

The California Legislature and Governor have elected to balance the budget in a manner that will bring harm to the day to day lives of Californians, a way of existence that is the envy of much of the world. How have we reached this untenable position, and more importantly, how can we remove ourselves from it?

In the nineteen fifties and sixties the educational system of California was expanded in inclusiveness and quality to rival any in the world. The welfare and in particular the education of the people were priorities in public planning. As a consequence we prospered. But, perhaps we were victims of our own success. The technological society resulting from that educational system produced vast wealth and prosperity which seemed to have eroded idealism and creativity while stimulated a need to make the rich richer.

We need a balanced budget. but one that provides for the well being of all of our citizenry. This can be accomplished through the rebuilding of California's educational system, from pre school through the Universities, to its former level of greatness. There are several reasons for such a claim:

(a) We owe it to ourselves. What greater reward could result for parents than a climate in which their children can gain an understanding of the world and acquire the skills necessary to compete in it.

(b) We need a solid foundation for our economy; a rock on which to anchor it. Teachers form that foundation. Teachers are not well paid but they establish stability both economically and socially. The teachers financially support their community in many ways as does the staff and everything else required to operate a School. Socially the school is the center for many activities. Some things generate profit but all provide cohesion of the community

The immediate reason for rebuilding the school system is economic stabilization. In the larger view the product of the schools is the men and women of the future. They form the vocational, professional, and intellectual structure fundamental to our way of life. To construct a budget that decimates education is destructive of the society, present and future, and thus borders on the criminal.

There are a variety of fund raising actions that will bring little pain to any one individual, business or corporation. Such actions include:.

- (a) Fully reinstating the license and vehicle registration fees. Eliminating them was a Schwarznegger ploy to win election for governor. (California lost more than 6 billion dollars in revenue.)
- (b) Require the same rate of tax on gasoline as on other products. The state tax on gasoline is 18 cents a gallon. This is approximately 6 cents on the dollar whereas we pay 8 or 9 cents on a dollar for other things.
- (c) Establish an oil severance tax (California is the only state that does not tax oil when it comes from the ground,)
- (d) Repeal corporate tax breaks.
- (e) Impose a ten dollar (one time) surcharge on every 50 thousand dollars of income of every person. (The amounts are for illustration.)
- (d) Oil extraction fees are imposed in all oil states other than California, Also Impose windfall profits taxes on oil companies.
- (e) Decriminalize or legalize certain drugs, then as we do with cigarets , tax them heavily to reduce misuse . Our treatment for drug usage is without rationality. Celebrities are celebrated and the poor and minorities are jailed.

Reduction of Expenses

(a) Reduction Prison Population. The extent of our prison population puts us in the barbarism category. (The prison population could be cut in half). Many nonviolent offenses could be punished in creative ways that are both beneficial and profit making.

(b) Redevelopment Agencies

Although goals to reduce poverty may have been good the program was hijacked by a variety of interests and sustained by diverting property taxes from school funding, thereby impoverishing the schools. Large and expensive beaurocracies were formed and then funds were directly or indirectly applied to private interests. (this system could be reduced in cost and purified in execution)

In San Jose these projects included, Hotel renovation in which significant funds were lost, Convention center construction, Sports complex with Sharks,), St. Joseph Cathedral . Santa Clara is negotiating with the 49ners for public money. Surely they have enough wealth to support their project. Many other examples may be cited throughout the State.

To add insult to injury money was captured over years by establishing long term bond indebtedness. In my opinion businesses should pay for the privilege of operating in California, not be given subsidies. In particular the education of children should not be sacrificed to special interests.