

The Reactor

Paul Azevedo



A handful of fog

Trying to grab a handful of fog, or get words like liberal or conservative to mean something is about equally difficult. I should have known better than to try. I know when the fog drifts in, and I know in a vague way whether people are liberal or conservative, but the words don't carry as much meaning as some people think. I think I'm a liberal. At least I am by my definition.

Pacifica's Bill Clinton described my recent column on the Birch Society as "trying to rewrite history with half truths, innuendoes, illogical conclusions and a blind eye to facts."

Golly, did I do all that in 500 words? Bill, I refuse to speak for any other person who calls himself a liberal. They are not authorized to speak for me. If you won't accuse me of every mistake you attribute to those you call liberal, I promise not to attribute to you the mistakes of those I think of as conservative, men like Herbert Hoover, J. Edgar Hoover, Richard Nixon and Attila the Hun.

I was unaware Eleanor Roosevelt supported "the socialist experiment" in Russia. Please elucidate what you mean by "support." I don't think I rewrite history when I remember Harry Truman as a staunch opponent of communism and Eleanor Roosevelt backing him. By the way, it was Khrushchev, not Kruschev, who said "we will bury

you." And liberal Democrats like John Kennedy saw to it he didn't bury us. That's what the Cuban Missile Crisis was all about.

It's true, as you imply, you don't have to be a liberal Democrat to believe in ecology, protecting the earth, recycling, preventing off shore oil drilling and encouraging open space. However, most people with those beliefs define themselves either as liberal Democrats, or just plain liberal. Most who favor offshore drilling, who think recycling is foolish, and who abuse the earth also define themselves as conservative.

Al Lynch doesn't fit my definition of martyr. He died of a heart attack, as I remember, a few years after he got *Playboy* and *Scientific American* removed by the government from the blind man's magazine stand at 7th and Mission post office. That story made the *Chronicle* and *Examiner*. Since this took place in the early '60s, forgive me if my memory is not perfect.

I don't think our former City Council was voted out only by conservatives, or that all the liberals in town voted for Mike Burdick and Dan Goldstein. Almost 11,000 Pacificans voted for change in the White House (Clinton and Perot) against 3,000 who voted to keep the conservative status quo, G. Bush. Pacificans who had to choose between the ultra-liberal Barbara Boxer and the darling of many Birchers, Bruce Herschensohn, voted liberal more than seven to three. The more moderate Dianne Feinstein beat John Seymour 80 to 20.

Though I differ fundamentally with Ron and Marcia Root on most things, let me agree with Bill Clinton when he says they are fine people. Like many of Pacifica's liberals, they believe sincerely in their goals. They're doing their best to accomplish them. Liberals should work as hard.

or not getting the margins exact — but the time saving is