

Exhibit 1019 Page 1

EDITORIAL
PUBLIC FORUM USE OF FLAG AS A SALES GIMMICK IS DESECRATION

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As in previous years, some real estate agent seized upon July Fourth as an opportunity to promote his services by supplying my neighborhood with plastic flags (made in Taiwan).

Last year dew or sprinklers washed out the colors. This year I observed some blown into the gutter. By this time next week, even our landfills will be full of our cherished symbol. Since they are for the most part plastic and cheaply made, we don't have to bother storing them properly until the next occasion, right?

I thank columnist Howard Kleinberg for his comments ("Sorry, but the Fourth of July is not the time to buy underwear," Opinions, July 4). His comments very succinctly point out how misplaced is the preoccupation with the deeds of a few fanatics who burn a flag in social or political protest, while rampant abuse, disrespect and routine defiling go ignored.

From my perspective, the desecration of our flag starts with its production in foreign countries, with materials that are designed to make it a cost-effective (cheap) marketing gimmick that can readily be discarded and thus become trash.

- Liselotte Crowell

Lake View Terrace

Howard Kleinberg thinks that businesses that stay open on Independence Day are owned by people who are as unpatriotic as flag-burners.

He says that the Fourth should be honored as a holiday to our American heritage, that businesses should close, and that workers who are now forced to man the cash registers should be released to spend the day with their families at parks and beaches - the way John Adams declared in 1776.

Kleinberg is a hypocrite.

The very vehicle he used to disseminate his accusations against Independence Day profiteers, his syndicated column, will put money in Kleinberg's pocket at the expense of fellow Americans who had to labor on the Fourth.

How dare Kleinberg lounge, visit, watch television or nap on our nation's birthday while he forces editors to edit, layout persons to lay out and press operators to print hundreds of thousands of copies of his wallet-fattening words?

- Paul Lipman

Mission Hills

Prostitution is a crime

This is in response to P. Bovee's letter of July 5, 1995.

The Los Angeles Police Department arrested Hugh Grant and Divine Brown, not the Los Angeles Sheriff's Department. The LAPD is not the agency threatened by the county's budgetary cuts.

The sexual act in question was "consensual" only by the fact that Grant paid money for Brown's "services."

Bovee needs to research California Penal Code Sections 647(f), 314.1 and 288(a). Sex for money is a crime. A paid act of oral copulation, on a public street and in public view is illegal.

Prostitution does not set well with the citizens of Hollywood, who reside in the neighborhood where this act took place. They are the ones who, in the spirit of community-based policing, requested that the LAPD crack down on blatant acts of prostitution in their neighborhood.

Pages could be written regarding the differences between the Heidi Fleiss case and Hugh Grant. Prostitution is not a "victimless" crime. Prostitution encompasses, enables and finances a wide spectrum of illegal activity.

- Sgt. David W. Twitchell

Van Nuys Patrol Division

Van Nuys

Exhibit 1019 Page 2

' Bloated bureaucracy'

So, the Legal Services Corp. ("Legal services for the poor," Public Forum, July 6) really helps the poor?

This is a bloated bureaucracy created by Lyndon Johnson as part of the welfare state. Its thousands of government-paid lawyers actually hurt the poor by filing a barrage of lawsuits against any entity (often the federal government) over any slight masquerading as "discrimination."

It has shut down employers creating even more unemployment. It has destroyed public housing by protecting criminal "rights."

Who needs the Legal Services Corp.? Not the poor. Possibly it's the American Bar Association, which lobbies for this agency every year. Otherwise, a lot of government lawyers might have to look for real work.

- Rich Hodulik

Burbank

2nd Amendment isn't dated

Bob Ginn ("Wanna-be patriots" Public Forum, June 29) doesn't give credit to our forefathers' reality during the time our Constitution was framed. When the Second Amendment was penned, muzzleloading firearms were used to wage war as the most advanced killing machines known.

To Thomas Jefferson or George Washington, a .69-caliber Charleville musket was no different than an M-16 to us and no less lethal. In America's longest conflict, Vietnam, 58,000 Americans are listed as casualties, compared to 600,000 from our little muzzleloading war of 1861-65.

Also, there is no evidence as of yet of a militia conspiracy in Oklahoma City. So who or what do you regulate?

- Brian J. Hall

Palmdale

Letters to the Editor

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