

**Interview for AOL NEWS with George Adams – Producer/Director Panic Nation 5-18-10**

**INTERVIEWER:** I'd like to talk to you about Oklahoma's anti-immigration law and how it compares to Arizona's new law. So this new law that Rep. Randy Terrill is trying to pass... anybody who knowingly is harboring, employing or transporting an illegal immigrant could be in forfeiture of their business or their car or whatever?

**ADAMS:** Right, he tried that a couple of years ago too he called it "son-of-House Bill 1804."

**INT:** Okay.

**ADAMS:** And it didn't get a whole lot of reaction the last time he tried it. Though I suspect now that Arizona's got their law, Terrill is definitely trying this again. House Bill 1804 came out in 2007, that was his omnibus. In my documentary I was able to uncover that there is at least one other person who also takes credit for writing the law. So even though he (Terrill) takes credit for it there's a woman up in Tulsa who says that she's the one that got the bill to him. Terrill self admitted that Mike Hethmon of the FAIR organization also helped him write it.

**INT:** He's pretty open about working with FAIR.

**ADAMS:** I understand that Mike Hethmon also took part in SB 1070 as did Kris Kobach. Russell Pearce and Terrill, they're in bed with the same people and now it's just become pardon my language, it's becoming a pissing match as to who can one up each other on these laws. It's ridiculous.

**INT:** But you're saying that he tried a couple years a couple years ago to attach a seizure provision and it failed?

**ADAMS:** Yes. He couldn't get support for it after 1804 passed from what I understand.

**INT:** You don't recall what the old number was?

**ADAMS:** No, he was calling it "Son-of-House Bill 1804."

**INT:** Okay, but you anticipate that this time that there will support?

**ADAMS:** I don't know. The House Leader originally said that they were not going to hear any new bills this session. There have been a couple of people that have said they want to wait until next session, after summer. I'm betting, I'm hoping that's the case. We want to try to start a letter writing campaign. after the summer vacation. If he gets it in this session, it pushes everything forward. I'm hoping that if we can get some of these legislators to look at Arizona and see all of the fallout that's happening there, they might hold off. Let's be honest, Oklahoma is not a tourist state, we're not even a border state so if anybody decided that they wanted to boycott Oklahoma, it would devastate the economy here. We've got a two year old NBA team that that made it all the way to the championship finals this year, are we going to subject them to protests like what's going on with the Arizona Diamondbacks? Do we want that type of publicity? I'm getting on my soapbox here for a second... Oklahoma has one of the smallest Hispanic populations in the country, we're not a border state and there's this guy Randy Terrill who has taken it upon himself, he and Carol Helm of I.R.O.N. (Immigration Reform for Oklahoma Now) and the KKK is also involved in this... to produce one of the strictest state sponsored anti-immigration laws in the country, second to Arizona now. Who are we making policy for?

**INT:** Um

**ADAMS:** <laughs> I could go on.

**INT:** So the other provision House Bill 3341, the language is there and it looks like its gone through the public safety, its gone through a couple of the other committees and Terrill made it sound as though that was one of the ones that was going to be tacked on. So I don't know if they're changing the language in that or whether they're I don't know how that's going somehow to be brought to a vote next week? He (Terrill) told me it hadn't been introduced and I googled it and found that it had been introduced so I'm a little bit flummoxed here. The other, this seizure provision and then there's another provision which he said would expand the racketeering laws to include activities with illegal immigration. I spoke with Lee Denny and she said she didn't know anything about it coming to the floor either. It sounds like you've got this thing in committee and he's going to just going to kinda dump it in there in the last week.

**ADAMS:** Yeah well, that's not surprising. You know his first anti-immigration House Bill 3119, back in 2006, failed miserably. I mean he was trying to make it illegal for the state of Oklahoma to do business with companies that had manufacturing plants in Mexico. Theoretically this would have meant Oklahoma couldn't do business with companies like Levi, Coalgate, Ford, etc. It failed.

**INT:** So you mentioned a letter writing campaign? Is that now essential that you've been made aware of this? Is this something you're going to do this week or...?

**ADAMS:** I don't know if we can get it off the ground that quickly, certainly as an individual. I was talking to my assistant yesterday and we were talking about these issues. First we need to release my documentary film. I was able to include some information about Arizona and SB1070. So the letters would include info about

Arizona, this other Representative Mike Christian, she (assistant) lives in his district. He seems to be taking on Terrill's mantle. From what I've heard Terrill doesn't have the GOP support in his home district anymore. There are two or three Republican candidates that are going after his seat. I know personally of a democratic candidate who has a very good shot at taking over his seat. And just in the last few months Terrill has been investigated for allegedly misappropriating his re-election funds. I believe it was NewsOK did a story about an organization giving him five thousand dollars for his re-election campaign. If I remember the article correctly, he hadn't even opened a re-election campaign account and he spent the money on Christmas cards and Halloween candy. He quickly returned the money once the story broke. This guy is being investigated about one thing or another. A couple of years ago, he was investigated for not disclosing all of his assets for a personal bankruptcy. The courts reopened that case and he subsequently had to pay back something like just under twelve thousand dollars that allegedly hadn't been disclosed.

**INT:** Um let's say that it does get introduced, that he does go ahead and attach it to bring it on to some other legislation. Is the is the segment there it's quite clear that he has some issues with some of the other GOP members but is sentiment in the legislature there something that would pass this or no? If it came out, would you expect it to pass or fail or is it is it simply is it just impossible to predict?

**ADAMS:** Again, I just don't know. I think that we were all very quiet and we, I say we as a collective of construction, the restaurant association, various unions and other entities here in Oklahoma, were all very quiet when House Bill 1804 was being introduced. I think people honestly believed it was so ludicrous it wasn't going to pass. And it did. In part because there was a letter writing campaign from a group of organized and I'll say it and you can quote me, a group of organized

racists who sent letters, went to the house, visited each office one by one and spouted their bigotry and racism, okay. This time, I'm hoping that enough people can say we don't want the same reputation that Arizona is getting right now, we don't need that headache. It's gotten national attention and I think that at some point it becomes like I said, pardon my language, it becomes a pissing contest over who can have the most outrageous state anti-immigration law. The bottom line is that that I really don't think anybody is pro-illegal. I myself am not pro-illegal, I'm anti-dumb laws. And these are...

**INT:** <laughs> Hang on one second <unintelligible> anti-immigration.

**ADAMS:** I need to give that quote its due. In my film, Reben Navarrette says that line. But I but I love that quote, it's so perfect. And that's what these are, dumb laws. We need comprehensive federal immigration reform. In November 2009, Obama was quoted as saying that this is what we need and we need to do it now. It's a shame that states like Arizona... I mean, look at their history, they didn't want the Martin Luther King holiday either. Is this really a racist state?

**INT:** So presumably that, I can only speculate here, but presumably, that's why Terrill is doing this at the eleventh hour and the question is coming out with five days left in the legislative season, will there be time for the unions and the construction and the restaurants to rally and try to fight it?

**ADAMS:** I don't know.

**INT:** It's attached to some bill that you know does the government there have the line item veto?

**ADAMS:** You know, that's a great question. I don't know. I don't believe so. I know he cannot veto anything if the bill gets enough votes. If there's a majority, I think it's gotta be by 2/3 vote, he cannot veto.

**INT:** So if he attaches it to some you know the police budget...

**ADAMS:** Exactly.

**INT:** Which bills he was planning on um uh he wouldn't tell me which bills he was gonna attach it to.

**ADAMS:** No of course not because he doesn't want the advertisement to get out. I mean the guy's an a'hole.

**INT:** He wasn't telling me anything but he was. Um so it's the question is there gonna be time to form this sort of reaction um you know and have it removed from any sort of bill that it might be attached to?

**ADAMS:** I just don't know. I mean I hope that that calmer heads prevail and the legislature will just say that we need to wait until after summer. Let's wait until we see what the fallout is with Arizona. Let's hope that Obama can pull something together you know because then this law goes away. One of the problems with the Arizona law is that it is vague. They keep talking about the lawful contact. There is a University of Arizona law professor who was quoted saying that lawful contact simply means contact happens when a police officer speaks to you.

**INT:** Let me return to something briefly.

**ADAMS:** Sure

**INT:** Is your documentary documenting the history of the anti-immigration movement in er...

**ADAMS:** Yeah, in a way. The name of the film is Panic Nation. I started shooting just after 1804 was signed into law. I use House Bill 1804 as kind of an example of the dog and pony show that that Randy Terrill has been taking around the country. He spouts off numbers and figures that he really doesn't have any backing for. I spoke to various politicians, celebrities and people around the country about the immigration issues. I feel we should stop yelling at each other from across the street. We need to have an open, honest dialogue about the issue. There's another quote from the film, "We have two signs on the border, Help Wanted and Keep Out." Americans have done this to themselves. The Hispanic laborers didn't come marching over the border you know carrying hoes and shovels invading the country. You know? America needs to be honest, we want these people here because we don't want to pay twenty dollars for a big mac. There's a whole host of things that we talk about in the film. I actually have 70 hours worth of footage and we've got it now just under two hours. Wait for the DVD extended version (laughs).

**INT:** And is it specific to Oklahoma?

**ADAMS:** No, nationwide. We use Oklahoma as an example. So it does address what's going on in the nation. We use House Bill 1804 and to a small degree, what's happening in Arizona as examples of states that are enacting these laws and why we need federal immigration laws.

**INT:** So essentially documents the proofs and the anger and the anti-immigration movement around the country in the past two or three years?

**ADAMS:** Yeah. It actually goes back to 9-11, the terrorists who attacked on 9-11, they were all here legally. They all had visas and passports but we've married the

two, we've married immigration with the terrorists in New York and they don't have anything to do with each another.

**INT:** Some big terrorist from Mexico, right?

**ADAMS:** Yeah, right.

**INT:** So um two quick questions for you just if you don't mind helping me out.

**ADAMS:** Sure.

**INT:** So there is a measure that will go on the ballot um coming up that would make English the official language in Oklahoma, is that correct?

**ADAMS:** Yeah, and that's another thing that Randy Terrill his original bill wanted English only and he corrected it to English as the official language. The way I understand it was the Indian nations came down pretty hard on him. Their native language was essentially taken from them by whites. And here Terrill wanted to do it again. Though he did put in the bill that Native Americans could keep their language. Again, it was ludicrous that his original intent would have made it illegal to speak in Italian in an Italian restaurant, or Vietnamese in a Vietnamese restaurant unless you were teaching someone English.

**INT:** Okay okay so it would be English as the official language...

**ADAMS:** He had to amend the bill and so now it's going to be, the way I understand it is, English is the official state language. So any documents that the state provides would be English. So if you do business with the state of Oklahoma, the contracts, etc. all would be in English. I think the funny thing is that he wants driver's license tests and everything else to be in English too. I've been told the state doesn't pay for those tests. The tag agencies pay for those.

**INT:** What about, um I also read something about this measure that he wants that would take away citizenship from kids born in United States of undocumented parents?

**ADAMS:** Yeah, that was also back when he was trying to do the “son-of-house bill 1804.” I’m not an attorney nor am I an expert on the constitution but he’s talking about basically repealing the 14<sup>th</sup> amendment.

**INT:** Yeah, yeah, well and I couldn’t figure out whether or not it was um um...

**ADAMS:** Oh, he’ll try it.

**INT:** Again this year eh you know I have to say the paper there does do a lot of reporting on these sorts of things and I guess everybody’s so focused on the budget now that this stuff just isn’t coming up in the news clips I’ve been able to find. I feel like I’ve kinda been swimming with my eyes closed a little bit here.

**ADAMS:** Let me mention another thing here. I don’t know how deep you want to go but the Oklahoma Police Department, hasn’t made any arrests using House Bill 1804. None. There have been no arrests for human trafficking, no harboring, no sheltering. It’s a law that was passed to make people’s lives miserable, pure and simple. He (Terrill) is on camera saying that people will simply self-deport. That’s the idea that this law was based on. That...

**INT:** Wasn’t that part of the law that was struck down?

**ADAMS:** No. It went to the courts and yes the judge just recently, I think it was just last month ruled that a couple of the employer items were unconstitutional. Basically it the law indicated that an employer would have to use the e-verify system but the federal government says that the e-verify system is not reliable, it’s not 100% reliable. The other thing is that the law wanted the social security

number to be used as identification. The social security number is not to be used for identification, it's to be used for tax purposes only. So basically the law according to the president of the chamber of commerce, and this is why they filed a lawsuit, the law was telling business owners to break the law. Either they had to break federal law and use a social security number as an ID or not doing it would and they would be breaking state law. So how can you tell a business owner to break the law? It's illegal.

**INT:** You tell me in a nutshell what 1804 does, you know what are the parts that now stand? It restricts the ability of the undocumented immigrants to get ID? Is that right?

**ADAMS:** Yes, but the federal law also restricts that. That's always been there. So yes it does. He (Terrill) also went after education, that's a whole other topic of conversation but he went after education too. A lot of kids get these school IDs. Well Terrill is against universities supplying IDs other than just simply school IDs. So now every ID has to say that the ID is only good for say Oklahoma University or whatever. Randy Terrill will tell you that 1804 simply mirrors the federal law. The problem is it's a mirror that hasn't been cleaned or is warped. It's like a fun-house mirror. The federal law specifically talks about human trafficking and harboring illegal aliens for profit and this type of thing. Eighteen-o-four takes the clarification out of that and turns it into something that is just vague. Eighteen-o-four simply says that you cannot transport, or harbor, etc. Now, Randy Terrill will tell you it's meant to talk about human trafficking. The problem is that if the law is vague then a priest who is taking someone to or from a funeral home or taking a person without documentation to or from work or to or from school, they can be suspected of transporting. And it's a felony! We're saying that a person who carools with Juan or Maria to work is in the same category as a person who's

making meth amphetamines. That's crazy. They're both felonies here in the state of Oklahoma.

**INT:** Well, it sounds like you may have one more next week. I tell you. Okay. Well, I very much appreciate the time that you spent and I think this will probably be posted on the AOL website, AOLnews.com probably Friday.

**ADAMS:** Okay.

**INT:** I think they're gonna do this as an advance for next week. But um you know I'm I'm kinda stunned that there's just been nothing written about this. So um maybe it'll maybe it'll trigger some reaction.

**ADAMS:** Hopefully I gave you something you can use.

**INT:** So, okay, well I appreciate it and thanks again.

**ADAMS:** Okay, take care.

**INT:** Bye bye.

**ADAMS:** Bye bye.

**(This transcript has been edited for publication)**