



"Accountability"
The Government Watchdog

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Vanguard

Los Angeles CA Vol VI
Week of November 28, 2010
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INVESTIGATE ANALYZE EXPOSE PUBLICIZE -- BRIBERY CORRUPTION FRAUD GRAFT

Vanguardians Purpose: To Inform, Educate, & Motivate for Involvement, Engagement & Advocacy

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"I predict future happiness for Americans if they can prevent the government from wasting the labors of the people under the pretense of taking care of them." – Thomas Jefferson.

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Glendale CA – Between July 1, 2010 and November 12, 2010 the City sued 128 people in small claims court for failure to pay their Water and Power bill. Judgments totaling \$295,878.03 have been awarded by the Court. Glendale was awarded the 'Kick 'em when they're down' plaque, a very prestigious award.

Sacramento – A new Attorney General will take office. Kamala Harris defeated LA County DA Steve Cooley for the job. Cooley acknowledged he wasn't going after Randy Adams because the DA needs the cooperation of law enforcement officers in the 'fight' against crime. To those in the community it sounded like it was OK for a law enforcement officer to break the law and do so with impunity. [More](#)

Compton: U.S. audits Compton housing programs HUD officials responding to a tip are examining the use of federal money in helping low-income residents. A Compton redevelopment official says there has been no misuse of funds.

Federal officials have launched an audit of the use of government funds by two programs administered by the Compton's Community Redevelopment Agency that have come under scrutiny before.

The audit is focused on federal funds to assist low-income residents through two programs administered by the city's redevelopment agency, said Tanya E. Schulze, regional inspector general for audit with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. She did not disclose details on the scope or nature of the audit.

The audit was prompted by a tip to the inspector general's complaints hotline.

Auditors are examining the city's First Time Homebuyers Program, which provides loans of up to \$100,000 for moderate-income homebuyers and up to \$150,000 for low-income buyers, and the Residential Rehabilitation Programs, which provide grants and loans for home repairs. [Read more.](#)

Bell CA -- An [LA Times Editorial](#) spells out some of the issues: The lessons learned about the need for transparency and public involvement in government are important ones. On a more practical level, the Legislature passed [AB 900](#), which returns the tax overcharge to the residents of Bell rather than to the schools, as state law usually requires. At least seven other pieces of [reform legislation](#) were introduced in Sacramento; legislators shamefully balked at the two most important bills, which would have required easily accessible disclosure of many public employees' salaries, but did pass others designed to curb excessive public salaries.

Washington – An FBI report regarding corruption discusses the cause and types – “Many major metropolitan areas have witnessed the indictment and conviction of public officials for corruption related activity, with public money being misused for private gain. Along with the increasing frequency of all types of corruption, the level of sophistication and complexity of this criminal activity present special challenges.

Corruption allegations are among the most sensitive matters addressed by the FBI. They must be investigated quickly, fairly, and accurately. Using a variety of federal statutes and investigative techniques, the FBI focuses investigations on all levels of government — federal, state, and municipal — and all branches of government — executive, legislative, and judicial.

Approximately 50 percent of the FBI's public corruption investigations involve law enforcement officers, chiefly due to the sheer number of officers in the United States. Similarly, allegations against municipal and state public officials, frequently involving contract or regulatory matters, are regularly investigated because of the large number of such officials.” [Click here for more.](#)



"I can't decide who I despise more – the politicians or the media."

PASADENA - The city will have to make up an unexpected shortfall of about \$13.2 million through 2014 - including \$6.9 million to the general fund - after CalPERS revised its retirement rates, officials said Monday.

The increasing California Public Employees' Retirement System costs could be addressed by contracting services, relying more on information technology and by consolidating and eliminating some services, said Finance Director Andrew Green.

"The immediate concern is that this sort of carefully crafted fiscal plan to get (the city's general fund) back into the black within five years is in jeopardy because of this unanticipated PERS shortfall," said Councilman Terry Tornek, referring to the city's plan to balance the general fund budget by 2014.

"We'll have to go back to the drawing board and recalibrate and figure out how to deal with it. There's no magic wand here."

CalPERS revised up the city's costs for fiscal years 2012, 2013 and 2014, after the agency did an in-depth analysis and determined that individuals in the system are retiring earlier and living longer, Green said. [More](#)

TRENTON NJ – Attorney General Paula T. Dow and Criminal Justice Director Stephen J. Taylor announced that a longtime aide of former Perth Amboy Mayor Joseph Vas pleaded guilty today to conspiring with Vas to obtain an illicit payment from a city vendor and illegally funneling money into Vas' congressional campaign via straw donors to evade campaign funding and reporting rules.

According to Director Taylor, Melvin Ramos, 54, of Perth Amboy, pleaded guilty to charges of second-degree conspiracy and third-degree financial facilitation of criminal activity before Superior Court Judge Anthony J. Mellaci Jr. in Monmouth County. The charges were contained in a May 21, 2009 indictment stemming from an investigation by the Division of Criminal Justice Corruption Bureau. The 19-count indictment also charged Vas, two corporations that were city vendors, and two owners of one of the corporations. The charges against Vas, including multiple second-degree counts of official misconduct and conspiracy, remain pending. All of the other defendants have pleaded guilty.

Under the plea agreement, the state will recommend that Ramos be sentenced to seven years in state prison. He must cooperate fully in the ongoing case against Vas and will be permanently barred from public employment in New Jersey. On Oct. 8, Vas and Ramos were convicted of federal corruption charges filed by the U.S. Attorney's Office for the District of New Jersey. They are scheduled to be sentenced in federal court in January. The state prison term will run concurrently with the

term that Ramos will serve in federal prison. Ramos also is jointly and severally liable with co-defendants for payment of \$58,006 in restitution to Perth Amboy.

"This longtime aide to Mayor Vas today admitted that, at the mayor's bidding, he engaged in two illegal schemes: one to pump funds into Vas' congressional campaign, and a second to have a city vendor pay an unauthorized catering bill for a city gala," said Attorney General Dow. "We allege that all of this was about Vas corruptly seeking to build his war chest and his political stature."

"We have now taken guilty pleas from all of the defendants named in the May 2009 state grand jury indictment, with the exception of Joseph Vas," said Director Taylor. "All of the co-defendants admitted their involvement in the corrupt schemes that we uncovered. We stand ready to take Vas to trial." [More.](#)

Vallejo CA -- For more than 1,000 creditors seeking repayment of tens of millions in debt from Vallejo, the city's pending bankruptcy exit plan may represent some harsh realities, a bankruptcy attorney said Monday. But before Vallejo will be allowed to exit Chapter 9 bankruptcy after more than two years, it first must convince a federal bankruptcy court judge and city creditors that it is unable to pay more than it is offering. The City Council is set to consider, and possibly vote on, the plan next week. The yet-to-be-approved budget strategy will be used to justify paying only about 5 or 10 cents on the dollar, city bankruptcy attorney Marc Levinson told the council at a recent meeting. [More.](#)

Austin TX -- A jury in Texas has convicted former U.S. House Majority Leader Tom DeLay on charges he illegally funneled corporate money to Texas candidates in 2002. DeLay was once one of the most powerful Republicans in Congress. He now faces up to life in prison. Jurors in Austin deliberated for 19 hours before returning guilty verdicts today on charges of money-laundering and conspiracy to commit money-laundering. [More.](#)

Maryland -- The arrests of a Prince George's County liquor store magnate and his wife by federal authorities last week as part of a broad corruption probe involving County Executive Jack B. Johnson has pulled back the curtain on the complex and often incestuous world of liquor and politics in the county. [More](#)

Montebello CA -- Richard McKee, vice president of open government compliance for advocacy group Californians Aware, demanded on Wednesday the Council correct violations of the Ralph M. Brown Act, which regulates government transparency. The City Council improperly met behind closed doors about negotiations with "unrepresented employees" and reassigning police officers to patrol, violating the Brown Act, according to McKee who demanded a response from the city by Dec. 10 acknowledging a Brown Act violation occurred and committing not to repeat the transgression. "Failure to respond as demanded will demonstrate that an actual and present controversy exists between us as to the public's rights and the City's responsibilities under the Brown Act," McKee wrote. [More.](#)

San Marino CA -- City begins enforcing business license tax while Senator says State needs to protect the small businesses that are affected. [More.](#)

SAMUEL ADAMS: It does not require a majority to prevail, but rather an irate, tireless minority keen to set brush fires in people's minds.

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1 COMMENTARY

You may agree or disagree with the views below. Feel free to comment on them. The commentaries do not necessarily reflect the position of Vanguardians

From the Publisher... SITTING IN THE CAT BIRD SEAT



Even though the Glendale City Council doesn't appreciate Vanguardians, doing almost everything in their power to discredit the work we do, there are numerous whistleblowers and concerned citizens that contact us about issues that are not healthy for the community.

We have become a focal point for those that seek a transparent government, a government that represents all the people, not just a few special interests.

Each week we reproduce articles about corruption all around the nation. From cops to firemen; from Congress to State legislatures; Governors, Mayors and City Council members. Sociologists and Law Enforcers are seeking reasons for this decay. To me the reason is simple. No one is watching.

When egregious activities cost taxpayers dearly and they sit idle; that gives officials tacit approval for their shenanigans.

I have often sat through council meetings where I have watched as council members get orders over their BlackBerrys on how to vote, while the voters sit and watch in awe at why the council could vote a certain way after having heard testimony from those in the chambers.

Council is very dismissive of pundits that come before it to share their knowledge of the financial issues that the City is facing. Think about it...five years ago those pundits called on the council for fiscal conservancy based on the projections of a recession that is still upon us. But they responded by bestowing more riches on the hired help.

Pauline Field and I met with then Mayor Rafi Manoukian and City Manager Jim Starbird about the use of consultants. Starbird declared that there was no need for them. Compare that comment to today's use of consultants. The City couldn't function without them. Of course the Council overlooked that. They also overlooked the fact that 'business friendly' stopped with the promotion of more and more employees to management, a problem that still persists.

More managers mean that the contributions to the GMA (Glendale Managers Association) increase. The more they increase the more money can be spent via the independent expenditure committee to perpetuate the continued tenure of office.

As long as certain council members can be in office the longer they can get the perks from those that have business before them. One CCM is known for berating contributors until they cough up more money.

In April there is a chance for voters to stop the corruption at City Hall by understanding the motives of a candidate or an incumbent.

Under one head of the Redevelopment Agency more matters were decided in secret...like it was when Larry Zarian was in office.

Send a message to those on the dais that you want more transparency. For instance...why was the soil contamination issue at Star Ford/Trader Joe's not an issue discussed in the sunshine?...Why are the financial details of the Neon Museum in the dark? Why is the Council spending time getting rid of City owned property instead of helping property owners find tenants for their revenue producing properties? These are the questions. Ask them. Get your own answers and then verify them with the documents.

BARRY ALLEN



NEXT WEEK: THE REASONS AND RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE CONTINUING FINANCIAL DEFICIT

The penalty good men and women pay for indifference to public affairs is to be ruled by evil men. PLATO

Most people want the benefits of an accountable government but are afraid to work for accountability or to support those that do often because they fear retaliation or are the beneficiaries of the largesse or corruption of government

THE CHIEF OUTLAW
HOW THE SILENCE OF THE LAMBS EXPOSES OUR CURRENT MORAL HAZARD

It is bad enough that District Attorney Steve Cooley is not pursuing Randy Adams with the same vigor he pursued the vermin politicians and top administrators who ran the City of Bell. What is most revealing about the state of public governance is the silence of people in positions of leadership who should be speaking out on the immorality of Randy Adams' contract with the city of Bell. Where is the leadership we need to restore our trust in law enforcement institutions?



We are not talking here about the immoral acts of some third-rate outlaw caught with his hands in the public cookie-jar. This is about the highest law-enforcement official of a city attempting to milk the system to his maximum financial benefit. Yet the condemnation Randy Adams deserves is not forthcoming from elected officials who knew Randy Adams nor from the people who served under his command.

Randy Adams made a contractual arrangement with the top administrator of a very poor city to extract for himself what is possibly the most exorbitant Police Chief's salary in the nation. The fact that the dastardly arrangement was kept secret more than demonstrates that Adams knew of the immoral act he was committing, let alone the possibility that the act was illegal.

GENUINE FAKE WATCHES

If the same act were performed by a poor slob, he would have little consideration from a judge who would bring up the question: "What would a reasonable person do?" If Joe Shmuck were to buy a Rolex watch from an unscrupulous man for eighty dollars, and transacted the sale at a park bench away from the prying eyes of onlookers, would he not be held to the expectation that a reasonable man would consider the watch as stolen property?

I have been told in confidence that the agreement between Randy Adams and Bell's city manager was conducted at a table at a Bell city park distant from Bell's city hall. If the outrageous salary on that agreement were not enough to sicken anyone who reads it, the arrangement to provide Randy Adams with a pre-cooked disability retirement claim to avoid paying taxes is the most sickening of all.

To get the sense of my outrage, I must put it in perspective. In June of last year, when I attended one of the graduation ceremonies at USC, the speaker, a professor emeritus, mentioned a statistic that slammed my consciousness – that there are hundreds of thousands of veterans from the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan who need extensive occupational therapy for their disabling physical and mental injuries. The scope of the injuries range from emotional incapacitation to severe brain injuries, to the loss of upper extremities such as arms or hands.



Randy Adams, by comparison, reportedly made a claim for a back injury while moving a box of office supplies as he was clearing his office. His competitive long-distance running activity afterwards does not jibe with his claim for a life-long disability compensation. The disability portion of his retirement would be tax-free. To me, Randy Adams tax-avoidance scheme is not only repugnant, it is very likely felonious. Those taxes that Mr. Adams tried to avoid would eventually go to pay for the medical costs of real disabilities suffered by members of our armed forces. The extensive therapy those men and women must undergo is a cost our society must bear to provide a semblance of a normal life for so many who have lost their eyes, hands, legs, or who arrived at a military hospital clinging to life or are nearly

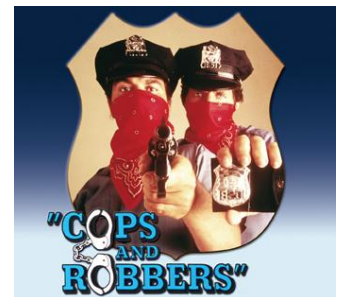
totally incapacitated.

So here is the summary of the moral depravity of this story: Randy Adams, police chief of the City of Glendale, who for six years swore to protect and serve the public, attempts to defraud the citizenry of a poor city with an outrageously undeserved salary, and creates a tax-avoidance scheme with a highly questionable disability claim.

When the district attorney can't fathom his moral obligation to help restore our trust in our law enforcement by holding Randy Adams accountable to that depravity, we have crossed the threshold into the practices of a third-world country.

This is Los Angeles County, not some third-world jurisdiction. Our respect for the rule of law and our expectations of an honest government is what sets this country apart from the faux democracies of this hemisphere. At least that is what I believed.

So why aren't the Glendale Police Officer's Association representatives speaking out on this issue? Why should the GPOA not obtain a signed petition from all its members condemning the actions and moral depravity of the chief who led them for six years? Why can't they make a public request that Adams rescind his claim to the outrageous pension and tax-free benefits?



Randy Adams did more than tarnish the reputation of the police. He trashed whatever image we had of law enforcement in Los Angeles county. Chief Adams was the president of the Los Angeles County Police Chiefs. Why isn't their leadership speaking in outrage at the depravity of the man who led them not too long ago? Why the silence of the Glendale City leadership?

While our men and women in the armed forces are putting their lives and limbs in jeopardy, and while their families are bearing huge sacrifices, we find local officials trashing our democratic values, trashing the tax system and our most elemental sense of fairness.

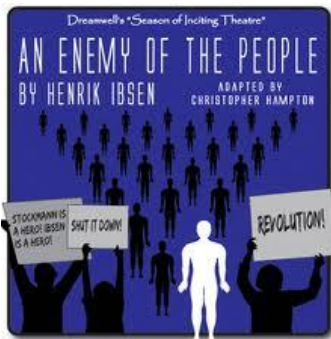
I thought the Silence of the Lambs was memorable horror fiction with heroic law enforcement as protagonists. In this local story, there are few law enforcement heroes. We live our own dastardly real silence of the lambs.

HERBERT MOLANO Click here [Glendale Today](#)

WHEN GOVERNMENT BECOMES THE ENEMY OF THE PEOPLE

The state of America is in a state of decline. We are living it. We are experiencing not only a decline in our economic resiliency; we are experiencing a change in the definition of government as we know it.

At the local level, a government of the people has now become a government of the entrenched. My claim is that we have a government run for and by the public employees who've organized to elect their own politicians and extract their maximum financial benefit for themselves.



I can point to numerous examples in the City of Glendale. I could point to the deep involvement by the Police Officer's Association and the Fire Fighter's Association in their endorsement of candidates and their financial support of candidates who will comply with their financial demands irrespective of how unreasonable or how damaging to the long-term financial health of the city.

To support my claim, I mention the lack of accountability by major city employee groups. I can point out that even in the most basic of measures – the response times by Fire Department Paramedics and their performance outcomes to heart attack and stroke victims – we get neither performance reviews nor targets for improvements.

I could list the number of city-funded projects that have gone millions of dollars over budget, while the managers involved continue to get outrageous salaries and benefits, let alone not get fired.

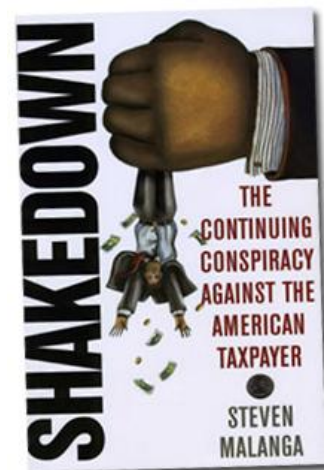
I could list the huge increases in their annual compensation in the past ten years, and unfathomable increases in their pensions.

But nothing could demonstrate that government has become our enemy as when a city government sues all of its citizens. Incredible? Yes! Outrageous? Yes! Fiction? No!

The city of Los Angeles had been in violation of proposition 218 for many years. Like the city of Glendale, they had circumvented proposition 13 by tapping the water utility finances as a back-door source of funds. They would jack up the rates and the money in excess of operations would flow to the general fund.

That is what proposition 218 was meant to prevent. The public voted to prevent local governments with publicly owned utilities from using their billing to extract more money from taxpayers and rate-payers. The City of Los Angeles refused to obey the law. They wanted to continue their own outrageous salaries and pension benefits. But since additional taxes must be put to a vote of the public, they simply raised the rates and raided the DWP coffers.

But other utilities were sued by the public and the utilities lost. The City of Los Angeles attempted to preempt such a lawsuit by filing a claim with the Court suing all of its citizens. The legal maneuver is called a "Validation Action." By filing the action and publicizing it in an arcane newspaper of general circulation, they tried to circumvent real notification and any



possible legal action by the public to recover the funds that the courts have considered an illegal taxation.

Fortunately for the public, a savvy reader found the notice and provided it to the Howard Jarvis Taxpayer association who responded to the city's legal action. Howard Jarvis won.

It came to my attention that the city of Glendale was also contemplating such a legal maneuver themselves. So now, for the past few months, I, and other concerned taxpayers, have been filing Public Records Act requests seeking documents of the city's attempt to file a similar suit against the public and publish it in a newspaper that no one in Glendale would ever read.

When a government sues all of its residents, it is no longer legitimate. It is the arm of the entrenched special interests and public employees who believe that government means controlling the organization that pays them their regular check. To them, the public is the necessary evil from which they need to extract their funds.

The "Validating Action" was a lawsuit whose success rested in keeping the public in the dark. The success of an enemy government rests on the ignorance of the public. It is the reason why organizations can thrive with names such as "Fire Fighters for Better Government" then funnel funds to incompetent council candidates and incumbents they can control.

There is an antidote to corrupt governments – A knowledgeable voting public. I would add that good democracies rest on more than just an informed public. It also rests on the public's ability to reason.

HERBERT MOLANO Click here [Glendale Today](#)

A GOVERNMENT FOR THE COMMON GOOD

What are the elements of a good government? It is a question that would merit a thick volume on issues ranging from participation, representation, elections, transparency, accountability, fairness, and distribution of resources, taxation and a dozen other considerations. But in the simplest form, what is the most essential element?

The Viral Campaign for the Common Good



Fill in the blank (housing, education, environment, energy, common good, etc.)

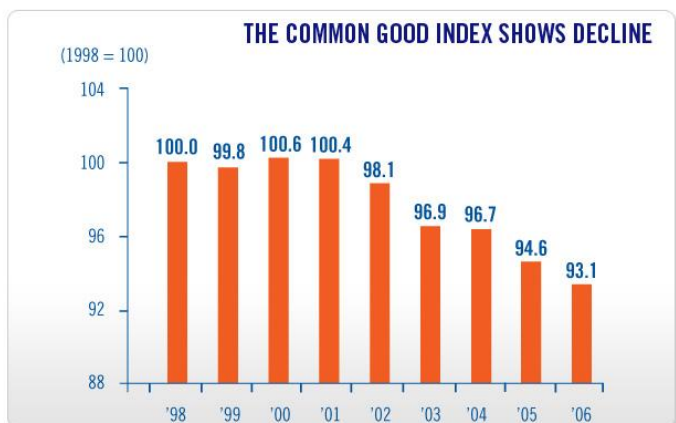
In a nut-shell, good government must pass the test of how its policies are directed toward the common good. This is equivalent to performance-based policies in business. Today the best run-businesses test to see if their policies will benefit the customer and how that improved customer experience translates into higher revenues, increased net profit and increased stock-holder value. To achieve those ends, well-run organizations think-through how those goals can be supported through better internal processes and how those processes can be achieved with improved internal learning and growth.

To these businesses, if that positive customer experience can be replicated, if the products and services they buy have a consistent expectation of value, the customer will become a repeat customer or pay a premium for those services, or both. That, in a nutshell, is at the heart of the success of Apple Computer and Southwest Airlines.

So why can't governments in America think along the same lines. Why do they fail us so often? The answer lies in a different model. Why do the residents of Denmark, Sweden, New Zealand, and Canada hold their government in higher esteem and trust than our citizens do theirs? The answer is very likely in their focus and commitment toward the common good.

Asking about how a policy will benefit the common good will give clarity to every political decision we make. If politics is the exercise of deciding who gets what, creating a litmus test on the impact of policies on the common good changes the dialogue and helps remove the strife with the resulting inequities.

Imagine that the leadership of a public employees union comes to the city council to ask for five years of additional pay without having to work. Had the councilmen asked



them to demonstrate how such policies benefitted the common good, these special interests would be hard-pressed to justify how working less would result in a public benefit. That policy change was the pension change approved by the city council in April of 2001.

When the police department demanded that their 6% pay increase in 2010 follow the 5% increase of 2009, no city councilman asked how complying with those terms would translate into a public good. If that increase in pay meant that we would have to reduce the number of police officers, remove the School Resource Officers, and close the Police Headquarters at night, how can that salary increase be justified as resulting in the public good?

When the Fire Department demanded to take over the paramedic service, then run by private ambulance services, the result was an increase to the city budget by an additional 4 million dollars in expenditures each year. When we ask how their performance improved the public good, we don't get any firm outcomes-based justification. The public good, as a litmus test, is not supported by any evidence from that expensive change.

When the GUSD superintendent was given around a \$100,000 raise on the year before his retirement, no one asked how that policy change would translate into a better education for our school children. Likewise when the GCC Board of Trustees gave the outgoing Superintendent a huge six-figure severance package after she announced her resignation, we are left to ask if the common good of the students was served by such grandiose gestures. When the Glendale city manager was given the promise of one-year's pay in the event of a forced termination, we can ask how the common good of the residents is served by such grand displays of affection.

When the GWP pursued the smart meter system at the expense of fixing rotting infrastructure, no one asked how policies such as these would translate into long term benefits to the public good. When GWP director Glen Steiger explained the one side of the equation – how the smart meters could serve the rate-payer, he was abruptly interrupted by councilman David Weaver with a retort that went: "Don't tell me what it will do for the residents, tell me what it will do for the city." This paraphrase highlights the mindset of many in positions of leadership who demonstrate with their words and deeds that the benefit to the bureaucracy trumps the public good.

The answer to our divisiveness, uncontrolled budgets, outrageous pensions, and poor infrastructure investments, lies in a very simple question: How will it benefit the common good?

If we leave the answer to the charlatans in office, we are sure to get some vague justification spiced with some trite hyperbole. The question needs a corollary: How do you measure it?

HERBERT MOLANO Click here [Glendale Today](#)

[Pension reform: New wave of proposals](#)

San Diego Mayor Jerry Sanders dropped the big one on public pension advocates last week, proposing that all new city employees except police and firefighters get a 401(k)-style individual investment plan instead of a pension.

The mayor's announcement that he plans to put an initiative on the next city ballot is the most far-reaching proposal to emerge so far after voters approved seven of eight local pension reforms this month.

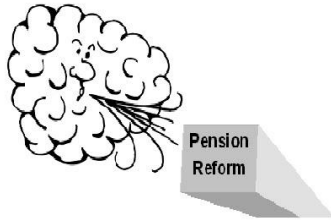
The Los Angeles city council last week put a measure on the March 8 ballot that would cut police and firefighter retirement costs. After San Francisco voters gave pension reform its lone setback this month, officials there reportedly are discussing new plans.

At the state level, two reform groups are talking about an initiative. University of California Regents may act on pension reform next month. State worker union holdouts will test incoming Gov. Jerry Brown in negotiations for new contracts.

And the possibility that public pensions will become a federal issue has CalPERS officials planning a trip to Washington, D.C., next month to begin staking out a position in case there is a national debate.

San Diego voters rejected a Sanders-backed proposal for a sales tax increase linked to pension reforms. Controversial deals in 1996 and 2002 lowered city pension contributions below actuarially required levels, while raising pension benefits.

"Eliminating pensions is a radical idea in municipal government, but we must acknowledge that we cannot sustain the current defined-benefit system, which was designed in another era for completely different circumstances," Sanders said [in a news release](#).



"Public employees are now paid salaries comparable to those in the private sector, and there's simply no reason they should enjoy a far richer retirement benefit than anyone else," he said.

A spokeswoman said the mayor's proposal, not yet drafted, exempts police and firefighters to avoid "severe recruiting issues." The unsuccessful Republican candidate for governor, Meg Whitman, made a similar exemption in her proposal to switch new state workers to 401(k) plans.

The president of a [pension reform group](#), which is planning a third attempt to put an initiative on the ballot, said a question added to a recent private poll found that exempting police and firefighters from a 401(k) proposal caused a sharp drop in support.

"The luster has gone off public safety (workers)," said Marcia Fritz, president of Californians for Fiscal Responsibility.

A campaign against a 401(k) proposal briefly backed by Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger in 2005 featured police and firefighters, who traditionally have strong public support.

Most private-sector employers that offer retirement benefits now use 401(k) plans rather than pensions. The employer makes a "defined contribution" and avoids the long-term debt of pensions. Workers have a retirement plan easily shifted to a new employer.

A 401(k) plan also shifts the risk of investment loss from the employer to the employee. Pensions depend on investment earnings for much of their revenue, 75 percent for many public plans.

One reason public pension costs are going up, diverting money that could be spent on other programs, is huge investment losses in the stock market crash two years ago.

Critics contend that optimistic earning forecasts conceal massive public pension debt. A Stanford graduate student study said state pension debt is \$500 billion if a risk-free bond rate is used, not the \$55 billion reported using risky diversified investments.

Fritz argues against switching new government employees (current workers have pension rights protected by the courts) to a pure 401(k) retirement plan. Some of the problems she cites:

Most public employees in California do not receive Social Security, a backup if investments fall short. Closing a pension plan ends revenue from new members, driving up employer costs. Pure 401(k) plans in Alaska, Colorado and Nebraska have not provided enough retiree income.

Fritz prefers a "hybrid" plan that combines smaller pensions with a 401(k)-style individual investment plan. She thinks that an initiative is needed, because public employee unions are unlikely to agree to the necessary long-lasting reforms.

Her group has not been working with the new Think Long Committee for California backed by \$20 million from financier Nicolas Brugguen. Its broad [agenda for an overhaul](#) of state government reportedly includes "runaway pension costs."

Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger got two-thirds of unionized state workers to agree to cut pension costs. Current workers contribute more toward their pensions, new workers get lower pensions, and the sweetener is a top-step pay raise after two or three years.



Unions representing the other third held out, hoping for a better deal from the new administration. But Jerry Brown was an early advocate of pension reform, proposing lower benefits for new hires in the final budget of his previous term as governor.

His argument for a "two-tier" system in 1982 was that pensions and Social Security gave some retirees more income than they earned on the job.

UC Regents may vote Dec. 13 on a [plan to begin closing](#) a \$21 billion unfunded retirement liability. Unions must approve parts of the plan to increase employer-

employee contributions, reduce retiree health coverage, and extend new worker retirement ages.

A [ballot measure](#) to cut Los Angeles police and firefighter retiree costs has union support. Pensions for new hires would be lowered. Current workers would contribute 2 percent of their pay toward retiree health care. Critics say more savings are needed.

Unions and others reportedly spent more than \$2 million to defeat a San Francisco ballot measure that would have increased worker pension contributions and cut health care coverage for dependents of current workers.

But the ballot measure sponsor, Public Defender Jeff Adachi, [told a newspaper](#) columnist he may try again. Unions said they are working on their own plan to cut pension costs in San Francisco.

A federal lobbyist, Don Marlais, told the California Public Employees Retirement System board last month that Congress and federal officials are beginning to be affected by "the relentless drumbeat of negative press" about public pension plans.

"We assured them and congressional staffers that public pension plans are sound and they are not looking for a bailout," Marlais said.

Two CalPERS officials, chief executive Anne Stausboll and external affairs director Patricia Macht, are scheduled to go to Washington next month to gather information about the national pension situation.

If there is going to be a federal discussion of long-term retirement security, as some expect, CalPERS wants to be ready to participate, possibly with guidelines to be considered by the board next spring. **Ed Mendel**

Reporter Ed Mendel covered the Capitol in Sacramento for nearly three decades, most recently for the San Diego Union-Tribune. More stories are at <http://calpensions.com/> Posted 22 Nov 10 Read the comment here [|12 Comments »](#)

TAKE ACTION – GET INVOLVED – BE INFORMED – SHARE VANGUARD – VOLUNTEER

2Shout Box

ED – Letters published do not necessarily express the opinion of Vanguardians, Vanguard News Service, the organization or Barry Allen. Names are used only when requested. Initials are used as there are people, believe it or not, who are concerned with retaliation or have issues before a legislative body. Letters will be published that are signed and are not hate oriented.



Mr. Molano's article only touches the surface. The last bond issue was to be used to repair and restore the GUSD's aging infrastructure in the local schools, which was supposedly beyond its useful life. Unfortunately, the infrastructure at the schools is mismanaged and not taken care of properly. The GUSD has scores of engineers, janitors and workers on their payrolls with absolutely no oversight.

Most of these workers have been moonlighting during the daytime working odd jobs for other property owners for years while the school district falls to pieces. I wonder who supervises these workers and why is not there a monitoring system in place? If this goes on in plain sight at GUSD I wonder who is watching the store at the City. Probably no one. A concerned citizen.

- Recently I did some research on CalPERS and its pension underfunding in this state. It is WAY more massive than you read. I became interested after hearing a CalPERS representative in Huntington Park last week. That presentation was scary but this is even more so..... Several days ago the CalPERS board met and they videotaped the 2-3 day meeting they had with their actuaries.

Get this, within two years the cost to cities, counties, and the state for pension payments will go up **35% - 40%**. Do you realize how many cities, counties, and states will collapse when that starts.....freakin' 40% and they are on their own damn video tape saying this to each other.

HOLY SMOKE!!!!!!!!!! That's \$200 million for the City of Los Angeles alone. You should see how this will impact Glendale. **GM**

- Whatever happened to the threat made by Chris Stavros, fire union president, in open session to the city council that he would come back every Monday evening to chide them until they approve the \$40 million dollars to build two new fire stations? Weaver said it was critical to the safety of the citizens because it was taking longer to get out of the stations to respond to calls because the apparatus floor space was too narrow. The fire union even showed some doctored photos to "prove" their claim.

The scary part was that all council members were ready to approve the money, but the recession and CalPERS warnings of massive increases in pension requirements miraculously made this "critical" issue disappear into oblivion. Fire Buff

- I have a question for Vanguard. Is Council member Drayman a Pitcher or a Catcher? [ED – That is a question for the Council member to answer. Vanguard archives are negative on Drayman in baseball.]

3 Public Information

"Just the facts"

The City of Glendale is overdue in response to this record request made on November 8, 2010:

To provide documents demonstrating:

1. the Federal Stimulus (ARRA) money received;
2. the projects for which it was received;
3. documents describing the number of jobs created by that Stimulus;
4. the amount of money left or unspent at this time.

[ED – In a recent City document the City claims to have received grants for

- | | |
|----------------------------|----------|
| 1. Adult Recreation Center | \$ 2.8M |
| 2. Fairmont Bridge | \$44M |
| 3. Smart Meters | \$20M |
| 4. Streets and Signals | \$ 3M |
| 5. Affordable Housing | \$35M |
| 6. Job training (Verdugo) | \$ 5M |
| 7. Public Safety | <\$500K] |




City spent about \$850,000 on outside Legal Counsel in addition to the City Attorney budget.

Cases of note include Ovasapyan (falsely accused of home invasion murder and may be the recipient of \$1,000,000 judgment) that the City has already spent \$107,000 to mitigate their loss.

The five GPD officers that are suing for discrimination - the City has already spent \$151,000 in defending the case before the trial. More soon...

"All truths are easy to understand once they have been discovered; the point is to discover them." - Galileo Galilei.

Agendas for the City of Glendale CA

 Click to view the agenda [City Council](#) [Housing Authority](#) [Redevelopment Agency](#)
Meetings at City Hall (CH) are in the Council Chambers, 2nd Floor at 613 E Broadway.
Meetings at the Municipal Services Bldg. (MSB) are in room 105 at 633 E Broadway.
Meetings at the Perkins Bldg (PB) are in the Conference Room at 141 N Glendale Ave.
Phone numbers are in area code 818 unless noted otherwise

Tuesday, November 30

- Housing Authority -- 2:30 pm, CH 548-2060
- Redevelopment Agency -- 2:30 pm, CH 548-2005
- Joint Meeting** –RE: Impact Fees for Parks and Library – 2:30 pm, CH 548-4844
- City Council -- 6:00 pm, CH 548-4844

Thursday, December 2

- Committee for a Clean & Beautiful Glendale – 8:30 am, PB 548-3700
- Groundbreaking for new Pacific Park Pool** – 2:30 pm, 501 S. Pacific St, 548-2000. The public is invited to this event.

Wednesday, December 1

- Planning Hearing Officer – 9:30 am, MSB 548-2140
- Planning Commission – 5:00 pm, MSB 548-2140

4 *Vanguardians*

Vanguard archives are available by clicking - [Home Page of Open Government \(???\) in Glendale California](#)

People from all over LA County are asking for Vanguard and Guardians training. We are expanding our coverage of LA County activities to accommodate the needs of the community.

Vanguard opens its 'Shout Box' to Glendale News Press (GNP) letter writers whose letters regarding City Government issues, questions and criticisms are not being published by the GNP. Vanguard Editor Pauline Field received approval from the editorial advisory board to make this opportunity available to all stakeholders.

Your employee Association doesn't support you, DON'T support them. Instead, send your union dues to Guardians as allowed by the [Meyers-Milias-Brown Act](#) for LOCAL PUBLIC EMPLOYEE ORGANIZATIONS

Vanguard is following these lawsuits: the 5 GPD officers; Rodriguez; Gillespie; Hayn; Hunter; Mendoza & Ovasapyan. The cases cited are from the Randy Adams regime and continue under Chief DePompa.

VANGUARDIANS needs your Continuing Financial Support


Please make checks payable to "VANGUARDIANS" Mail to: POB 11202 Glendale, CA 91226

Your contributions are tax deductible. You will receive a receipt for income tax purposes

- The [Ralph M Brown Act](#) mandates legislative bodies to provide each person an opportunity to speak and requires that agendas are posted and meetings are open.
- The [California Public Records Act](#) (PRA) is the tool to get information about the operations of government.
- The [Political Reform Act of 1974](#) allows public access to the financial reports of public officials.
- www.maplight.org to follow the money trail from special interests to the policy maker

To become more involved in your community, to learn how to use these important tools, you can call 818 243 1502

Comments on this issue from our advisors: Excellent. Comments by Allen, Molano, and Mendel are scary. The corruption is everywhere. I wonder if the comments are enough to spark the much needed public outrage and action. JS

5  **the Insider** is written by city employees that care about the way the City is run. As they are concerned about retaliation, their identities are secret. Vanguard provides them the opportunity to have this forum. The comments are their own.



It appears that a back door deal is being negotiated between the Official Police Towing contractors whose towing contracts expire soon. The City may just grant a 5 year extension. They are bickering over call volume. Crescenta Valley Towing says not enough and Monterey & Gay's are not willing to adjust their rates. They may not go out to bid. A former CCM is involved in the talks.

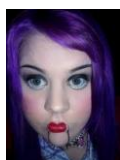
More about the Vassar affordable housing project. ADI fired their employee that provided pictures showing the cut rebar to the city inspector in order to protect the in-house architect and the structural engineer that said there was no problem. Of course a problem could pop up with a 7.0 earthquake. At this juncture the City of Glendale has subordinated its responsibility for the safety of the residents in the HUD property.

Looks like the bonus babies will be exposed on Monday, about time. Also looks like the City will be forming a media relations committee to insure the proper spin will be controlled by the executives.

If the community truly wants to send a message that they are fed up with waste in government, they should send the existing Council members packing next year. None have done anything except what they have been told to do by Starbird since taking office. Don't expect the old police building to be used anytime soon. "Lack of funds". Good thing we bought an asylum!!!

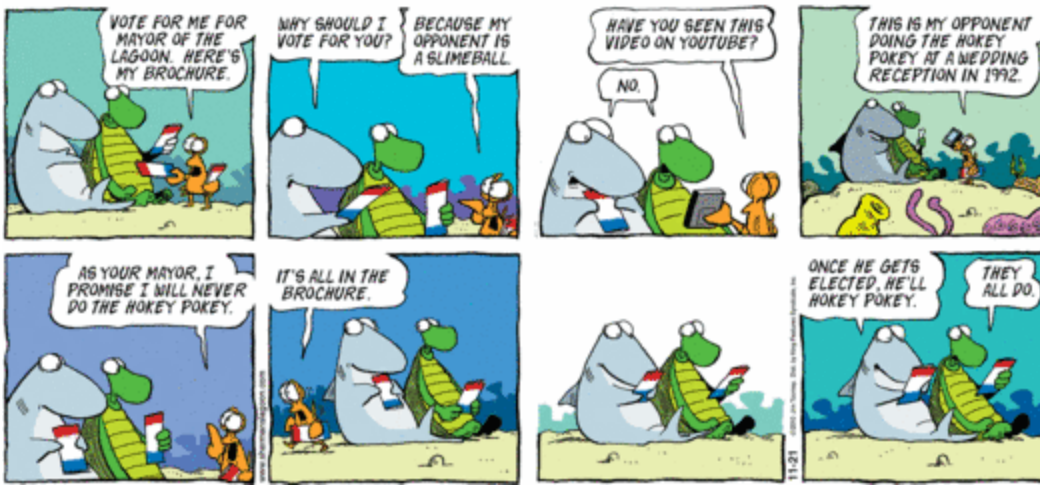
Looks like a City Attorney will be let go...let's see if you can tell from this description: **REDACTED**

6 THE DENIZENS ON THE DAIS



SHERMAN'S LAGOON

BY JIM TOOMEY



"You can't win an argument with a Moron, an Idiot, or a Political Bigot" Kraft

When did it begin?

The Lie-O-Meter moves from week to week showing the official telling the most outrageous lies.

Weaver*	Quintero	Najarian	Drayman*	Friedman
1997	2001	2005	2007	2009

* Drayman and Weaver terms end in April 2011

7 STIMULI

FOR Sale: 12 year old California "C" Corporation

Vanguardians ThinkTank has evaluated several ideas to stimulate growth

- One with appeal to car and RV dealers;
- Another that would appeal to free standing buildings in commercial zones for DIY auto repairs;
- Yet another that would provide early warning of brush fires in remote locales

Contact Barry Allen @ 818 243 1502 regarding STIMULUS

8 Skeptic.Com interview with Governor-Elect Jerry Brown. Part 3 More next week

Skeptic: Who are the biggest contributors to the Republicans and the Democrats, nationally and here in California?

Brown: In each state it is a little different. Obvious examples come to mind. The truckers, the medical industry, the tobacco industry, some of the unions are big contributors.

Skeptic: Do they give to both sides?

Brown: A lot of them do; some don't. Teachers and unions generally give to Democrats, oil companies and truckers are more Republican-oriented.

Skeptic: Perhaps you can define some of these "inside baseball" terms — what do they mean and why are they important: Soft Money.

Brown: Soft money is corporate or union, as opposed to individual, donations to a political campaign. In many states, there's no legal limit on soft money. Legally it is not allowed in federal campaigns. It can only be used for voter registration, party building, and state campaigns. But it can funnel back into campaigns.



Skeptic: Vote Suppression.

Brown: When you engage in mudslinging you can lower the voter turnout and the reduction in voter participation is skewed against the poor. Inclination to vote is strongest among the most educated and the most affluent. As you go down the income and education scale, you find lower rates of participation.

Skeptic: Walking Around Money.

Brown: That's money that you give to get people to go out and vote on Election Day. Today it's principally in the poor neighborhoods of large Eastern cities.

Skeptic: Losers always like to claim the other side only won because they had more money. But if you're interested in domestic or foreign policy, if you're a group

that has been the victim of government policies in the past, shouldn't you contribute to the process? What's wrong with that? Isn't that simply playing by the rules and playing smart?

Brown: What's wrong with it is that it offends common-law notions of bribery, which proscribe the giving or receipt of money or anything of value, where the intent is to influence official behavior. That pretty well describes campaign contributions, particularly PAC donations. What's wrong is that the money exchange is inherently corrupting. It separates the process from ordinary people. As the central government takes on more power and as advanced technology makes things more complicated, the only ones with the time and the expertise to become active are the paid people. And increasingly they represent the corporate view of unlimited free trade, homogenization of all communities, the disruption of the neighborhood and the family in the service of neutered efficiency. Credit, consumption, global production, massive incarceration, massive propaganda, and a general anxiety are the products of the modern, market economy. It is making it virtually impossible to come to terms with the environmental crisis which threatens countless species, and human life itself.

Skeptic: Or are contributors in many cases just playing safe? To what extent are political contributions a subtle form of paying protection? If *Skeptic* magazine were in a position to make big contributions (unfortunately, we're not) and there were a *Gullible* magazine, wouldn't *Gullible* have to contribute just to "cover their ass" so Congress didn't pass a bunch of pro-*Skeptic* legislation?

Brown: Well, buying protection is buying influence. You have to be in the game. If the Baby Bells don't pay to play, then AT&T or the cable companies will come into their market and they'll lose out. The government has power and it auctions it off in a sophisticated way. The skill of being a member of Congress is knowing how to play in that auction. And then it knows how to take the money that comes from the auction and use it to get re-elected. That takes no brains at all because you hire a professional. You could be a dog and get elected, because most people don't see their congressman. In the modern, anonymous, urban areas, it's merely a mailer, a computerized pamphlet, brochure, book, or letter, and in some cases TV ads. But the face-to-face town meeting has long gone the way of the dodo bird.

Email info@vanguardians.org to subscribe to the Weekly News on issues that impact you. **Vanguardians encourage and support advocacy, involvement and engagement with government. Vanguard is intended for personal use by recipient and forwarding without change to recipient's personal email list. Vanguardians is a 501C3 educational non-profit corporation. Contributions are tax deductible.** Vanguardians does not use commercial fundraisers. **To ensure you receive Vanguard, please add our email addresses info@vanguardians.org, vanguardweekly@gmail.com and ba@fieldworks.net - to your address book or Internet Service Provider safe list. **Annual subscription for email \$50, by US Mail \$75, Newsstand \$2 per issue. To unsubscribe -- reply with the word 'unsubscribe' in the subject line.****

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