

the reactor

By Paul Azevedo



You would have thought we were back in the 1960s. The San Francisco dailies used words like "stunned" and "shocked" when the state Supreme Court reconfirmed the Serrano decision. What's so stunning or shocking in 1977 about saying that your kids and mine deserve equal education, and that an unequal tax base can't provide the equal dollars to fund that education?

San Francisco, which spends more on education (to get less) than almost any other school district I know, is complaining loudly.

That's the real problem! "Them as has" ain't about to give some of "their" tax funds to "us that hasn't." Not without a fight, they aren't.

SOME OF THE legislators are complaining that 1980 is approaching at breakneck speed and they can't revamp the school tax structure in three years. Let us put this high speed call-to-action into perspective. Mr. Serrano brought his lawsuit in 1967, when he learned that his gifted son, then in kindergarten, would be cheated of a good education unless he moved to a high-wealth district... And, my oldest son was four that year.

By 1980 Mr. Serrano's son will be in college and my son will be a senior in high school.

WHILE THE LEGISLATORS have dallied, dithered, dawdled and delayed, a whole generation of Pacifica's finest product have been cheated of an equal education, their teachers have had to settle for lesser pay, little equipment, a poverty-level of educational tools, and parents have had to take on an overwhelming burden of taxation.

While the Legislature has procrastinated, the great wave of 1950-1960 children have passed and is passing through the educational system, forever blighted and discriminated against by a tax situation that the courts so rightly term unconstitutional.

AS YOU CAN GUESS, I'm in favor of the Serrano decision, and its confirmation by the court.

We in Pacifica have taken the lead in gathering together the low wealth school districts and fighting for justice in educational dollars.

Now is a good time to commend Superintendent Jim Brien for his valiant, persistent leadership in the fight. Our school board has backed him. They have fought for OUR children, but the efforts that have been made were on behalf of many thousands throughout this state.

Let's hope that our grandchildren, at least, will get the benefit.

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