

## EDITORIAL

### DON'T RE-TRY SEN. MENENDEZ

The Obama administration indictment against US Senator Robert Menendez (D-New Jersey) ended last week in a hung jury. A poll of the jurors found that 10 (plus one released early) favored a "not guilty" verdict, and only two favored conviction. Department of Justice ("DOJ") prosecutors immediately promised to re-try Menendez. It is time to end this anti-democratic farce, and dismiss the indictment.

Menendez was indicted by Obama's DOJ under today's new catch-all statute, the "honest services" law. Menendez was charged with trying to help Dr. Salomon Melgen, an old friend and campaign supporter of Menendez, with federal contracts and visas - typical constituent services. In exchange Menendez allegedly received some golf games and hotel stays - trivial things to Menendez. More nefariously, the DOJ charged that money raised by Melgen for Menendez' campaign committees could be considered "bribes" under the honest services law. This is not only legally dubious, it is dangerous.

The first problem with the Indictment was its motivation. Lots of US Senators help their constituents, who also raise money for their campaigns. That is how democracies work. But Obama was angry at Menendez for opposing him on the Iran Nuclear Treaty. So Obama - in true Chicago gangland style - had his DOJ indict Menendez. The message to Congress was clear - cross Obama and you may be indicted and arrested.

The second problem is what is called "separation of powers." The US Congress is an equal branch of the US government to the President. It is ridiculous for the President to sit in judgment over whether a member of Congress is providing "honest services" to his or her constituents. Just as it would be absurd for Congress to do the reverse - impeach and remove a President because they disagreed with his policies and decided that he wasn't being "honest" with the voters.

The final problem is even more disturbing - the hostility of the un-elected law enforcement agencies of the US government to the messy nature of democracy. Elected officials do favors for their supporters. They vote for laws favoring their supporters' interests. They cajole and threaten and make deals with government bureaucrats and other elected officials. They allocate public money for local projects that are often a gigantic waste of money. And voters and campaign supporters expect them to do just that. If an elected official doesn't satisfy his local constituents, they can vote him out. That is called Democracy.

Raising campaign funds is a necessary part of this process. Without funds, no candidate can compete and reach the thousands of voters in today's elections. And who is going to donate those campaign contributions - friends and supporters, of course. This has been true for the 245 years of the American republic. George Washington, Thomas Jefferson and Abraham Lincoln all received and benefited from political contributions.

So when a politically-motivated DOJ sits in judgment over an elected US Senator - twisting the ordinary practice of democracy into accusations of "criminal" behavior - we should all be very worried. That is why *The Leader* is calling for the DOJ to drop this case now, and not re-try Senator Menendez.

*The Publisher*

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR: We encourage our readers to express their view regardless of opinion, through the Letters to the Editor column. Letters published represent the viewpoint of our readers. *They do not necessarily reflect the opinions of The Leader* and, in fact, may be of opposite viewpoint. Letters should be typed and mailed or emailed to the editor's attention. Letters will be edited for length, clarity and accuracy. All letters should be signed and contain author's address and telephone number for verification. Although it is discouraged, we will withhold an author's name if the subject matter is sensitive or the writer may be subject to intimidation or harassment. Letters that contain accusations or important "facts" must demonstrate knowledge in the area described or show evidence for their writing. *The Leader* will not return letters and reserves the right to publish them at a later time or not at all, due to lack of space or editor's discretion.

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

*The Leader* has received several unsigned letters to the editor. We will respect an author's request for anonymity, but must have your name, address, and phone number. We want to hear from you and publish your opinions, so in the future, kindly include the above requested information.

### FLAGS FLY FOR VETERANS DAY POWERED BY CONTRIBUTIONS

*To the Editor,*

In early November, Locust Valley American Legion post members installed 80 flags on telephone poles throughout the town. These flags are flown, then taken down, twice a year, for Veterans Day and Memorial Day. Thanks to Anker Electric for the use of a bucket truck, greatly simplifying and adding to the safety of the project.

Donations were received from many Locust Valley merchants to help defray the maintenance and replacement cost of these flags. The generosity of the merchants was exceptional. The following is a list of our donors:

*Doug Gamble*

Anker Electric  
Apple Bank  
Basil Leaf Cafe  
Birch Hill Meats  
Brass Rail Restaurant  
Brittons Hardware  
Buckram Stables Cafe  
Country Plaza (Million \$) Deli  
Cosmo Tile  
Daniel Gale Realty  
Douglas Elliman Realty  
First National Bank of L.I.  
Forest Iron Works  
G. Willikers Gifts  
Herzog, Judith Ann  
Hogan & Hogan  
Humers & Wagner LLP  
Klein Cleaners  
LV Bistro  
LV Chemists  
LV Deli  
LV Market  
M & A Landscaping  
Marino Cleaners  
Victoria Pieta (in memorium Jean Wilson)  
Tavern on the Plaza  
Sicuranza Plumbing  
Scott Whiting

### BEWARE OF SCAMMERS AT THE HOLIDAYS

*To the Editor,*

Scams that target older people occur every day, but you can count on scammers to ramp up their efforts to prey on people's generosity during the holiday season. These grinchers, armed with their dirty tricks, may even weave the holidays into elaborate stories to pull at your heartstrings as they slip their sticky fingers into your wallet.

During the holidays, the common scam known as the imposter or "grandparent scam" might be decorated with a special plea, a story of a relative in trouble who desperately needs money to fix a car or get out of jail - and home for the holidays.

The ruse known as the IRS scam takes on a vicious new twist with a grinch on the phone threatening an elder with being arrested and spending the holidays in jail for unpaid taxes or a fake debt. And then there is the predictable increase in false or imposter charities, which sound identical to the real ones. The pitch is wrapped in sympathy inducing requests for year-end, tax-deductible holiday donations. These grinchers stand ready to take your credit card or check routing information and charge you for bogus Nutcracker ballet tickets, or a holiday charity fundraising event.

These scammers may even scour the internet and social media sites looking for a

special connection to your life, such as a family member or community connection, to get you to trust them so you'll be willing to part with your hard-earned money. Some will go to great lengths to sound like they know you, or worse, your elderly parents.

We all know to support local merchants whenever possible. But in the holiday rush people are not paying attention to the simple things, and sometimes prices are mis-marked, and the wrong change is given. Please check the prices when checking out, sale prices sometimes do not register and count your change when you leave.

*A Concerned Shopper*

### Notice to our Subscribers

Several of you have called regarding issues either not being delivered on time, or not delivered at all. If you know your subscription is up to date, please call your post office. *The Leader* is sent out each Wednesday morning from the Locust Valley Post Office. Their number is 516.671.1559.

### Leader Stations

Stop by these stores to pick up your copy of *The Leader*.

<b>BAYVILLE</b> Twin Harbor Pharmacy Marty's Party Bayville Pharmacy Oak Neck Deli	<b>LOCUST VALLEY</b> Country Plaza Deli Locust Valley Deli Locust Valley Bagel LV Convenience Store Locust Valley Market	<b>GLEN HEAD</b> Glen Head Deli Glen Head Pharmacy Tobacco King
<b>GLEN COVE</b> Henry's Leo's Deli Glen Cove Stop n' Shop Charlie's Deli Forest Avenue 7-11 Shanti Maa Polish Deli	<b>OYSTER BAY</b> OB Stop n' Shop Verrelli's	<b>HUNTINGTON</b> One Stop Quick Stop Toast Jim Dandy Double S Deli Munday's
	<b>EAST NORWICH</b> East Norwich Deli	<b>HALESITE</b> Bay Delicatessen TK's Galley
	<b>COLD SPRING HARBOR</b> Gourmet Whaler Cold Spring Plaza Deli	

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