

LETTERS & OPINIONS

## Politics, Artesia Style

**T**he early 1970s brought us the TV show *Love, American Style* every Friday night. These days, on the second Monday of each month, the Artesia City Council provides us with the real life performance of *Politics, Artesia Style*. In this performance, four of the cast (council) members Sally Flowers, John Lyon, John Martins and Larry Nelson all gang up on cast (council) member Tony Mendoza.

All kidding aside, on April 11, 2005, for

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the third year in a row, the four councilmembers refused to allow Mendoza to have his normal turn in the rotation for mayor pro-tem and then mayor. It is not unusual for councilmembers to change the customary rotation for the mayorship (ordered by the number of votes each member received at the last elections). Every councilmember is accountable to both the voters and to the other councilmembers. Hence, denying the mayorship is one way for the councilmembers to hold one another accountable. Of course, denial of the mayorship should not be based on political and/or personal reasons. It should be a punitive move in response to wrongdoing.

The problem in Artesia is that the four councilmembers who have ganged up to deny Tony Mendoza his rightful turn at mayor have refused to publicly answer why they are doing it. I encourage the four councilmembers to send the Los Cerritos Community News a joint letter explaining their positions. Absent such a letter, one would have to conclude that

their reasons are due to political differences, as Mendoza's political views are different than the others'.

After Congresswoman Linda Sanchez brought \$1.2 million in federal grants to Artesia to redevelop Pioneer and Artesia boulevards, Mendoza thought that it would be proper to endorse Sanchez for re-election. None of the other four councilmembers thought that it would be appropriate to endorse Congresswoman Sanchez.

Councilmember Mendoza also refuses to go along with the other four in fighting Assemblymember Rudy Bermudez on the "Little India" sign to be placed on the 91 Freeway at Pioneer. Mendoza does not think that spending over \$100,000 (and counting) to fight a sign that costs about \$1,000 (to be paid out of private funds) is a good use of taxpayer's money.

The voters of Artesia have shown their agreement with Mendoza *three* times in the past five months. In November they voted to re-elect Linda Sanchez by a 58-42 margin, and voted to re-elect Rudy Bermudez by a 51-49 margin, as Artesia voters thought there were more important issues at stake than the "Little India" sign. In March, not a single Artesia resident signed up to challenge Tony Mendoza in a Council election, as no one perceived him to be vulnerable.

It appears that Tony Mendoza is a victim of the same mis-use of a punitive process to settle political scores as Bill Clinton was *vis a vis* the impeachment and Gray Davis was *vis a vis* the recall. How unfortunate.

**Alon Barlevy, PhD.  
President, Hubert Humphrey  
Democratic Club**

## Text of Article

Politics, Artesia Style  
Alon Barlevy, PhD.  
President, Hubert Humphrey Democratic Club

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All kidding aside, on April 11, 2005, for the third year in a row, the four councilmembers have refused to allow Mendoza to have his normal turn in the rotation for Mayor Pro-Tem and then Mayor. It is not unusual for councilmembers to change the customary rotation for the mayorship (ordered by the number of votes each member received at the last elections). Every councilmember is accountable to both the voters and to the other councilmembers. Hence, denying the mayorship is one way for the council members to hold one another accountable. Of course, denial of the mayorship should not be based on political and/or personal reasons. It should be a punitive move in response to wrongdoing.

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