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Editorials

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6B

Letters to the editor

Supervisors shouldn't bail out the sheriff

It has been fascinating reading about the irresponsible Santa Clara County sheriff and his attempts to live beyond his means.

The simple facts have yet to be presented to the public — the sheriff requested \$33.6 million last year and was only given \$30.9 million. This has been the case for many other departments because of Proposition 13, of which Sheriff Winter was fully aware of when he ran for office.

Rather than accepting the will of the people and spending less, he ignored the board of supervisors and ran his department as if he had received \$33.6 million from the board.

During the middle of the year he went to the board and got \$1.8

million and now he is back for the rest of it.

It seems that the sheriff has decided to ignore the board of supervisors in doing their elected duties. As Supervisor Lofgren pointed out, the law makes the sheriff responsible for the damage that any person in the sheriff's office will realize due to his irresponsible way of running the sheriff's office.

I tell the supervisors that they should not bail Sheriff Winter out of a situation that he got in through bad management or total defiance of the supervisors, for if they do, he will just be back next year doing the same thing.

There has been a lot of talk as to where will the money come from. Robert Hilton, director of manage-

ment and budget, identified a half a million dollars for the sheriff. Moreover, the sheriff could start charging the big businesses and agriculture who receive his services free-of-charge like welfare, through asking for contributions and getting them to pay for what they get rather than giving them something for nothing.

In the final analysis it clearly appears that the sheriff is not able to manage his department and therefore he should resign as soon as possible and turn the department over to somebody who could manage it OR he should start acting like a law-abiding citizen and run his department with the money he's got.

— Kevin M. Aslanian
San Jose