

Faithful Citizenship

April 20, 2008

You have to hand it to the Mayor. At least he's out front about his intentions. He says that with or without council approval, we will have steel on steel technology for the rail transit system he is building. He also said he has no misgivings about having awarded a \$505,000 "public relations consulting" contract to his friend Elisa Yadao. Then there is the \$150,000 "lobbying" contract that went to former council member John DeSoto. Where do they come up with these numbers? And just what do you have to do to become a "consultant?" Sign me up! I predict we have only begun to realize the depth of intrigue in the building of this massive public project. Why so cynical? Because they always say the best way to predict the future is to study the past.

I wish the legislature would be as up front as the Mayor. At the start of this session, a bill was introduced to raise the mandatory retirement age for judges. The argument was that people are living longer, healthier lifestyles and it was no longer appropriate to require judges to retire at age 70. Wait a minute. Was it coincidental that this bill would prevent the present governor from appointing a replacement judge for the State Supreme Court? When the reason for the bill became transparent, supporters were pressured into modifying it to apply only to appointments made in the future. The existing retirement requirements would apply to all present judges. Suddenly, the momentum and interest in the bill faded away. Supporters say it became "too politicized!" Wasn't that what it was about from the beginning?

Finally, I am inspired by the visit of Pope Benedict. He has asked us to use our faith to feed the hungry, shelter the poor, care for the environment, and heal the damage done to the defenseless.

Gotta go boot up my hard drive! *Aloha - Maui B.*