

A neighborly act of kindness

It may be time for San Mateo County to perform the most generous, neighborly act its ever done for its neighbor to the north. As you know, this county has been more than generous with San Francisco. The City uses our county as watershed. SF airport sprawls over vast San Mateo acreage. Golf courses, an archery range, even a dangerous, obsolete, overcrowded jail clutter up this county because SF is overcrowded.

When these counties split in 1856, San Mateo County was sacrificed so what was left of San Francisco County could be rid of a gaggle of crooks and get on with business. In the first San Mateo County poll, the barkeeps and their cronies immediately won one of the most crooked elections ever held in the U.S. Hundreds of votes were generated in what is now Daly City, Colma, and South San Francisco, by fewer voters than now live on one short block in Linda Mar.

Voting early and often, the boys took over the county.

We've since cleaned up our act, as you know. Meanwhile, San Francisco has an election department that can't keep polls open, can't count votes after they close, and a DA who can't keep his hands to himself. The Board of Supervisors, San Francisco's version of a city council, would be a laughing-

stock in Colma, where they have the excuse that most of the population doesn't vote and government officials must be chosen from among fewer than 1,000 living adults.

In the spirit of corporate downsizing, our counties must end 140 years of separation. If banks can do it, counties can do it. We'll call the new entity Peninsula County. There's not much we can do about the SF Supes. As a City Council they will probably continue to make fools of themselves.

As for other offices and departments, pick the most competent and dump the other. Kayo Hallinan would go. Jim Fox would run the whole show, quietly and competently as he has for years. Elections would be run by Warren Slocum. Precinct tallies would be ready by 10 p.m. Tuesday instead of 10 a.m. Wed. One of the best parts of this new arrangement from my point of view is that the one thing SF has done better than San Mateo County, the new library, would become part of the Pen-

The Reactor

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insula Library System.

Another plus. HMO's and health care providers, who tend to Balkanize themselves county by county, would give patients a wider choice of specialists. What's more, three of my children whose birth records are kept in San Francisco County, would now be able to get their certificates from the county where they grew up.

With the merger, at least one daily newspaper would still be printed in the county, unless the Chronicle moves all its facilities to Fremont or Union City after the Examiner finishes its prolonged death throes.

A decision will have to be made on the county seat. I suggest Pacifica. Government as an industry is light, clean and healthy. Perhaps the quarry would be a good location. Pacifica is not far from San Francisco, not much farther from Redwood City and Menlo Park, only nine miles from the newly renamed Peninsula International Airport. An ideal location.