



J.D. CROWE

Wilson vs. next in line

I am outraged at the "Governor's dilemma on running for president" (March 5) and his reluctance to leave the state in control of the duly elected lieutenant governor.

Not only is Gov. Wilson recanting his campaign promise to serve a full four years, but now he is trying to plot a way to either hold a special election or change the state Constitution so Lt. Gov. Gray Davis would not be next in line.

How often do we hear from the Republicans that they were voted in to lead? Isn't it odd that this same rhetoric is ignored if the politician is from the other side?

Last I looked, the lieutenant governor was also elected by popular vote. What happened to Republican support for the voice of the voter?

Oh, I forgot. They care about the voters' choice only when it suits their own personal or political gain. Silly me.

ERICA LEVY
Albany

Battling tobacco giants

Your profile of Dr. Stanton Glantz ("UCSF professor savors battling tobacco firms," Metro section, March 5) revealed a remarkable scientist who is an untiring advocate for public health.

I have known Glantz for several years, and it is clear that he has done more to improve the health of Californians than any citizen can appreciate. The fact that the tobacco industry calls him "personally offensive"

and "fundamentally unpleasant" is a testimony to his effectiveness in making our state healthier by promoting policies based on scientific studies that reduce all our exposure to second-hand smoke.

It is the tobacco industry executives whose decisions placing profits before people cost the country over 450,000 lives and tens of billions of dollars every year. If anyone is "personally offensive" and "fundamentally unpleasant" it is these executives.

The real power of Glantz, however, is rooted in the scientific basis of the policies he advocates. It is disingenuous for Walter Merryman, a spokesperson for the tobacco industry, to accuse Glantz of using inaccurate data.

The industry Merryman represents still says that nicotine is not addictive and that smoking does not cause disease. Glantz combines science and advocacy to promote health. The power of his truth can be seen in the lack of popular respect for the tobacco industry and the declining use of the product it promotes with reckless disregard for the public health.

Glantz is a genuine public health hero who deserves all our thanks.

LAWRENCE WALLACK
Professor of public health
UC-Berkeley

White House not 'Lompoc'

Your editorial, "The Lompoc White House" (March 6), is shallow, partisan and misleading. With the exception of the possibility that former Agriculture Secretary Mike Espy let Tyson Foods buy him lunch — an epic instance of corruption — all of the various crimes and misdemeanors referred to in your column are said to have occurred before the purported malefactors took office, and only Webster Hubbell [who resigned from the Justice Department] has admitted to any wrongdoing.

Unsubstantiated attacks by political enemies aren't particularly good evidence of anything, except perhaps the political weakness of the victims of the smears and the absence of integrity on your editorial board. If the present administration is corrupt, you haven't begun to show it.

Compared to the Reagan regime, whose serious, systematic rottenness has been proved many times in court, the Clinton administration is, so far

as we know, a rather clean operation.

I admit the various innuendoes you circulate do show a pattern. The pattern, however, results from the consistent efforts of right-wing pressure groups and the Republican Party to further their aims by black propaganda and legal persecutions.

JIM HARRISON
San Francisco

Reviews of mystery yarns

Congratulations on bringing a breath of fresh air and considerable flair to your book reviews with "Book 'Em Bobbie!" [an occasional column of mystery-book reviews by Bobbie Hess in the Style section].

It is a rare treat to read a review in which the critic is more interested in telling about the book and whether it is good or bad, than in displaying his or her own erudition.

Verdict on this new column: A rattling good read.

MARY MORRIS
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