

Leadership L.A. deserves?

Your Jan. 1 editorial "City of big ideas" is in exactly the right spirit for addressing the problems we will face in the '90s — almost.

I recall recent Daily News disclosures of the pathetically unimaginative approach shown by our city legislators in dealing with the solid waste problem in the '50s. Sam Yorty became mayor by playing to a few self-centered constituents who didn't like separating their trash. Instead of trying to make the program more convenient and efficient, the City Council simply rolled over and canceled it, ignoring predictions of big landfill problems in the future. (Even with the benefit of hindsight, all one council member could say recently was "What could we do?")

I think that the Daily News has missed a crucially important point, however. If our city fathers and mothers are unimaginative as regards problem-solving (and problem-recognition, for that matter), it is precisely because we are unimaginative. I do not see in the people of Los Angeles a particularly high degree of ingenuity and initiative, as you seem to. Nor am I under any illusion that our elected officials are anything but a mirror image of those who elect them.

So far we have not elected to office anyone who would lead us into the future, because we do not want to forgo, as would be required, any of the conveniences and comforts to which we are wedded.

— Bill Becker
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