

Letters to the Editor

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Core mural rightly tapped LADWP's guilty conscience

Isn't it sad that LADWP is "deeply offended" by the John Pugh mural on the east wall of the Window Fair building? Now the people of the Owens Valley are *again* being threatened by LADWP. "Unfortunately, now we're going to have to look a little closer at the people and groups we donate to," Gene Coufal said in the Tuesday, Oct. 11 issue of *The Inyo Register*.

Well, boo hoo, Mr. Coufal. It was my understanding the draining of water from the Owens Valley for the City of Los Angeles was history. This reminds me of the little boy who said, "If you don't play by my rules I'm going to take my ball and go home." Kudos to Mr. Jerry Core, the owner of the building the mural is painted on, for planning to leave it on his wall.

Don C. Dillinger
Bishop

On Oct. 6, 2005, Gene Coufal wrote the Bishop Mural Society (and many others) to complain that DWP employees were "deeply offended and concerned about the mural that has recently been painted ... at East (sic) Line and Fowler Streets in Bishop." The mural depicts the Bishop Sierra, a grassy meadow, a small orchard, a creek and a DWP drainpipe surrounded by a small patch of

parched earth. If DWP employees are so sensitive they are offended by this attractive mural, what can they think of the expanses of weeds, dust and dead grass in some portions of DWP wellfields?

Mr. Coufal asserted that the scenes are "... not realistic portrayals of the Owens Valley as it was 100 years ago, or in the present" and that the scenes are a "false and negative depiction" of DWP's management. *Methinks he doth protest too much!* The historic presence of orchards and meadows in Owens Valley is well documented, as is parched earth on de-watered agricultural land and de-watered Owens Lake. Perhaps the disproportionately small size of the DWP drainpipe is unrealistic and false.

Mr. Coufal referred to DWP's "excellent land stewardship." Inyo Superior Court Judge Lee Cooper ruled – only three months ago – that DWP currently violates the California Environmental Quality Act and has done so for about 30 years.

Most striking about Mr. Coufal's letter is its unintended irony. The irony comes from the fact that Mr. Coufal's policies at DWP have undermined the Inyo-L.A. Long Term Water Agreement (LTWA). The LTWA was intended to bring, once and for all, closure to Inyo's historic grievances against L.A. by mitigating some of DWP's most outrageous environmental abuses and, more importantly, by establishing a new relationship of cooperative management for the future. Inyo Supervisors went so far as to produce, in 1990, a short movie entitled "The Search for

Justice" to persuade skeptical constituents of the LTWA's value.

Had Mr. Coufal and his colleagues worked in good faith to implement the LTWA they would not now be threatened by references to the past, because old ghosts would have been laid to rest. Rather than laying old ghosts to rest, however, the LTWA, in its failure, has itself become a new and exceptionally annoying ghost. If Mr. Coufal and his colleagues find the mural offensive, it is an indication of the degree to which they remain haunted, and they can rightly blame only themselves – not the mural.

Daniel Pritchett
Bishop

Politics have no place in murals meant to beautify City of Bishop

As residents of Bishop, we are very proud of the many murals displayed on various buildings around town, which depict persons, places or events in Bishop's past. They are beautifully painted and add to our appreciation of local history.

However, we were very disappointed with the mural recently completed on the Core building at the corner of West Line and Fowler Street. Though Mr. Core denies that

the mural makes a political statement, in our opinion it does just exactly that!

Many of us in the Owens River Valley have been frustrated for years at the slow progress with LADWP over water issues. Nevertheless, some progress is being made. Yes, progress is slow but, through the courts and with negotiation, we can begin to see "light at the end of the tunnel."

While it is true that LADWP has siphoned off precious water resources for years, we see no good to come out of the statement that is made by the Core Mural. It may even do more harm than good.

We sincerely hope not.

Yours very truly,

Carl and Virginia Gorham
Bishop

The Bishop Mural Society has done a wonderful job of placing murals around town. I have enjoyed each and every one, until last week. The newest mural displayed at Fowler and Line Street is nothing more than a political cartoon. Freedom of speech and/or expression is a right granted to us in the Constitution, however, I'm amazed that the Bishop Mural Society has sunk to this new low of painting such garbage on buildings around this beautiful town and calling it art. It is really too bad this graffiti cannot be transported elsewhere. I truly dread to see what they will come up with next.

Jean Atwood
Bishop