

## Watch Group Criticizes Garfield Ads

**Election:** League says it was disturbed by council candidate's mailers attacking LaBonge

*From a Times Staff Writer*

An election watch group said Friday that it was greatly disturbed by mailers and television ads by Los Angeles City Council candidate Beth Garfield attacking her opponent, Tom LaBonge.

But the Campaign Watch Commission of the League of Women Voters concluded that the ads and mailers did not warrant censure for misleading voters.

"We are, however, greatly disturbed by the nature of the unnuanced underlying the materials," the commission said. The group cited "dubious words and images," including footage depicting cash stuffed in envelopes and shadowy figures behind closed doors.

LaBonge had complained that the material accused him of a shady deal involving the tobacco industry and falsely implied that he tried to hide his acceptance of tobacco industry contributions.

LaBonge was not on the council during a vote to ban smoking in restaurants but supported the restriction. Garfield has filed a complaint with the same group charging that a LaBonge mailer is "loaded with character attacks and false and misleading statements."

Meanwhile, the executive director of the city Ethics Commission, Lee Ann Pelham, said Friday that statements in Garfield mailers about LaBonge were wrongly attributed to the panel. One of those said LaBonge took tobacco money at the last moment, so voters wouldn't know before the [1993] election. That statement was not made by the commission.

"We regret if any member of the public was led to conclude otherwise," Pelham said.

# Los Angeles

PATT MORRISON

## *In Troubled Times, Hahn Has Barely Registered as Leader*

**W**ho's the mayor of Los Angeles, I ask Aura at the video store. Dunno, she says.

Well, who's the mayor of New York? Oh, Giuliani, she says easily.

Who's the mayor of L.A., I ask the bashful guy with the spiky hair at the one-hour photo place. Um . . . Riordan? he says. And who's the mayor of New York? Giolani, he says, struggling with the syllables.

Tonya at the Vons doesn't know the mayor of L.A., but New York? "G . . . G . . . I'm not good with names. The guy that was out at the World Trade Center."

David at the Chevron doesn't know either name. Cynthia at the vet's, who voted for mayor, can't remember who won. But she knows who the mayor of New York is.

On my errands this week, only Gilbert at the drugstore knew that James Hahn is the mayor of L.A. (Then Gilbert quizzed *me* about the new city attorney, whose name he knows because Rocky Delgadillo once coached Gilbert's football team at Franklin High.)

One hundred days after he was sworn into the job he's been yearning for and prepping for all his adult life, Hahn is still, to much of the most media-mad city in the nation, only a title—not a face, not even a name.

The election-night Hahn, the lively, glad-handing Hahn, has been hung back in the closet—way back. Instead, at a luncheon this week celebrating his first 100 days in office, we got the checklist Hahn, the mayor with a clipboard, ticking off all he has done to extend after-school programs, to call for a landfill hearing, to sign six

(maybe editing that application form) to dine with the president of Mexico at a White House state dinner—the political equivalent of a screenwriter passing up dinner with Steven Spielberg. Most unsettlingly, he is still pressing full-bore for a condensed LAPD workweek even as reservists are being called up for military duty—and the LAPD says it has 652 officers and civilians on the call-up list.

The Police Protective League, which endorsed Hahn after he endorsed the three-12-hour-day plan, couldn't fail to answer a patriotic call to hold off on 3-12 in this crisis, but Hahn hasn't placed it.

Curiously, Hahn registers higher on national political radar. He heads a new mayors' task force on airport security. Ten days ago, he gave the Democratic response to President Bush's weekly radio address.

The Dems chose Hahn, a spokeswoman said, because it's been "dramatically demonstrated . . . what role [mayors] play in everyone's lives." Giuliani got it at once. Riordan found it out after the 1994 Northridge quake. Hahn is still workshoping the part.

On Sept. 11, Hahn was stuck in Washington, D.C. He did not stage a teleconference with L.A. reporters or arrange a reassuring speech to a city convinced it was terrorism's next target. He did not tell L.A. that if he had to, he would hitchhike all 3,000 miles to get back home.

So it was council President Alex Padilla whom we saw on TV, and if I were Hahn, the sight of the smooth, smart, capable-looking Padilla taking charge would have

in office, we got the checklist. Hahn, the mayor with a clipboard, ticking off all he has done to extend after-school programs, to call for a landfill hearing, to sign six business-tax reforms, to identify the city's 25 worst intersections—all worthy, all important, but all the iceberg part of the job.

It was not reassuring that this was his first major civic speech since taking office. It was not reassuring that amid world turmoil and civic angst, he found it worth noting that he slashed the application form for neighborhood councils from 21 pages to six. (That's a bureaucrat's job; getting people excited about neighborhood councils is a leader's job.)

Yes, L.A. is an apolitical town. Yes, Hahn is a low-key guy. But political perception colors political reality. In hometown cine-speak, L.A.'s mayor can no longer just produce or direct the project, he has to star in it, too.

Day after day, in Hahn's early tenure, the notice went out to newsrooms that "Mayor Jim Hahn has no public events scheduled."

Sometimes, he'd show up at events like the Sparks' victory gala, at Van Nuys City Hall or at LAX. He stepped into the monthly ask-the-mayor KFWB radio call-in gig. (Yesterday, he ate sushi for the cameras—not Little Tokyo sushi, or, now that he's made stopping secession his priority, even San Fernando Valley sushi, but convention center, out-of-towner sushi.)

His appointments of veterans and insiders earned some plaudits, but Richard Riordan's appointees, not Hahn's, still fill some 200 of those posts—and the permanent job of running the Department of Water and Power remains open.

L.A. is home to more Mexican citizens than any city outside Mexico, and yet Hahn was too busy

So it was council President Alex Padilla whom we saw on TV, and if I were Hahn, the sight of the smooth, smart, capable-looking Padilla taking charge would have been reason enough to thumb my way back to L.A. aboard the first big rig that would stop for me.

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Call to hold off on 3-12 in this matter