

Are there Lessons to be Learned on the Southern California Fires?

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The devastation wrought by the Santa Ana winds, last week was horrific. At least 24 dead, 12,000 plus buildings destroyed, thousands more left with nothing, their homes are gone.

Did Del Norte learn anything from the havoc and desolation left behind?

The fire itself, at the time of publishing, has yet to be anyway near containment.

The Triplicate asked those in the know if this horrific devastation could have been avoided. Fire Chief Kevin Carey, past Board of Supervisors Chair Dean Wilson, the Del Norte Office of Emergency Services all agree, the horrific Santa Ana winds were unstoppable. The area stretching from Malibu to Pacific Palisades to Altadena looks like a war zone, the post World War II Dresden of what was once the beautiful Golden State. Golden no more, estimates to rebuild may cost upwards of \$150 billion and may take decades to bring this once iconic area back to quasi- normal. Will it ever be the same. No!

There is culpability here. For years, the State has been cutting back funding and services at Cal Fire. Los Angeles City represents Pacific Palisades. Administration at both the State and local level has been bereft. Dysfunctional fire hydrants with no water pressure sat functionless, as the City of Los Angeles diverted precious funding to DEI and homeless, instead of precious water to those with homes. Mayor Karen Bass, who vowed in a campaign promise never to travel out of the country, broke that promise in short order by

travelling overseas at least four times since being elected, the most recent on a junket to Ghana, all on the beleaguered public dole.

Gov. Newsom was also culpable cutting funding for fire and law enforcement and spending \$24 billion on the homeless. When confronted by a woman who just lost her home in the Palisades, Newsom feigned he was on the phone with lame duck and arguably mentally challenged President Biden. Turned out Newsom was not speaking with the President, yet another fabrication.

These issues never affected Del Norte. The Smith River Complex Fire affected only a very few structures and impacted National and State property.

Bottom line: all First Responders were magnificent in performing their duties, and all should be highly commended and appreciated.

The one common thread tying both disasters is resources. For too long and too stingy, resources to fight fires have been diverted for social welfare purposes.

The largest Department in California is Health and Human Services and the Legislature and Governor have allocated \$50 million of your tax dollars to combat the Agenda of President Trump.

Things that make you want to go hmm.