



the 9-16-81 reactor

by Paul Azevedo

First, let me apologize to any and all who acted on my suggestion last Wednesday. If you tried to phone a county supervisor, you found out what I had forgotten. It was St. Theobald's day, or Admission Day, or some other day when county employees don't answer the phone.

I had asked that you urge the board to act on the purchase of seven acres on Roberts road. The plan was to build, eventually, 72 units of what is laughingly called "affordable" housing. I used the term "affordable," because that is what our original story had used.

Mr. Bill Fabian, whose letter appears elsewhere, seems to think that "affordable" translates to "low cost." Unfortunately for most of us, this version of "affordable" housing can be afforded only by those who make about \$600 a week.

Far from an invasion from the ghetto, this might wind up being an invasion by a gaggle of rejects from Hillsborough. I am disgusted with an economy in which a family must FIRST earn the respectable income of \$600 a week, and THEN go to the county for help.

Most teachers and cops, and this newspaperman,

would feel good about earning that much more than they earn right now. Very few of them could afford, from a standing start, to qualify for this housing which Mr. Fabian denigrates as low cost.

If an income of \$30,000 a year is beneath your respect, you have just stigmatized most of this town.

However, I must thank Mr. Fabian. He may have given me a clue to the motivation behind this housing initiative, which F.O.P. calls "slow-growth" and I call "stop-growth."

When a psychiatrist uses a Rorschach inkblot, it is to find out what is deep inside the mind of the person he is interviewing. When I used my Rorschach ("affordable") Mr. Fabian thought "low cost." Then he associated low-cost, not with the pleasant thought of healthy young families growing up as neighbors, but with the Pink Palace, Valencia Gardens, Army Street, Potrero Hill, Bayview-Hunters Point, and Westview.

What these places have in common, besides many minorities, is that they are full of victims of all races.

If we could project all the sins we see around us on "them," and then keep "them" out of town, life would be much simpler. But there is plenty of vandalism, drugs, and other problems originating in the higher-priced houses of Park Pacifica. Pacifica's problems don't end at Westview's edges. In fact, there may be more concerned neighborhood activists per capita in Westview than there are in Park Pacifica.

Some of the best neighbors we have in this town started life in the ghettos of San Francisco.

You can't tell a person's desirable or undesirable character by his color or his income level.

We'll just have to take them one at a time, and judge each one individually, by his actions.