

# As economy fails, people find distraction in legs

By Pat Clark

There is an old song and dance that claims when the economy is doing well, women's skirts get longer, and when the economy is clunking along, women's skirts get shorter. It should come as no surprise to you then, that early reports indicate trendy women will be exposing more leg this year.

I got hold of famous fashion designer Cosmo of Waverly for further details.

*(The scene: Cosmo's shop in Waverly. I found him back in his sewing room, stitching his designer label in a pair of socks.)*

"Designer socks?" I said.  
 "How dare you refer to these articles as socks!" answered Cosmo. "I happen to be putting the finishing touches on some men's anklewear."

"What's the difference?"  
 "Socks are two bucks a pair. Designer anklewear goes for \$8.50 a set."

overheard the conversation:

"Yeah, this is Cosmo . . . how ya' doin' Louie . . . of course I heard the Dow Jones closed over a thousand today, what do you think I live in a cave here or something. Listen, I got a recent tip, and I want you to sell off as much of the stock portfolio as you can. Never mind where I get my info, let's just say I know the market is set for a dive . . . toodeloo, Louie."

Cosmo returned, not knowing I had heard everything "Now, where were we?" he said, in an unusually civil tone.

"I was asking you how you felt about women's fashions as an economic barometer."

"Oh, that's right, he said. 'There are probably some people who believe in that, but it's just so much hocus-pocus. Let's take this year for example. My sources inform me that women's skirts are going to be shorter this year . . .'"

"I told you that a few minutes ago," I said.  
 "Sure you did. Well, you're a reliable source, aren't you? Anyway, I have no doubt that the American economy is entering a boom period, which blows that quack theory of yours to smithereens. Listen, you don't mind if I get a little paperwork done while we talk, do you?"

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## humor

I looked at the socks/anklewear appreciatively to smooth Cosmo's ruffled feathers, then quickly changed the subject.

"Cosmo, you've been in this business a long time, and have seen a lot of different fashion trends come and go," I said.

There's this theory . . .

"Get to the point," said Cosmo, not at all fooled by the stuffy introduction to the topic.

"Okay. There's a theory that women's skirts get shorter in times of economic stress."

"I've heard of this theory," interrupted Cosmo.

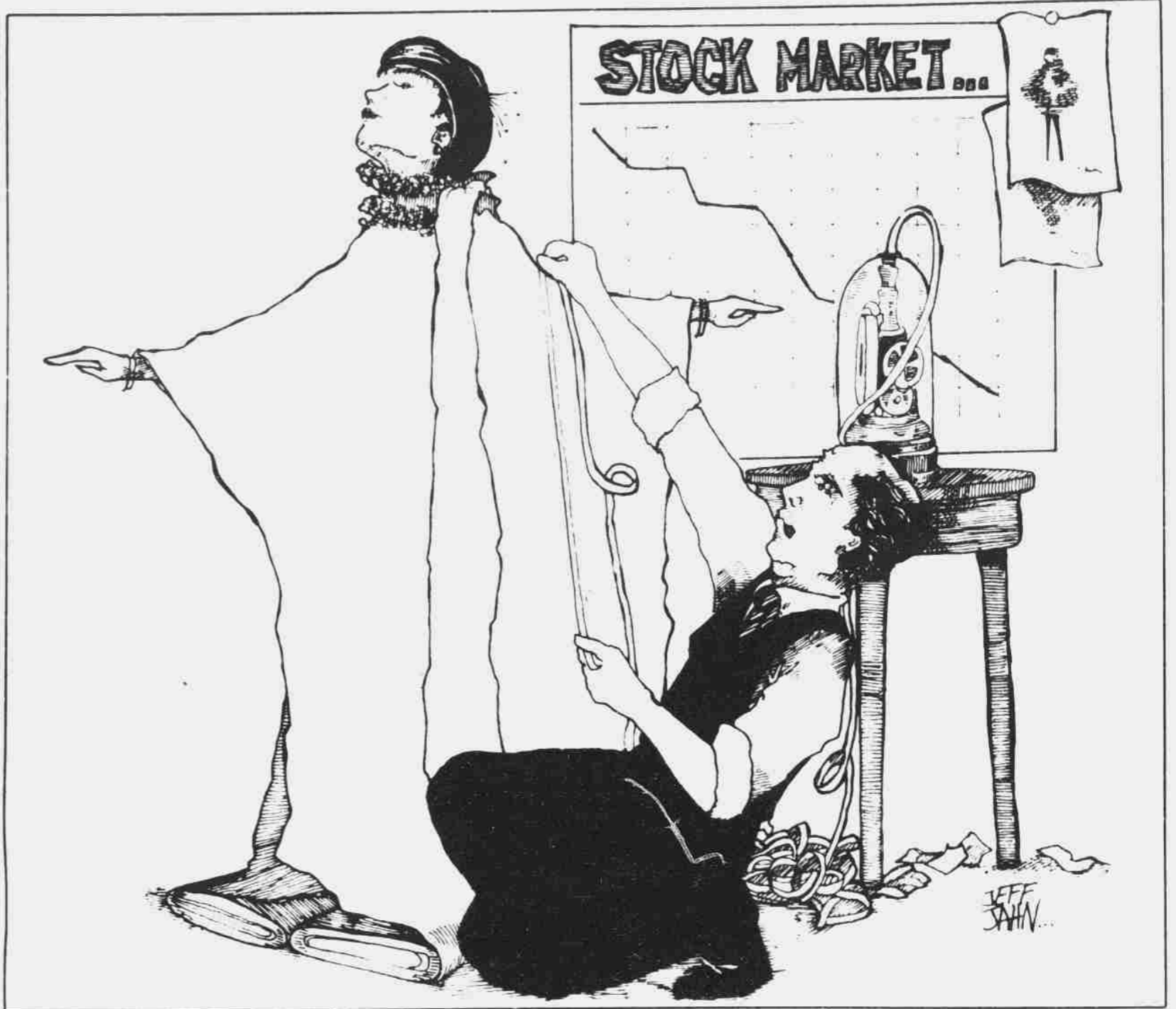
"Do you believe in it?"

Cosmo got up from his sewing table. "Why do you ask?" he said.

"Well, I have heard that women's skirts are going to be shorter this year, and I wondered if there was any correlation between that and the economy."

Cosmo lit a cigar. "Let me point out something to you, pal. Fashion designers are artists. We do not have any concern whatsoever with the ebb and flow of the economic waters. That should be obvious from the prices we ask for our merchandise. Now as to this business of shorter skirts . . ."

He was interrupted by the ringing of the telephone. I



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