



Maricopa County Sheriff's Office
Joe Arpaio, Sheriff

NEWSRelease

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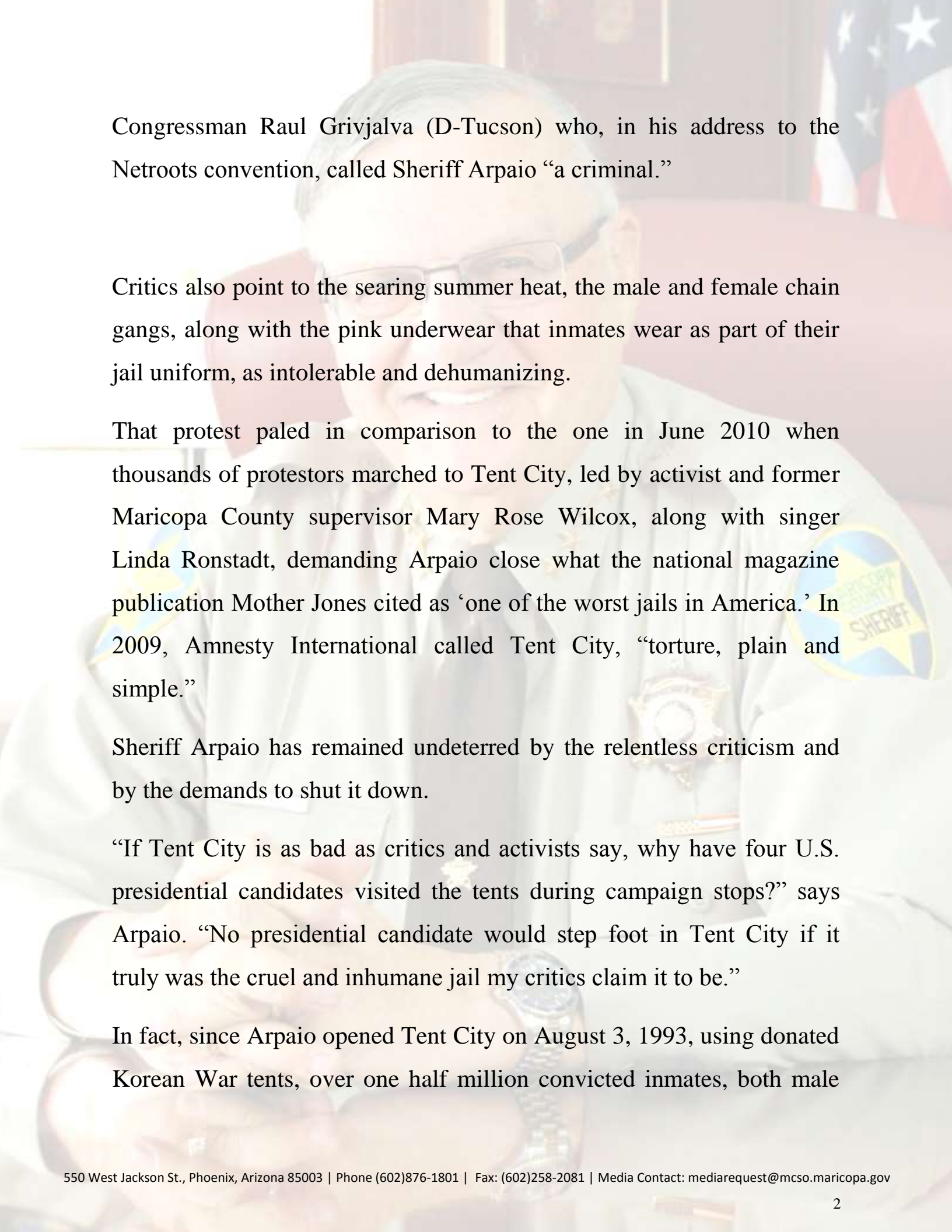
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CLOSE TENT CITY JAIL CRITICS DEMAND JUST AS ARPAIO OBSERVES TENTS 22 ANNIVERSARY

PROTESTORS CITING CRUEL, INHUMANE CONDITIONS

(Maricopa County, AZ) Confronted with increasingly insistent demands from activists calling for the immediate closure of Tent City Jail, Maricopa County Sheriff Joe Arpaio is moving ahead with plans to celebrate the 22nd anniversary of his canvas incarceration compound on August 3, 2015 at high noon.

This despite that recently, on July 17th, hundreds of people from around the nation marched to the Sheriff's downtown headquarters, led by a large progressive organization called Netroots Nation displaying numerous anti-Arpaio signs and forcing a lockdown of the Sheriff's downtown jails. Protestors publicly called for an end to Tent City – calling it an “outdoor deathtrap” and “anti-human laboratory.” Protestors were bolstered by comments made earlier at the convention by U.S.



Congressman Raul Grivjalva (D-Tucson) who, in his address to the Netroots convention, called Sheriff Arpaio “a criminal.”

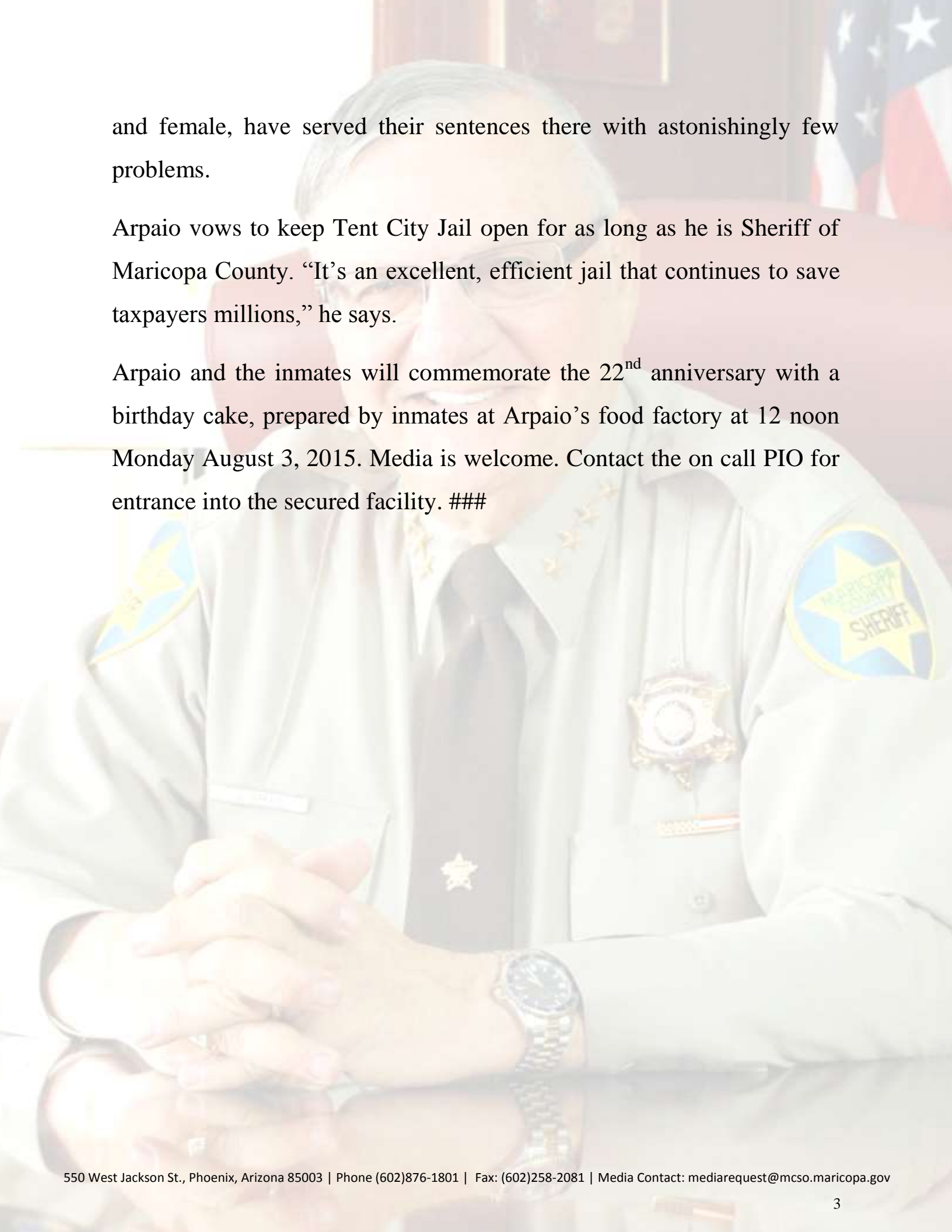
Critics also point to the searing summer heat, the male and female chain gangs, along with the pink underwear that inmates wear as part of their jail uniform, as intolerable and dehumanizing.

That protest paled in comparison to the one in June 2010 when thousands of protestors marched to Tent City, led by activist and former Maricopa County supervisor Mary Rose Wilcox, along with singer Linda Ronstadt, demanding Arpaio close what the national magazine publication Mother Jones cited as ‘one of the worst jails in America.’ In 2009, Amnesty International called Tent City, “torture, plain and simple.”

Sheriff Arpaio has remained undeterred by the relentless criticism and by the demands to shut it down.

“If Tent City is as bad as critics and activists say, why have four U.S. presidential candidates visited the tents during campaign stops?” says Arpaio. “No presidential candidate would step foot in Tent City if it truly was the cruel and inhumane jail my critics claim it to be.”

In fact, since Arpaio opened Tent City on August 3, 1993, using donated Korean War tents, over one half million convicted inmates, both male



and female, have served their sentences there with astonishingly few problems.

Arpaio vows to keep Tent City Jail open for as long as he is Sheriff of Maricopa County. “It’s an excellent, efficient jail that continues to save taxpayers millions,” he says.

Arpaio and the inmates will commemorate the 22nd anniversary with a birthday cake, prepared by inmates at Arpaio’s food factory at 12 noon Monday August 3, 2015. Media is welcome. Contact the on call PIO for entrance into the secured facility. ###