

Maricopa County Sheriff's Office

Joe Arpaio, Sheriff



Date: March 10, 2009

ARPAIO REFUTES MEXICAN CONSUL GENERAL CLAIMS

*Removes Mexican Consulate from
Jail's "Most Favored Nation" Status*

Will Seek Reimbursement from Mexican Government

(Phoenix, AZ) Maricopa County Sheriff Joe Arpaio today countered the unsupported claims of the Consul General of Mexico contained in a letter sent on February 23, 2009. Consul General Carlos Flores Vizcarra's letter echoed complaints previously raised by local and national critics and groups opposed to the Sheriff's immigration enforcement policies.

"I am terribly disappointed by the Consul General's letter," Arpaio says.

"For years he and I have had a good working relationship. I even extended special visitation status to his staff to ease their ability to communicate with incarcerated Mexican citizens. Instead of raising any genuine concerns, he chose to adopt the lies and distortions of the illegal immigration groups which attack me at every opportunity."

As the former Regional Director for the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration in Mexico City, Arpaio has first hand knowledge of the jail and prison conditions in Mexico.

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News Release

“If anyone has been disingenuous here, it is Consul General Flores. Look at the deplorable way Mexican citizens and foreigners are treated in that country’s jails and prison,” Arpaio says. “Look at the violence erupting all along the Mexican border between drug cartels, human smugglers, and the regional law enforcement authorities.”

In his letter to the Consul General today (see attached), Arpaio informed Flores of the Sheriff’s intent to seek reimbursement of the housing costs associated with Mexican nationals who are determined to be in the country illegally and are currently incarcerated in Maricopa County jail facilities.

He also informed Flores that the consulate has now lost its “most favored status” within the jail and staff from the consulate will no longer have 24 hour access to jailed Mexican citizens but will instead be treated like all other foreign governments.

Despite the obvious displeasure from the Consul General, Sheriff Arpaio reiterates his commitment to enforcing all state and federal laws against illegal immigration as long as the laws to do so remain in place. In fact, last night, nine illegal immigrants were arrested by Sheriff’s deputies during a traffic stop on I-17 near Anthem and seven of them were booked into jail on felony human smuggling charges. The illegal aliens admitted they paid between \$500 to \$1200 for illegal transportation into the United States from Mexico.

“My deputies have arrested 231 illegal immigrants in workplace investigations. They have made 1,242 arrests under the felony Arizona human smuggling laws and 1,484 arrests under the federal 287-G agreement. Also 22, 329 illegal immigrants have been discovered and detained during the jail’s booking process by Sheriff’s officials.” END

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