



Paul Azevedo

The Reactor

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There was plenty in last week's Tribune to react to. I have opinions enough to write a column each on everything from mudslides and cable TV complaints to Maxine Vernon, the violent death of Clarence Galindo and the resurrection of fireworks stands by petition.

Galindo was the man who deprived a 92-year-old man of the privilege he had earned as an arctic hero, that of dying peacefully in his bed. Capt. Christian Pedersen was the kind of man they write books about, an arctic explorer, ship's captain, authentic hero, who had retired to his snug harbor in Vallemar, only to die by the random violence of an escapee from the San Francisco County Jail. I do not mourn for Galindo, but I mourn when any man wastes his own life and that of others in such a shameful fashion.

However, I object very strongly to the provision in the ordinance (you'll find the public notice on page 17) which makes it a misdemeanor "wilfully" not to pay the tax and for which you can go to jail for six months. This is too darn close to sending people to debtor's prison. When taxes are based on property, the proper way to enforce them is with a lien, and that's already in this

ordinance. (Landlords, beware. Your tenants can now get you "liened" on.) Putting people in jail should be reserved for criminal acts like leaving your garbage cans out too long, which is also a crime in Pacifica.

I wish all the good people who worked so hard and passed all those petitions to resurrect fireworks stands this year had been apathetic for once. Apathy in a bad cause is no vice, and diligence that results in injuries and property damage is no virtue. No, Virginia, Barry Goldwater didn't say that.

Cal Hinton hasn't been trying to get fireworks banned these many years because he likes being mean to little kids. It's because, as our leading expert on fire, he knows that fireworks would cost too much even if they were free, and there isn't enough profit to justify them even if the worthy causes that sell them made twice the profit at half the labor. I think it's a shame that a good guy like Bud Wheeler feels he's got to defend fireworks, and I'm glad that on this issue at least, the mayor and I can agree.

I have to congratulate the mayor also for biting the bullet and voting for the utility tax. I don't want to pay for it any more than anyone else does, but this city is our city, and it's worth preserving.

As for Maxine Vernon, who wrote last week to complain about "rowdiness" directed against our present council majority, she should realize that it is the present council majority, and their friends The Friends who set the present tone of rudeness to those who disagree with them. Ms. Vernon is a very articulate person, but I am unaware of any complaints from her about the conduct of the Friends of Pacifica, which would have been far more justified.