

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Proposition One

Editor — On September 29, a television interviewer asked Governor Reagan if he were not asking the people of California to approve a very complex initiative to amend the State Constitution by his urging a "yes" vote on Proposition One. The Governor replied that the initiative was indeed lengthy and complex (I heartily agree) and the people should not worry about the details in the initiative, it would only confuse them, but they should vote "yes."

Two questions:

First, since a constitution is supposed to be a simple document expressing basic principles on which other laws are based, why should we vote to add a relatively incomprehensible amendment to the Constitution?

Second, does anyone else find the "don't worry about the details and don't ask questions — just vote as I say" attitude shocking?

RUTH T. COBB.

Menlo Park.

Pat Buchanan

Editor — A calm reflection of Patrick Buchanan's lengthy discourse before the Watergate committee on 1972 White House strategy revealed, to me at least, a sad, ignominious and malodorous condition surrounding our national politics.

What Mr. Buchanan said was that politics is the name of the game, the sole purpose of which is to get elected. Mr. Buchanan exhibited no outward concern about honesty, integrity or kindred attributes. Instead he described a large inventory of dubious political ploys, playful pranks and harmless deceptions, of which he seemed inordinately proud.

He pointed out that he would not undertake anything "illicit, unethical, improper, nor any unprecedented practices not fully condoned in the normal political procedures of either party." In other words, a Presidential election, following Mr. Buchanan's methods, turns out to be a gigantic exercise in sophistry and subter-

fuge, designed solely to win an election.

The qualifications, the sincerity, the honesty, the true purposes of the candidates are non sequitur.

Sad, sad and too bad for the future of this country, I think.

KIMBALL BURR.

San Francisco.

Editor — So the networks have cancelled their live coverage of the Watergate hearings. Millions saw and listened to Pat Buchanan tell the truth about the tax-exempt foundations, their interlocking directorships and their use of tax exempt funds to espouse liberal and far left causes. That's typical of liberal thought. As long as big business is shown as the big corrupter of our politicians, it's big news. But when the truth about who's funding all our leftist movements begins to appear on our television screens, that's not news, according to our TV executives. Maybe if Buchanan was given enough time on television, the American public might have learned the truth...

HARRY E. BREWER.

Millbrae.

Editor — Even as Patrick Buchanan was seeking to defend the "dirty tricks" of his employers in the White House, he was playing another. On the basis of totally inaccurate information, which he did not bother to check, he charged on national television that the Institute for Policy Studies tries to influence the votes of Congressmen through its seminars and that it funded a profit-making underground newspaper with the use of a Ford Foundation grant. These are serious charges, and they are totally false. Nor did the magazine article, which Mr. Buchanan cited as the basis for his charges, in fact support them. His performance was another reckless attack on an institution whose research, analyses and criticisms he does not like.

His conduct before the Senate Select Committee was quite consistent with the extraordinary position he advanced there that the employees of the President are to be held to no higher standard of ethics and morality than ordinary

pranksters. The President's men are apparently still bent on using the power of the White House to harass individuals and educational institutions that do not share their "conservative philosophy" or their ethical standards.

RICHARD J. BARNET
MARCUS G. RASKIN

Co-Directors,
Institute for Policy Studies,
Washington, D.C.