

Monologue

Reagan needs to accommodate for working citizens

By Marco Procaccini
Copy Editor

In this election year, any free-spirited, working-class person could probably ask, "What has Reaganomics had to offer common working people, who make up the majority of society?" A good question.

A news report last week quoted President Reagan as saying the unemployment rate has dropped, so unemployment is down. Come on buddy, you know better than that. The unemployment rate is measured by the number of people collecting unemployment insurance. A low rate means less people collecting, not more people working. People whose insurance has expired, welfare recipients and those who don't qualify are not counted in the rate. Economic analysis shows the actual number of unemployed people has been increasing for many years. With almost half of primary industry workers out of work and perpetual 50 percent unemployment of racial and ethnic groups and young people, it is absurd to state unemployment is down.

Of those who have found work, most are employed at low and reduced paying jobs. This has been significant enough to prompt Reaganites to say productivity is up. True enough, but who's benefiting? Not those who are producing the wealth.

Rather it is those who profit from it—business profits are up substantially. Whoopy! Prices relative to wages are up also. But real wages and other labor rewards are down, thanks to scarcity of jobs and increased hostility toward trade unions.

But Reaganites are happy about all this. They say that business will re-invest in America and all will be well. In fact, concern has been voiced over increased U.S. business investments being made outside the country in more profitable places. You know, brutally repressive and Big

Brother-type societies like Latin America, South Africa, Japan and Chile, where people have little social freedom. (That's why Reagan likes those places so much.)

Even if business investment was to stay in America, with reduced wages and benefits and less economic freedoms, working people don't stand to benefit.

Reagan's loudest boast is that the inflation rate has been cut in half. An impressive feat on statistics paper. It has caused the U.S. dollar to increase in value, thus Reagan can say that personal savings are worth more. This is great for those who derive their personal income from profits. Their savings have increased.

However, with falling wages, although personal income is worth more, working people have less of it (four years ago they had more, but it was worth less).

Reagan fans scream that people are more secure about the economy, thus are buying more products. I say garbage. Although each dollar buys more, low wages and high prices force people to spend more on essential commodities. In addition, more people are buying on credit, thus inflation is forecast to rise next year.

The Reagan Administration has acquired the largest deficit in history. It's at the point where the banks could probably reclaim the Capitol building along with the entire Congress. What an interesting dictatorship that would make!

This government's aggressive, suicidal and repressive foreign policy on a 1-10 scale is worth a fat zero. Ditto for its exuberant military spending. Reagan's drastic cuts in social services have caused nothing but hardship for the millions who need them. Furthermore, Reaganomics has done nothing to reduce ever-increasing poverty, malnutrition, and mass violations of basic human freedoms. To these facts, Reaganites have remained conveniently silent.

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Dedication of triatheletes shows stupidity of humans

By Doug Vaughan
Of The Print

After watching ABC's Wide World of Sports last weekend and seeing the 1983 Ironman Competition (a.k.a. triathlon), I realized how stupid some people are...in this case several thousands.

Besides senseless, the fifth annual competition is a 2.4-mile swim, followed by a 112-mile bicycle ride and topped off by a marathon run. The only smart thing about it is that it was held in Hawaii.

I've never watched the Ironman competition before, and believe me it was a joy. Never have I seen so many people pushing their body to the limit, and more.

What does a person get from this? Besides pain, I don't know. Obviously these people are in their best physical condition, yet the competition involves a total disregard for the body. It can't be healthy, or practical.

In the Nov. 7 issue of Newsweek magazine, it said that the most dedicated triathletes will give up their home, family life and career for the sport. The program consists of 40 hours of training per week. It takes more than that to succeed.

Wouldn't you think the dedication would deter most people? Not quite. There are an estimated 250,000 American triathletes...all shapes, sizes, and colors. And there are about 1,000 scheduled super-endurance events for this year.

Dave Scott, the 1983 triathlon winner and winner of three of the five Ironman Triathlon Competitions, is considered the master of the

sport. Yet, in the 1983 competition, he passed the last aid station of the bicycle portion in order to improve his time. Becoming hypoglycemic and dehydrated, he went off course, hitting a boulder at 20 mph. He required 60 stitches in his head. He still refuses to wear head gear.

Another eye-catcher was Millie Brown, the oldest woman to compete and last to finish the course. Twice she collapsed but regained stamina to complete the course before the 17-hour time limit.

The Newsweek article told of another triathlete, Joanne Dahlkoetter, a psychologist. In the 1982 competition, she recalled the pain. "I was crying and there was blood gushing out of my shoes." It turned out that her insoles were improperly inserted. She had worn the whole soles off her feet. Appetizing, huh?

Is it worth the pain? Obviously these quarter-of-a-million people think it is. Some say it will become as big as tennis in a few years. I'll stick to tennis.

There is no doubt that triathletes are healthier than the average Doug Vaughan. But who wouldn't be with 40 hours a week training?

Studies show that triatheletes have a total physiological change. All bodily functions are altered. They have stronger hearts, slower metabolic rates and bones that are more dense than average. The biochemical structure of their muscles are more efficient. Fat or glycerol is turned into energy at a faster rate. The life expectancy of a triathlete could be 100 years.

The benefits speak for themselves, but the price is unreasonable. Why these people choose triathlon training over family, career and friends is beyond my comprehension. Don't get me wrong, I am not against the sport—I like watching people in pain.

