lots of other committees which help determine the shape of the campus, but these are the ones which help decide how your fees are spent. While they are all interrelated since they appoint at least one member to each other or receive such an appointment, they are all fundamentally independent which often leads to considerable confusion about who does what. Hopefully this walk through the system will make news stories make more sense.

—Eykamp, a graduate student in political science, has served on the A.S., GSA, UCB, and Reg. Fee committees.

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**In Grand Style** — The *Koala* responds to the CR's criticisms as only the *Koala* would.

## 'Mitch' and Bill

Dear Sirs:

Congratulations on another fine issue of CR (May 1992). I find the "culture wars" to be one of the most interesting and important events of our time; your March issue was an arsenal of ideas for those of us on the right side of this conflict. The interview with William Bennett was particularly enjoyable. I would however like to point out a mistake in the interview (originating no doubt from the difficulty of transcribing a recorded conversation). I mention it only because it involves a brilliant culture warrior, one whom your readers would enjoy. On page 16 you quote Mr.

Bennett as referring to "Mitch Dechter's" comments about culture. The reference was in fact to Midge Decter, the wife of Norman Podhoretz (the "he" Mr. Bennett refers to in the following sentence of the interview is Ronald Reagan) and a Distinguished Fellow of the Institute on Religion and Public Life. Mr. Podhoretz is Editor-in-Chief of *Commentary*, the leading publication of neo-conservatism, and Ms. Decter is one of our finest critics of contemporary culture; her article "Ronald Reagan and the Culture War" (*Commentary*, March 1992, p.43) was apparently the inspiration for much of what Mr. Bennett had to say on the matter. She is also an eloquent opponent of multi-

culturalism (*Commentary*, Sept. 1991, p. 25). She and the journal to which she contributes are well worth knowing.

Duffy Tweedy  
Librarian, UGL

Editor's Note: We're red in the face. Our typographer spelled Decter's name phonetically when he transcribed the interview. He has since been flogged.

## Oppress-o-rama

War fans:

The anti-periodical columnist claims that "One is either an oppressor or oppressed." (CR, May 1992).

Maybe on Mars; not here. In

# FROM THE PEN OF THE EDITOR:

Chances are you are picking up this journal closely after the election. And chances are you are tired of all the preaching and squawking, fighting and mudslinging that characterizes politics in a democracy. We pretend every election year that debate should be conducted at a higher level and then we are always surprised when politics descends to the level of toddlers. But it is the nature of democracy to produce the Bill Clintons and Barbara Boxers of the world who opt for giving the people Disneyland. Only in the most dire circumstances does democracy produce a Pericles or a Winston Churchill.

If you are frustrated with this state of affairs and think that the real need in this country is for better ideas and good debate then you have come to the right place. The pages that exist herein are graced with the finest that UCSD has to offer in sincere and rational dialogue about the important issues in politics, culture, and philosophy. We have simple objectives at the *California Review*: to contribute to high quality debate at this university; present cogent and well articulated conservative philosophy; and entertain and

enlighten our fellow UCSD student.

We at the Review are admittedly conservative in our political views. Of course, for most people that means mean and cold hearted but our earnest hope is that these pages will help others reconsider this point of view. But the California Review is no doubt the most diverse publication on campus. We have people who consider themselves libertarians, traditional conservatives, classical liberals, and also social liberals who are interested in writing for the best thought out student publication at UCSD.

This year's writers will no doubt build on the accomplishments of last years crew and hopefully will enliven debate at the university with something more than the bumpersticker exchanges that characterizes much of the debate on this campus. There are many things in this nation to both criticize and extoll and the purpose of the *Review* is to do this job as best as possible at this university.

Enjoy!

— Matthew S. Robinson,  
Editor-in-Chief

hierarchical societies most adults live in the middle ranks, both oppressed and oppressing. Indeed one person may play several social roles, concurrently or consecutively. A beaten child may become an abusing parent; and then later, in the post-adult phase, be bashed again.

A few people, such as Quakers, try to transcend the system: to be neither victim nor victimizer.

Most just follow the herd.

**J. Tortuga**

*Editor's Note: We are very happy to see that Mr. Tortuga sees the distinction that we were trying to make. If it is true that a person may have "several social roles" then the accusations of collective guilt are both inaccurate and*

*unwarranted. To implicate a person or a race for its past instead of concentrating on the circumstances of the present is an overtly political act based on ignorance. Unfortunately, what such thinking does is involve us in debates that are impossible to resolve and ultimately hinder relations between our fellow human beings. We ought to concentrate not on the immeasurable rights and wrongs of history, but on the substantially more concrete aspect of rights and law.*

*Individual guilt, responsibility and equality under the law are the true foundations of liberty. Law should not be founded on the politics of group or race; an act which has made so much of history bloody and justified many a totalitarian's gulag.*



## CALIFORNIA REVIEW

*"Imperium et Libertas"*

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The *California Review* (Restitutor Orbis) was founded on the sunny afternoon of the Seventh day of January, Nineteen Hundred and Eighty-Two, by discipuli cum civitas listening to Respighi and engaging in discourse on preserving the American Way.

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# In Review...

■ IN ITS NEVER-ENDING QUEST TO cut the federal deficit, the illustrious democratic House of Representatives this month approved a measure to give the chief executive line item veto power on financial items, much like that possessed by the governors of the majority of the 50 states. The difference? The House bill, which would sunset after only two years, would give override power to a majority of *either* house of congress. This is less than the present requirements to place an appropriation on the bill in the first place.

"I think it will chart a course," said House Speaker Thomas S. Foley (D-Wash.), perhaps referring to a forward course toward even less congressional restraint and more loopholes large enough to fit half of Congress through.

■ THE ASSOCIATED STUDENTS OF UCSD this month endorsed a resolution calling for a "Columbus Myth Free Zone" on the UCSD campus for the remainder of 1992, and endorsing a 2.5-mile march and border demonstration on the 500th anniversary of Columbus's journey. According to a flyer for the event, organizers "DEMAND [...] Union jobs and decent salaries for all! Housing and health care is a right! [...] Quality and relevant education for La Raza! [...] NO 1492-1992 COLUMBUS DAY CELEBRATION!" It's Wednesday, 6:30 pm. Do you know where your A.S. is?

■ THE ASSOCIATED STUDENTS OF UCSD were rightfully incensed by a recent publication by members of several left-wing newspapers at UCSD, titled *UCSD Exposed: A Pictorial History of Student Activism*. Several hundred copies of the huge 12" by 16" publication, which chronicles past protests over everything under the



sun from CIA recruitment at the Career Center to the opening of the Price Center, were printed on heavy gloss paper at a cost of \$15 each, using money allocated to be spent only on one-color newsprint, and distributed among any interested students. But don't expect to find stacks of the publication outside your lecture halls, and don't expect to be able to acquire a copy for yourself, because most copies have been snatched up by friends of the authors, with the rest being reserved only for organizations. The A.S. has since seized \$3000 of *New Indicator* funds for the infraction. Remember no cause is too big and no wallet is too small.

Of course, we might see them go on sale for 10 big-ones but remember you paid for them in the first place. Proof that your education dollars are used wisely. Kind of reminds you of the regents, huh?

■ HOW MANY AIRPORT EMPLOYEES DOES IT take to screw in a light bulb? Apparently in Philadelphia the answer is three. Civil service rules require one building mechanic to remove the light panel, an electrician who actually changes the bulb, and of course a custodian to sweep up the dust created by the overwhelming task.

■ It really doesn't get any better than this: Mr. Philip S. Whaley, 42, of Syracuse, New York proved he was an Ace in driver's ed. Throughout a 28-minute auto chase which ended with charges of possession of stolen property, grand larceny, driving under the influence, reckless endangerment, reckless driving, and resisting arrest, Mr. Whaley faithfully used his turn signal. Voicing his gratitude, investigator Gerard Verrillo said that

"at every turn, we knew exactly where he was going." You're a model citizen, Phil!

■ LATEST TOTAL BILL PAID BY CO-OPS FOR legal counsel in their ongoing dispute with the university: \$70,000. That's a lot of 25 cent bagels.

■ "...GEORGE BUSH HAS THE WORST economic record of any President in 50 years," derides a new Clinton T.V. spot, claiming that "George Bush is running attack ads." The California Review is inclined to wonder if Mr. Clinton will be producing anti-hypocrisy ads to run alongside this latest round of cheap attack ads.

■ THE MAGAZINE *FIRST THINGS* FOUND AN interesting sign at a recent pro-choice demonstration: "I would die to defend my Mom's right to an abortion."

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# OPEN THE FLOODGATES

◆ Political leaders are moving too quickly to avenge the prosperity of the eighties. America must demand temperance.

By Roderick Lee

*You can't create more employees without first creating more employers. You can't have capitalism without capital.*

—Jack Kemp

Throughout this long, drawn-out campaign season, if there's one thing that we've heard enough of it's that the rich must pay their "fair share". Liberal Democrats and their media allies have sought to portray the Eighties as a Decade of Greed, a party of, by, and for the rich in which a small handful benefitted at the rest of the population's expense.

During President Reagan's first term, congressional Democrats sought to characterize the Reagan tax cuts as "reckless". But now, every Dem and his mother is advocating a middle class tax cut.

The difference, however, is that the Dems want to link their middle class tax cut to a tax hike on the rich. Thus, the reasoning goes, the rich help pay for the masses' tax relief.

The Dems' logic ignores two simple facts. First, taxing the rich will not help pay for government. Second, and more importantly, tax cuts do not necessarily need to be balanced by equal or greater tax increases.

Since announcing his candidacy, Bill Clinton has been getting away with spouting off the falsehood that President Bush wants to "give tax breaks to the rich and raise taxes on the middle class." This blatant lie is Clinton's misunderstanding of the evil known as "trickledown economics".

What Slick Willie ignores, and his media allies forget, is that President Bush has called for tax relief for all, which includes both the rich and the middle class. And Al Gore seems to have forgotten that he voted in favor of the 1990 tax renege that his ticket is now railing against.

Back to point one. Clinton's so-called New Covenant proposes raising the upper income tax bracket from 33 percent to 37 (or maybe 38) percent on that selfish segment of our nation known as the "top two percent." In addition, he also proposes a millionaire's surtax.

The increased revenue from these two tax hikes on the monolithic "rich," he claims, will help pay for his middle class tax cut. Wrong! The government could place a 100% tax on this top bracket, liquidate all their assets, and accumulate enough money to run the government for at most a week. Sorry, Willie. There just aren't enough rich to persecute to pay for your cut.

But, why even bother with finding a scapegoat to pin the bill on? This brings us to point two: no one need pay for a tax cut.

Before formally reneging on his tax pledge, President Bush announced that we needed to "increase tax revenues". Note, the specific wording. He said "tax revenues," not "taxes," two very different things. Several conservative writers attempted to come to Bush's rescue by noting that we could increase our tax revenues by instituting an across-the-board tax cut or cutting the capital gains tax all to no avail.

In the biggest mistake of his career, the President signed and openly negotiated the terms of the 1980 budget fiasco. Not only was this a serious misstep because of his own broken pledge at New Orleans, but also Bush approved an increase in taxes during a contractionary period of the business cycle.

The results speak for themselves. Tax revenues went "down", not up, despite the fact that tax rates rose. The already shaky economy further soured and most of the scapegoat rich sniffed.

The 1990 budget fiasco included a "soak the rich" scheme known as the luxury tax. Luxury cars, yachts, and jewelry were subject to the tax. The hope was to pick up revenue since the purchasing power of the rich would not be affected by the recession.

But the rich are not spendthrifts. The luxury tax drastically increased prices, so the rich just stopped buying. Now most

**The difference, however, is that the Democrats want to link their middle class tax cut to a tax hike on the rich. Thus, the reasoning goes, the rich help pay for the masses' tax relief.**



luxury cars are imports, so this helped narrow the trade deficit ever so slightly. But, more importantly, luxury yachts are a largely domestic industry. And this illconceived “punish-the-rich” luxury tax torpedoed the US yacht building companies.

Simple economics. Prices rise. Demand drops. Yacht inventories increase and yacht builders have to cut back on costs. Who got the ax? Labor. Unemployment figures rose. Nice job Dems.

This yachting mishap is just one example of how, as Kemp puts it, “[t]he Democrats’ plan won’t soak the rich — it’ll soak the middle class, it’ll soak the poor, and drown the economy.”

Both liberals and conservatives generally agree that small businesses fuel economic growth. Clinton claims that small businesses will benefit from his plan because he is “putting people first.” Isn’t it interesting, then, that small business owners, themselves, are weighing in largely for Bush? Small businesses say the combination of Clinton’s tax hikes and his “pay-or-play” health care program will drastically eat into their profits, if not eliminate them all together.

Furthermore, small businesses often file tax returns as individuals. A tax hike will hit small businesses twice, once at the enterprise itself, and once at the chief proprietor. Yet another “soak-the-rich” tax hike drenching the middle class.

Now, rewind to 1981. President Reagan implemented an across-the-board tax cut, including one that lowered the top bracket from 70% to 33%. In spite of the lower rates, tax revenues “increased.” True, the deficit increased, but this was a result of larger defense spending not lesser tax intake.

This is the “failure” of trickle-down economics. Cut taxes, increase tax revenue; raise taxes, decrease tax revenue. So, what do the Dems offer us? A chance to escape from this failure and return to tax-and-spend. Only this time, it is “soak the rich” and “invest in the country”.

Supply side economics (the proper term for the epithet, trickle-down) is *\*not\** about cutting taxes for the rich and letting the money trickle down to the masses. Rather, as the name suggests, it is about addressing the supply side of our economy.

Before Milton Friedman, the economics of this century was dominated by the teachings of John Maynard Keynes, who focused his attention on demand. Keynes believed that government’s task was to adjust its spending levels in order to affect the GNP. The GNP has three elementary components:

consumption, investment, and government spending. If the first two fall back, say, due to a contractionary phase of the business cycle, Keynes said government’s role was to increase spending to stabilize the GNP. It is this thinking that brought us liberal icons such as the New Deal and the Great Society.

But, along came the supply-siders, motivated by an inherent mistrust of government. Instead of letting the government manipulate aggregate demand through spending, return the money to the private sector in the form of tax cuts and let businesses increase aggregate supply. With less profit diverted to taxes, businesses can afford to expand operations or finance R&D or other auxiliary programs. Each added program means more jobs. Also, since supply outpaces demand, inflation is held in check.

So, now which approach do you trust to revive the economy? Before you answer, let’s turn from national to state issues.

As the Boys on the Bus continue their lies against “twelve failed years of trickle-down,” their local disciples have managed to place these ideas on the state ballot under the misnomer, “The Economic Recovery Tax Relief Act of 1992”. This is Proposition 167 on the California ballot.

Like Clinton’s New Covenant, 167 offers a conglomeration of tax breaks to the middle class and sticks the “evil rich” with all manner of tax increases. First, the carrot. Prop 167 would cut the statewide sales tax to 5.75% at the beginning of 1993 and then down to 5.25% six months later. It would extend the renters’ credit and repeal the much hated snack tax. Proponents are hoping that this clause about the snack tax will draw in the voters it needs. Fortunately, we can destroy the snack tax without

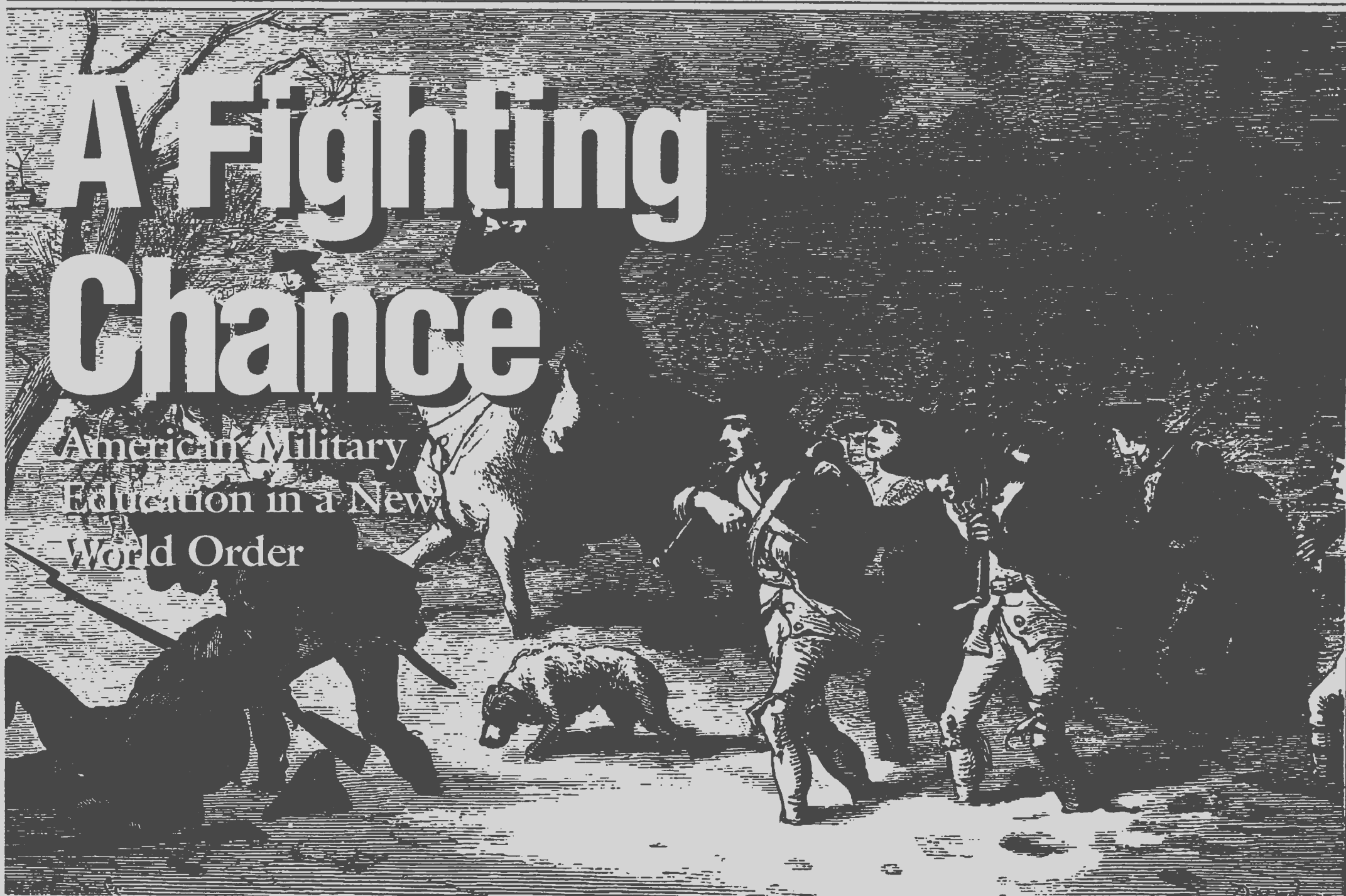
invoking all the other corporation-hostile proposals that exist in 167. If all you care about is the snack tax, vote for Prop 163 — *not* 167.

Now here comes the damage. After 167’s authors grab your attention with the above carrot, they hope you will ignore the array of corporate and bank taxes since, simply, most voters are neither banks nor corporations.

Suffice it to say, banks, corporations, insurance companies, and interstate businesses would be subject to a new barrage of taxes. In addition, lest we forget our traditional scapegoat, the rich, the personal income bracket for 11% would fall lower, from \$200,000 to \$175,000 and an even higher 12% bracket would be added for incomes in excess of \$250,000.

See TAXES, page 23

**Small businesses  
say the  
combination of  
Clinton’s tax  
hikes and his  
“pay-or-play”  
health care  
program will  
drastically eat  
into their profits,  
if not eliminate  
them altogether.**



# A Fighting Chance

American Military  
Education in a New  
World Order

**I**n the debate over American competitiveness in the new world order, concern has been expressed over the importance, quality, and availability of higher education and job training in the United States. The importance is fairly obvious. In today's business world, a high school diploma doesn't get you much farther than the local Burger King. A good G.P.A. and about \$40,000 can secure a student quality, but despite grants and loans, higher education remains financially unfeasible for a majority of the population. We can't deny the need for better access to education. Learning is the cure for ignorance, poverty, and intolerance, social ills that have long needed correction.

Unfortunately, help is not likely to come from above. Although the Federal government is desperately trying to gather funds to help finance educational programs, the budget crises allows little room for increased spending. So what useless and unnecessary programs can we cut to make room for higher education? The sacred cows of welfare, Medicare, and social security tend to be poor candidates in the political arena. Desperate to find a quick-fix solution, accusing fingers on Capitol Hill point to the Defense Department. Since the

constant threat of nuclear war has evaporated along with the Warsaw Pact, America's defense budget has been fair game for all manner of anti-military liberals and would-be economic reformers. At first, it seems a sensible solution. What need do we have for thousands of active duty personnel in this kinder, gentler nation? The argument rages on both ends of the political spectrum between the need for eternal vigilance and the need to curb government waste. However, a crucial and often unrealized truth about the military lies hidden underneath all the political posturing. Put simply, the military is one of the greatest opportunities our country has to offer lower-income men and women for gaining education, job training, and self-respect.

Last summer, I had the unique experience of seeing this from the inside. As a civilian employee on Onizuka Air Force Base, CA, I received a real education about the Armed Forces. Many of the lessons were unexpected and enlightening. In the beginning, I only saw the obvious: the military involves rules, regulations, expensive equipment, and lots of paperwork. It appeared to me that Uncle Sam ran his military in some very inefficient ways. The surprises came later, once I had a chance to get to know my supervisors, both officers and

**B y A l e x a n d r a N i g r o**

enlisted personnel. The officers were what I had expected: bright, educated men and women who chose to serve their country after college instead of choosing more lucrative careers in the civilian world. Many of these had only been able to afford college by participating in the Reserve Officers Training Corps (ROTC). They were putting their education to good use, helping run a critical satellite communications base providing instant global information access to a number of government and non-government clients.

Even though officers generally receive the highest pay and most visible positions, they are a minority in the Armed Forces. The majority of military personnel come from the enlisted ranks. Having little to no education beyond the high school level, enlisted personnel represent the core of the military. Although I originally expected to work with enlisted guys of the Beatle Bailey variety, three months of work, friendship, and sometimes heated political debate trimmed my intellectual arrogance down to size. Once the military finishes torturing a new recruit in basic training, they send him to school. The enlisted life involves a great deal of studying and test-taking. They receive education in fields ranging from law to environmental engineering, participate in almost constant job training, and maintain our most critical communications and defensive systems. Unfortunately, they are also disappearing fast.

In a push to reduce the size of our standing army, the government is offering early release and retirement packages for active duty personnel as well as cutting back on recruitment. I know a few who welcomed this opportunity to leave military life, but most saw these cutbacks as a bleak sign of the times. The men and women I worked with came from all over the United States, many from the poorer rural areas. The military gave them access to ideas and skills they previously couldn't afford or even imagine. The opportunities were there for everyone, gender and ethnicity do not bar advancement in any area. For women, the normal strains of being a working mother were alleviated by fair maternity leave, financial support, and



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day care available right on the base. Seeing a young female Airmen 8-months pregnant in full camouflage and combat boots was one of the funniest and most gratifying things I saw. Medical insurance, retirement benefits, and social services were all readily accessible, a package not easily found anywhere in civilian life. Those who wished to go on to a university could earn their tuition under the G.I. Bill. There are other benefits, not easily described on a recruitment form. With education comes pride and self-respect, these people stood behind their work and were proud of their achievements.

I talked to many who were concerned with their prospects once they re-entered the civilian world. We are reducing the armed forces at the worst possible time, already the job market is overrun with job seekers while the military puts people on 12-hour shifts to cope with understaffing. For the retirement of one Master Sergeant, the guys in his shop created a going away gift. It was a huge colored sign that read, "Will Work for Food." It was meant as a joke, but for someone who gave 20 years to his country, it was a grim reminder of what may be to come. Even more frightening is the prospects for the younger men and women. For a young Airmen or Private, being forced to move into a business world that gives little care about the training and advancement of all employees is no less frightening than for a poor high school graduate looking at few choices and opportunities. Whatever edge these young men and women have is greatly reduced during a recession.

These people joined the military to make their lives and our country better and safer, we owe them more than this. In an attempt to free funds for some nebulous future education program, we are denying people in the present from gaining education, training, and security in uncertain times. By reducing our Armed Forces, we are intensifying the very problems we are trying to solve. It's true that we we need to evaluate what our military does, but what I saw this summer convinces me they are up to any task we set before them. We only need to let them do it.◆

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# Whining A B O U T . M Y Generation

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ADVENTURES IN THE IDIOT CULTURE • BY PHILIP MICHAELS



I

've been kicked around long enough, baby, and it's time I got some respect. It's high time I get what's coming to me, and at last, *at last*, the moment has come. I am part of a national trend. Television reveres me. Advertisers woo me. I am part of the twentysomething generation. Fear me.

After years of doting on that most hated and self-obsessed of generations, the thrice damned Baby Boomers, the media has begun to shift its attention to the twentysomethings. For those of you baffled by such complex, in-the-know jargon, twentysomethings are men and women between the ages of twenty and twenty-nine, and according to the media, they're hipper than hip.

Well, frankly, as an official twentysomething, I'm flattered. I mean, I always thought I was pretty darn special and deserving of attention, but all these programs and advertisements aimed specifically at *me* — well it really is *too much*. There's no way all of this attention can be healthy. Who knows? The twentysomething generation might just be a couple of Fox Network shows away from become as annoying and ubiquitous as those sniveling Baby Boomers.

The problem began for me when ABC aired a Special Report this summer on the twentysomething generation hosted by news diva Barbara Walters. If ABC airs a special report, you know the story is important. And if the twentysomethings were getting more news coverage than Bosnia, Somalia, and the presidential election, well, this could be the biggest story this side of that Quayle-Murphy Brown thing.

In one of her typically hard-hitting-tell-it-like-it-is reports, Walters breathlessly told a spellbound world that the twentysomethings were "A Lost Generation." (No apologies were offered to Gertrude Stein, who probably couldn't hold a candle to Barbara Walters, anyhow...)

"This is a generation that wants time for family, friends, themselves," Walters divulged. "They want to live life on their own terms."

Pretty heady stuff. The only problem is that such a description could apply to just about anyone, whether they're twenty-three or fifty-eight. The Special Report went on to say that the twentysomethings were worried about the economy, concerned with the environment,

**Sometime  
during the  
middle of *The  
Real World*, I  
lost the will to  
live**



and just really sullen about politics. And so is every other age group from what I've heard. How the twentysomethings cornered the anxiety market is beyond me. I guess Barbara Walters, in her infinite wisdom, figured that since a forty-eight year old is more likely to drop dead of a heart attack than a twenty year old, the twenty year old will be around longer to be depressed by the world's problems.

That's what the Special Report basically was about — Barbara and eight twentysomethings sitting in a semi-circle with concerned looks on their faces as they wrestled with the pressing issues of the day. It was a regular angst-fest over problems ranging from global warming to interest rates to venereal disease. (I'm not kidding — apparently twentysomethings believe that the lousy economy isn't half as important as to why they aren't getting any action.)

"We're the first generation to be worse off than our parents," sniffed one particularly melancholy twentysomething. Barbara nodded and tried to look concerned.

I'll admit I didn't watch much of the Special Report, as I was busy living life on my own terms. But it got me thinking — I never realized my generation had been rendered limp with anxiety about the state of the world. Was my generation so preoccupied with disillusionment and worry that eight healthy looking people took the time to commiserate with Barbara Walters about how rotten things were? If what Walters was saying is correct — and I have no reason to doubt her credibility as a journalist — then hundreds upon thousands of my fellow twentysomethings were awash in a sea of seriousness while I dabbled unawares in the wading pool of jocularity.

That's when I hit upon the Grand Idea, the Plan that would prove whether this twentysomething "Lost Generation" blather had any basis in reality or if it was just another media-induced myth like the lambada craze a few years back or, more recently, the H. Ross Perot candidacy. I would compare what I knew about the twentysomething generation with what I saw on television. For 2 1/2 hours, I subjected myself to television programs aimed at hip twentysomethings like myself. This was certainly a daunting task which would require every ounce of my skill and fortitude. I was unafraid. God was my co-pilot.

### The Shows

The first program I watched was *Beverly Hills 90210* — an upper class romp through the adolescent years. While the show technically concerns itself with angst ridden high school students rather than angst ridden college graduates, I

include it in the Grand Idea for three reasons. First of all, it's on the Fox Network, the network of a new generation. Unlike those fuddy-duddies at CBS or ABC, the Fox Network hopes to capture the minds of American youngsters by gearing its insipid broadcasting towards them. A more cynical man would call this "pandering" — Fox calls it "a stroke of broadcasting genius." Secondly, *90210* is the show that started the "youthward ho!" movement in television. And finally, all of the actors on *90210* are in their late twenties anyhow.

The world of *90210* is populated by Beverly Hills high school students who are either blonde or grow sideburns. Each week, they tackle a Big Issue, like Teenage Pregnancy, Death, Violence, and Love. In the episode I watched, the Big Issue was deaf people and how deep down inside, they're just as swell as you and me. If nothing else, *90210* will always deliver a hard hitting theme.

Which is part of the show's appeal I'm told — that *90210* tackles the day to day problems that teens can relate to. This episode was no exception. Brenda, the

pouty heroine, had been spending too much time around her moody, sideburn-clad boyfriend, Dylan. So her parents sent her off to Paris for the summer where hilarious consequences ensued. Ah yes, there's a true to life experience we can *all* relate to.

The other thing I noticed about *90210* was a rather obvious lack of minority characters, who apparently, don't have problems that teens can relate to. In the hour long program, only one minority had a speaking role (two lines). This does not include the numerous French people who appeared in the episode.

But *90210* isn't a complete loss. It even features witty political satire that would put Oscar Wilde to shame.

"You know what they say about liberal girls," one of the characters says to a liberal girl. "They're so... liberal."

"Well, you know what they say about conservatives," the liberal girl retorts. "They make lousy lovers!" Zing!

No mention was made of the sexual prowess of moderates, Reagan Democrats, or Perot supporters.

*Melrose Place* directly follows *90210*, for those of us who like to kill off all our brain cells in one convenient sitting. The program follows the lives of a group of glamorous twentysomethings living together in a condominium in trendy Los Angeles. The characters spend each episode worrying about the world's problems and living life on their own terms.

The characters also like to struggle. In fact, struggling tops living life on your own terms as the favorite activity at *Melrose Place*. Each character is, in some way, struggling to succeed at

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**"This is a generation that wants time for family, friends, themselves... They want to live life on their own terms." Pretty heady stuff. The only problem is that such a description could apply to just about anyone.**

# THANK YOU, CONGRESS — NOT!

## ◆ Big Cable Bill Provides Big Problems for Consumers

By Mark Rotenberg

In a typically brilliant career move for the incumbents of the 103rd Congress, the House and Senate voted this past month to re-enter the cable regulations industry. After all, incumbents face the toughest reelection challenges in over a century this year. Now they've got something to take to the electorate and rub in the faces of their challengers: "I voted to keep your cable rates down."

After all, what better way could there be to address the important issues of the day — crime, racism, debt, unemployment, individual responsibility, and Ren & Stimpy for under \$20 a month.

It's important to realize that *something* had to be done to deal with cable rates and lack of competition in the home entertainment industry. Supporters and authors of the bill (among them Mr. Al Gore) have touted the bill as improving service and lowering prices through encouraging competition. The platitude is correct — encouraging competition in the home entertainment industry would lead to better service and lower prices. However the president made the correct call in vetoing the 119-page bill because the bill's regulative approach and special-interest nature create numerous shortcomings which will more than outweigh the bill's perceived accomplishments.

### The Case for Competition

The vast majority of local cable companies operate as regional monopolies, protected by locally-erected barriers to entry and by "sweetheart" agreements with local government. Implicit in franchise agreements is the concept that cable television is a natural monopoly, and that duplication of services by other operators would be costly or redundant. In exchange for this security, local cable operators pay 3-5% of

their gross revenues to the local government.

As a substantial source of revenue for municipal governments, this "tax" provides a strong incentive for local governments to continue the local cable monopoly. The 1992

cable act does nothing to change this situation, and in fact makes it worse by guaranteeing local government the power to regulate prices for the local monopoly, thus concentrating more power on the city council toward this lucrative source of income. It is no coincidence that local monopolistic cable operators maintain close connections with local bureaucrats in many cities and communities. In fact, cases abound

where local governments have intervened to *prevent* competitors from entering the cable television market in their local areas.

The aim of the federal cable bill, if anything, should have been to compel local governments not to prevent free competition between cable operators and operators of other modes of home entertainment. Placing such simple regulation on government itself rather than placing complex regulation on the business community is more likely in the long term to produce positive results than opening the door to allow the political process to be hijacked by special interests in the business community.

Anecdotal evidence of the self-regulating power of local competition may be found in the case of Montgomery, Alabama. Before the introduction of competition into the local cable industry, Storer Communications, the local monopoly, had raised rates four times in four short years to \$18.25 per month for its basic cable, with no related expansion of service. In October 1990 the company suddenly



went from 29 to 61 channels, and dropped its basic monthly rate by nearly two dollars. The simple reason was that two weeks earlier, a competitor began laying cable of its own in the same service area.

Statistics show that prices for basic cable service average 18% lower in competitive markets than in comparably-sized, non-competitive markets. Furthermore, competitive markets offer more channels, lowering the per-channel price by about 30%. The evidence indicates that exploitation of cable consumers occurs as a result of excessive local regulation and barriers to entry, as opposed to the lack of federally-mandated controls on pricing.

### **Technological Issues and Background**

One of the goals of the Cable Communications Policy Act of 1984, which initially deregulated the cable television industry, was to encourage the country to get wired into cable through private investment. The policy has been enormously successful, with approximately 90% of American homes today within the reach of a nearby television cable.

With reregulation, there is an assumption that wiring is complete, and that regulation will now make it accessible. However, with the rapid expansion of telecommunications and informational facilities available, it is likely that fiber optic cable will eventually be needed to replace coaxial cable and provide the bandwidth necessary for such services. Fiber optic cable is already being used by telephone companies to connect feeders and networks to the nationwide long-distance backbone. The next logical step will be to bring this fiber into the home for use by telephone, computer, and video applications.

Video services, on-call "switched" video (as opposed to the "channeled" video currently being used), a video "dial tone", local area network services, and high-definition television are all promising industries in a deregulated market, yet their progression into the American home will now invariably be slowed by reregulation by the cable bill, and by the disinterest in investment brought on by the creation of such a heavily regulated industry.

The Federal Communications Commission, on two landmark occasions, has emphatically asked Congress to overturn 1984 regulations barring cross-ownership between cable companies and phone companies. The FCC ruled in these cases that phone companies may

compete in the video market, and that cable companies may compete in the telecommunications market.

Rather than capitalize on these rulings by removing barriers to entry in these two markets, Congress effectively erected new barriers to competition between various media in the new bill. The effects of such provisions will undoubtedly end up in court and in the offices of the FCC, but certainly don't guarantee competition.

Ideally, cable and telephone companies should be able to share each other's infrastructure equipment through voluntary lease agreements, or else be free to install their own competing infrastructure. The main regulation necessary would need only to prevent (or limit) cross-ownership of both technologies in a single service area. In other words, cable companies should be able to operate phone services in areas not overlapping their cable service areas, or vice-versa. The minimal regulation would prevent an area from having one single company control their telephone and their cable television services.

Such a plan would guarantee that cable and telephone companies compete with one another on an equal footing, without running the risk of individual cable/phone companies monopolizing a single service area. It would also provide larger incentives for improving service and improving infrastructure, while expediting the transfer of new technology into the home market.

With most analysts predicting the end of the local telephone monopolies (the so-called "Baby Bells"), this plan would leave both telephone and cable television operators as fair competitors, with the biggest winners being the consumers.

### **Necessary Utility or Optional Service?**

Central to the issue of what it is the federal government has chosen to regulate is whether cable television provides a necessary and basic utility such as water and electricity, or instead provides an optional service such as pizza or newspaper delivery. In passing the cable reregulation bill, the federal government has effectively reclassified cheap cable from being a privilege to being a right. But at what cost?

The home entertainment industry is as diverse as the restaurant industry. Consumers of the future will be able to choose from a variety of new technologies for their viewing pleasure. Wireless cable is quickly becoming a cost-

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# THE SEARCH FOR POLITICALLY CORRECT PIZZA

By Michael J. Malervy

It is hard for the politically correct person to enjoy a good, hot pizza. He may not know what pizzas are politically correct, and what toppings are politically correct. So for those of you who wish a change from the food served at the Ché Cafe, here's your guide to your very own politically correct pizza.

Domino's Pizzas is the most obvious examples of political incorrectness.

Domino's has supported a fetus' right to life for many years.

In their quest to get a pizza delivered to your door in thirty minutes or less, Domino's needlessly pollutes the air by using the automobile. After all, why can't Domino's take advantage of public transportation or the bicycle? The use of the automobile by Domino's to deliver pizzas, along with their pro-life stance, places Chef Domino among the most politically incorrect pizza makers of the world.

Little Caesar's Pizza is not much better than Domino's. Little Caesar's is Eurocentric. Their name brings to mind the Roman Empire and all its grandeur. A more appropriate name for this pizza chain would have made one think of perhaps China. Additionally, Little Caesar's makes fun of the vertically challenged — after all, poor Caesar couldn't help it that he was so short.

Finally, Little Caesar's is guilty of insensitivity towards those who go hungry. How can Little Caesar even think of selling two pizzas at a time when people in Somalia go hungry? The politically correct person would like to see "Pizza!Pizza!" replaced with "Pizza!". Unless these problems are corrected, Little Caesar's would deserve to be sacked by the Huns.

Godfather's Pizza is also politically incorrect. When one thinks of a godfather, he is inclined to think of religion and (gasp!) family values. Since the only politically correct family members are single mothers and of

**“It is hard for the politically correct person to enjoy a good, hot pizza.”**

course Big Brother, Godfather's Pizza is indeed politically incorrect.

Round Table Pizza is also guilty of Eurocentrism. Round Table beckons to England in the Middle Ages, and a bunch of dead white males. As Round Table is the only place at UCSD where beer can be served, the establishment has raised the ire of the New Indicator, the Bible of Political Correctness. Only after the New Indicator deems otherwise, Round Table shall remain politically incorrect.

Pizza Hut, however, is politically correct. Pizza Hut brings to mind a structure used by people living in the Third World — a very politically correct notion indeed. Some would argue that Pizza Hut is owned by PepsiCo, a corporation, and is therefore politically incorrect. PepsiCo may be a corporation, yet it is a politically correct corporation. After all, Pepsi was sold in

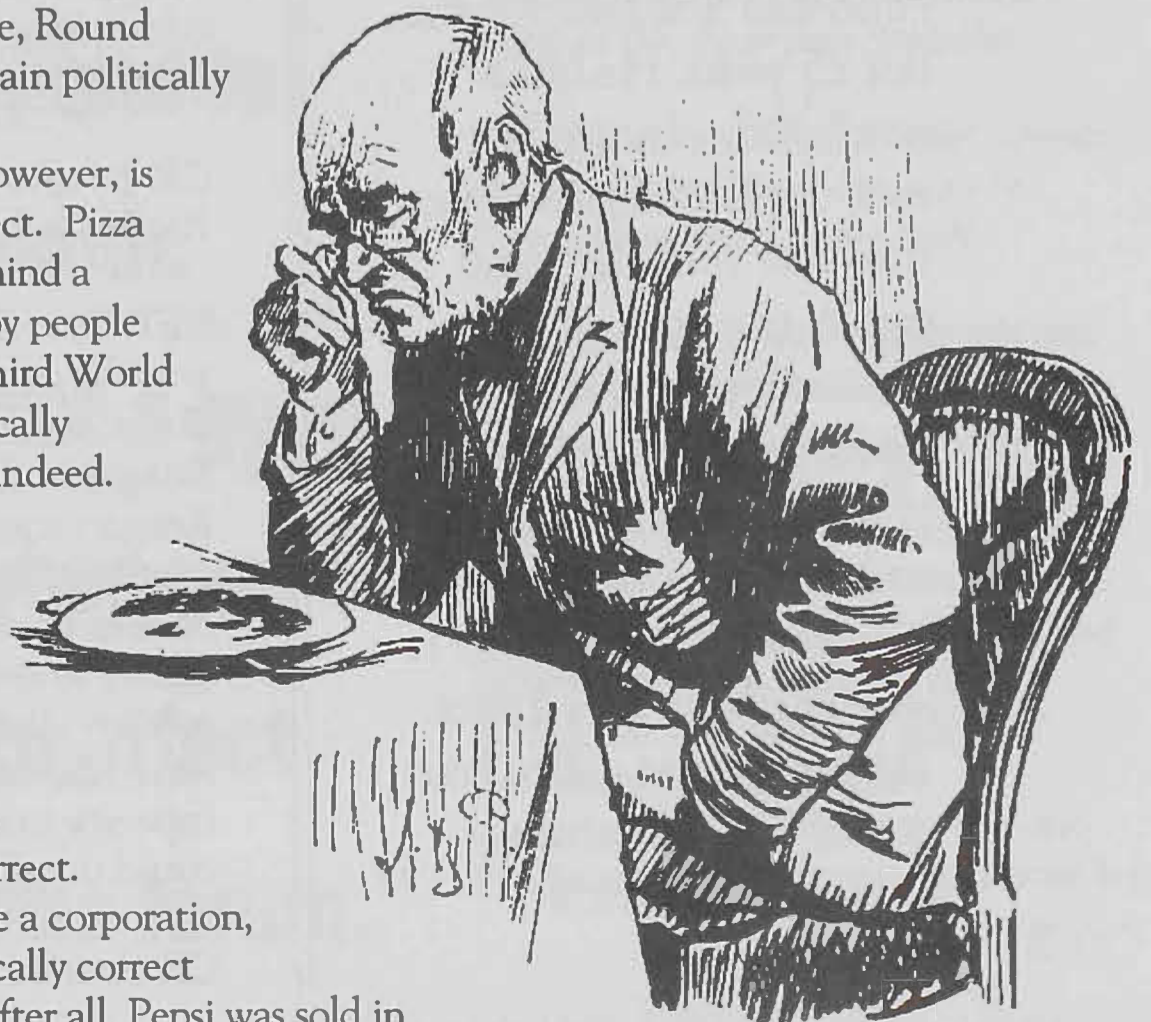
the former Soviet Union. A corporation which could sell its capitalistic product in the Soviet Union *must* be a politically correct enterprise.

Now that the politically correct person knows where to get a pizza, the question arises as to what toppings are politically correct. Pepperoni, Sausage, Ham, Canadian Bacon, and Ground Beef are off limits, as it is cruel to make an animal die for man's lust of meat. Extra sauce and extra cheese must be forgone, as only a politically

incorrect glutton would ask for extra toppings.

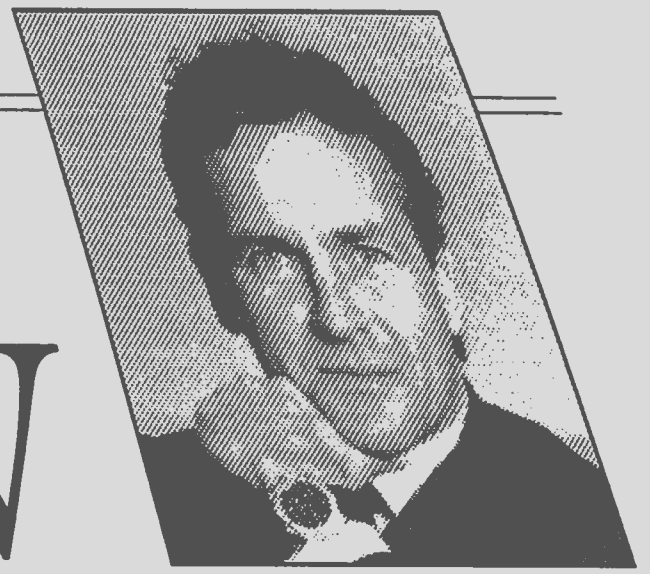
All other toppings are politically correct, but only if used sparingly. Again, how can you eat a pizza loaded full of toppings when hunger is killing people in Africa?

The next time one of my friends wants to get a politically correct pizza with me, I think I'll just grab me a cheeseburger instead. ♦



# The New Conservatism

A CONVERSATION WITH R. EMMETT TYRRELL



On October 7, two of the editors from the *California Review* interviewed R. Emmett Tyrrell, Jr. about his new book *The Conservative Crack-Up*. Tyrrell was the founder and editor in chief of the *American Spectator* for the last 25 years. He has a syndicated column that runs the *Washington Times*, the *New York Post*, and papers throughout the United States. He makes frequent appearances on opinion shows and has written for *Commentary*, *National Review*, *Harper's*, and *The New York Times*. *Time* magazine called him one of the "50 future leaders of America."

*California Review*: Now you've written a book about the conservative crack-up — what do you think is the main premise that conservatives can draw from this?

R. Emmett Tyrrell: Well they'd better draw from it [that] their temperament is anti-political, and by temperament they don't like politics, so they'd better overcome their temperament. And they'd better learn to work with coalitions, as well as others in their political camps. For instance, welcome liberals who might share some of their views on privatization or something of that sort. I think that the premise of the book is the great thing that brought the conservatives down... their very own temperament, which is to be private, and to avoid public life, which is not a good thing when you're trying to affect the public forum.

*CR*: So what do you think contributed to the success of Ronald Reagan in forming a coalition if simply that wasn't the case...

RET: Two things contributed to Ronald Reagan's success. One was the deplorable condition of the liberals; the existence of the liberal crack-up. The second thing was the talent of Ronald Reagan... the great political savvy that Ronald Reagan had. Reagan was a conservative who was unhampered by the conservative temperament; I mean he had been a liberal when he was young, he had a great love of public life, he had a great ability to articulate his ideas, which is one of the problems conservatives had over the years. Conservatives over the years have had very few writers around, and they had a very limited capacity to dramatize themselves and their ideas. Reagan could do all that.

*CR*: So what I think that conservatives have to fight their way

through when meeting the popular prejudices of the public is their very temperament, as you say, is very cloistered. How do you think conservatives go about changing that?

RET: Well, I don't know how they go about it. You know, like an old fire, you gotta train these people. First of all, they have to understand politics; they have to understand that politics in a public act, and they have to get more comfortable with the public act of politics. They've got to be able to involve themselves a little more in the give and take. Conservatives' minds, particularly with this book, conservatives don't particularly like criticism. They'd better learn to take a little criticism. You might notice that this, *The Conservative Crack-Up*, has been well-reviewed — people like George Gilder and Ben Hinnegar of the *Wall Street Journal*, but by the kind of lesser luminaries of conservatism, the book wasn't very well received. The conservatives have got to, better learn how to take some friendly criticism.

CR: What effects did the fall of communism have on the conservative movement? Some people think that that's directly led to the conservative crack-up, but you simply say that it's something more temperament, something that's more intrinsic to conservatism itself, or to the American brand of conservatism.

RET: That's right, I don't believe it was the fall of communism, as they say. The founder of modern conservatism was Edmund Burke, and I don't think he ever met a communist. You don't need communism around to have conservatism.

CR: So, taking that thought, what do you think that the battles or the challenges for conservatism will be in the future?



**“...The thing that brought the conservatives down [was] their very own temperament, which is to be private, and to avoid public life... Not a good thing when you're trying to affect the public forum.”**

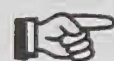
RET: Well, I think that preserving personal liberty against a statist like Bill Clinton is one thing, I mean preserving a concern for individual liberty in a country whose leading intellectuals have no regard for individual liberty, that's a pretty big challenge.

CR: So do you think that begins with conservatives starting to take a little bit more of a cultural role, not just one that's strictly political? Conservatives teaching more, conservatives writing more; things that have been popularly, in our age, mostly controlled by liberals?

RET: That's right. I say in the book that the conservatives have got to involve themselves in what they didn't do. Ronald Reagan was a political genius in so many ways, but one thing that he didn't do that was astonishing to me, was he made no effort whatsoever to do what Roosevelt, John Kennedy did so well. And that was, influence the culture of the country. He made no attempt to influence the culture of the country, and the conservatives had better make some effort in this regard. Of course, at the *American Spectator* we do. That's the whole point of the *American Spectator*.

CR: How do you think Ronald Reagan could have done that; how does the President go about doing that?

RET: The same way Roosevelt did bring artists, and poets, and playwrights into your government, and confer the laurels of the White House on such people. I mean, the Roosevelt administration was famous for having playwrights like Robert Sherwood, poets like Archibald MacLeish in the government. In Reagan's government, I don't know if Tom Wolfe was ever even invited over for



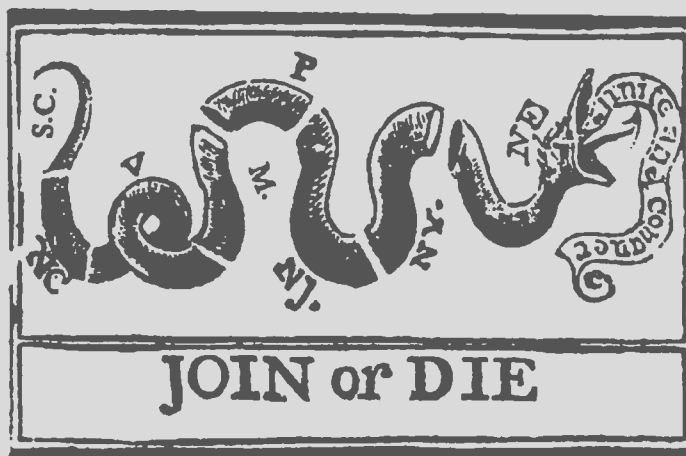
dinner. So I mean the blueprint's there, it's something that was done, as I said, has been done by other political leaders; unfortunately they were all liberals.

CR: Now, you made a comment that nestles in the back of the American Spectator; there were some young conservatives who were bothered by some of your comments that you made. Would you like to explain that book about them not being hip. Would you like to explain that a little bit more, because we have a collegiate audience? I thought that was very interesting.

RET: I don't think liberals are particularly cool these days. But, I mean P.J. O'Rourke has shown you guys how to be cool, just act like [him], you know. Marry a girl 20 years younger than you. But you know, have some fun. Let the libertarian streak in you vivify your behavior.

CR: But so you think this is the crack-up of conservatism itself, versus the crack-up of the right where there's groups like the neo-conservatives, the conservatives, and the libertarians that aren't getting along since communism's fall. Certainly with guys like Patrick Buchanan, firing shots at William Bennett, that's not something that's good for the movement of the right in this country, whereas people like Buckley had been taking years to put together a movement that could affect ... cultural ...

RET: You've always had these fissures in conservatism, and at critical moments, conservatives always come together. Pat Buchanan was against the Gulf War, but as soon as the bombs, or the guns went off, Pat was back on the right side again. Pat challenged the President, but as soon as the challenge failed, he gave a more supportive speech for the President at the convention. That's not the problem. The problem isn't that we disagree on various



**“The founder of modern conservatism was Edmund Burke, and I don't think he ever met a communist. You don't need communism around to have conservatism.”**

issues, the problem is much deeper; the problem is that basically, with the exception of a guy like Bill Buckley, conservatives are lousy public figures. Ronald Reagan, Bill Buckley, people like that were different; they were great public figures, but they didn't suffer the public — the conservative temperament.

CR: Why is that? Because they were instinctive conservatives versus...

RET: I think it was because they were Irish myself... I can't tell you how to change your temperament but I can certainly tell you when you've got it. I can tell you Russell Kirk had it. You know, that guy... now there's what I call an unhip public figure, old fuddy duddy Russell Kirk. Remember, he has to criticize Bill Buckley's novels. I took the criticism seriously until I read one or two of Kirk's.

CR: Do you think that four years in the wilderness again will be good for the Republicans?

RET: Well no, I don't think so. Because I think that they'll lose important court appointments, important federal roles that they have in the Washington bureaucracy. I don't think losing's ever a good thing.

CR: Would you consider somebody like George Bush conservative?

RET: George Bush is temperamentally a conservative, and I think his deepest sentiments are conservative, but as I say of him; and I say of our culture in general, we have a culture that's completely polluted by liberal ideas, and liberal issues. And one of those liberal issues is “one must balance the budget at all costs, even raising taxes,” and George Bush, though he should have known better, what did

he do when he stepped into the White House as President of the United States? He put a bullet into his foot by breaking his vow "No new taxes." And promptly increased the deficit, government spending, taxes for us to where, if not a recession, certainly a stagnant economy. What's another element of the liberal culture he responds to? Education, and the environment. He wants to be the education president, he wants to be the environmental president. All that's well and good, if he used conservative policies to do that. But instead he fell for liberal policies. Spending more money on education is going to make us a renaissance society? My foot!

*CR: Well then it seems that the problem is a lot in allowing liberalism to define the questions because they have people who are publicly in control of a lot of culture they have been allowed to influence culture — or pollute it.*

RET: Well I would bar them from influencing it. I wouldn't deny them the ability to, but we've got to have our influence and our say also. Part of the reason we don't is because liberals are, of course, bigots, and in power. They can't hear enough of themselves talking, and they certainly don't like to hear the other side. If they hear the other side, they respond with charges of fascism and things like that. I think that we can do a better job of presenting our case; that's where we fail.

*CR: I've heard you talk about the Bork hearings being a watershed. Could that be traced back to Reagan's 1984 election; Reagan basically winning a popularity contest as opposed to implementing conservative issues?*

RET: Well, you know, I touch on that in the book. I think it was probably a mistake for Reagan to run the 1984 campaign as a beauty contest. He should have stuck with issues and

ideas. But so many times, it's typical really of American politicians that if they can possibly avoid real issues and real debate, they will. I think that was somewhat to be expected, I think it was a great mistake. But you know, I also remember that by 1986, Ronald Reagan was far, by far the oldest man ever to be President of the United States. He should have brought more young Californians in; you know, the Californians are the best thing that ever happened to Washington. Anytime I heard he brought someone back from California, I was heartened, frankly. That's why when I get out here and I see that your party's in such disarray, I'm really surprised, because I thought that the Republican Party out here was in such good shape. But again, I think that the weak leadership of George Bush has contributed to the problems you've got out here.

*CR: Well, Wilson's contributed to this, too. He did a lot of what George Bush did, instead of staying with the conservative ideas, and trying to win on those grounds, conceding the issues over to the left.*

RET: Yeah, I understand that.

*CR: It's saying, it's a kind of tacit admission, the last eight years were terrible, they were cold-hearted and not based on liberty, a love of liberty, and a love for trying to solve the same problems with different means.*

RET: Yeah, I wrote a column on that this morning; I said that I knew Wilson a little bit in Washington. He was a much better senator than he was [governor].

*CR: Is there anybody in the conservative movement now that you see who could step forward?*

RET: I think most conservatives agree that the conservative leader for

the near future is Jack Kemp. I think that just down the line people will say that.

*CR: Why?*

RET: First of all, he loves public life, he's got that animal instinct that you've gotta have. Secondly, he has some original ideas that are somewhat different. You know, one of the problems with the political debate in this country is it's exhausted. These people have been arguing the same thing for years — the inner-cities need more money, the inner-cities need less money. How long are you going to argue that capital punishment is good, capital punishment is bad. How long are you going to argue these stupid arguments? Kemp's got something different to say — we don't need more money, we need different policies for the inner-cities. We need empowerment, we need enterprise zones, we need things like that. To which the only response is Michael Kinsley's enervated, "Oh does anybody actually think we're going to do that?" Okay Michael, we aren't going to do that, so what should we do, just keep throwing money at people that are becoming more and more decadent as the money's thrown at them?

*CR: Isn't that an example, though, of conservatives putting out a positive ideology, instead of just being — well, what Russell Kirk says that conservatism is the negation of ideology, which is really not true in our present circumstances. But here you have a situation where Jack just gets up and stands up and puts in a positive way what his ideas fought, or what Bill Bennett has ...*

RET: Right, but that's not ideology. He's just gotta set about policy, positive policy. And Kirk, you know, Kirk's point isn't wrong, it's just not relevant. ♦

# GENERATION

Continued from page 14

some thing. There's a struggling writer, a struggling actress, a struggling advertising executive, a struggling social worker (which seems a bit redundant, actually), and a struggling aerobics instructor. (And who wouldn't struggle in the cutthroat world of high glamour aerobics?) One of the characters started out as a struggling construction worker, but then found a job as a struggling mechanic. They all live in the same condo, which is managed by a married older couple. They weren't in the episode I watched — they were either too busy struggling or living life on their own terms, I'm not sure which.

One might ask how all these people can afford to live in a trendy Los Angeles condo, seeing as how they all seem to be struggling. But logic is a scarce commodity in the realm of television, unlike, for example, affordable housing.

Like *90210*, the denizens of *Melrose Place* have to confront a Big Issue each week. Jake, the construction worker turned mechanic, had to confront his past, which, we soon found out, was somewhat dicey. Jake spent most of the episode brooding, which is apparently more fun than struggling and living life on your own terms put together.

"I want to get as far away from my life as possible," seethed Jake, as he sped off on his motorcycle. Amen to that, Jake. Wish I could join you.

When not brooding or struggling, the fun-loving *Melrose Place* kids do what any other twentysomething would do — they argue about who is more self-absorbed.

"You are so self-absorbed!" screamed the social worker at the aerobics instructor.

"I'm self-absorbed?" asked the incredulous, yet still struggling aerobics instructor. "You are the most self-absorbed person I know!"

In my opinion, it was probably a draw.

By far the most grating of the shows I watched was *The Real World*, which airs on MTV. If television is candy for the mind, then MTV is the broadcasting equivalent of Pixie dust — it may be pretty looking and sugary-sweet, but there's no way on

earth that it can be good for you.

*The Real World* has an unusual premise — take eight people (who are *not* actors, by the way) from diverse backgrounds, stick them in a loft in New York City, and turn the cameras on. Bold social engineering experiment or just a re-hash of old *Brady Bunch* episodes? You be the judge.

The best way to describe *The Real World* is to say that it's a lot like *Melrose Place*,



only without the witty banter. The characters — whoops, I mean, *real people* — still brood. They are still pursuing various and sundry careers — we meet a rapper, a rock singer, a poet, indeed, the cream of the trendy crop. They still live life on their own terms. And they still purport to struggle. (Point of order: When MTV is paying your rent and sticking you on TV every week, struggling is the one thing you aren't.) Only on *The Real World* everything is done MTV style — loud and repeatedly.

In this episode, for instance, Heather the rapper was having a fight with Erik. (I forget what he does, but it apparently had something to do with sniveling and pouting.) Erik would yell at Heather. Heather would yell at Erik. Insults would fly. Racial epithets would be flung. And then, everyone would analyze what just happened.

"Heather and Erik have sort of a roller coaster relationship," observed one person.

"I feel sorry for people like Erik," Heather told the audience playing along at home.

"Heather is just self-absorbed," Erik explained, falling back on what was becoming the battle cry of the twentysomethings.

This type of post-crisis analysis goes on throughout *The Real World*. No event is so

trivial that it does not merit a full-blown discussion. One wonders how these twentysomethings are able to analyze themselves so thoroughly and still find the time to struggle. Maybe this is a special generation...

There were other programs I could have watched, but sometime during the middle of *The Real World*, I lost the will to live.

## What I Learned

Based on my notes, there was no dearth of information about twentysomethings in the programs I watched. As a matter of fact, I was able to glean dozens of truisms about my generation from the ol' boob tube. In summary:

- People who go to high school in Beverly Hills have interesting hairstyles.
- Minorities are not as interesting as deaf people.
- The French are kind of snooty.
- Struggling and brooding are great fun!
- You can't run away from your past.
- Being self-absorbed is bad, but then again, it may not be.
- Erik and Heather have a roller coaster-like relationship.
- This much crappy TV would probably kill a lesser man.

But what did it all mean: this unholy union between TV and the twentysomething generation. Could it, would it hold any special meaning for my life. My only basis of comparison to what I saw on television is my own twentysomething life.

I live with three other twentysomethings in a condominium in trendy La Jolla. Matt is a struggling college student. Blaine is a student who struggles at college. Robin struggles and also attends college. We are all white. One of us is blonde. No one wears sideburns. We all live life on our own terms.

But apart from that, my life takes a left turn away from television's brand of reality. None of us wallow in pity, nor argue about who is more self-absorbed, or tackle with the problems of a changing world on a regular basis. If any one of us was to remark "You know, our generation is the first generation to be worse off than our parents," we would probably stare blankly at him

and keep on eating Fritos.

All of this leads me to conclude that this whole twentysomething generation in crisis malarky is a fraud and a myth. The twentysomething don't have it any worse off than any other generation — we're all in the same, sinking boat. But since television ads are targeted at young people, the programs sandwiched between the ads have to attract those young people. And the way to do that is to make an angst ridden mountain out of a mildly anxious molehill.

The danger here is that we become so enamored with this concept of a "Lost Generation" that it becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy. When we become consumed with trying to define each generation's own particular mood, we tend to forget that history is one long series of struggles and successions.

And you can't very well forget about that if you expect to live life on your own terms. ♦

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## CABLE

Continued from page 16

effective technology, with small rooftop microwave antennas aiming to replace underground wires.

New "direct broadcast satellite" technology promises 100 channels via a rooftop antennas one foot in diameter, and is already in use in parts of West Europe. Video rentals and sales have become a billion-dollar industry, and home computers are finding niches in the news industry. With such a wide variety of home entertainment services available beyond local television, Congress deciding to regulate cable to provide "cheap" basic service is tantamount to Congress deciding to regulate pizza delivery to provide "cheap" basic nutritional service beyond the food already available at the grocery store.

### **Local Broadcasters and Local Politicians**

Cable operators and distributors owe nothing to local broadcasters. Every additional viewer which cable brings to local broadcasters translates into higher advertising revenue for the broadcaster and little or no return to the cable distributor. In a major coup for television

broadcasters nationwide, Congress's bill allows local governments to set rates which cable operators must pay to local broadcasters to rebroadcast their signals. To prevent cable companies from dropping low quality or unreasonably priced local stations from their lineups, cable companies will now be required to carry and pay for all such stations, to the tune of over one billion dollars in the next few years. Ultimately, every cent of this money will come from — you guessed it — consumers.

It is not unreasonable to ask cable regulators pay a negotiated sum for rebroadcasting rights of local television signals. But such sums must be freely negotiated between voluntary parties and not through government-sponsored price-fixing schemes.

One would be inclined to wonder why Congressional representatives are so quick to pass this billion-dollar consumer-sponsored gift to local television stations, when it's clear that the interests of competition will not be served. Within an hour of passage of the bill it was clear: local representatives need the support of their local television franchises. Editorials supporting local representative's decisions and chiding President Bush's veto graced the local airwaves and cable wires all night, and local political endorsements have arrived over the past few weeks.

### **The Bottom Line**

One of the most hideous provisions of the cable bill would guarantee certain profit margins for cable companies, if they create a financial hardship. This will serve to keep many inefficient companies in business at the public's expense. If the cable bill truly encouraged competition, those companies would be out of business and new entrepreneurs would be bidding to take over their operations.

The bottom line, and perhaps most obscene of all about the cable bill is that it *won't* encourage competition. It will step up cost, bureaucracy, inefficiency, and unnecessary regulation. It will not force local governments, those with the necessary power, to encourage competition both inside and outside the cable entertainment industry. And it will substantially slow down the improvement

of technologies necessary to bring home communications into the 21st century. It will do one thing: give politicians an issue to talk about for a month.

Most ironically, many of the senators and congressmen will not be around in five or ten years to explain to the public why cable rates haven't gone down. Their lies this month about how their decision will keep rates down will have all but been forgotten, and replaced with a new crop of lies and deceptions. ♦

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## TAXES

Continued from page 11

What makes Proposition 167 even more dangerous than the New Covenant, is that 167 only affects California. The New Covenant will affect all fifty states uniformly. But, 167 is a state initiative and will have no effect on how business is run in Arizona or Oregon or Nevada or Michigan.

Two years ago, McDonnell Douglas scaled back operations in Long Beach and shifted its major contracts to St. Louis. Now, General Dynamics is leaving San Diego for more business-friendly Arizona. These movements are due to increased regulation. One can only imagine the mass exodus that will occur when this regulation is topped with increased taxes. Let us hope we have not strayed so far from the Reagan legacy. No matter how hard we try to only soak the rich, the middle class inevitably gets doused. If Proposition 167 succeeds, combined with a Clinton victory, Californians should be prepared to ride out a long wave of continued economic decline. Are you ready to open these floodgates? If not, vote no on Proposition 167. ♦

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**Come to our weekly meetings  
every Thursday at the Grove  
Caffé at 5:45 p.m.**

# Parting Thoughts...

Those who understand the past can prepare prudently for a tolerable future.

◆◆◆  
—Russell Kirk

◆◆◆  
Behavior is the mirror in which everyone displays his image.

◆◆◆  
—Goethe

◆◆◆  
Good actions enoble us and we are the sons of our deeds.

◆◆◆  
—Cervantes

◆◆◆  
Sixty years I knew everything; now I know I know nothing; education is the progressive discovery of our own ignorance.

◆◆◆  
—Will Durant

◆◆◆  
Colleges are places where pebbles are polished and diamonds are dimmed.

◆◆◆  
—Robert Ingersoll

◆◆◆  
Both force and money are impotent against ideas.

◆◆◆  
—Ludwig von Mises

◆◆◆  
The temptation shared by all forms of

intelligence: cynicism.

◆◆◆  
—Albert Camus

◆◆◆  
Nothing is more powerful than an idea whose time has come.

◆◆◆  
—Victor Hugo

◆◆◆  
To see what is right and not to do it, that is cowardice.

◆◆◆  
—Confucius

◆◆◆  
We are not afraid to follow the truth wherever it may lead, nor to tolerate error so long as reason is left free to combat it

◆◆◆  
—Thomas Jefferson

◆◆◆  
Politics consists in choosing between the disastrous and the unpalatable.

◆◆◆  
—J.K. Galbraith

◆◆◆  
How alike are the groans of love to those of the dying.

◆◆◆  
—Evelyn Waugh

◆◆◆  
No matter who you vote for the government always gets in.

◆◆◆  
—English Graffiti

◆◆◆  
Politicians are like diapers. They both should be changed often. And for the same reason.

◆◆◆  
—John Wallner

◆◆◆  
I am ready to meet my Maker. Whether my Maker is prepared for the ordeal of meeting me is another matter.

◆◆◆  
—Winston Churchill

◆◆◆  
Don't salt other peoples food.

◆◆◆  
—Belgian proverb

◆◆◆  
“The government deficit is the difference between the amount of money the government spends and the amount it has the nerve to collect.”

◆◆◆  
—Sam Ewing

◆◆◆  
It isn't evil that is ruining the earth, but mediocrity. The crime is not that Nero played while Rome burned, but that he played badly.

◆◆◆  
—Ned Rorem



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