

WHY JANET NAPOLITANO IS RIGHT FOR ATTORNEY GENERAL

✖ The election is nigh 24 hours in the bank, and the rumor wires and scuttlebutt are exploding with discussion of the makeup of President-elect Barack Obama's cabinet and staff to be. Attorney General is a critical post in any administration; but perhaps at no time in the history of the United States as important as at this moment.

The thankless task of recreating the once shining star that was the Department of Justice will take a special skill set from the person chosen to be the next AG. DOJ Main is a festering mess; stocked with Cheney/Bush political lackeys and consiglieri, unqualified and inexperienced Regent plants, and literal criminals that have aided and abetted the evisceration of our Constitution and commission of torture and other war crimes.

A department of expediency over honesty and integrity was grown by the Bushies. From DOJ Main down through the line level career prosecutors in the various District US Attorney Offices, credibility and trust have been felled. The once shining continuity of impartiality, justice and rule of law is in dysfunctional chaos.

Janet Napolitano is the right person, the best qualified and most suited, by far, to meet the daunting challenge ahead at Attorney General.

Napolitano is well versed and experienced with constitutional law and civil rights, having been mentored as the hand picked protege of one of the country's great Constitutional scholars and authorities, John P. Frank, one of the two legal fathers of the *Miranda* decision. She has sizable long term experience not only as the Arizona Attorney General (a huge office), but also as

chief executive of an entire state government as Arizona Governor. Of critical significance, she was the US Attorney for the District of Arizona for six years under President Clinton, prior to her terms in state office as Arizona's AG and Governor.

The job ahead is going to, in addition to the legal skills, require someone with Federal experience and the established ability to manage a giant bureaucracy. Janet Napolitano has a very rare combination of background and experience to fit that bill. The attention to bureaucratic detail, not just in Washington DC, but in all of the 93 US Attorney district offices is going to have to be immense. Wholesale institutional change needs to be implemented, and malefactors rooted out.

Janet Napolitano has this ability in droves over any other candidate discussed for AG. She is spectacularly good at bureaucratic detail and getting big entities working as an efficient team. Janet has an incredibly feel good aura around her, and it is contagious to those working with and for her. She is a master team builder, both in terms of efficiency and competence as well as morale and attitude. Janet has already exhibited her turnaround skills in her transformation of the Arizona Executive branch, which was in shambles when she took over. These are exactly the skills that will be demanded from the new AG.

As Sara commented:

Whoever takes the AG's job will be faced quickly with dealing with a host of major fraud cases stemming from the economic melt-down. Congress itself will certainly be doing the hearings and pointing to potential targets. We've got one that is just emerging now in Minnesota – Hedge Fund Operator charged with Three Billion in Fraud, taking down a whole group of industries, including Sun Country Airlines which was forced into bankruptcy. Apparently cases like

this are scattered everywhere. And yes, they will be handled by the USA for the most part, but many of these are international cases and Main Justice will have to engage. My own sense of what will return DoJ to health is a new focus on cases where large segments of the public have been harmed – properly preparing and winning some of these, and then with a new slate of personnel evolving a better culture. What's hurt them has been fake cases – emphasis on voter fraud (which hardly exists) over emphasis on slightly potential over hyped terrorism cases, not having bright lines regarding politics and the policy of DoJ, and all those light weights from Regents University. I think Obama will be very sensitive to significant improvements at DoJ.

Janet Napolitano has tackled massive business fraud cases as Arizona AG, including the Arizona Baptist Foundation case, at the time one of the largest mass fraud cases in US history, which she personally shepherded through initial investigation and criminal prosecution. Napolitano has the guile, skill and determination to take on any entity and see that justice is administered, something to keep in mind in light of the economic collapse caused by financial and energy concerns.

Terrorism experience? Janet Napolitano has that in spades too. Janet, as US Attorney for the District of Arizona, was one of the leaders on the Oklahoma City Bombing Case, and shepherded the case against Michael Fortier, who was not only convicted, but was turned and made the critical witness against Timothy McVeigh and Terry Nichols. Napolitano is so strong in terrorism/security that she is also being considered for head of the Department of Homeland Security.

If there is a nationwide functioning nerve center of any Presidential administration, it is

the justice system and Department of Justice, if for no other reason than the fact that the FBI and US Attorneys are everywhere, in every jurisdiction across the United States. Trust, competence, morale and efficiency must be restored in the heart of the nation's justice system.

These institutions have historically propagated and renewed themselves from within, with each generation training and mentoring the next generation. That has been blown up under George Bush and his lackeys Ashcroft, Gonzales and Mukasey. There is now effectively a two generation gap missing and/or devoid of competence in the career ranks at DOJ. The good people, that were there before, either left in disgust or were marginalized out of relevance, and the successor generations are incompetents and Regent Law type plants. The very substrate we will need to turn around the Department of Justice is missing from it.

If it was a normal situation, a normal Presidential turnover, the situation would not be so critical. But things at DOJ are not normal. Just having someone that is good on the issues, or thinks like we do, or that we admire, is not nearly enough right now. It is going to take both that *and* the ability to institute it top to bottom in a huge bureaucracy, as well as the people skills to quietly inspire their subordinates to get it done. Just a popular name or a vision isn't going to cut it; the complete package is required.

The other names that have been bandied about – Eric Holder, Sheldon Whitehouse, Artur Davis, Pat Fitzgerald, and others – all have either legal acumen or leadership acumen in differing amounts; but none have the vast amounts of *both* that Janet Napolitano does. Then you have to figure in her inherent ability to make people around her feel positive and motivated, even in dire circumstances.

Janet Napolitano *is* the complete package.
President Obama, make her your Attorney General.

It will be one of the smartest decisions you
ever make.