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Published by Chuck Hains & Sally Beer

Local Election Analysis

For the data wonks among us, following are final results from several of our local cities and Council Districts within Pasadena.

Absentee voting continues to grow, with our areas showing 30 - 40% of the vote coming from mail ballots. Further, although turnout was notably lower than in 2008 (as is usually the case), Democratic candidates held their own quite well. Governor-elect Brown did nearly as well as President Obama. Interestingly, absentee voters continue to be substantially more conservative than election day voters, but perhaps a bit less so than in past years.

2010 Voting Analysis by City

Pasadena Sierra Madre La Canada South Pasadena San Marino

2010 Voting	Pasadena	Sierra Madre	La Canada	South Pasadena	San Marino
Registration	71692	7770	14098	15383	8766
% Democratic	50.0%	37.6%	30.0%	45.5%	22.4%
Election Day votes	29393	3903	5740	7052	3075
Absentee Votes	15537	1782	3988	3317	2264
% Absentee votes cast	34.6%	31.3%	41.0%	32.0%	42.4%
Total Votes Cast	44930	5685	9728	10369	5339
Turnout	62.7%	73.2%	69.0%	67.4%	60.9%
Jerry Brown Election Day %	71.6%	53.9%	42.4%	69.4%	37.9%
Jerry Brown Absentee %	58.5%	47.4%	37.0%	58.0%	32.9%
Jerry Brown Overall %	67.1%	51.9%	40.2%	65.8%	35.8%
Kamala Harris Election Day %	62.6%	42.9%	31.5%	57.7%	27.8%
Kamala Harris Absentee %	48.6%	35.6%	27.0%	45.7%	23.4%
Kamala Harris Overall %	57.8%	40.7%	29.6%	53.9%	25.9%
2008 Voting Turnout	85.5%	93.4%	85.1%	89.0%	81.2%
Obama %	73.4%	57.6%	50.0%	70.5%	45.1%

We're sorry we aren't yet able to include Altadena's numbers. The Registrar reports them in the total count for unincorporated L A County and therefore they have to be pulled out and added up precinct by precinct.

2010 Voting Analysis by Pasadena City Council District

	District 1	District 2	District 3	District 4	District 5	District 6	District 7
Registration	9627	10234	6769	12149	8199	14055	10991
Total Votes Cast	5536	6365	3394	7953	4581	9963	7138
% Turnout	57.5%	62.2%	50.1%	65.5%	55.9%	70.9%	64.9%
Jerry Brown %	82.5%	68.5%	79.8%	56.0%	80.2%	59.0%	63.4%
Kamala Harris %	76.0%	58.0%	74.4%	46.0%	73.0%	47.4%	54.0%
2008 Comparison	83.6%	78.3%	83.4%	86.9%	82.4%	90.0%	88.0%
Obama %	84.9%	71.1%	82.2%	61.0%	80.2%	65.0%	70.5%

ACT Research Committee Update

Greg Harrison has led the ACT Research Committee for three years. He will be stepping down after this "City Elections Cycle". He will be sorely missed. He has done a great job.

Ralph Hurtado, the other Research Co-Chair, will be taking over. He announced at the ACT Pot Luck Dinner that he would be reorganizing so that more people share the load of work. At the meeting two volunteers answered his call for help. Long time ACT member George Van Alstine will be a co-chair in charge of setting up the interviews and developing questions in the School Board elections. New member John McLean was tapped to be another co-chair; he will either coordinate City Council elections or State elections and propositions. Ralph will take charge of whatever election cycle John does not want to organize. Ralph will also organize the PCC candidate interviews. We would like to thank John for being willing to dive in there at his first ACT meeting!

-- Ralph Hurtado

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P.S. This is a great gift for any festive occasion – Valentine's Day, birthdays, graduation, Independence Day... Make it memorable with a special \$20 gift ACT membership!

Proposed ACT & ADC Officers for 2011

ACT Co-Chair

Carolyn Carlburg
(Wendy Gordon and Neal Wrightson
continue as Co-Chairs for another
year.)

ACT Treasurer

(Jon Fuhrman continues.)

ACT Recording Secretaries

(Robert Cuite, Sally Beer and Bill
Hacket continue, but each of them
would be delighted if someone else
wants to step up.)

ACT Corresponding Secretary

(Beth Gertmenian continues.)

ADC President

(Bill Hacket continues.)

ADC Treasurer and Secretaries

Same as ACT



California Democrats Meet

California Democrats' Assembly District
election meetings are scheduled for either
Saturday, January 8 or Sunday, January 9.
Plan to attend the meeting for your AD. You
will find the time and place at CADEM.org.

The 44th AD meeting is on Saturday, January
8 at the South Pasadena School District Ad-
ministration Building, 1020 El Centro Street,
South Pasadena. You need to arrive between
10 a.m. and 12 noon.

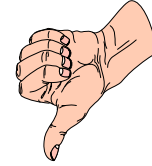


Special Thanks to Sustaining Members

John and Terri Buchanan, Sierra Madre

Letters to the *Phoenix*

From: Terry E. Tornek



Jon Fuhrman's *Political Notes* is a welcome
feature in every issue of the *Phoenix*.

While it is intended as a personal & partisan
editorial piece, his description of Carolyn
Naber's candidacy in Pasadena District 6 was
an unfair & clumsy hatchet job.

Carolyn Naber is a tireless neighborhood
advocate & civic leader that I served with on
the Planning Commission. She is now coura-
geously taking on an ineffective incumbent
knowing that an incumbent hasn't been de-
feated in Pasadena in the past 24 years. She
is conducting a strictly non-partisan campaign
& has rejected any political party endorse-
ment. Yet Jon, who supports her opponent,
tars her as a "very conservative Republican...
[who] is said to be the anointed Tea Party can-
didate" because of his distaste for her political
adviser. C'mon Jon, is your thirst for revenge
clouding your fact checking? Scott Phelps
(Green), Margaret McAustin (Ind.), Berlinda
Brown (Democrat) & I (Democrat), all used the
same consultant.

By law & tradition, our local elections are sup-
posed to be non-partisan. ACT itself famously
proclaims that it is non-partisan. Using ACT's
resources to launch a false, partisan smear is
shameful & reflects poorly on the organization
& its membership.

It is my fond hope that ACT members & other
Pasadenans will judge candidates on the basis
of their performance (or lack thereof) & their
ideas, not on partisan fears & irrelevant talk-
ing points.

-- TERRY E. TORNEK



Political Notes

by Jon Fuhrman



Monday, Dec. 13.

Was the President right? Did he cave in to the wily Republicans and surrender, morally as well as politically, to their agenda in some sort of craven attempt at bipartisanship? Or was this more of a tactical maneuver to yield on the Republicans' marquis issue but, at the same time, gain a host of critical concessions while simultaneously defining a central campaign issue for the 2012 cycle?

Many on the left took, and still argue, the former view. Their moral outrage is genuine -- and valid. There is no question that high-income families have benefited disproportionately over the last years, and many feel those families no longer pay their fair share of taxes (particularly when one factors in regressive payroll taxes that are a flat 7.65% of the first \$106,000 of earned income). The Republican

near monomaniacal focus on protecting our most wealthy families from a modest hike in income taxes seems inexplicable to progressives. Can they really be so greedy, so self-centered? Clearly our experience with those higher tax rates contradicts the Republicans' economic arguments about job creation and supply side economics. The last time we had taxes at those levels we had massive job growth and federal budget surpluses (albeit with some help from the dot-com boom). But logic and simple morality -- and the internal contradiction with their anti-deficit focus -- don't seem to dent the Republicans' insistence on those principles.

So what did the President gain with his compromise, which does appear likely to be enacted. First and foremost, he gained the continuation of extended unemployment benefits. All those workers who had been unemployed for over 26 weeks will, unless the compromise goes through, lose their extended benefits (covering the period from 26 through 99 weeks) on January 1. Millions of families would suddenly be cut off from that modest lifeline. Compounding the problem, taxes on all working families would go up, since both the Bush tax cuts and the Obama tax cuts (those included in the stimulus package, but often forgotten about by media commentators) would expire.

Together, the loss of tax cuts and unemployment payments would hit consumer spending hard. The worry was that impact could be enough to trigger a second recessionary dip and counteract the slow, but steady, job growth we've seen in the private sector over the last 8 months.

The Republicans figured they couldn't lose. Either the President gave in on extending all the tax cuts, contrary to his repeated campaign promises, or the economy could collapse, thus -- from their perspective -- sealing his fate in 2012. Either way, they win, not being

overly concerned with the economic fate of the country. If one doesn't really care what happens to most Americans, it's easy to hold fast to one's principles.

The President, however, didn't have that luxury. He actually does care, and as President he's supposed to care about what happens to most Americans. His language in last week's press conference -- that one doesn't negotiate with hostage takers, at least until they start shooting the hostages -- captured his dilemma precisely. He had indeed campaigned and repeatedly argued that extending tax cuts for the wealthy was unacceptable. But when faced with the choice of endangering our entire economy, and the financial stability of millions of American families, he chose the right course.

Republicans argue that the people have spoken, that their capture of the House gives them a mandate to follow their policies. In fact, though, this last election was not about tax cuts for the rich, or the morality of our financial policies; more simply, it was about unemployment and fear. The economy is still so fragile that even those employed fear they might be the next to be unemployed, and those unemployed are finding it terribly difficult to get back into the workforce.

In two years, we hope job growth will accelerate, the unemployment rate will be down at least a couple of percentage points, and people will see generally that the stimulus package and monetary policies are, albeit slowly, helping us dig out of the huge hole we're all in. At that point, the 2012 election can be about broader issues of fairness, equity, income distribution, and the government's proper role in the economy and the health care system.



But over and above the continuation of unemployment benefits and the extension of the Bush tax cuts, the President won the extension of many of the Obama tax cuts and, further to sweeten the package, a temporary 2% cut in payroll taxes for working families. This latter provision actually goes a significant way towards making the entire system less regressive. It will add up to \$2,000 in after-tax income to working households, which should be a sharp stimulus to consumer demand and economic growth. Yes, it is financed by increased debt and a higher deficit, but that's pretty much pure Keynesian economics -- pump up the economy through borrowing and

spending in recessions, and pay down the debt in boom times (which we did under President Clinton, but not under Republican Presidents).

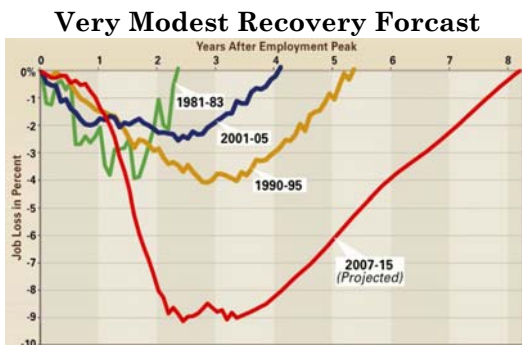
Hence, if the President is right, even though our richest families will, for another two years, get off lightly, economic growth will continue, perhaps at an even faster pace, and the middle class will also be protected. Then, two years from now, we can argue

directly and explicitly about the moral vision each party would bring to the White House. Given that polling has shown unequivocally that most of the country agrees with the President on this issue, we should be well positioned to retake the House and hold the Presidency in 2012.

Here in California, alas, the news continues to be grim. Governor-elect Jerry Brown recently hosted a Budget Summit for the entire Legislature, along with many citizens and opinion leaders. His presentation puts a stark light on our situation; moreover, he seems truly committed to taking the pain this year and next so that we can finally right the ship. The mess-

age seems to be -- you ain't seen nothing yet! The budget cuts for the rest of this year, as well as next year, may be substantially more painful than what we've experienced over the last three years.

ACT will be posting a copy of the Governor's Power-Point presentation on our Web site (www.actpasadena.org). It's a relatively short set of 18 slides, well worth reviewing. One slide in particular (page 9 shown below-- Very Modest Recovery Forecast) captures our dilemma: our percentage job loss has been dramatically steeper than in previous recessions (1981 - 1983, 1990 - 1995, and 2001 - 2005) and the recovery will take far longer.



Source: Legislative Analyst's Office,
Governor-Elect Edmund G. Brown Jr.

The essence of our problem is revenue loss -- overall General Fund Revenue is down 25% compared to January 2008. That calculates out to be about \$25 billion, which is basically our deficit. Despite all our budget cutting so far, our steady-state "costs" are about \$25 billion more than our current revenue. And of those costs, over 71% of the General Fund goes to local assistance -- K-12 spending and support for cities and counties for Medical and other assistance programs. Less than 30% is left for supporting the UC and Cal State systems, for debt service, for retirement contributions, and for all the state operations (including prisons and law enforcement). So any

substantial spending reductions have to hit, first and foremost, local service delivery, with K - 12 the biggest target.

There is one slim ray of hope. The Controller reported that cash receipts in November were \$1.3 billion higher than anticipated, with personal income, sales, and corporate taxes all above projections. Further, spending was \$260 million under budget. Is this an omen of better things to come?

This just emphasizes that if the economy perks up sharply, and the tax base strengthens, we can get back to "normal" within two or three years. Of course, these tax revenues also include the short-term hikes in personal income taxes and sales taxes; when they expire next year, there will be a new hole in our revenue stream. So the key issue for the state is how quickly employment, and the economy in general, will pick up. The Controller's office tracks a number of economic indicators each month. Compared to 2009, auto registrations are slightly down, median home prices are steady, single family home sales are down significantly, but new foreclosures are down by almost 25% compared to third quarter 2009. Overall employment for October is slightly lower, and permits for new home construction are down by 25%.

On the local scene, filing is about to close for City Council and School Board races. Congratulations to Mayor (and ACT member) Bill Bogaard, and to Councilwoman Margaret McAusten, who will be unopposed for re-election. Council Districts 1 and 6 will have two person races, but in Council District 4 it looks like we'll have 5 candidates, virtually assuring a run-off election.

Congratulations also go to Renatta Cooper, who will be unopposed for election to the PUSD Seat 2. But the story is a bit more complicated. Another potential candidate -- Erika Cardenas -- took out papers but was left wait-

ing at the altar, so to speak. Rumor has it that she was encouraged to take out papers by another PUSD Board member, Ramon Miramontes. Miramontes reportedly had first encouraged Robert Jenkins to run against Cooper, but Jenkins decided to pull papers for Seat 4 (where the incumbent, Bob Harrison, was retiring). Miramontes then encouraged Cardenas to run; she pulled papers, collected the requisite 100 signatures, but apparently chose not to file when her supporters failed to deliver a check for the ballot statement and filing fees.

Rumors similarly suggest that one of the two candidates running against Tom Selinske for PUSD Seat 6 was also encouraged to run by Miramontes. Additionally, Miramontes and PUSD Board Member Scott Phelps are also supporting James Smith, a candidate in City Council District 1 running against incumbent Jacque Robinson.

These maneuvers highlight the discord under the surface on the PUSD Board, where Miramontes and Phelps often find themselves disagreeing with most other Board members. The root of this split is not obvious; there don't seem to be fundamental policy differences. For example, Phelps was an energetic, active and effective supporter of Measure CC, which Miramontes also supported, though less avidly. Both have generally supported the budget decisions made by the Board as a whole. So it's not obvious, at least to me, what policies Miramontes and Phelps would like to see implemented which the other Board members are resisting. Miramontes and Phelps do seem much less convinced that the Superintendent is doing a good job than other Board members; further, they seem to believe that the Northwest community is given short shrift in many aspects of District operations, while other Board members often don't perceive the injustices that Miramontes and Phelps believe exist.

Whatever the cause, Miramontes seems to feel isolated on the Board but determined to try to strengthen his political position by electing potential allies. As he helps candidates challenge incumbents like Selinske on the PUSD Board and Robinson on the City Council, he may be finding common ground with more conservative Republican and Tea Party activists, who are also challenging incumbents, though perhaps for different reasons. Generally speaking, it's a tough time to be an incumbent for any office, with budget cuts, service reductions, and facility closures all contributing to constituent dissatisfaction. Further, the public is becoming more and more skeptical of public employee salaries, with scandals in Bell and Vernon adding to the natural assumption that cities and school districts are spending their money poorly, overpaying administrators, and failing to deliver basic services.

So there may be a sense that incumbents, and the "traditional" power structures, may be vulnerable. Interestingly, consultant Martin Truitt, one of the tactical leaders of the local Tea Party movement, may be finding common cause with Miramontes. Miramontes supported PCC Board member Berlinda Brown in her campaign against incumbent Connie Castro, and Truitt helped execute that campaign. Interestingly, in City Council District 6, Truitt is supporting challenger Carolyn Naber in her campaign against incumbent (and ACT member) Steve Madison. Naber strongly contradicts my assessment of her as a highly conservative Republican; she says she is "fiercely non-partisan" and independent of any organized political group. Nonetheless, being supported by Tea Party leaders like Ross Selvidge and Michael Alexander, making contributions to the Lincoln Clubs (the highly conservative, high-end fundraising arm of the Republican Party), opposing Measure CC, and using consultants like Truitt pretty much put her on

the far right of the ideological map. And while city politics is, and should be, non-partisan, the Tea Party's excessive skepticism toward public employee compensation levels, retirement plans, and public spending generally are, from my perspective, clearly unhealthy and unhelpful at City Hall.

-- Jon Fuhrman

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From State Senator Carol Liu...



December Update

The new State Legislature was sworn in on December 6th. In the following days we were briefed on California's current fiscal condition and the expected \$25 to \$28 billion budget shortfall. Many of us attended the briefing for legislators and local government officials hosted by Governor-elect Jerry Brown to kick-start the budget deliberation process and impress upon everyone the difficult choices that lie ahead. The next day, the Senate Budget Committee, on which I sit, held a hearing to review Governor Schwarzenegger's proposed budget cuts to address the current year shortfall of \$6 billion, which once again target safety net programs. At this point the Legislature plans to wait until our new Governor is sworn in before we act on the budget.

Governor-elect Brown and the Legislature are intent on moving away from the patchwork, short-term solutions that have been adopted over the last several years to address the budget deficit. Our budget system is fundamentally broken and the state faces a structural deficit set in motion by Proposition 13 and its

aftermath decades ago. Subsequent ballot initiatives have limited the state's flexibility to respond to the ups and downs of the economy. The voters will be an important part of the restructuring dialogue and process as the state seeks to identify the priority services that they want government, and therefore, the taxpayers, to provide.

Governor-elect Brown scheduled another invitation-only budget forum at UCLA on Tuesday, December 14th to discuss the implications for public education of California's fiscal condition and plans a third in the Central Valley. For more information on the budget forums and copies of the briefing materials being presented, visit the Governor-elect's website: <http://www.jerrybrown.org/jerry-brown-budget-summit-0>.

While many challenges lie ahead for all of us, I truly believe we can come together and create positive change. I thank everyone who came to my Holiday Open House for their donations of diapers and contributions to the L.A. Foodbank and for holiday gifts for local foster youth. I wish you a joyful holiday season and good health and happiness throughout the New Year.

Senator Carol Liu represents nearly 850,000 people of the 21st District, which includes Altadena, Burbank, Glendale, Pasadena, La Cañada Flintridge, San Gabriel, Temple City, several City of Los Angeles communities and portions of cities and communities stretching West to Reseda. Visit www.senate.ca.gov/LIU.



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Joe Kelly, Carol Liu, Jeanette Mann, and Ralph Hurtado. Senator Carol Liu was presented with a certificate of thanks for her advocacy for Foster Children, by the All Saints Foster Care Project.



Congressman Adam Schiff Leads Impeachment Process

Amid all the partisan rancor, most media outlets missed a rather historic vote. The Senate voted 96-0 to convict Federal Judge Thomas Porteous of corrupt dealings, and then voted 94 - 2 to disqualify the Judge from future federal office. Apparently, the last time the Senate voted unanimously to convict a judge was in the 1860's.

Our own Congressman, Adam Schiff, was chosen by his colleagues in the House to be the chief prosecutor and argue the case before the Senate. That is a notable affirmation of the respect Congressman Schiff has earned from his colleagues, many of whom are attorneys and former prosecutors as well. Further, getting the Senate to vote unanimously on any issue of importance is a remarkable achievement in these days of sharp partisan divisions.

We congratulate Congressman Schiff on his achievements, and should consider ourselves lucky to have him as our Representative.

The DREAM Act



The DREAM ACT is in limbo, much like the current status of the students who are the focus of the act. The act has passed in the House and now moves on to the Senate, facing a future that is uncertain.

Passage of the bill would establish a path to citizenship for students who have been in the country for at least 5 years; have earned a high school diploma, or its equivalent; and plan to enter an institution of higher education or the military. Congress member Dana Rohrabacher of Orange County, among others, feels that passage of this would be a first step in the undoing of America as he knows it.

Former Pasadena resident Neidi Dominguez, a graduate of Marshall High School and UC Santa Cruz, shares, "Now the Senate has the duty to pass the Dream Act and listen to the majority of the American public (more than 70%) that support the Dream Act ... There are no excuses to fail American sentiment, there are no excuses to vote for a better America, there are no excuses for immigrant and human rights..."

The politics surrounding the bill's passage are complex. Complicating the matter even further is the increasing number of Latino voters in the nation. Latinos, like other groups, are not a monolithic community, and are currently being wooed by both political parties.

The final DREAM act vote will define the immediate future for the students. It will also clarify the positions of elected officials on the complex topic of immigration and may define the political futures of those casting their votes.

-- Roberta Martinez

Condolences, Jackie Veselich

Jackie Veselich, a founding member of ACT, died Nov. 14 of complications that began with a series of strokes. She was 84 years old. She was active all her life in the Democratic party and also in Common Cause and Planned Parenthood.

She had a wild and droll sense of humor and her friends will always miss her astute evaluations of people and events.

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Welcome New & Returning ACT Members:

Paul Krehbiel, Pasadena
Garrett Schneider, South Pasadena



☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆



World traveler Ralph Hurtado and friend enjoy reading *the Phoenix* at Petra.

Deadly strikes by heavily armed drones made in So Cal and controlled in Vegas only deepen the Af-Pak quagmire

By John Gula 12/02/2010

Our war in Afghanistan, now in its 10th year and expanding to include Pakistan, is not going well. Launched soon after Sept. 11 to topple the Taliban government that harbored Osama bin Laden and al-Qaeda, the war has failed to deliver a military defeat of the Taliban, which is stronger than ever. More US troops have died in Afghanistan during 2009-10 than during 2001-08. Clearly there is something very wrong, in many ways, with this picture.

At a recent NATO summit in Lisbon, President Obama and other NATO leaders endorsed a plan to gradually turn combat duties over to Afghan security forces by 2014. This means tens of thousands of US troops in Afghanistan will still be dying in large numbers and killing many Afghans well beyond the end of Obama's first term. Even this is probably an overly optimistic timetable. Meanwhile, the war effort is costing US taxpayers more than \$100 billion a year — budget deficit hawks, take note!

Despite 10 years spent training Afghan security forces, many units remain poorly trained, corrupt and unable to successfully battle the Taliban without Western assistance. Even worse, there have been multiple instances of Afghan security personnel turning their weapons on their Western mentors. Obviously, the Taliban has successfully infiltrated the ranks of the Afghan army and police.

As in Vietnam, we are also failing to win the hearts and minds of the Afghan people. A major reason for this is the brutal tactics of our counter-insurgency efforts, such as nighttime "capture-and-kill" raids by Special Oper-

ations forces, which terrorize and infuriate many Afghan civilians. And it doesn't help that our man in Kabul, Hamid Karzai, is viewed by most of the populace as riddled with corruption and unable to provide trustworthy local government that deserves and wins popular support.



Meanwhile, the war in Afghanistan has metastasized to Pakistan as Taliban fighters have sought refuge and alliances with like-minded insurgents in the tribal areas of Western Pakistan. Because US combat troops on the ground are prohibited from entering Pakistan by the Pakistani government, in recent years we have increasingly used unmanned aerial vehicles, otherwise known as drones, to launch air-to-surface missile attacks against insurgents in Pakistan. Modern warfare, already incredibly brutal, inhuman and desensitized, is getting even more so as this trend toward robotic war gathers steam. The US has already launched more than 100 drone strikes this year against Pakistan, killing hundreds.

Drones in the Afghanistan-Pakistan theaters are controlled 7,000 miles away at Creech Air Force Base near Las Vegas. Where is the morality or courage in the ability of a drone "remote pilot," sitting before a computer screen at Creech, to launch a missile strike against a target in Pakistan? So far, missiles from errant drones have killed hundreds of innocent civilians in Afghanistan and Pakistan, and vehement opposition to this form of warfare is increasing in both countries.

Consider also the mentality and morality (or lack thereof) of an American Empire that builds these kinds of robotic war machines, gives them names like "Predator," "[Grim]

Reaper," and "Global Hawk," and then equips them with 500-pound "Hellfire" missiles and sensor systems like "Gorgon Stare," named for the creature in Greek mythology whose gaze turns its victims into stone. As Max Von Sydow famously remarked in Woody Allen's film "Hannah and Her Sisters," "If Jesus came back and saw what's going on, he'd never stop throwing-up!"

The number of drone attacks in Pakistan and Afghanistan has increased dramatically during the last three years. Has it helped our war effort? No. The situation in both nations is worse than ever. Recently, Pakistan refused a US request to expand the areas where drone missile strikes can target Taliban and al-Qaeda operatives because of fierce civilian opposition to these strikes.

Indeed, a good argument can be made that our drone strikes are only multiplying the ranks of the insurgents faster than we can kill them.

Of course, the sophisticated technologies employed by our drones are always touted as the latest magic solution to our failing war efforts. Recently, we have been promised eventual success because new sensors enable drones to listen in on cell phone conversations and even pinpoint the location of the caller on the ground. But if these new technologies are so great, why are we still losing? We also had a huge technological advantage during the Vietnam War, and we all know how that ended.

The disaster unfolding in Af-Pak is giving a big boost to Southern California's fast-growing drone industry, which employs an estimated 10,000 people and has been fueled by at least \$20 billion in Pentagon and CIA spending since 2001. It's a crime we can't find more civilized ways to gainfully employ our region's aerospace workers.

John Gula, PhD, is affiliated with the Southern California Federation of Scientists

**From
Congressman
Adam B. Schiff...**



WASHINGTON UPDATE

Senate Votes to Impeach Judge G. Thomas Porteous, Jr.

On Wednesday, Dec. 8, the U.S. Senate voted to convict U.S. District Judge G. Thomas Porteous of Louisiana on all four articles of impeachment against him, removing him from his lifetime seat on the federal bench and denying him his \$174,000 annual salary and pension. Specifically, the four articles of impeachment, which required a two-thirds vote to pass, charged Porteous with taking cash and gifts from lawyers, accepting kickbacks, participate in a corrupt scheme with bail bondsmen and lying to the Senate during confirmation. After removing him from office, the Senate also voted to disqualify Porteous from ever holding public office.

As lead House impeachment manager, I presented the case to the full Senate for Porteous's removal on Tuesday, Dec. 7. To watch my rebuttal statement at the end of the trial, visit my YouTube channel at

www.youtube.com/AdamSchiff.

Judicial impeachments are extremely rare – Porteous is only the eighth federal judge in U.S. history to be impeached and convicted by Congress.

House Sends DREAM Act to the Senate

Also on Wednesday, Dec. 8, the House passed the DREAM Act, which I co-sponsored to give young people who were brought to the U.S. by their parents as minors, through no fault of their own, the chance to earn legal status and contribute to our country's well-being by serving in the U.S. Armed Forces or pursuing a college education. On Thursday, Dec. 9, I sent a letter urging the Senate to take up the matter.

House Passes Legislation to Prevent 25 Percent Cut in Medicare Payments to Doctors

Also on Thursday, Dec. 9, the House voted to pass the Medicare and Medicaid Extenders Act to ensure seniors and military families will be able to continue seeing their doctors. This bipartisan bill blocks the 25 percent cut in Medicare payments to doctors, scheduled for January 1, through 2011. The legislation already passed the Senate and will now go to the President to be signed into law.

Consumers Get More Value for Their Health Care Dollars

Last month, the Department of Health and Human Services issued "Medical Loss Ratio" provisions to require health insurers to spend 80 to 85 percent of consumers' premiums on direct care for patients and efforts to improve quality of care. If an insurance company fails to adhere to the provisions, it will be required to provide a rebate to their customers starting in 2012, providing consumers with more value for their health care dollars and increasing transparency by requiring insurance companies for the first time to publicly report how they spend premium dollars.

IRS Seeks to Return \$164.6 Million in Undelivered Checks to Taxpayers;

Recommends E-file and Direct Deposit to Eliminate Future Delivery Problems

A total of 111,893 taxpayers are due one or more refund checks from the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) totaling \$164.6 million, which could not be delivered because of mailing address errors. Undelivered refund checks average \$1,471 this year, compared to \$1,148 last year.

If you think you are missing a refund, the sooner you update your address information with the "Where's My Refund?" tool on IRS.gov, the quicker you can get your money. To access a telephone version of "Where's My Refund?" tool, call 1-800-829-1954.

To eliminate future delivery problems, the IRS recommends that taxpayers file their tax returns electronically, because e-file eliminates the risk of lost paper returns, reduces errors on tax returns and speeds up refunds.

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I look forward to providing you with another Congressional update in ACT's next Phoenix



January 5
Wednesday
7 p.m. ACT Steering Committee/ADC Meeting at the home of Bobbie and Henry Moon, 1961 Mar Vista Ave., Altadena. Research Committee report on PUSD and Pasadena Council races. Coffee at 7 p.m.; meeting begins at 7:30 p.m. All members welcome and urged to attend.

January 7
Friday
8-9 a.m. Friday Morning Progressive Discussion Group at Conrad's Restaurant, NW corner Lake & Walnut, Pasa. Call Inman Moore for info at 626-795-2201. We meet on 1st & 3rd Fridays.

Newsletter. Until then, please find more useful information on constituent services and recent news by visiting my Web site: www.schiff.house.gov. To sign up for my weekly Washington Update e-newsletter, please visit: <http://schiff.congressnewsletter.net/mail>. I would also love for you to add me as a friend on Facebook:

www.facebook.com/CongressmanSchiff.

As always, please reach out to my office to tell us your thoughts or let us know if there is any way we can be helpful to you: (626) 304-2727 or (202) 225-4176.

Sincerely yours,

Congressman Adam B. Schiff
Congressman Adam Schiff represents the 29th Congressional District of California, including Alhambra, Altadena, Burbank, East Pasadena, East San Gabriel, Glendale, Monterey Park, Pasadena, San Gabriel, South Pasadena, and Temple City

January 8 44th AD Democratic Election
Saturday meeting at the South Pasadena
10 am-noon School Dist. Admin. Bldg, 1020
El Centro St., South Pasadena.

January 21 Friday Morning Discussion
Friday Group. (Details same as 1/7.)

January Candidate Forum. Watch for
information in the January
Phoenix.

January Phoenix Deadline

The deadline for the January *Phoenix* is Sunday, January 9. Please email your items to Chuck Hains at Hains27@SBCglobal.net. We will prep *the Phoenix* for mailing on Thursday, January 13, 7 p.m. at Chuck's house, 1391 La Solana Drive, Altadena. (Volunteer mailers please verify time with Ellen Coles at 626-798-2402.)