

Initiative might repair Measure 5's damages

OUR OPINION: Plans to offset the effects of Measure 5 should be considered

Americans have heard over and over that children are the future of this country. Presidential hopefuls list lofty goals they say will help the education system get back on its feet. Local politicians develop programs to fund extracurricular activities, and the media expose the inequality in schools.

With all this attention focused on education, one would think it was our number-one priority.

But it isn't. Five years ago voters approved a measure that put a cap on the amount of property taxes assessed. This action collapsed the foundation of public education; schools were forced to drastically cut budgets and programs. Many districts no longer offer music programs, debate teams or art classes, and most sports programs are now pay-to-play. Many reports over the last five years show that property assessments have increased to the level that most homeowners were paying before Measure 5. Regardless, schools are not receiving the same funding they were receiving five years ago.

In an attempt to remedy this, a statewide initiative filed last week would allow school districts to raise property taxes above the limits set by Measure 5 in 1990. The plan, once approved by voters, would allow a \$2 increase per \$1,000 of assessed value or \$200 per year for a \$100,000 home.

This idea allows communities to fund education at

the levels they see fit. Each district would be able to develop priorities for education through taxes. The plan would give some money back to education, but at the same time it would not raise the tax rate to the pre-Measure 5 level.

Because the state and federal governments have so drastically decreased the funding to schools, the districts have been forced to adjust. To make the money work effectively, the communities within the district should identify the programs that are necessary for a quality education. Extracurricular programs are essential to a quality education. Without them, America would be without symphonies and theaters. When students are deprived of artistic and athletic opportunities, it becomes more difficult to discover hidden talents. Studies have shown that athletic programs in inner-city schools help keep kids in school.

Classes such as music and art, which help develop well-rounded students, could be subsidized so that students could still have the opportunity to participate. Students who could not afford the fee could receive waivers.

Communities must learn to work together to provide the best education possible for our children. The initiative, offering an alternative to Measure 5, is a step in the right direction to replace the lost money. No dollar amount can be placed on the importance of education. It is the most important line on the budget. This initiative would allow the government to begin to repair all the damage made by budget reductions.



Right wing movement rears its ugly head

Just before students all ran screaming from campus and into the waiting arms of spring break, the *Emerald* printed a letter by Alexandra Berwick, Multi-Cultural Center Coordinator (ODE, March 18), that I felt highlighted a concern I've had for many years now.

Right wingers, and especially Republicans, are the root cause of everything that is oppressive and evil in America.

In fact, I'm sure that I can prove it is Ronald Reagan's or George Bush's fault that I have suffered from a painful ingrown toe nail for all these years.

Republicans and white males need to be stopped at all costs.

Remember years ago when those women were attacked and had their swimsuits torn off by a whole bunch of drunken college boys during spring break in Palm Springs, Calif.?

Republicans. Every last bikini-top-ripping one of them.

Those same male chauvinist pigs are all running for Congress, but you won't hear it in the media because it's all a huge cover up. The press, after all, is just another arm of America's vicious, insidious, ever-encroaching military industrial complex (whatever the heck that is).

Remember Keiko, the sickly but lovable killer whale now living in Newport? He didn't get sick because of any discrepancy in his living arrangements in Mexico. The CIA made Keiko sick after planting a super-sensitive transmitter in Keiko's dorsal fin that attempted to monitor and stem the flow of all the illegal but highly skilled working class Mexican migrants into the U.S.

Obviously, something went terribly wrong with the transmitter and Keiko has never been the same.

Again, we can blame it all on the white, male-dominated CIA.

And how can anyone forget the tragic Gulf War?

Saddam Hussein? He's a Republican.

That's right. So it was actually a good war, the best kind of war, the mother of all high-fives-all-around wars, because oppressive white-dominated America sent a bunch of its own oppressive white, male Republican soldiers to fight it out with Hussein's oppressive Republican Guard soldiers. Republicans were oppressing each other left and right, but more so to the right of course. It wasn't pretty.

Back here at the white, male-dominated University, Berwick mentioned in her letter that the April 14 march to "Fight the Right" in San Francisco will address the "continued social injustice shown by the right-wing movement in America."

I looked up the "right-wing movement" in the phone book's oppressive White pages and gave them a call. Of course, they denied showing any social injustice to anyone. In fact, right-wing

movement officials (who wished to remain anonymous for obvious reasons) denied ever having any social injustice in their possession, let alone having ever showed it to anyone. The march will be just the beginning of a nation-wide campaign that will finally track down and eliminate every last trace of Republicanism, Right Wingism, male dominance and rabid conservatism left (I mean right) in this country.

OPINION



David Bartlett

History is full of examples of oppressive white males gone bad.

Hitler was a Republican. No, it's true. Really.

Napoleon? A Republican.

America should stop playing footsie with progressive socialism and make quicker, bolder moves to institutionalize Communism as its sociopolitical base.

After all, Communism has always lifted the oppressed working-class masses from under the very heels of their Chevrolet-driving, mom-hugging, apple-pie-eating, flag-waving, white male masters.

Need proof? Just look at the former Soviet Union, China and Cuba.

Have you seen the smiles on the faces of Chinese dissidents crushed by government soldiers during the Tiananmen Square protest of 1989? And there's a right wing movement in America that's oppressive? Oppressive is the fact that Tiananmen demonstrators are still being persecuted today by a paranoid Chinese government.

Real Communists will always be scared to death of real freedom.

While America still struggles with racism and inappropriate attitudes toward domestic violence, there is no "war" being waged against homosexuals or poor women, and there is no "white male dominated institution of power... keeping the masses of oppressed down and not allowing them their rights."

When the "Fight the Right" marchers go to San Francisco, they will not be met by an opposing army because the enemy is all of us.

There is no conservative conspiracy.

There is only a very diverse nation trying desperately to come to grips with its own diversity. America should not be constantly flogged for its grievous actions of the past.

Instead, we should all try to work together, to communicate with each other and tell one another about how any given issue or concern impacts us individually.

We should at least agree to disagree.

We aren't getting anywhere calling each other names and slapping labels on one another.

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