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OPENING & CLOSING CEREMONIES*



*SITE OF 1984 OLYMPICS  
BOXING COMPETITION*

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ALTERNATES

December 8, 2011

Members of the Coliseum Commission:

RE: **Los Angeles Times Article of December 8, 2011**

I am writing to clarify a few facts that are missing from or misleading in the aforementioned article about the reimbursement made by Commissioner Mark Ridley-Thomas to the Coliseum Commission in September 2011 for tickets to a NFL game two years that he had requested.

1. The statement in the article that Commissioner Ridley-Thomas had “scored” these tickets “on the public dime” is, of course, inaccurate, false and misleading. The Los Angeles Times reporters continue to deliberately ignore the fact that the Coliseum Commission’s financial affairs are not supported or based on taxpayer funds of any type from the State, the County or the City. As you know, the Coliseum Commission’s activities are solely dependent on self-generated revenue, which the Los Angeles Times continues to mis-state as public monies. Commission President David Israel already protested this mischaracterization to the publisher and editor of that publication in September, but the Times continues to utilize this incorrect statement in its reporting.
2. Ron Lederkramer brought the matter of the outstanding invoice for Commissioner Ridley-Thomas to my attention in early summer 2011, before the Los Angeles Times had obtained copies of Mr. Lederkramer’s reimbursement records in August. I had deliberately decided I should talk to Commissioner Ridley-Thomas about this matter only in person, but summer schedules did not allow for 1-1 contact between him and me until September 3 at USC Game # 1. Commissioner Ridley-Thomas and I then handled the matter within the following two weeks, and the Commission’s account was settled. For the Los Angeles Times to suggest that the completion of this transaction and the reimbursement from Commissioner Ridley-Thomas was prompted by its inquiry is self-serving and false. But, of course, the power of the pen is in full force.

3. Finally, the position of the Los Angeles Times news staff in reporting on this matter is interesting in view of that publication's own relationship with other organizations for preferred access to and purchase of tickets. As you may know, for many years, the public sale of ~3,000 tickets to the annual Rose Bowl Game was administered through a lottery process. I know from personal knowledge that it was the practice of the Pasadena Tournament of Roses Association to set aside a special allotment of tickets to the annual Rose Bowl Game for direct purchase by the Los Angeles Times for distribution to its executives, reporters and advertisers. In my view, for the Los Angeles Times to suggest that it is inappropriate for a member of the Coliseum Commission to ask for assistance from the Coliseum/Sports Arena staff in acquiring tickets to an event at another venue is certainly inconsistent with that organization's stance as described above.

Sincerely,



John Sandbrook  
Interim General Manager