

Memo to Gov. Janet Napolitano: Get some vision

I was watching Gov. Janet Napolitano being interviewed by Michael Grant, and I was struck by the fact that it looked like a couple of lawyers making a deal on something — very esoteric, very sleep-inducing.

I like Michael Grant and, despite being a rock-ribbed conservative Republican, I voted for Janet.

Can any of you remember the last time Arizona was well-served by a governor? By that, I mean a few clearly held beliefs, well articulated and held strongly. I think this state needs a vision, and I actually think Janet could do it, but she's got the wrong coaching.

Lest any of you think I'm a newcomer, I've lived in Arizona since 1986 and can't think of any good governors. Before that, I was in Nevada (*laissez faire* government, no taxes, great environment) and California (land of Reagan and Deukmejian). Tough guys, uncompromising.

So, with two years left before I change my vote, here are some thoughts to resuscitate your visions:

- Where in the world is your energy policy? I'm tired of paying \$2 a gallon (and I can afford it) when people who have just come back from Dallas are telling me that Texas is 30 cents lower. This looks like an opportunity. Let's get the governor to lease some rail or truck tankers. Or, whatever happened to the idea of putting a gasoline refinery around the Mobile area?

- While I'm on the subject of energy, Arizona used to be the solar-energy capital of the world. It still could be. I happen to have as a CEO client, the head of a solar-power firm (a woman) who'd love to bend Janet's ear. She's building a second house outside of Kingman in the largest off-grid solar community in the United States. Everyone in Arizona should be all over this development. Where is Arizona's solar policy? Where is Napolitano's special assistant on energy policy? Where are some deeper tax credits? How about pitching the feds to reinstate their solar-tax credit?

- All-day kindergarten is a nice idea, but I



MY VIEW

John Heinrich II

school districts, for openers.

don't see Tom Horne out trumpeting this. Let's tell the school districts to take the millions out of hide; fire some administrators. And what is up with the rest of our education system? How about chopping 25 percent out of the prison budget and giving it to the schools? What are the plans to get the drop-out rate down? The future of Arizona business is in the hands of the educators. Tell them to get with it. Consolidate the

- with regard to reduced prison funding, we don't want the prisoners to come back, so the poorer the conditions, the more the deterrent.
- While we're rearranging the Arizona social contract, I'll put in a plug for Patricia Leach of HomeBase Youth Services, who has a far better success rate with troubled teens (ages 16-21) than any state agency in the United States. Even the Chinese want to talk to her about what she's doing. Give her CPS and the rest of the social services bureaucracy, and let her run it. If she can't lop 15 percent to 20 percent off the payroll, with better results, I'd be surprised. She certainly can keep teens out of jail, she's proved that. At a minimum, give Pat some additional government CPS dollars to help more teens.
- Where is our water-conservation policy? I haven't heard a peep out of anyone on this subject. We're still in a 10-year drought. I don't see too many low-flow toilets or showerheads, but I do see a lot of new lawns and pools going in. How about some tax credits for water conservation, or tax consequences of using more water?
- The budget: I think I nodded off during some of Janet and Michael's discussion, but it appears we're still upside down on revenue versus expenses. Why? On expenses: Cut staff 10 percent, and give the remaining people a 10 percent raise. **How about accountability-based**

performance reviews? Give the casinos more slots and more gaming tables, give a few of both to the racetracks, take a bigger cut for the state (that's the Nevada way). *The Business Journal* was kind enough to run this position a year ago ... was the government listening?

• Lastly, Janet, you need some serious coaching in public relations, after your "deer-in-the-headlights" stare-down of the poor Channel 15 reporter trying to find out why you're outsourcing the welfare call center to India. Unbelievable gaffe by a public official. Be honest, get out front of the issue. Otherwise, the news media *will* roll over you, and I might help them. I could go on, but I'd like to invite the gover-

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nor to sit in on one of my quarterly CEO sessions, free of charge, to get a better feel about what the heart of Arizona's business community *really* is saying.

These members are CEOs of companies between \$15 million and \$200 million in annual sales, and probably employ more Arizonans than the Intels and the Motorolas, Wal-Mart, and the vaunted bio-techies.

Fix all these things in the next two years, and I'll vote for you again.

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