

sembly) argue that local schools need fewer, not more, restrictions on how they allocate money.

Protection of Marriage Act

James Bemis, below, provides an in-depth discussion of **Proposition 22**.

Bonds and Tax Hikes

Besides citizen measures to correct an unresponsive or misguided Legislature, several propositions appear on every ballot because the state Constitution requires voter approval before the The Party of Big Government, which sometimes includes big business, is permitted to spend more of our money in certain ways. For instance, the March ballot includes bonds. If they pass, the state will pay more than \$8 billion over 25 years for about \$4.7 billion in spending. Curiously, this year's state budget surplus is expected to be enough to cover this proposed spending. Why, then, put these presumed necessities on our credit card when we have a pocket full of spare cash? Of course, the explanation is that it's a shell game the Big Government folks love to play. Ask the voters to approve borrowing for politically popular spending while lavishing the spare cash on boondoggles the voters would find less palatable. Thus, **Proposition 12**, "safe parks," \$2.1 billion; **Proposition 13**, safe drinking water and flood protection, \$1.97 billion; **Proposition 14**, "literacy," \$350 million; **Prop-**

osition 15, crime labs, \$220 million; and **Proposition 16**, veterans' homes, \$50 million.

Another effort to win voter approval for more spending, **Proposition 26**, would lower the 120-year-old two-thirds vote of the people requirement to a simple majority to pass local bond measures. Local bonds are covered by local property taxes. Proposition 13 was overwhelmingly approved by voters losing their homes to runaway property tax assessments. This measure, which could be titled the "How Soon We Forget" initiative, will, if passed, greatly increase upward pressure on local property taxes as non-property owners vote to place homeowners on the hook for a highly probable orgy of new school construction bonds.

And finally, returning to measures placed by the non-Big Government Party, **Proposition 28** would repeal 1998's Prop. 10 — the 50¢-per-pack cigarette tax. Advertised as funding for "early childhood development programs," it has created a behemoth state bureaucracy.

MANY PROPOSITIONS make for a lengthy ballot, but voters should be grateful for this chance to weigh-in on the issues. On March 7, have someone else make your coffee, pick up your dry cleaning, and answer your telephone. This is your chance to make up, somewhat, for your legislators' many deficiencies. Go to the polls and vote.

CPR

The Protection of Marriage Act

Proposition 22: Restating The Obvious, Preserving The Normal

James Bemis

"Only marriage between a man and a woman is valid or recognized in California."

IN A sane age, this assertion — containing the entire text of Proposition 22, an initiative on California's March 7 ballot — wouldn't be subject to debate, much less to a vote of the people. But

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ours is not a sane age, and thus today's men and women are driven to extraordinary lengths to defend the ordinary truths of their fathers. To paraphrase George Orwell, in a world gone mad, the primary duty of good men is continually to restate the obvious.

Hence, Proposition 22.

In the upcoming election, Proposition 22, the Protection of Marriage Act ... oops, sorry, the Limit

on Marriage Act (a distortion of the measure's name and purpose introduced by our politically correct Attorney General Bill Lockyer) has emerged as this year's most contentious issue. The proposition, performing — *à la* Orwell — the primary duty of the good by simply stating the obvious, is opposed by a strange conglomeration of gay rights groups, feminists, movie and TV stars, educators,

Democrat Party honchos, and, incredibly, some Christian churches. Oh, yeah — also nearly every major newspaper in the state.

BELIEVE IT or not, the assumption that we should recognize marriage for what it is — a union between a man and a woman — wasn't always a controversial matter. Virtually every society has some form of marriage as we know it, and the institution has proven itself as a means of preserving social stability and a tried-and-true way to provide for the care of women and children.

Western Civilization raised Holy Matrimony to the level of a sacrament, bestowing both privileges and — most importantly, yet often conveniently forgotten — duties on each of the partners. These obligations included a life-

long commitment, including sexual fidelity, to one's spouse in sickness and in health, till death do they part; providing for the care and upbringing of the children borne to the marriage; sharing ownership of property, and other responsibilities.

Most societies, including ours, recognized both the cultural benefits of matrimony and the burdens assumed by the married couple on behalf of the society at large, primarily in the proper raising of future generations. Thus, certain privileges and benefits were afforded those who shouldered the duties and responsibilities coming with marriage. These benefits included marriage tax breaks, inheritance rights, medical and other insurance coverage, and other special considerations. After all, marriage and family were the primary means of transmitting civilization

and culture from one generation to the next, the building blocks of the future. It was generally acknowledged that families raising honest, productive, well-educated children were not only doing the Lord's work, but everyone else's too. And raising such children, heaven knows, ain't cheap.

This is a vital distinction to make in properly understanding today's "marriage" controversy. First came society's recognition of marriage's cultural value and its accompanying duties and burdens. The privileges and benefits afforded husband and wife followed. To hear some tell it, you'd think marriage was created solely as a means to bestow certain "rights" on heterosexual couples and deny them to homosexuals.

This is a fundamental misunderstanding of the nature of the institution of marriage, part of what seems to be a widespread and

The Campaign

According to a prominent Republican political strategist, the first year of the Proposition 22 campaign was "clumsy and awkward," focusing more on "an anti-homosexual than a pro-family message." But with the addition of professional public relations staff, campaign organizers have been "doing a good job lately" and thus the campaign "is much improved now."

According to campaign spokesman Robert Glazer, the committee supporting Proposition 22 is "going to run this in a very positive way." He believes things are "going well. People are starting to understand the truth" that the initiative simply defends traditional marriage and has "no negative impact

on gays." How's the media coverage been? Glazer admits, "we have a hurdle to overcome in terms of media."

Here Mr. Glazer is being generous. Major newspapers in the state have dropped any pretense of fair reporting in news articles and have adopted an unremittingly negative tone about the initiative in their coverage. For instance, a search of news articles published in the Los Angeles Times about Proposition 22 brings up 29 stories at the time of this writing, all with an anti-22 tone, with headlines like "Clergy Attack Initiative on Gay Marriage," "Mormons Asked to Drop Support of Measure Banning Gay Marriage," and "Coalition Rallying Against Initiative to Ban Gay Marriage." Nothing remotely comparable was written about supporters of the initiative.

The same was true of the San Francisco Chronicle, which had published 18 articles on 22 with headlines such as "Cast of 'Will & Grace' Comes Out Against Prop 22," and "Hate Victim's Mother Speaks Out - Prop 22 Called 'Another Seed of Fear'." No similar headlines covering those favoring the measure. The San Diego Union-Tribune ran articles on the campaign with headlines like "4 Candidates Join in Opposing Ban on Gay Marriage Recognition," and "Grass-roots Campaign Aims to Get Out Gay, Lesbian Vote."

You get the idea.

The negative reporting may be affecting Proposition 22's support. While a poll in September 1999 showed public backing at 63 percent, a late December Field Poll indicates only 51 percent in favor.

—James Bemis

growing misunderstanding of the nature of all cultural institutions. In fact, this general confusion is so widespread among so many intelligent people, a cynic might conclude it is intentional.

IN A way, I suppose, the progressives' push for "gay marriage" is a step up for matrimony. Not long ago, wedlock was condemned as paternalistic, repressive, and virtually akin to slavery. Nowadays, though, liberals consider marriage such a wonderful institution that its benefits shouldn't be denied to anyone, not even couples of the same sex.

The Initiative

Back to Proposition 22. The arguments in favor of the initiative are pretty clear — this is the traditional, time-honored definition of marriage and without codifying it, we're at risk of "same-sex marriages" being imposed on us either by judicial fiat or by forcing California to recognize these so-called "marriages" performed in other states. Arguments opposing the initiative are less lucid — more rant than reason — but should be countered nonetheless. So, as provided in the March 7 Primary Voter Information Guide, here are the arguments against Proposition 22:

It's redundant!

Opponents argue that "same-sex marriage" is already banned in the state, citing a 1977 bill signed by then-Governor Jerry Brown stating that marriages licensed in California shall be a relationship between one man and one woman. However, marriages performed in other states are generally recognized as valid here. Since several state courts — witness Hawaii and

Vermont — have come close to imposing legalization of "same-sex marriage" on their states, proponents say Proposition 22 is needed to prevent California from recognizing these ersatz marriages in our state.

**First came society's
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wife followed.**

It's divisive!

"Supporters of Proposition 22," opponents assert, "are spending millions of dollars to convince you that basic rights should be denied to a group of Californians." Yes, it's poor English. Beyond that, it's poor logic, too. The initiative only codifies current law and traditional understandings. It does not prevent anyone, including homosexuals, from getting married. Just not to each other.

It's unfair!

In other states, opponents argue, "arch-conservative legal organizations have used similar laws as tools to deny lesbians and gays fundamental rights — like the right to visit a sick or injured partner in the hospital, the right to inheritance, or the right to health insurance." Ah, yes, those ancient, venerated "fundamental rights" of domestic partners — right up there with life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness — for which

so many of our ancestors fought and died. What about those "rights"?

Well, as we've seen, marriage perquisites were provided as a way of easing the burdens of raising a family; a sort of societal quid pro quo for producing and molding the next generation, upon whom the continued existence of civilization depends. But with "domestic partnerships" — including heterosexual ones — there is no "give" to society, only "take." Therefore, persons participating in domestic partnerships have no claim, or "rights" to any special benefits — including family health insurance, family inheritance rights, or family visiting privileges — beyond those of any other citizen. None.

ALAS, PROPOSITION 22 does not threaten any of these hard-earned domestic partnership benefits. For example, California Code of Regulation, Section 70707 stipulates that "hospital visitation rights may not be restricted on the basis of sexual orientation." The dearly-departed remain free to leave their inheritance, except, of course, that portion the federal government absconds with, to any persons of their choosing. And governments and corporations will still be free to offer medical insurance and other benefits to couples that are shacking up — or living as domestic partners, for more sensitive souls.

It's totalitarian!

"PROPOSITION 22," (opponents put this objection in capital letters so people will know they're serious here) "WILL RESULT IN UNNECESSARY GOVERNMENT INTERFERENCE." It's nice to see liberals

finally becoming concerned about the continual encroachment of government into our lives. Unfortunately for them, Proposition 22 does no such thing. Proposition 22 neither requires nor prevents anyone from getting married. It prescribes no changes to anyone's behavior or living arrangements. It merely establishes the conditions under which a marriage is recognized as valid. To enter marriage, you must meet its qualifications, the same ones that have existed for thousands of years. If two or more people wish to enter into a "domestic partnership," they — unless they are my daughters — have been free to do so in the past and will continue to be so if Proposition 22 passes. This arrangement simply will not be sanctioned as a "marriage" — not then,

not now, and — God willing — not ever.

It doesn't take an alarmist to foresee that if Proposition 22 fails, before long some judge in California will rule that the traditional definition of marriage as "one man, one woman" is discriminatory and demand that "same-sex" marriage be legalized. We're perilously close to that now.

Oddly enough, both sides of the debate talk about marriage's nominal — i.e. cash — value, but neither side mentions what is normal. And yet this is really the heart of the matter. Here again, we're threatened by what G. K. Chesterton said was modernity's morbid weakness for "sacrificing the normal to the abnormal." To the extent this sacrifice is made, our institutions become warped and

degraded. The evidence? Look around you.

WHATEVER OUR views about homosexuality may be, they ought to be formed based on charity toward others and mindful of our own fallen nature. Nevertheless, we should not fear addressing that central question of normal human behavior, as we have got thousands of years of human experience to serve as a guide. So long as we shrink from examining and speaking the truth about ourselves, we'll continue to be bombarded with assaults on our traditional institutions, until one day we'll find there's nothing left of civilization worth preserving.

Why the fury?

From Allan Bloom's 1987 book *The Closing of the American Mind*:

"There is one thing a professor can be absolutely certain of: almost every student entering the university believes, or says he believes, that truth is relative. If this belief is put to the test, one can count on the students' reaction: they will be uncomprehending. That anyone should regard the proposition a not self-evident astonishes them, as though he were calling into question $2 + 2 = 4$. These are things you don't think about. The students' backgrounds are as various as America can provide. Some are religious, some atheists; some are to the left, some to the right; some intend to be scientists, some humanists or professionals or businessmen; some are poor, some rich,

They are unified only in their relativism and in their allegiance to equality. And the two are related in a moral intention. The relativity of truth is not a theoretical insight but a moral postulate, the condition of a free society, or so they see it. They have all been equipped with this framework early on, and it is the modern replacement for the inalienable natural rights that used to be the traditional American grounds for a free society. That it is a moral issue for students is revealed by the character of their response when challenged — a combination of disbelief and indignation: 'Are you an absolutist?', the only alternative they know, uttered in the same tone as as 'Are you a monarchist?' or 'Do you really believe in witches?' This latter leads into the indignation, for someone who believes in witches might well be a witch-hunter or a

Salem judge. The danger they have been taught to fear from absolutism is not error but intolerance. Relativism is necessary to openness; and this is the virtue, the only virtue, which all primary education for more than fifty years has dedicated itself to inculcating The point is not to correct the mistakes [of the past] and really be right; rather it is not to think you are right at all."

All the Protection of Marriage Act says is that we know what marriage is and what it is not. But that alone is sufficient threat to the absolute relativist orthodoxy Allan Bloom described to account for the fury of the measure's opponents. What, after all, besides fury, will serve to defend the decedent certitude that all we know about right and wrong is that it is wrong ever to think we are right at all?

Affirmative

Ron Unz

Government is for sale in California

THERE ARE many areas of the world where ordinary citizens suspect that their elections are for sale. But California is one of the few places where these purchases are publicly disclosed.

Consider last November's Proposition 9, an initiative sponsored by consumer activists that would have slashed utility rates in the state. The utility companies spent about \$40 million to crush the measure, and some of their most effective television ads featured crusading consumer affairs reporter David Horowitz, star of the "Fight Back" TV series. Horowitz's impassioned claims that Proposition 9 would be a disaster for consumers swayed many voters. Most never realized that he had been paid more than \$100,000 by the utility companies to make those claims.

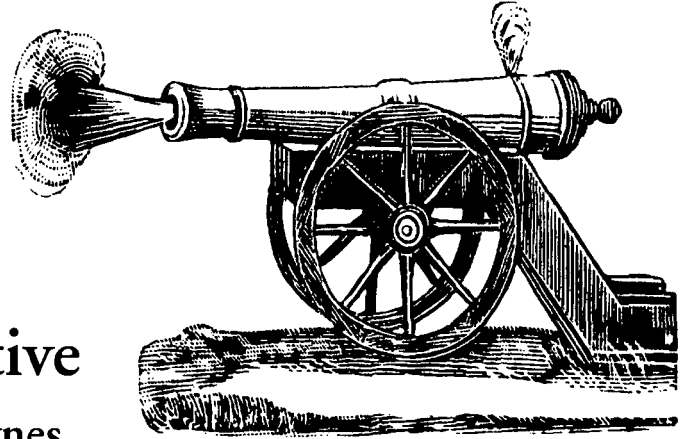
During that same election, Proposition 10, the tobacco tax initiative, was denounced as "doing nothing for schools" in a series of TV ads by former state Superintendent of Public Instruction Wilson Riles Jr., leading his past political allies to wonder why. Post-election filings answered that question: He'd been paid \$90,000 by the tobacco industry.

Despite strongly opposing both Proposition 9 and Proposition 10

Ron Unz, former Republican candidate for governor and author of Proposition 227 — 1998's measure to eliminate most bilingual education in California — is chairman of Voters Rights 2000, Proposition 25's sponsoring committee.

Resolved:

Proposition 25 should become law.



Negative Ray Haynes

Big Government, not money, is the problem

PROPOSITION 25, the Ron Unz initiative for "campaign finance" reform is based upon a flawed premise: that the source of money is a problem in politics. Money in politics is not the problem; the problem is that government control of the economy forces people to give to politicians with whom they do not agree simply to keep the government off their backs. In short, the problem is big government, caused by big government, and benefits big government. But Mr. Unz's solution is: create *more* government. The essence of Proposition 25 is to empower bureaucrats to have more control over the po-

litical system, through a complex system of rules and regulations designed to discourage many citizens, who otherwise might participate in the political system, from even starting.

Worse than that, the system designed by Mr. Unz specifically leaves out the influence of unions, the one special interest group that has no problem resorting to political influence and government coercion to achieve its political ends. When asked about this outcome, Mr. Unz admitted that he left out unions because if he included them, the initiative might not pass because the unions would oppose it. Of course, the left always opposes anything that interferes with its agenda. So should the response of the lovers of liberty to that type of opposition be to capitulate to their demands, and then disarm ourselves unilaterally? I don't think so.

If Mr. Unz really wants to co

Ray Haynes, a Republican candidate to replace Dianne Feinstein in the U.S. Senate this year, represents California's 36th state Senate district (Riverside).