

## Response by Jerry Bernstein to Column Left of December 2, 2004

### opinions

# A Better Resolution

— BY JERRY BERNSTEIN —

**T**wo holidays are haunting Cerritos City Hall. They are Martin Luther King, Jr. Day and Veterans Day. Many residents want the two days observed with City Hall closed.

The problem is that both holidays are currently "floating" holidays, which means city employees can take them off when they want. The employees union says it is willing to give up the two floaters in return for a new holiday.

However, city employees presently have 12 holidays, nine fixed and three floating. If another one were added they would have a 13. Only the city of Santa Fe Springs has more, with a total of 15. Los Angeles County has 11, with no floaters.

Last week, on the Opinion Page, Column Left writer Victor Manalo suggested the city might give the employees one extra vacation day, which would not be a floater.

The suggestion has some merit, but this writer doesn't believe it's the way to go. Veteran's Day should not be a floating holiday. The holiday is a time the nation has set aside to honor our veterans. Cerritos should do the same. It shouldn't be just another day off.

### Comments by Alon Barlevy

Three holidays. Don't forget Cesar Chavez Day !!!

No they are not. The two holidays are not recognized by the city. The city gives its employees floating holidays IN LIEU of those holidays.

No they don't. They are not willing to give up flexibility in exchange for nothing. That's why the Nov. 22 meeting concluded w/o making MLK an official city holiday.

In the Nov 25 Issue of the Los Cerritos Community News, the same writer, Jerry Bernstein wrote that "The city of South Gate is the highest with 15". So which one is it, South Gate or Santa Fe Springs?

Wrong author. The author was Alon Barlevy (Victor Manalo would not write such a column, as he is an Artesia resident).

Huh ?????? Not one word in that column suggested an extra vacation day. The proposal was a complex switching of days, *with a net effect of no additional days off!!!!*

Do not link the two holidays. As important as Veteran's Day is, MLK is currently more important. MLK is a celebration of civil rights, which are currently under assault from the Bush Administration, all in the name of "National Security"

Martin Luther King, Jr. made us focus on a national problem. That all American citizens were not being afforded the opportunity to achieve the American Dream.

Those two days should be fixed holidays. City employees would not be losing the days. They would be converting them from floaters to fixed holidays that would be observed on the same day the rest of the country observes them.

If the union members agreed, negotiations could be reopened on the existing contract and the matter resolved.

Again, do not co-mingle MLK with Veteran's Day.

City employees are not stupid. Why should they give up flexibility and get nothing in return?

Again, they did not, and probably would not if asked again.