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02

Days until Nov 7th

Former GOP Chairman Flames Hatred Towards Arab Americans

Posted on Monday, 10/09/06 - 11:56 am
 By Elliott D. Petty

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Shawn Steel, former chair of the California Republican Party has gone out of his way to intervene in an Anaheim City Council race to oppose an Arab American republican who opposes the president's war in Iraq.

A letter from Steel on various websites, including the OC Blog, a politically conservative website, leveling vicious and unnecessary accusations against Bill **Dalati**, an insurance agent who was born in Syria and became a naturalized U.S. citizen in 1987. The headline atop the letter opposing **Dalati's** candidacy read "Something Scary in Anaheim," describes **Dalati** as anti-American and a supporter of extremist groups.

Since when does a state party official participate in a local non-partisan council race? When a candidate supports the sometimes controversial but generally mainstream Council on American-Islamic Relations (**CAIR**). To boot, **Dalati** opposes the Iraq war and participated in a protest in Anaheim denouncing the recent Israel-Lebanon conflict.

Unfortunately, **Dalati** is a victim of Steel's dislike for **CAIR** who took him to task in 2003 for making this statement at a University of Southern California Support Our Troops rally hosted by the College Republicans: "The Islamic community has a cancer growing within it, which hates Jews, hates freedom, and hates Western society...the disease within Islam must be rectified."

Let someone in Iraq say this about Christianity and I guarantee the wrong Revs. Jerry Falwell and Pat Robertson would denounce the comments as well. But not just them, but as a Christian I too would be pretty ticked off about the insensitive remarks.

Out of nowhere, Steel found himself subject of a national protest campaign organized by **CAIR**. Many Arab Americans sent thousands of emails and letters asking him to apologize.

Well, Steel has never apologized and oddly believes he is owed one by **CAIR**. Still holding a personal grudge Steel has chosen to personally attack a man that Anaheim Mayor Curt Pringle, a former Assembly speaker and a Republican believes is unwarranted.

As reported in the LA Times, Pringle doesn't see the substantiation to the aggressive charges made against **Dalati**. "In my dealings with him, he's been nothing more than a businessman in our community," he said.

"Those who attack him for his heritage and his faith misrepresent who he is and what he has done," said Anaheim Councilwoman Lorri Galloway, a Democrat who has endorsed **Dalati**.

Mr. Steel, you cannot expect an apology if you are not willing to give one. And an apology is what is warranted from you for trying to fan the flames of hatred at a political candidate.

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