



San Joaquin Public Employees Association

September 12, 1995

Institute for Law & Policy Planning
P. O. Box 5137
Berkeley, California 94705

Attention: Alan Kalmanoff, Executive Director

Dear Mr. Kalmanoff:

I am responding to your request for communication regarding your company's execution of its duties in the County of San Joaquin for the Criminal Justice System Task Force.

David V. Platt, General Manager
San Joaquin Public Employees Association
Telephone # (209) 466-0985

1. Please comment on ILPP's research. Was it thorough?

I am unable to ascertain whether or not your research was thorough inasmuch as the policy set forth by you and adopted by you and your organization denied my organization access to the direct communications between you and the different departments and divisions within the county. Therefore, I cannot determine whether or not you asked the right questions.

Therefore, I cannot determine whether you were accurate in what you found and reported.

2. Were our recommendations sensitive enough to fiscal and political realities that they could be put into effect

I do not believe your recommendation went far enough in its proposal that a system be placed into effect that required cooperation among departments. I believe that a stronger emphasis by you in your report on the issues that were considered mandates by the different departments such as the District Attorney, the Courts, and the Sheriff would have served the county better than the general statement that we must learn to cooperate with each other.

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I do not believe that the recommendations nor the implementation of some of those recommendations will save money for the county while preserving public safety. I'm afraid that the political situation in this state, nation and counties that the God incarceration will, in fact, be enhanced and justice will be overlooked.

3. How were our staff members with whom you came into contact?

Inasmuch as I only came in contact with you, I found you affable, I found you evasive, I found you persuasive, I found that you would be someone that I would enjoy debating with, I found you to be someone that has their agenda that is pretty well set. In other words, I found you close to a mirror image of myself. However, I am more trustworthy

4. How did we do in our public presentations?

I found you very directive, I found you selective, I found you very effective in achieving your agenda. On some levels, I found you quite capable of starting the process of coalescing. I believe that your style allowed people to start the process but then retract into their own myopic views.

I believe the foregoing statements reflect how I perceive your ability to facilitate a meeting.

5. Did we leave out anything, or anyone, important? Did we cause any unresolved problems? Please describe.

I do not believe you created a problem in the community. By not clarifying or requiring the parties to clarify what they felt their constitutional mandates were, I believe you gave everybody an out. I do not believe you caused any unsolved problems. I do not necessarily believe that you solved any of the problems within the jurisdiction.

This is not to say that you are ineffective - it is simply to say that the problem is complex and until the parties can decide that they will truly be candid and they cannot afford not to be honest with each other and tell everybody what the good, bad and the ugly in their departments are, we will not find a solution that is acceptable to the majority of the community because we will not admit that each of us is part of the problem as well as part of the solution.

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6. Do you believe that, overall, the San Joaquin County has been helped by the project

Beats the hell out of me.

7. Comments.

I believe that the Task Force had a real potential to move forward on the issues facing all of us in the Criminal Justice System and that we fell short. We fell short not because of the limitations that you have or I have, but because of limitations of the system itself. I believe that there was a violation of the public meeting laws. I believe that the information that you garnered from individual meetings with different groups should have been made public. I believe that until that happens, we will not find solutions to the problems. The fact is most of us are willing to sacrifice someone else's organization. The fact is most of us are not going to tell people about our blemishes and until we do we will have a hard time coming up with solutions.

I am sorry to say that I believe that I will not be able to give an adequate response to these questions for three or four years. But I can point out that since the conclusion of the Task Force presentation at the Board of Supervisors, a follow up call from anyone on the committee asking my input on anything except Dave Baker. I believe that we will again see the momentum going underground and becoming quite esoteric and, therefore, non-productive. It would seem to me that if we were to correct that situation, it would only be through a series of follow-up meetings for the committee that are scheduled and individuals noticed to attend those meetings to receive input as to the progress that was or was not made.

I believe that if I were asked to serve on another committee such as this Task Force Committee and I were faced with the same issues of secrecy, that I would be tempted to seek court action to force openness at the meetings. I understand clearly that this would in a great measure deter your ability as a consultant to gather information that may or may not be helpful to the body of work as a whole. But juxtaposed to that it would seem to me that until we all come out of our respective closets, no one will know what hat we are wearing. I am one of the few people that admits I wear many hats - some don't look good in public.

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As I continually stated through the hearings, as general Manager of the San Joaquin Public Employees Association, knowing that I represent all the county employees except Deputy Sheriffs I and II and the Management and Confidential employees, my members had a vested interest in finding an overall comprehensive solution to the problem because no matter which way the committee decided to go, there would be a negative impact. That negative impact would have been felt by our members.

I felt truly betrayed by you at the Board of Supervisors meeting wherein you broke a direct promise to me that you would not bring up the specter of contributions from organizations to elected officials. I am sorry to say I believe that you knew exactly what you were doing when you spoke on this issue. I do not find you to be a precipitous person.

I would also point out that your actions will not jeopardize my ability to work with you and your organization in the future. As a representative of working people in this country if I made a decision not to work with people who had screwed my members and broken promises to the organization, there would be a precious few individuals in this nation that I could work with.

Sincerely,

SAN JOAQUIN PUBLIC EMPLOYEES ASSOCIATION

David V. Platt (EC)

David V. Platt
General Manager

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