

Valley Times Feb. 3 letters

Letters from our readers

Posted: 02/03/2009 12:01:00 AM PST

Boy, did our local Rep. Ellen Tauscher put her foot in her partisan mouth. In response to an article on President Barack Obama holding discussions with the GOP on the stimulus package, Tauscher was quoted after blasting Republican Reps. John Boehner and Eric Cantor for urging members to vote against the package before listening to Obama. "Are you really going to listen to the people who lost the House for you? At some point you have to vote your conscience." Whoa, so don't listen to other points of view? You would never run a business that way.

Last time I looked everyone has a voice and a right to be heard and under Obama listened to. Her partisan and, yes, dumb comments only magnify the political self-rightness, an entitlement that we all have opposed for so long. Tauscher, you lost this voter for good.

Bob Jones

Alamo

Some facts

A recent letter writer is a frequent critic of Israel in these pages. She pretends that she knows much about Palestine before the establishment of Israel in 1948. According to her, (Jan. 28) Israel has "occupied Palestine for 60 years." This puts her squarely with Hamas, who like her, consider Tel Aviv occupied territory.

She says Christians worshipped in Bethlehem for 2,000 years. The only Christians who could have

were all Jews, the original Christians.

Jerusalem has had a Jewish population for three millennia. The Romans expelled Jews from the area in 70 A.D., but many Jews never left. Consequently, the Jewish population is the only one that has lived on this land continuously since Jerusalem's foundation.

The Ottoman Empire took a census. It revealed that Jerusalem had a population of 14,000 with 7,000 Jews. In 1864, the British Consulate reported back to London that Jerusalem had a total population of about 15,000 with 8,000 Jews, 4,500 Muslims, and 2,500 Christians. This was East Jerusalem — the modern city had not yet been built. These facts are available in books that deal with real history, e.g. in "The Fight for Jerusalem" by Dore Gold, page 120.

Istvan Simon, Ph.D.

Pleasanton

Schmidt for council

I support Grace Schmidt for Alamo Town Council because she has proved she understands how to get things done in the government system at hand. I witnessed her hard work in seeing that people in Alamo got the information about government they needed to keep the kind of community they want.

I worked with Schmidt last spring when she did research and discovered regional plans to expand Alamo's downtown intersection at Danville Boulevard and Stone Valley Road.

She spent long hours explaining to me, my concerned neighbors and friends how the various government agencies work together to move projects like the Ultimate Configuration forward.

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We were able to take her information and get it out to Alamo residents who strongly opposed the expansion. The result was that we were successful in getting the Ultimate Configuration off the list of projects eligible for funding by the Tri-Valley Transportation Council.

Schmidt is the type of person we need in our small town to serve the interest of the community.

Lorrie Tovani

Alamo

More support

We are neighbors of Grace Schmidt and support her candidacy for Alamo Town Council. From 1985, when Schmidt and her husband moved into our neighborhood, she has been at the forefront of issues that matter to us and our neighbors.

She has been very dedicated to building consensus within the neighborhood and going and doing things that would matter for us.

She is knowledgeable about local government and generous with her knowledge and time on behalf of our interests. Schmidt was the driving force behind Alamo's successful reversal of a regional effort to add an unpopular downtown Alamo intersection expansion project to the list of the authorized projects of the Tri-Valley Transportation Council.

We need Schmidt on the first Alamo Town Council.

John and Becky Whetten

Alamo

BART bungling

The recount by BART directors Joel Keller and Gail Murray recounting of the Fruitvale station shooting ("Shooting incident was tragedy, but everyone is entitled to due process"), reminded me of " ... to the safety of sterility the threat has been refined," from Phil Ochs' song, "The Crucifixion."

The shooting was a tragedy. BART's handling of it in the immediate aftermath was a travesty, largely responsible for the explosive public outrage.

Four days after the shooting, BART Police Chief Gary Gee was asked at a news conference why the officer hadn't yet been interviewed. Gee said, "We have to respect the officer's privacy and the privacy of his family." Outrageous!

On the night of the first demonstration, a BART spokesman said that from day one BART had been trying to interview the officer but he had "lawyered up" and refused to talk to BART. Which is it?

Not surprisingly, riots ensued. According to Keller and Murray, BART handled the investigation as it should have been handled and is working to rebuild trust.

The truth is, at a time when moral leadership was demanded, BART's sorry excuse for a police chief fumbled and equivocated.

Can anyone respect that sort of Keystone Kops leadership?

Ken Stein

Berkeley

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