

## THE “STATE OF FEAR” ON CALIFORNIA’S BORDER Si Frumkin

What comes to mind when an article is headlined “State of Fear”? Where do you think this scary state is? In North Korea? Zimbabwe? Darfur? Is it one of the score of other African or Asian nations where populations are struggling to survive?

Well, no. Anyway, not as far as the New York Times is concerned. Its selection for the horrifying state is *Arizona!* Yes, this is not a misprint – our own sunny, golf course and swimming pool friendly, retiree and computer geek attractive American Arizona!

The article – an unsigned editorial on December 8 – is a description of Arizona that most of us would not recognize. It is, in the view of the New York Times - a newspaper that is believed by many to be a responsible purveyor of accurate news and intelligent opinions – a hellish place that continues to hatch , “...the dumbest, cruelest ideas anywhere for getting tough on immigrants” and “This is a border state that brought us the Minutemen, where duly elected Yosemite Sams keep thinking up new ways to brand illegal immigrants as a class of undesirables and criminals ... (with a goal) to make their lives so miserable that they have no choice but to abandon their lives, jobs and families...”

Arizona is the way it is because it is run by a governor whose major achievements for two terms has (*sic!*) been simply “to veto bill after bill on the xenophobes’ long wish list”. The vetoed “noxious measures“ would require the police to become federal immigration enforcers, would deny day laborer’s speech rights, the 14<sup>th</sup> Amendment guarantee of citizenship to children born in the U.S. would be voided, English would become the official language and police would be allowed to arrest the undocumented for trespassing.

Wait a minute! But if all these “noxious” measures were vetoed by the governor, Janet Napolitano, then why is the Times so angry at her? How did the

widely respected Democrat two-term governor earn the Times' contempt for creating a "State of Fear" from a formerly pleasant state?

Well, the governor is about to leave her office for an important job in Washington. She has been selected by President Obama as his Secretary of Homeland Security and apparently the New York Times believes that this is simply unforgivable, regrettable and possibly akin to what Kim Il Jung or Mugabe would do.

What is so interesting – and would be funny if it weren't so obviously asinine – is that the Times almost completely neglects President-elect Obama's role in this unforgivable situation. After all, it is Obama that appointed her and he is the one that should be blamed, right? The only mention of Obama in the entire article consists of two words: "down side" - in describing the appointment in the only sentence that may be considered to be critical of the President-elect in the entire article.

During the Presidential campaign, the Times' pro-Obama bias was so evident that a number of Republican commentators referred to the newspaper as "New York Obama Times", (I suppose to differentiate it from the "Los Angeles Obama Times"). It seems that the bias has not evaporated with the election – the Times editors couldn't quite bring themselves to say anything derogatory or ill-conceived about any of Obama's actions that may be connected to the creation of a "State of Fear" in one of our Western states.

Still, why is Napolitano's leaving so disturbing to the New York Times?

The Times thinks that this is obvious. You see, her successor would be the secretary of state, Jan Brewer. She is (horrors!!) a Republican and "is expected to be far more willing to sign whatever tough immigration measures to get to her desk." But the news isn't all bad: the new speaker of the House, Kirk Adams, is a conservative Republican, who "...to his credit, has a reputation for understanding that immigration extremism can be bad for business." In other

words, he is ready to sell out his conservative Republican beliefs for the benefit of Arizona capitalists.

As for me, I fully anticipate that gulags will soon be built in Arizona to replace the golf courses, fences will be erected to keep citizens in and foreigners – especially New Yorkers – out, slavery would be reintroduced and that Napolitano would rue the day she accepted the ill conceived appointment by the President whose initials may or may not be B.H.O.

(I should add, in the interest of full disclosure, that after 4 years of acceptable mix of satisfaction and frustration, and one year (the last one) of total aggravation and disgust, I have finally canceled my subscription to the New York Times).