



Active Democrat

General Meeting – August 12, 2009

John Dean: Torture and the Abuses of Governmental Power



President's Letter:

So,...
California finally has a state "budget",... and surprise, ... no one is happy! We're in impossible

economic times, made even more impossible by the 2/3 requirement for revenue enhancement or legislative budget approval.

California is one of only three out of the 50 states (Arkansas and Rhode Island are the others) requiring the 2/3 vote. When I asked out loud, "Who thought of this cockamamie idea?" – I was surprised to learn that California has been operating under these rules since the voters adopted it way back in 1934! Somehow California survived and sometimes thrived for many years since. That is, ... until the effects of Proposition 13 hit the fan. Most of you know the story – Designed in 1978 to keep "seasoned" home owners' property taxes reasonable in an escalating market, Prop 13 also kept corporate property taxes artificially low – since corporations rarely sell property and don't usually die. Yes, Prop

13 has helped the long-time homeowner, but as usual, the corporate benefits FAR exceed those given to the average citizen.

So now, vital property tax dollars are not increasing sufficiently, and CA cities have to think of creative ways to raise revenue – parcel taxes, sales taxes, use fees, etc. ... and here's where the 2/3 issue comes in. In order to get things done our state needs money. But we can't get more revenue if 1/3 + 1 of the legislature blocks it. That's all it takes – 1/3 + 1 to stop any revenue enhancement – no matter how fair; 1/3 + 1 to stop any budget – no matter how equitable. This is not democracy! This is tyranny of the minority!

Our new CA budget-that-makes-no-one-happy is the result. Again, this is something of which most of you are already aware. In the U.S. Senate our magical number of 60 caucusing Democrats means nothing if every negotiation is controlled by "Blue Dogs" watering down progressive bills – so we can get our filibuster-proof super-majority. Our current attempt to pass a meaningful national health care policy is a (see **President**, page 2)

Monthly General Membership Meeting:

**7:00 PM Wednesday,
August 12, 2009**

6:45 PM – Refreshments

Rotunda Room

Veterans Memorial Building

4117 Overland Avenue

Corner of Overland Ave. and
Culver Blvd.

What's Inside?

2: **President's Message**
(Continued)

2: **Resolution on Nuisance Ordinance**

3: **John Dean Will Speak**

3: **Brief Biography of John Dean**

2: **Di's Corner**

Club Notes

Renew your membership!

Please use the form on page 4 to supply your renewal information.

Electronic Newsletter:

Submit your email address to Info@CCDemClub.org and ask to get the newsletter by email! Save a tree and save our club the postage!

Join the Culver City Peace Vigil:

Show your support for ending the war in Afghanistan every Friday 5:30 – 6:30 PM across from the Culver Hotel.

Comments expressed in the Newsletter are the opinions of the authors and do not necessarily represent the position of the Culver City Democratic Club.

[**President** from page 1] perfect example of how the minority is allowed to override the will of the majority.

In California, what is new, however, is how an increasing number of Democrats are learning to frame the issue. Since Republicans own the word “taxes”, we need to explain the issue in terms of majority versus minority rule. Professor George Lakoff and others are suggesting a one-sentence ballot measure that can work, “All legislative actions on revenue and budget shall be determined by majority vote.” By tying budget and revenue together and emphasizing the gridlock caused by minority rule, we might be able to win this one.

In the next few months I hope to be bringing you updates on any speakers, new campaigns and propositions dealing with this important issue. Stay tuned.

Hopefully yours,
Ronnie Jayne

Resolution on Nuisance Ordinance

At the last general meeting in July the Club members voted to support a resolution asking the

Culver City City Council to continue the discussions and workshops on the ordinance and to inform the Culver City Democratic Club of the schedule of the meetings. The members decided that a letter explaining the decision of the Club should be sent to each of the members of the City Council. The following is the text of that letter:

“RE: Public Nuisance and Property Maintenance Code Changes Proposal

Dear Council Members:

The Culver City Democratic Club Membership met on July 8, 2009 and discussed the above Nuisance and Property Maintenance Code Changes Proposals. The members of the Club voiced their concerns regarding the new codes intrusiveness and exposure to fines. The question arose as to whether we need a new code at all?

Additional concerns include the presence of drought resistant plants and gardens, the amount of proposed fines, the potential for infringement on private property rights and due process issues.

Seeking Submissions

We would like your articles and letters to the editor. Let your voice be heard! Submissions will be published as space allows. Submissions may be edited for length.

The Club’s Executive Board reserves the right to determine suitability of submissions for inclusion in the newsletter.

It is our understanding that there will be 2 or more community workshops regarding specific aspects that will be included in the final proposal. The Culver City Democratic Club requests that we be notified of the date, time and place of those meetings, so we can attend and participate in the discussions.

We hope to hear from you regarding the workshop meetings as soon as they are scheduled and thank you for the staff’s cooperation in this matter.

Sincerely yours,

CULVER CITY DEMOCRATIC CLUB

Mollie "Lee" Welinsky,
Corresponding Secretary”

Di’s Corner: By Diane Rosenberg

Mollie "Lee" Welinsky our corresponding Secretary was reappointed to the Resolution Committee of the California Democratic State Party. Howard S. Welinsky, a member of our club, was appointed as the Co-Chair of the Platform Committee of the California Democratic State Party. We congratulate them both.

On Monday July 27 Diane went into the hospital to have her left hip replaced. The surgery was a success. Herb says "Thank God everything went fine for Diane." Diane came home on Wed. July 29 and is now recovering. She thanks the members who called and spoke with Herb.

“I must study politics and war that my sons may have liberty to study mathematics and philosophy. My sons ought to study mathematics and philosophy, geography, natural history, naval architecture, navigation, commerce, and agriculture, in order to give their children a right to study painting, poetry, music, architecture, statuary, tapestry, and porcelain.”

-John Adams

John Dean Will Speak



Mr. John Dean will be the featured speaker at our meeting on Wednesday, August 12. Yes, that John Dean!

John Dean, key government witness of the Watergate prosecution, best-selling author, and frequent guest commentator on cable and network news, has great fondness for speaking to Democratic Clubs.

Mr. Dean will be addressing two issues: Torture and the Abuses of Governmental Power.

He has closely followed the torture debates happening in Congress and throughout the country. His keen legal insights will cut through the emotional argument and attack the core of the national debate – the constitutionality and legitimacy of the use of torture by the U.S.

Mr. Dean's analysis includes:

- The perceived vs. actual benefits of torture
- the legality of the infamous torture memos
- torture as war crime
- the types of torture
- use of domestic vs. international law in prosecuting those sanctioning torture activities
- the consequences of failing to hold an administration responsible for authorizing torture

Mr. Dean will also speak about the startling new revelations found in the re-release of his best-seller, *Blind Ambition: The End of the Story*. As Nixon apologists continue to rewrite the history of

the Watergate break-in, Dean exposes new details that validate and clarify the truth of his original work. *Blind Ambition* continues to hold relevance, especially in the wake of the Bush Administration, in its documentation of the abuses of governmental power.

After his presentation Mr. Dean will be taking questions from the audience so come prepared. Mr. Dean will also be selling and signing copies of his books so again come prepared. We are expecting a large turnout so be sure to reserve the time on your calendar and arrive early to get your seat.

Brief Biography of John Dean

(Excerpted from Wikipedia)

John Wesley Dean III (born October 14, 1938) was White House Counsel to U.S. President Richard Nixon from July 1970 until April 1973. As White House Counsel, he became deeply involved in events leading up to the Watergate burglaries and the subsequent Watergate scandal cover up, even referred to as "master manipulator of the cover up" by the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI). He was convicted of multiple felonies as a result of Watergate, and went on to become a key witness for the prosecution, resulting in a reduction of his time in prison.

Dean was born in Akron, Ohio and grew up in Marion, Ohio, the hometown of former President Warren Harding. He attended Colgate University and then The College of Wooster, earning a bachelor's degree in 1961. He received a Juris Doctor (J.D.) from Georgetown University in 1965.

Dean pleaded guilty to obstruction of justice before Watergate trial judge John Sirica on November 30, 1973. He admitted supervising payments of "hush money" to the Watergate

burglars, notably E. Howard Hunt, and revealed the existence of Nixon's enemies list. On August 2, 1974, Sirica handed down a sentence of one to four years in a minimum-security prison. However, when Dean surrendered himself as scheduled on September 3, he was diverted to the custody of U.S. Marshals. He spent his days in the offices of the Watergate Special Prosecutor and testifying in the trial of Watergate conspirators Mitchell, Haldeman, Ehrlichman, Robert Mardian, and Kenneth Parkinson, which concluded on January 1, 1975.

Dean's lawyer moved to have his sentence reduced, and on January 8, Sirica granted the motion, adjusting Dean's sentence to time served, which wound up being four months. With his conviction for felony offenses, Dean was disbarred as a lawyer, so could no longer practice law.

Dean is currently an author, columnist, and commentator on contemporary politics, strongly critical of conservatism and the Republican Party, and a registered Independent who supported impeachment of President George W. Bush.

2009 Club Officers and Committee

Chairs:

President: Ronnie Jayne
President@CCDemClub.Org
First Vice President: Karlo Silbiger
FirstVP@CCDemClub.Org
Second VP: Roger Maxwell
SecondVP@CCDemClub.Org
Treasurer: Eric Fine
Treasurer@CCDemClub.Org
Recording Secretary: Sally Gardner
Corresponding Secretary: Lee Welinsky
Membership Secretary: Diane Rosenberg

Web Editor: Brian Pogue
Webmaster@CCDemClub.Org
Newsletter: Greg Valtierra (Interim)

Renew your membership!

Now collecting dues for 2009. Dues for 2009 were due by January 1, 2009. Current dues must be paid by renewing members before a vote to get a ballot at the general meeting. New and lapsed members must have paid dues at least 25 days in advance to vote at a meeting.

Culver City Democratic Club
P.O. Box 4254
Culver City, CA 90231-4254

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August 12, 2009 - Meeting Program:

John Dean: Torture and the Abuses of Governmental Power

Upcoming Events

► **Wednesday, August 12**
Monthly General Meeting:
John Dean: Torture and the Abuses of Governmental Power

7:00 PM at the Rotunda Room, Veterans Memorial Building. Public is welcome. Call Ronnie at (310) 836-7557 or email President@CCDemClub.Org

► **Saturday, August 15**
Monthly Board Meeting:
9:00 AM at Tom and Ronnie's home. All members welcome. Call Karlo at (310) 202-7255 or email FirstVP@CCDemClub.Org

► **Saturday & Sunday, August 29 & 30**
Fiesta La Ballona Booth:
Help us get the word out about Culver City Democratic Club and register voters. Volunteers needed for two hour shifts. All members welcome. Call Ronnie at (310) 836-7557 or email President@CCDemClub.Org

► **Wednesday, September 9**
Monthly General Meeting:
CC School Board Endorsements
7:00 PM at the Rotunda Room, Veterans Memorial Building. Public is welcome. Call Ronnie at (310) 836-7557 or email President@CCDemClub.Org

Culver City Democratic Club Application/Renewal Form

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Email: _____

Address: _____

I declare that all the individuals listed for membership are registered Democrats.

Signed: _____

- Membership Dues: Dues may be waived for financial hardship
- Special Rate: Remainder of 2009 plus 2010 membership \$45**
 - Member \$30 Student \$20
 - Supporting Member \$75 Sustaining Member \$125

Additional Contribution: \$ _____

Please make your check payable to:

Culver City Democratic Club
P.O. Box 4254, Culver City, CA 90231-4254

For questions please call Membership Secretary Diane Rosenberg at (310) 398-5328

Please renew for 2009 if you haven't already done so.
The dues period runs concurrent to the calendar year.
Renewals are due by January 1, of each year.