The interminable campaign for the US presidency has finally wended its weary way to termination. But despite months of debates, interviews, and public statements, a large part of the voting public has no real idea of what the two major candidates stand for. We have been subjected to a myriad of television debates, in which irrelevant and often inane softball questions were put to the candidates who responded with irrelevant and unresponsive answers.

There was no mention of the real and political issues which face America, or even recognition that they exist. Instead, we had media pundits make such inane inquiries as, "Why do you think you could provide the best leadership to America?" The resulting answers were just vacuous generalizations. Asked, "What would your tax program do for America?" The answers were, "My plan would not only reduce taxes on the middle class, but it would protect our Social Security and Medicare programs, and provide new billions for Federal assistance to schools and universities, with local control over the money spent," etc., etc., etc...

No questions were asked about the problems of urban sprawl, lack of affordable housing, and the extraordinary rise in land prices that so burden prospective homeowners and industry.

A lengthy article appeared in the Los Angeles Times on October 28, written by Dea Anna Sloggett Behle, a senior at Cal Poly Pomona, entitled, "Young Voters' Issues Are Ignored." Ms. Behle noted that a report sponsored by CBS News and MTV Networks found that 25% of Americans between the ages of 18 and 24 do not know the names of the two major candidates and that 70% of that age group have no clue as to the vice presidential candidates! Ms. Behle attributes this extraordinary ignorance to an alleged sacrifice of the concerns of young voters in favor of issues that affect their parents and grandparents, such as social security and health care. She adds that: "While the economy has been on fast forward and we are excited about our prospects, we find it increasingly difficult to find a safe and affordable place to live... We are reminded that in places like San Francisco, we will be forced to live farther and farther away from the place we work... While we recognize that more housing is necessary, we wonder if there isn't another way to keep the cost of housing down and provide living space while preserving an adequate natural environment."

We suggest that one reason that these issues are ignored by the candidates is that our youth will go through their high schools and universities without receiving the slightest information as to the causes of poverty, urban decay, lack of affordable housing, and other fundamental social problems. As one prominent university professor recently stated to us, "We are all Keynesians now," referring to university economics and political science professors. Keynes taught that depressions are a natural characteristic of the free enterprise system which should be addressed by heavy government spending, even if the chosen projects are only pork barrel in nature. No explanation is given by the Keynesians as to the causes of slums, urban sprawl, absence of affordable housing, rural poverty, or business cycles or any of the other economic pestilences which accost us.

If your Insights writer had been selected to propose questions to the two major candidates, they would have been something like this:

Questions to both candidates:
1. Do you agree that most government expenditures increase land values, and that road and transit construction, in particular, increase surrounding land values considerably more than the cost of construction?
2. Do you think that Congress and the President acted properly in enacting and signing the $218 billion road, transportation, and incidental public works bill, pushed through Congress by the slippery Ed Schuster (Rep., PA), which greatly increased land values on nearby properties?
3. Do you think that Schuster should have received a greater penalty than he did when found guilty by the House Ethics Committee of fraudulent activities, with the extraordinary provision that he should not be punished, even with a reprimand?
4. Do you agree that the expenditures of the Housing and Urban Development Agency are scandalous in that they only subsidize local special interests, developers, and land speculators at the expense of all competitors and the taxpayers?'
5. Do you agree that there should be no more subsidies or quotas on farm production, such as those for peanuts and tobacco, which only boost the land value of acreage on which those crops are grown?
6. Do you agree that the Federal government should stop funding the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund because of their subsidization of special interests and protection of dictators?
7. Do you agree that the infinitesimal payments for the use of government owned grazing land should be increased to open market rates?

8. Do you agree that placing heavy taxes on land and removing taxes on buildings and improvements would be of great assistance to industry and to homeowners and would ameliorate urban sprawl and lack of affordable housing?

9. Do you agree that the average worker would be better off if allowed to keep the full amount that must be paid for social security and medicare, rather than having that money transferred to the Federal government, resulting in future generations having to pay in much more than they will receive?

10. Do you agree that the construction of schools, colleges and universities increases surrounding land values more than the total cost of construction?

11. Would you name one major governmental agency that you will eliminate?

12. Do you agree that Medicare has been found greatly unfair in the amount and nature of its payments, thus causing many competent doctors to refuse to take patients who are on Medicare?

Questions to Mr. Gore:

17. Do you agree that the Chinese government expected to get something in return for the funds channeled to you through the Buddhist temple in Los Angeles?

18. Why do you always refer to the necessity of cutting taxes for the middle class? Shouldn't low income and high income taxpayers be granted relief also?

Questions to both of you:

Why do you both feel it essential to end your speeches with the now ubiquitous phrase, “God bless you and God bless America”? If America is truly in such condition that many of our citizens do not even know who the major candidates are, we need more than God’s blessing to solve our economic and social problems.

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to halt our pursuit of the fleeing and panic stricken remnants of the Iraqi army? Did not your father call upon the Kurds in the northwest and the Shiites in the southeast to throw out Saddam Hussein, without providing support, leading to their slaughter and the extermination of thousands of Saddam’s opponents, and leaving him to stay in power?