

# EDITORIAL

## Changing for the better

A spirit of optimism is spreading across America, a spirit of hope and of confidence.

Despite "The Day After," Americans support their government's decisions to stand firm against all opposition to deploying defensive nuclear weapons in Europe. We looked at the horror and we seek peace, but not at the price of freedom.

Despite widespread criticism both at home and abroad of our action in Grenada, we Americans stand a bit taller in our own eyes because our government took an initiative important to our national security. At the grass-roots, Americans breathe easier.

Despite terrorist attacks against Marines stationed in Beirut to keep the peace, against the Capitol, and threats of more such attacks to come, Americans are figuratively hitching up their britches in an attitude of, "Okay, if you guys want to fight that way. . . ." Americans are not running scared.

Despite an unacceptable eight percent unemployment figure, more Americans are employed today than ever before in history. Despite a huge deficit in the national budget, Americans are accepting that either taxes must rise or services decline and that probably they must accept some of each discipline. Despite the recent recession, Americans are determined to build a stronger economic base as recovery continues.

Despite an apparent impasse, Arabs and Israelis are suddenly closer to agreement than at any time in memory.

Despite continuing displays of inhumanity in Central America, news from that troubled isthmus carries faint notes of reassurance. Despite walk-outs from arms control talks, Russians show signs of conciliatory attitudes on several fronts.

Perhaps the spirit of optimism, the swing from blue to rose, the confidence in finding solutions is but a reflection of the spirit of the Christmas season. Perhaps nothing more concrete underlies the positive temper of the times than 1984's impending elections. Whatever the causes, whatever the reasons, the change is welcome.

Good feelings follow the arrival of good news from many fronts. Hope keeps faith alive, faith in ourselves, faith in the future. And we need faith in the future for we must pass the years ahead to younger generations.

At Christmastime we shift easily to brighter outlooks and, as we usher in the holy season, we commemorate an earlier era; then, as now, hope and optimism were greeted with rejoicing. Even if it is no more than political hype, brighter spirits can do nothing but good. Even should hope prove baseless, for a short time we shall have had respite and relief from pessimism and gloom.

While we may not quite be able to bring ourselves to sing "Happy Days Are Here Again" as a carol this year, when we hear the lilting notes of "Jingle Bells" ring through the night, and carolers sing "Joy to the World!" we can take up the tunes and join in with heartfelt hope and faith because somehow for some reason, a spirit of optimism is sweeping across America.