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Fraternal Order of Police

United States Park Police Labor Committee



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October 22, 2003

Gale Norton
Secretary of the Interior
Department of the Interior

Secretary Norton,

The Fraternal Order of Police, United States Park Police Labor Committee represents the officers of the agency. We are writing in an effort to bring to your attention the grave state of this proud organization as a result of the imposed enhanced security around the monuments. We believe there are instances where enhanced security countermeasures are not being fully utilized.

What are the threats against the monuments? This is the most important question that should be answered prior to deciding what measures should be put in place. Assaults from aircraft or missiles are not defensible by law enforcement. This only leaves threats from individuals or an explosive laden vehicle.

Currently, the Jefferson and Lincoln Memorials are significantly protected from such events. The Washington Monument would be protected with the use of "jersey barriers" at the sidewalks, adjacent to the roadways. This would of course be an interim measure until planters or other aesthetically pleasing devices are in place. The threat from a person bringing a device onto the grounds of one of these monuments in an effort to bring down the monument is not realistic. The real threat would come from a person carrying or pushing explosives in an attempt to kill or maim the visitors.

The Middle East continues to teach us that regardless of the numbers of "police or soldiers" any target is vulnerable from this type of attack. This would beg one to think that the most important factor is the protection of visitors. The United States Secret Service designed the current security matrix of four officers per monument. This would be the proper number if

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these officers.*

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the intent was to close or secure the monument for anyone getting within close proximity to the monument and thus protect lives and property as is the intent at "Code Orange".

The current security level of "Code Yellow", which is described as a heightened state of security should consist of two officers at each memorial. This would be augmented by a roving patrol of a two-officer unit armed with special weapons. This patrol unit would strictly focus on any suspicious vehicles while responding to instances in the monument core area, which are deemed a security interest. There would still be the regular patrol units moving throughout the area. History reminds us of countless tragic events which were curtailed as a result of diligent patrols as opposed to fixed security or observation post, not to mention the vast numbers of criminals apprehended due to simple traffic enforcement.

Additionally, security cameras could better utilized and staffed. The use of ground sensor, alarms on air-shafts and doorways would save money while improving security and allowing a more effective use of personnel. All of these measures have been requested by the FOP over the last eight years.

Recently, a citizen's call to 911 reported a suicidal male sitting on the Memorial Bridge railing. Several officers were within 200 yards of this incident but did not respond as per the directive officers are not to leave their respective post to include life threatening emergencies. One patrol officer made it to the scene and pulled the male to safety. No one was injured.

One week later, this continues to bother one officer who stood back and watched from his security post. Imagine his state of mind had this instance turned out differently. Responding to emergencies and such life threatening instances are the backbone of any law enforcement professional. It impairs our ability to serve and protect our visitors within the ordinary circumstances that are most often present. To set such restrictions under the suspicion of a diversionary attack is simply operating out of paranoia.

Madam Secretary, not only has the morale of the force plummeted but there are already signs of increases in crime in our primary areas of jurisdiction and a tremendous reduction in traffic enforcement due to the drain of personnel to support the current mandate for the memorials. Additionally, our presence on the National Mall has significantly been reduced. The United States Park Police has never recovered from the affects of 9/11 and remains in a critical personnel shortage as well as having never been properly funded to provide the level of service to the community or the nation. The current security matrix has placed a heavy

Thanks -
Working w/ LPT
OLES

conducting security
surveys + re

Chief's response
in weekly (get date
& reiterate)

contract guards
expansion

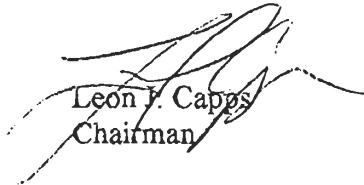
burden on the force and without a review of these procedures or an influx of funding we are being placed in a position, which promotes failure for the agency, the community, the nation and the President.

Considering the changes which have occurred within this agency at the direction of DOI and NPS, could you provide a forecast for the US Park Police over the next five years?

The membership of the FOP is requesting immediate action on these matters. I respectfully request you respond to me by the close of business on October 31, 2003. I look forward to working with you as these issues are resolved.

*integral component -
current review directed by
Ats FOP so better understand
the role & funding challenges
of the USPP.*

Sincerely,


Leon J. Capos
Chairman