



# Perspective

By JAMIE BUCKINGHAM

## No Necktie

I've just about given up on wearing neckties. With the advent of the leisure suit I can now go almost anywhere with an open neck shirt. Of course there are still a few stuffy places which require a tie — but I never did feel comfortable there, anyway.

I guess I've always been something of a rebel against neckties. I never could see spending \$10 on a strip of cloth with no utilitarian value except to entangle your head in a passing thrashing machine, or provide a handle for the neighborhood mugger to use as he beat your head against the curb.

Last week, however, I broke my tradition. For the first time this year I wore a tie to church. (We have very few thrashing machines at our church, and only a limited number of muggers.) After church a distraught woman approached. "I wasn't able to hear a word of your sermon. I kept worrying if you were strangling."

I was deeply touched and immediately removed my tie.

Even though I am committed to remain tieless — even in the casket — Jackie feels I need some kind of neck attire. Ascots are for fancy dans. Bandanas for cowboys. Neckerchiefs for Boy

Scouts. Yet, in Jackie's mind, going without a necktie is almost as obscene as going braless. So, I have been looking for something to satisfy me — and society.

Earlier this week we spent a few days in Montego Bay, Jamaica. At one of those "duty free" shops I spotted just what I needed — a gold neck chain.

"Try it on," the clerk urged. "I make you good price." The tag read \$29.95. That seemed high for a tiny chain, but if the price was right it might be worth it.

It was just right. Like a bikini, it was designed for comfort — with just a taste

of propriety. "Give me a price," I said with cool efficiency.

As the clerk went to work on a calculator, my 14-year old daughter punched me in the ribs. "Daddy, the tag says \$299.50 — not \$29.95."

I gulped. She was right.

The clerk returned. Grinning. "You get great bargain. One half ounce pure gold for \$239."

I heard Jackie gasp. "For a guy who won't wear a \$10 necktie you..."

I took her elbow and we were gone. I'll just remain nude around the neck. It's cheaper. More comfortable. And gives muggers very little to grab.