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Charitable Deductions

Saturday Review's cover story ["Cornering the Goodness Market: Uncharitable Doings at United Way," October 28] does a disservice to the entire voluntary sector and to the concept of free associations to help others, which for 200 years has characterized the best spirit of America.

Chernow's piece is filled with inaccuracies and half-truths and we feel readers should know the following:

- The term "monopoly" does not apply to United Ways any more than it does to other institutions in the community's hands, such as schools or churches.
- Allegations of "middle-class bias" are unfounded and unfair. United Way is a collective effort in the hands of volunteers in all communities. No comparable system has yet been devised for balancing the priority needs of the poor and middle class while guaranteeing accountability and efficiency to both the donor and the recipient.
- Charges in the article of racial discrimination come from two executives of the National Black United Fund, an organization which seeks to serve the needs of blacks but which unfortunately has chosen to do so through conflict rather than cooperation. Not a single NBUF chapter has ever applied for United Way support, despite approaches by local United Ways.

John W. Hanley
Chairman
Board of Governors
United Way of America
Alexandria, Virginia

Three cheers for the United Way. Ron Chernow's article served to strengthen my support for them. I have been a fair-share contributor since the beginning of time, and the day United Way includes "Butcher Houses for Unborn Babies" is the day I withdraw my support.

Amy Styer
Richmond, California

Ron Chernow's article was extremely interesting and provocative. However, it unfairly and unnecessarily paints a negative picture of the United Way and the agencies it supports.

The United Way isn't perfect—but what institution is? We must continue our efforts to improve the system, raise more money, involve broader issues and concerns, and increase the level of

participation of nonwhites. To that end I applaud the article. We won't achieve that end by casting aspersions on the Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, or the United Way.

Walter L. Smart
Executive Director
National Federation of
Settlements and Neighborhood Centers
New York, New York

Ron Chernow replies: I don't think the individualism espoused by Mr. Hanley is enhanced by a billion-dollar bureaucratic colossus like the United Way. The diversity of U.S. schools and churches alluded to by Mr. Hanley only highlights the singular monolithic nature of his own organization. As for the United Way's middle-class orientation, Mr. Hanley inadvertently confirms my point. Why should a charity have to balance the needs of the poor and the middle class? I think the poor alone would quite suffice. I also find it strange to fault the National Black United Fund for rejecting United Way largesse when their whole *raison d'être* is self-reliance for blacks. Ms. Styer points up a phenomenon I mentioned in the piece: the veto power exercised by the zealous donor in large federated campaigns. I applaud Mr. Smart for his sane and balanced criticism, but would remind him that not all United Way agencies are as intimately involved with the problems of the slums as his own settlement houses.

In Praise of African Art

Vicki Goldberg's article ["Nubia's African-Egyptian-Western Art," October 28] was very well written and informative. I entirely agree that Nubian art is a sad reproduction of Egyptian art. However, I don't think that Westerners look upon African culture with prejudice. African culture is powerful and interesting. The exaggeration of certain parts of the human body in sculptures and figurines was done purposely to emphasize their beauty—they were not done this way simply because the artists had no talent.

Barbara L. Wells
Crafton, Wisconsin

Fisticups

The first two paragraphs of Jonathan Evan Maslow's article ["Can the U.S.

Play Soccer With the Big Boys?" October 28] are a classic example of biased reporting at its worst.

According to all reports, the score in the Argentina-Peru match was a fair reflection of the contest. With its superb, imaginative playing (after all it won the tournament), the local team overwhelmed the Peruvians. And you can be sure that if the goalie had wanted to play foul, he would have been promptly dismissed and replaced with a substitute. Maslow's stance doesn't hold a droplet of water.

Axel Hornos
Pittsford, New York

Correction

In "Shareholder Power: Kicking the Corporate Shins" [SR, November 11], James Traub stated that shareholder activist Evelyn Y. Davis had told an ITT annual meeting that women should be excluded from that company's board because of jealousy over her "close personal relationship" with chairman Harold Geneen. Mrs. Davis informs us that she never claimed such intimacy, and the jealousy would be induced by her "fame and glamour."

ANSWERS TO JANUARY 6 PUZZLES

WIT TWISTER No. 133 (page 7)
ancients, canniest, instance

FRASER YOUNG LITERARY CRYPT
No. 122 (page 7)
Just as those who practice the same profession recognize each other instinctively, so do those who practice the same vice. —Proust

MIDDLETON DOUBLE-CROSTIC
No. 162 (page 63)

JOHN TERRAINE: THE GREAT
WAR (1914-1918)
All over Africa, races and colors were joined in combat under many flags: Afrikaaners from the Union, Rhodesians, Nigerians, Senegalese, Congolese, Kikuyu—down to a small, wretched, oppressed tribe called bastards.

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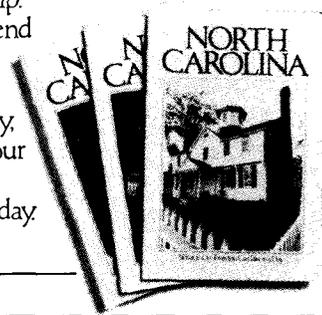


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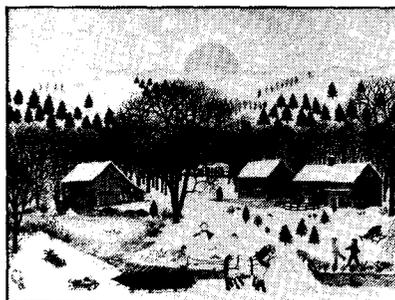
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Better Fences Than Neighbors

The Tortilla Curtain may not be as imposing as the Berlin Wall, but it's the best we've got. By the time you read this, the merry rhythm of hammers should be echoing through El Paso, Texas, as workers knock chain-link fencing into pressed steel, and steel into concrete, along a six-mile swath between Uncle Sam and his least favored neighbor.

The 10-foot barrier, commissioned by the district office of the Immigration and Naturalization Service as part of a stepped-up campaign to keep Mexicans in Mexico, has not enjoyed an enthusiastic

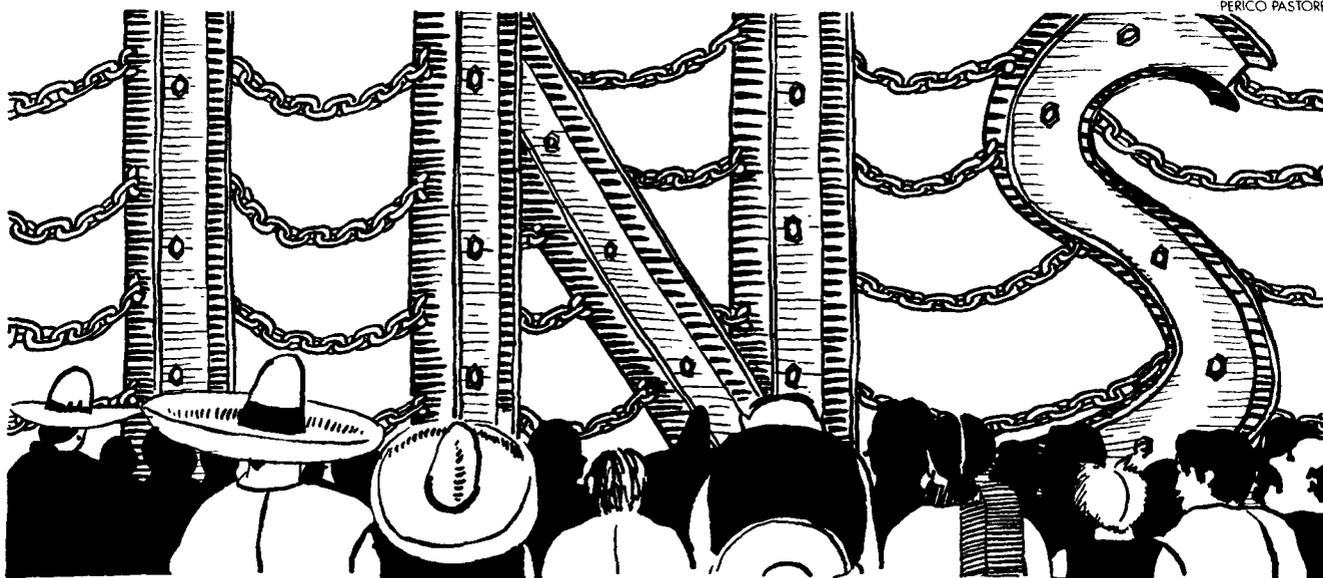
reception. Within days after the Los Angeles *Herald-Examiner* revealed, last October, that the fence was to be built, Mexican papers screamed "Carter Hates Us" in banner headlines, while radio and television peppered the nation with the story.

Meanwhile, back in Washington, INS Commissioner Leonel Castillo, perhaps mindful of our new friendship with a nation sitting on top of what may be the world's largest supply of oil, tried to smooth the ruffled feathers. Castillo ordered the construction company, Anchor Post Fence, to dull the edges of the actual

material, pressed steel, which Anchor had guaranteed to "leave a couple of toes behind." But he also gave the go-ahead to the project.

Although construction has been delayed until Anchor softens its steel, the wall should take only six months to finish. Having thus kept poachers, children, and mothers—"the garbage," as local INS director Charles Perez puts it—from stepping into El Paso for a day's jaunt, immigration officials will be free to use their helicopters and electronic sensing equipment to stem the immense tide of Mexicans trying to escape poverty and unemployment.

PERICO PASTORE



Inflationary Leap

The Carter administration's first anti-inflation forum, held in St. Louis, produced the kind of practical advice that businessmen have been demanding. As reported in the *Wall Street Journal* (November 3), the perplexed owner of a building-materials firm asked inflation-warrior Robert Strauss how to apply the new price guidelines to his 20,000 items.

Said Strauss, "If I had your problem, I'd jump out the window."

Mickey Takes the Orient Express

Nothing American seems quite so difficult to imagine outside American soil as Disneyland—a place as freakish, as unprecedented, and as charming and childish in its infatuation with technology as the country it adorns. One would think that nobody could duplicate Disneyland, or would want to—except, of course, those demons of imitation, the Japanese. According to *The Economist* (October 28), Japanese entertainment and construction firms plan to pour \$350 million, starting early this year, into one of the world's most remunerative fantasies.

The idea of a Tokyo Disneyland, shelved during the energy crisis, has been resurrected by the Mitsui Real Estate Development Company. Mitsui has retained the electronics wizard Matsushita to design this immense confection out of magic, mystery, and molded plastic; the final form is expected to put the American original distinctly in the shade (as is the Japanese fashion). Doors are scheduled to open in early 1982.

Meanwhile, rumors of a Japanese excavation site bearing a striking resemblance to the Grand Canyon have been strenuously denied.