



Mayor R Rex Parris

11 hours ago near Lancaster, CA

I am saddened and dismayed by comments I've seen on social media and in the news in the last 24 hours. The topic under discussion is the political mailer I sent to registered voters discussing candidate John Ervin. The message has been miscast in the ugliest possible racial terms by those with a political agenda. The African American Leadership Council and I met. They persuaded me to clarify my statements.

Racism has no place in local governance. Ervin calling me a racist is not unusual. He once accused me of being a racist because my administrative assistant is African American. But here, the "race card" is played to divert attention from the mailer's true message.

Just a few years ago, crime was rampant, gang activity went unchecked and our streets were unsafe. The city council initiated numerous programs to address these problems, at every step – John Ervin – opposed every measure; every idea we put forth. He opposed stopping Section 8 abuse, he opposed stopping gangs from wearing their colors on our streets, he opposed removing 2,000 pit bulls from our streets, and he opposed our right to pray at council meetings. This is why I labeled him the "gang candidate."

Some question my use of a photo in the mailer taken at the memorial honoring the memory of the late Trayvon Martin – an event I was unable to attend but supported. Some see this as hypocrisy; Ervin is crying "racist." The facts are that some people used the march as a protest against law enforcement. I was disturbed by the many signs that read: "No Justice/No Peace." I saw a threat in that sentiment. I still do.

Ervin organized the event, took out the permit for the event and gave the microphone to some speakers to slander our deputy sheriffs. I was offended by this as were many of the people who supported the march. All of us should be offended by this, people of every race.

Murderers!? These are the people who keep us safe! In their service and dedication to duty, they are not so different from the brave men and women who serve in our military overseas. Yet Mr. Ervin, so eager to remind us of his service in uniform, did nothing to denounce those in his march who demeaned and insulted our deputies. Hypocrisy, indeed!

Ervin sent out mailers of his own, to Republican high propensity voters proudly showing him standing next to Republican leaders proclaiming that he's pro-law-enforcement – a stance that is belied by his past behavior. His mail to Republicans shows him shooting a handgun claiming he supports the right of people to carry guns. Yet, he is a Democrat and supports his party's platform opposing people's right to carry concealed weapons.

I'll conclude by apologizing for any perceived slight or insult to our citizens. The mailer's message might not be eloquent, but it remains an important message. I stand by it. I urge every voter in Lancaster to ignore the racial epithets and political posturing, and look to the deeper truth.

R. Rex Parris

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