

EDITOR FOR A DAY

LaMalfa one of us? Are you kidding me?

By JIM LEDGERWOOD

CANDIDATE FOR Congress Doug LaMalfa has campaign signs up everywhere, complete with cowboy hat, that state, "Doug LaMalfa conservative for Congress one of us." So, is Doug really conservative and one of us? Let's look at the record. LaMalfa was an obscure member of the Republican Central committee until his mentor David Reade saw an opportunity to take advantage of a lack of qualified candidates in an opening in his assembly district. With a campaign fueled by family rice money, LaMalfa was able to win the race. LaMalfa went on to win the Senate race with the slogan, "Doug is one of us." Now a new opportunity has come up, with the retirement of Wally Herger, to move on up to Congress.

So let's start with the question, Is LaMalfa really one of us? Before his political career LaMalfa claims to be one of the common folk, a rice farmer. The facts show that the main crop on the LaMalfa family farm was government rice subsidies and entitlements - welfare for rich farmers, if you will. Indeed, LaMalfa and his family did quite well at this and were able to harvest about \$4.7 million dollars worth of government handouts over the years. If this was not enough, LaMalfa took advantage of a loophole in the law to circumvent a \$180,000 limit per farm by dividing the ranch

among family members.

According to the Heritage Foundation, a conservative research organization, farm subsidies were intended to alleviate farmer poverty, but the majority of subsidies go to large commercial farms like LaMalfa with average incomes of over \$200,000 and a net worth of nearly \$2 million. Most struggling family farms are excluded from most subsidies. Indeed, only a select few get government handouts.

As a California legislator LaMalfa has been a busy boy, passing legislation that benefits fat-cat farmers like himself at the expense of the average taxpayer. He has helped in founding an organization devoted to protecting rice entitlements and has publicly advocated many times for rice welfare. When asked about the obvious abuses, he answers with a curt "Don't criticize farmers with your mouth full." (La-Malfa, don't call yourself a conservative with your pockets full of rice welfare entitlements.) He authorized legislation to line his and other large commercial rice farmers' pockets with a \$400,000 windfall in the form of a tax credit for rice straw program. When the government pays you not to grow rice you can sell

your taxpayer-funded water allotment to some southern California water district for big bucks. From the years 1995-2010 the LaMalfa farm never received less than \$161,592 - over \$500K one year and more than \$400K for three years - for a yearly average of \$293,427.

In addition to government handouts, LaMalfa received profits from his crop and water sales. The LaMalfa farm is in the top 1 percent of rice welfare recipients in the first congressional district, giving Doug the distinction of being perhaps the biggest welfare recipient in Butte County. Add to that his state salary of about \$116K, his state-provided car - a Mustang mach 1 - per diem and travel allowance, and his total take of taxpayer funds is, well, quite generous. Nice work if you can get it. His actions are made even more hypocritical by his public actions or words. LaMalfa quotes: "In my opinion state wages and benefits need an overhaul" (but keep my farm subsidies coming).

Another attributed statement by Redding.com on Feb. 23, 2011: "California's government needs a reality check to remind it that taxpayers simply can't afford to keep funding lavish entitlements (like rice wel-

fare for millionaires), especially when they are having trouble keeping their own heads above water."

"This is the wrong message to send to the real economy, to the private sector who are struggling to keep their businesses afloat." -- Redding.com 3/14/12

Regarding criticism over accepting farm subsidies, LaMalfa said, "You get over it." 7/28/11 Redding.com

So, how would you answer the question, Is Doug LaMalfa one of us? Well, I guess if you are a millionaire rice farmer trust fund baby who has spent his whole adult life collecting government handouts, the answer would be yes. If you are a regular guy or gal struggling to make ends meet, pay your mortgage and get your kids through school, the answer would be no.

So how can a guy who has lived on government handouts his entire life have any credibility in cutting the \$16 trillion dollar debt and runaway spending that our kids and grandkids will inherit? The bigger question is, why would he want to go to Congress? Sure looks like to protect rice farm welfare. Is there any other conclusion?

NOTICE OF EVIDENTIARY HEARING BEFORE THE CALIFORNIA PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION
REGARDING PACIFIC GAS AND ELECTRIC COMPANY APPLICATION TO RECOVER THE COST OF SEISMIC STUDIES
RECOMMENDED BY THE CALIFORNIA ENERGY COMMISSION (A.10-01-014)

Pursuant to California Public Utilities Commission Rule 13.1(b), an Evidentiary Hearing for the above referenced matter is scheduled for April 18-20 2012 at 10:00 AM, at the following address:

California Public Utilities Commission Courtroom
State Office Building
505 Van Ness Avenue San Francisco, CA 94102

On November 30, 2011, at a hearing at the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC), the administrative law judge granted a motion by Pacific Gas and Electric Company (PG&E)