



## the reactor

12-15-82

When I came to Pacifica 19 years ago, I just wanted a 50 by 100 foot lot with house attached that I could call my own. I didn't realize how lucky I was to be getting away from the "pleasures" of San Francisco living. I got a clue when I found a refund on my car insurance waiting for me, as the reward for changing my address.

Like a lot of people in their 20s and 30s, I had bounced from rental to rental, from Santa Rosa to San Jose to Concord to Walnut Creek and finally to San Francisco for two years.

I moved out of the Haight-Ashbury a couple of years before the infamous days of the "love" generation. My move was precipitated by looking out my back porch and imagining our tiny baby crawling off the edge of a 40 foot drop on to concrete.

The Haight has calmed down, but San Francisco has changed for worse, I think, and perhaps irrevocably. Like a community which tolerates a religious cult only to be overwhelmed by an influx of cultists, San Francisco has tolerated a variety of odd balls with different behavior patterns, and is now being overwhelmed by them.

Pacifica originated in large part because families from San Francisco wanted inexpensive homes where they could afford to raise children in an uncrowded area. While the Peninsula was growing in population, San

Francisco was being repopulated by people like Carol Ruth Silver. She may not object to apple pie and baseball, but she certainly does seem to object to couples, when they marry and have children and create a nuclear family.

I understand that Ms. Silver, in her roles as San Francisco supervisor and single parent by choice, objects to honoring National Family Week. NFW is one of those innocuous public relations inventions, used mainly to create a peg to hang a news release on. We probably don't need the week, but we do need families, preferably with a father, a mother (married to each other) and the children they raise.

Sadly, many children don't have the benefits of such a family, and thus must survive without a full-time set of parents. San Francisco (and Pacifica) pays a heavy price for the many households that don't have this once-usual pattern of life. Kids need mothers... and fathers. Cities need stable families. What's open to question is... Does San Francisco need Carol Silver or Harry Britt, who seem to me to be more concerned with undermining normal family life by encouraging irregular relationships than in helping the comparatively few families remaining in San Francisco to raise their children to become moral, upstanding adults.

The traditional family is an endangered species, and nowhere more so than in the City, where relationships often are about as permanent as footprints on the beach at low tide.

Traditional families, whether nuclear combinations of father, mother and children, or extended groups that include grandparents, aunts, uncles and cousins are needed to help children grow up to become responsible adults. The informal ephemeral combinations that are so common these days are hammers chipping at the foundations of society.

Unfortunately, the Silvers and the Britts are hard at work, enlarging the cracks and wedging them ever wider.