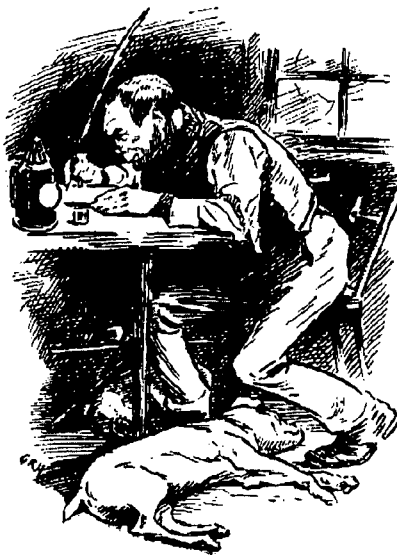


NOTEBOOK

Long-time conservative Republican activist **Shawn Steel** announced his candidacy for California Republican Party Treasurer, releasing a long, impressive list of endorsers including Congressmen **Chris Cox**, **Bob Dornan**, **Randy Cunningham**, **John Doolittle**, **Duncan Hunter**, **Wally Herger**, **Richard Pombo**, **Dana Rohrabacher**, and **Ed Royce**. Several legislators have also signed on, including **Jim Brulte**, as well as grass-roots activists such as California Republican Assembly President **Greg Hardcastle**, Christian Coalition California head **Sara Hardman**, and Orange County GOP Chairman **Tom Fuentes** ... Orange County's **Gil Ferguson** may have eliminated any chance of capturing vacant (formerly **Marian Bergeson's**) 35th state Senate seat by apparently prodding **Paul Horcher** to vote for **Willie Brown** for Speaker December 6. *Orange County Register* report quotes Horcher saying Ferguson advised him "under no circumstances" to trust GOP Leader and Speaker candidate Jim Brulte. Horcher said Ferguson told him that although he (Ferguson) "disagreed with the Speaker," Willie Brown was, at least, "honorable." L.A. Times reported "Ferguson acknowledges that he told Horcher to get the best deal he could get. He also said he doesn't blame Horcher" ... Assemblyman **Ross Johnson**, also eyeing the 35th S.D. seat, responded quickly, sending a hard-hitting, early January mail piece pinning Horcher's treason squarely on Ferguson.

In wake of investment fund collapse, furious Orange Countyans have begun arriving in droves at city council and school board meetings, demanding a full accounting of elected officials' financial dealings. A loose alliance of taxpayer advocacy groups from across the county (calling itself the **Committees of Correspondence**) has held several public meetings and news conferences, usually topping off the proceedings by burning in effigy supervisors, administrators,



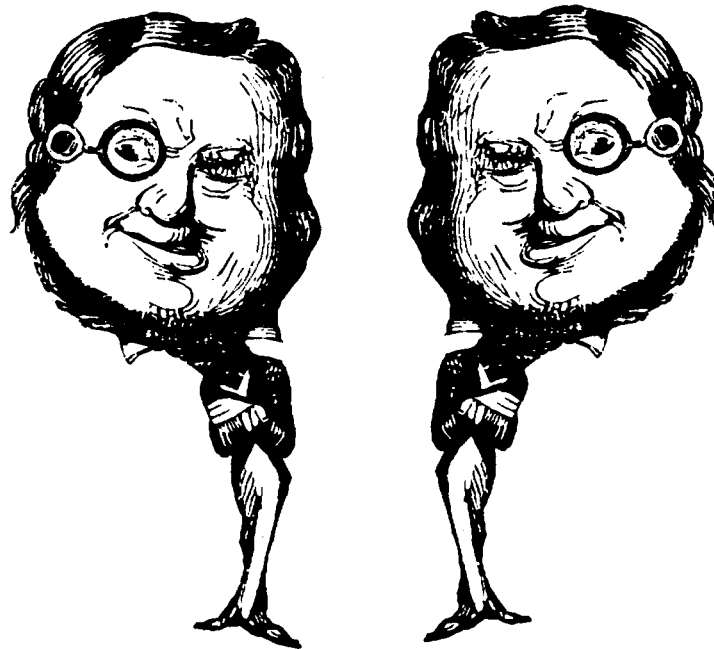
or others. A Committee-inspired supervisor's "pledge" form, renouncing any resort to tax or rate increases, appeared in the *Orange County Register* and is now reportedly jamming supervisors' FAX machines ... **Greg Haskin**, Chris Cox's Orange County district representative, is scolding the media for its reverential treatment of toppled O.C. financial whiz **Robert L. Citron** during the campaign for county treasurer last spring. Haskin, who served on Citron challenger **John Moorlach's** campaign advisory committee, tells audiences how

Moorlach and bond market professionals painstakingly determined the value of the Orange County Investment Pool, handing the media its findings: proof that OCIP had lost hundreds of millions of dollars even before the election, only to be greeted with yawns from reporters who quickly hurried off to interview Citron's wife about the nerviness of anyone who would run against her husband ... Haskin also points out that media coverage of the historic Sacramento battle over control of the Assembly consists little more than talk of spats between Republicans and rhapsodies on the "genius" of former-Speaker Willie Brown who is, after all, soon to be tossed out on his ear.

The **California Civil Rights Initiative** (CCRI) has exploded onto the media's consciousness following landslide passage of November's Proposition 187. National networks and major newspapers are suddenly focusing on the proposed ban on race, ethnic, and sex preferences ("affirmative action") in public contracting, public employment, and public education that is headed for the 1996 California ballot. The bandwagon was officially recognized by Governor **Pete Wilson**, whose endorsement of any proposal comes only *after* its popularity has reached run-away proportions. Ironically, the media, whose fixation on race obliterates all other considerations, is portraying CCRI as a sort of "Son of 187," even though many of its most prominent backers (**Ron Unz** in particular) were — and remain — vocal foes of the successful anti-welfare-for-illegals initiative.

CPR

CAPITOL WATCH



Jeepers, Speakers

Republican unity appeared to hold in Assembly Speaker battle. As CPR went to press, the Assembly GOP caucus, led by Assemblyman Jim Brulte (R-Rancho Cucamonga), continued to reject Democrat proposals to end the six-week-old, stalemated speakership battle in Sacramento. Various division-of-power proposals have been floated by both sides, but the sticking point appeared to be the Democrats' insistence that any agreement last for the entire current two-year legislative session and that it reflect the Assembly's current even split between 40 Republicans and 39 Democrats plus Assemblyman Paul Horcher (I — formerly R — Diamond Bar). In effect, agreeing to Democrats' demands could nullify the outcome of any recall elections (especially Horcher's, expected in April) that might restore a 41-vote GOP majority and effective Republican control of the lower house.

Brulte has rejected any such agreement on grounds it would amount to a repudiation of November's popular vote that sent a GOP majority to the Assembly. Horcher's abrupt December 6 repudiation of his Party and his vote to retain Willie Brown as Speaker created the current 40-to-40 Assembly impasse.

Assemblyman Bernie Richter (R-Chico) "stood down" from his maverick Speaker candidacy. Sources in Richter's office said some 10 to 12 Democrats demanded that Richter renounce the Horcher recall in return for their votes and that the Chico Republican refused to do so. He thus would have needed the votes of 10 or more Republicans to achieve the 41 votes necessary to replace Willie Brown. Unable to muster sufficient GOP support, Richter stood down January 17.

* * *

Horcher recall organizers claimed to have collected more than half the required 18,760 signatures to force a recall election in only the first two weeks of signature gathering. Despite heavy rain and cold weather, more than 1,000 volunteers took the field collecting signatures on recall petitions and Governor Pete Wilson sent a letter to the district (with petition enclosed) urging Horcher's recall. Once the signatures are certified, the governor can set an election date, possibly as early as April. On the same ballot, voters would name their choice to replace Horcher. If the recall passes, the replacement candidate with the most votes, whether or not a majority, wins. If a Republican takes the seat in this strongly GOP (and conservative

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