

LEGISLATIVE FILE

by Ray Haynes

Governments are instituted among men, wrote Thomas Jefferson in the Declaration, to secure the peoples' inalienable rights, which means that protecting individual liberty is what legislators exist to do. Unfortunately, actual legislators tend to do the opposite, exercising power in strange, intrusive ways. Perverse people and unnatural actions merit perverse recognition: hence, the "Noseys" — my annual public notice of outstandingly stupid exercises of power during the past year in the California Legislature. So, getting right to the point, the 2005 Grand Nosey Award Winner is:

AB 1677 (Koretz) Correctional Condoms Act: This bill provides for the legalization and distribution of contraband in our state's correctional facilities by allowing any non-profit or health agency to distribute condoms and dental dams freely to inmates (just what *is* a dental dam?). This bill is the no-contest champion of 2005's crop in the let's pretend we're stupid so we can do the opposite of what we say we are doing category.

First, sex between inmates is a crime, so this bill says its purpose is to "prevent disease." The author assures us the bill isn't intended to encourage illegal sex acts between inmates. Well, then, all we have to do is pretend we're

dumb enough to believe that and everything's OK, right?

The trouble is we know the left always and everywhere encourages unnatural sex, along with every other self-destructive behavior, because self-destructive people are easier to control, and power over people is their guiding ideal. Does anyone suppose Mr. Koretz would support free distribution to inmates of Biblical injunctions against perverse sex as the state's chosen way to "pre-



vent disease" in prison? Put me down as a cynic if you like, but I do not.

Next we have the 2005 Nosey Award runners up: AB 651 (Berg, Levine) State Sponsored Suicide: Attaining the ultimate in self-destructiveness, this bill sought to provide a state sanctioned means of self-murder with the "help" of "health care" providers. One of the Manson family killers reportedly told one of those about to be stabbed to death that murder is an act of love, a sentiment this bill seems to have cap-

tured and would incorporate into state law. Charlie would be proud.

AB 616 (Vargas) "Cigar Envy": On the lighter (although no more air-headed) side, this bill sought to prohibit smoking in an outdoor area enclosed on four sides by a public building. Juan Vargas' willingness to have the taxpayers print a bill whose only function would have been to interrupt the relaxed atmosphere in the governor's signature cigar smoking tent illustrates perfectly the playground antics of an insulated Capitol establishment.

AB 17 (Koretz — yet again): criminalizing smoking at the beach, proving that no category of humanity can ever be down enough to prevent their being kicked one more time by lefties. Now we have no smoking indoors and no smoking outdoors. When smoking is outlawed, only outlaws will smoke.

And, inevitably, taxation — SB 607 (Bowen): Taxing Yard Sales — would you expect anything less from lawmakers who tried to pass a "soda tax" and force building codes to include the principles of "Feng Shui" (the positioning of objects based on patterns of yin and yang and the flow of chi)? And AB 1103 (Karnette) Tour de tax: The legislature has long tried to figure out how to tax kids. This year they did it. Tax bikes. Youngsters, welcome to a free society. CPR

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industry-wide. "You all know that this is a rough year for newspapers," he told his reporters as he announced layoffs in December.

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The *Los Angeles Times* has been buffeted this year from the right, middle (if Michael Kinsley's pique is indicative), and left. Not even Barbra Streisand reads the paper anymore. She made a great show of blasting it for junking Robert Scheer's tired column. The *Times* ran a briefer version of a screed Streisand sent to the paper in which she announced she was abandoning it. "The greater Southern California community is one that not only proudly embraces its diversity but demands it," she wrote on her web site (where she posted the unedited letter). "Your publisher's decision to fire Robert Scheer is a great disservice I'm almost embarrassed for you in seeing the *LA Times* being referred to as the '*Chicago LA Times*' on the myriad of Internet sites I've visited in the last few days. It

seems, however, an aptly designated epithet, representing the feeling among many of your readers that your new leadership, especially that of Jeff Johnson, is entirely out of touch with them and their desire to be exposed to views that stretch them beyond their own paradigms. So although the number of contributors to your op-ed pages may have increased, in firing Robert Scheer and putting Jonah Goldberg in his place, the gamut of voices has undeniably been diluted, and I suspect this may ultimately decrease the number of readers of those same pages."

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Indeed, the "progressive" community is furious that the percentage of conservative commentators in its pages is inching up, hovering dangerously close to 30 percent according to some estimates on left-wing blogs. Scheer still knows how to organize a 1960s-style protest. By casting his sacking as a dark ideological betrayal, he is rousing the rabble. "What happened

WHAT YOU HAVEN'T BEEN TOLD ABOUT GUN CONTROL

By SAM PAREDES

California bought a Hollywood story line: the evil Everything's For Sale Davis horde had laid waste state finances, the townsfolk recruited a handy Action Hero looking for a new adventure to clean up the mess, lots of noisy fireworks ensued, the bad guys were trounced and the Hero firmly installed as sheriff. Cue credits, end music, and the cheering crowd departs glowing with "they all lived happily ever after" contentment.

But Sacramento isn't Hollywood. In politics, your reward for winning isn't peace, it's war redoubled. The Action Hero, still in celluloid mode, tried to make peace with the bad guys he'd just trounced, but said bad guys, ignoring the script, refused to stay trounced. Instead they laid long-term plans to recapture

control of state politics. They understood what a lot of voters and the Action Hero did not: that holding office is merely step one; victory depends on follow through, perseverance, on knowing, as Thomas Jefferson said, that the price of freedom is eternal vigilance.

While the Hero set out to charm and woo and negotiate, his enemies accepted (without thanks) his peace offerings (like the nonsensical .50 BMG firearm ban), planned quietly their counter-attack, and awaited their chance. The fans, also still in celluloid mode, went along with this disappointing sequel mainly be-

cause they loved the original so much.

Then: the second sequel. Our Hero sees he is in deep kimchee. Rather than end California's financial woes, his bonds merely bail out the structural forces driving the state into the red. He tries half-heartedly (till nearly the end) to reignite the fire of the recall that his first sequel deliberately extinguished. The people, having lost track of the convoluted plot line, boo his Special Election showdown scene. Suddenly the Hero sees his reform movement has been "terminated"!

So what does a good action hero do after a flop? Change directors and create a new character. Enter Susan Kennedy who, unlike our Hero, has long known that Sacramento isn't Hollywood. And the people whose recall votes called for John Ford to direct? Alas, they end up with Michael Moore.

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