



# The Washington Report

**The Newsletter of the National Association of Police Organizations**

*Representing America's Finest*

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**July 12, 2016**

## **NAPO Statement on the Murders of Dallas Police Officers**

On the night of July 7, 2016, the law enforcement community suffered the deadliest attack since September 11, 2001. Four Dallas police officers and one Dallas Area Rapid Transit officer were murdered in cold blood in a coordinated ambush sniper attack by a perpetrator who stated that he wanted to kill police officers, particularly white police officers. The men and women of NAPO condemn in the strongest possible terms the brutal and deliberate ambush murders of these officers. Yet again, persistent and nationwide calls for the killing of officers, coupled with the deafening silence of America's elected and appointed officials, has led to another cowardly assassination of five of our finest. While we mourn and grieve and commit ourselves to supporting the survivors, we must also stand up and speak out against the senseless agitators and gutless politicians who helped bring about these murders.

This is a nationwide problem, with nationally organized calls for violence against police, and national media coverage. It absolutely requires a response from the highest national levels. We are currently in the midst of war on cops. This Administration helped foster the climate that made this war possible. The constant message that America's police need to be reformed, monitored, investigated, prosecuted without any distinction as to the merits and valor of the individual men and women who do this job is beyond tiresome, it is deadly. Tepid responses to these murders do nothing to discourage future attacks, let alone change the culture that becomes increasingly strident in its calls for killings with each officer's death. The President and the Attorney General have the ability and the platform with which to stem this violence. We should not have to remind the Administration that stopping the spilling of officers' blood is the first step without which no other person, business or community in this nation can be safe.

State and local law enforcement's access to lifesaving surplus military equipment must be restored. NAPO has been urging the President and Congress to restore local police officers' ability to have defensive gear such as helmets, shields and bullet resistant vehicles for over a year<sup>i</sup>, but they have refused. In the Executive Order (Executive Order 13688) that prohibits our access to vital surplus military equipment, the Administration acknowledges that this gear fulfills legitimate police needs, and the lack of such gear "can have life-threatening consequences."<sup>ii</sup> However, the Administration, worried that some of these items "could significantly undermine community trust," concluded this concern outweighed the concern for police and public safety.

Officers been stripped of defensive gear for the sake of appearances, in a misguided effort to appease those who hate the police. Appeasement does not work. We need the Administration's support, not studies and policy recommendations. Our officers need helmets, shields, bullet proof vehicles. The men and women in Dallas who have been stripped of this equipment still ran into murderous gunfire knowing that what they were wearing could not stop the assassins' rounds. They deserve and have earned the right to live.

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NAPO has urged the Department of Justice (DOJ) Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) and its Director, Ron Davis, to fund two-man patrols for safety, but they have refused. We have called upon the DOJ Civil Rights Division to prosecute cop killers, but they have refused. We met face to face with the Attorney General months ago to show how the law can be used to federally prosecute those who shoot police, but she has refused. We called upon this Administration to condemn violence BEFORE it happens, and they refuse. Further, we have publicly warned that this Administration forcing police departments to adopt policies on "implicit bias" and "procedural justice" instead of focusing on law enforcement was putting officers' safety at risk.

Now that we have multiple officers killed, the Administration is scrambling to condemn it, but they will still refuse to restore the defensive equipment that the President and his Administration unilaterally took away. The DOJ will still refuse to go after cop killers like it goes after officers after a use of force incident. Police departments will continue to struggle to get the resources necessary to keep their officers safe. Indefensible hatred for police and calls for the killings of officers will continue with no abatement.

This Administration's refusal to act has helped bring this about. The disarming of police has helped bring this about. The continued demonization of police as the problem has helped bring this about. The continued mischaracterization of the Black Lives Movement as "peaceful" when they shout "What do we want? Dead cops!" has helped bring this about.

It is time for the Administration and elected officials to stand with the men and women who are out there doing an extraordinarily difficult job and show political leadership by supporting them and giving them the resources they need to protect themselves and their communities.

## **NAPO Meets with President and Vice President Over Shootings**

In direct response to NAPO's statement accusing the Administration of not fully supporting our nation's law enforcement officers, President Obama and Vice President Biden called a meeting on July 11<sup>th</sup> with NAPO and other national law enforcement organizations. Executive Director Bill Johnson represented NAPO at the meeting during which the President and Vice President discussed the recent shootings in Dallas and listened to the issues the various law enforcement organizations want the Administration to address.

The President started the meeting condemning the Dallas shooting and called it a hate crime. He said that if the shooter was still alive, the Justice Department would be pursuing hate crimes charges. In a direct response to NAPO's statements after the Dallas shooting, he also went on to deny he has started a war on cops and stated that as President he must have credibility with both sides. When he asked Johnson what the Administration could have done differently in response to police shootings, Johnson gave two examples of missed opportunities for the Administration to step up and support police. The first example is when Officer Wilson was cleared of any wrongdoing after Ferguson. The Administration should have come out in support of the criminal justice system and the result, even if it did not agree with the grand jury's decision. Instead, then-Attorney General Eric Holder stated that his mission for the remainder of his tenure as Attorney General was to make it easier to convict officers in similar situations. How can officers feel supported with a statement like that even after being determined to have done nothing wrong?

The second example is the Administration's continued belief that Black Lives Matter is a non-violent movement. There has been no response, no condemnation when Black Lives Matter protests turn violent. There was no outrage when two St. Louis County police officers were shot by a Ferguson protester who was at a Black Lives Matter protest. There is no demand for accountability from the movement when members support violence towards police or even act on those calls for violence. The only response from the Administration and

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elected officials comes when officers are killed – such as in the case of the assassination of Officers Ramos and Liu in New York City or the murder of the five officers in Dallas. These responses, or lack thereof, are why officers feel they have a target on their backs and do not have the support of their elected officials.

Johnson then went on to state that NAPO is not just making statements against the Administration, but that we have tried to work with the Administration on policies to provide greater protection for officers. We have come to the table, but our proposals have fallen on mostly deaf ears. Johnson outlined NAPO's proposals on restoring state and local law enforcement's access to surplus military equipment, on the Justice Department requiring grantees to establish two person patrol units, on federal prosecution of cop-killers and on the extradition of cop-killers from Cuba. He also mentioned NAPO's insistence that the President's Task Force on 21<sup>st</sup> Century Policing include rank-and-file officers, which was ignored. NAPO has shared these proposals with the Administration on multiple occasions at various levels from the President down to the Director of the COPS Office. Johnson told the President and Vice President that the Administration has largely remained silent on these priority issues for rank-and-file officers. Despite NAPO's efforts, there is too heavy of an emphasis within the Administration to rely on chiefs and management organizations in policy-making decisions and that leaves the rank-and-file officers left behind and resenting the policies forced upon them.

At the end of the meeting, the President committed to reviewing Executive Order 13688 to see if there are any changes that need to be made regarding what surplus military equipment law enforcement agencies can access. There is a Federal Interagency Law Enforcement Equipment Working Group meeting on July 21<sup>st</sup> to discuss the Executive Order, its continued implementation and any changes stakeholders suggest need to be made. NAPO will be participating in that meeting and we will find out if the President has decided to make any changes to the list of prohibited and controlled equipment.

NAPO has been invited to another meeting with the President on July 13<sup>th</sup> and we will update our members on the result of that meeting.

## **NAPO in the News**

*Politico*, a major political magazine in Washington, D.C., covered the entire interview NAPO's Executive Director Bill Johnson did with FOX News on the morning of July 8<sup>th</sup> responding to the murder of the 5 Dallas police officers the evening before:

“I think [the Obama administration] continued appeasements at the federal level with the Department of Justice, their appeasement of violent criminals, their refusal to condemn movements like Black Lives Matter, actively calling for the death of police officers, that type of thing, all the while blaming police for the problems in this country has led directly to the climate that has made Dallas possible,” William Johnson, the executive director of the National Association of Police Organizations, said in an interview with Fox on Friday morning.

Johnson said although the Thursday night shooting of law enforcement officers reminded him of ‘the violence in the streets in the 60’s and 70’s,’ he pointed out how Obama’s response appeared different than his predecessors.

‘I think one of the big differences then was you had governors and mayors and the president — whether it was President Johnson or President Nixon, Republican or Democrat — condemning violence against the police and urging support for the police,’ Johnson said. ‘Today that's markedly absent. I think that's a huge difference, and that's directly led to the climate that allows these attacks to happen.’

‘It’s a war on cops,’ Johnson also said. ‘And the Obama administration is the Neville Chamberlain of this war.’”

The full article is available at: <http://www.politico.com/story/2016/07/obama-war-on-cops-police-advocacy-group-225291#ixzz4E7CeYnTg>

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On July 7<sup>th</sup>, Johnson was quoted in a *CBSNews.com* article, “When Cops and Civilians Both Have Guns”. The article focused on the officer shooting of Philando Castile in Minnesota, who had a firearm in the car with a concealed carry permit and how the state’s concealed carry law has changed the way officers interact with individuals who legally carry concealed weapons.

“Johnson stated that the presence of a gun other than the officer’s in a police-civilian interaction ‘does ratchet up the stress of the situation.’

Johnson says that there are multiple ways for an officer to make sure he and the citizen he pulls over are safe once that person has disclosed that he has a firearm.

‘Most officers will say, I appreciate you letting me know: here’s what we’ll do,’ Johnson said. The officer can then, for example, ask the subject to step out of the car while he secures the firearm until the encounter is finished. He can also ask his partner to secure the firearm while the civilian keeps his or her hands in plain sight.

‘It’s legal to own guns, so it isn’t enough to use deadly force against someone for possessing a firearm,’ says Johnson. ‘There has to be some sort of criminal use of it before police can take a law enforcement action.’”

The full article is available at: <http://www.cbsnews.com/news/philando-castile-shooting-when-cops-and-civilians-both-have-guns/>

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Johnson was quoted in a *Washington Post* article, “Police group: Minn. governor ‘exploited what was already a horrible and tragic situation’”, on July 9<sup>th</sup>. In the interview, Johnson was asked for a response to Minnesota Governor Mark Dayton’s statement that Philando Castile was shot during the traffic stop because he was black.

“‘I think right now, the overriding emotion collectively is one of sadness, I think it’s one of anger and I think it’s one of resignation in the sense that I still have a job to do,’ Bill Johnson, executive director of the National Association of Police Organizations, told The Washington Post on Friday. ‘But there’s got to be a fear, a concern, that because of the job, because of the uniform I wear, I’m being targeted.’

Johnson also said that police, who have been caught in the outcry surrounding two fatal shootings of black men less than 48 hours apart, ‘feel unfairly painted with a broad brush.’

Johnson said the governor ‘exploited what was already a horrible and tragic situation. Whether race had something to do with it or not, I don’t know, because I can’t get into the officer’s head,’ Johnson told The Post. ‘And neither can the governor.’”

The full article is available at: <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/morning-mix/wp/2016/07/07/minn-cop->

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On July 10<sup>th</sup>, Johnson was interviewed by the *Wall Street Journal* regarding how the President has responded to police shootings and criticism from law enforcement organizations – like NAPO – that his actions and statements have helped ignite tensions between police and minority communities.

“‘The man responsible for the murders [in Dallas] was Micah Johnson, but having said that, I do think the president by his inaction has contributed to a climate where these things can happen,’ William Johnson, executive director of the National Association of Police Organizations, which represents about 240,000 law enforcement officers, said Sunday. ‘This president and his administration absolutely do not have our back and make our jobs more dangerous.’”

The full article is available at: <http://www.wsj.com/articles/police-swipe-at-obama-over-tensions-1468195494>

## Congress Adjourns for a Long Summer Recess on July 15

Congress has one week until it adjourns for a seven week recess on July 15<sup>th</sup>. In that time, the House will focus on trying to continue passing appropriations bills with the hope of passing some sort of gun reform bill quickly fading. The Senate will focus on the Department of Defense (DOD) Appropriations bill and reauthorizing the Federal Aviation Administration. NAPO is closely watching the DOD spending measure as it includes a provision defunding Executive Order 13688 and prohibiting the Department from using any funds to implement it.

The House and Senate have assigned conferees to negotiate the final National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) for Fiscal 2017. NAPO, together with other law enforcement organizations, sent [a letter](#) to the leadership of the House and Senate Armed Services Committees urging them to include in the final NDAA language that would rescind Executive Order 13688 and restore state and local law enforcement’s access to lifesaving surplus military equipment. Conferees are expected to work throughout the recess to reach an agreement on a final, compromise NDAA.

In addition to our efforts to make the Executive Order unenforceable, NAPO is working closely with law enforcement champions in the House and Senate to get Congress to take action on pro-law enforcement legislation, such as the Thin Blue Line Act, before lawmakers leave at the end of the week. There must be a response from Congress in support of police after the horrendous attack in Dallas on July 7<sup>th</sup>.

NAPO will keep our members updated on these efforts. If you have any questions, please contact Andy Edmiston at [aedmiston@napo.org](mailto:aedmiston@napo.org).

**Please monitor NAPO’s website, [www.napo.org](http://www.napo.org), and Facebook page: National Association of Police Organizations, and follow us on Twitter at NAPOpolice for breaking news and updates.**

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<sup>i</sup> 9/9/2014: [NAPO statement for the record](#) in support of 1033 program for Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee hearing on "Oversight of Federal Programs for Equipping State and Local Law Enforcement"  
2/22/2015: NAPO participates in Executive Order 13688 stakeholder meeting and raises serious concerns with the Executive Order  
6/2/2015: NAPO [Letter to the President](#) outlining concerns with Executive Order 13688  
6/12/2015: NAPO [Opposition letter to the Stop Militarizing Police Act](#)  
12/3/2015: [Joint LE letter](#) to Senator Shelby for his efforts to rescind Executive Order  
12/4/2015: [NAPO letter to Congressional leaders](#) on need to restore access to equipment after the San Bernardino shooting

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2/18/2016: NAPO participates in Executive Order 13688 stakeholder meeting and raises serious concerns with the Executive Order  
3/18/2016: [NAPO endorsement of the Lifesaving Gear for Police Act](#)  
3/23/2016: [NAPO endorsement of the Protecting Lives Using Surplus Equipment Act](#)  
6/13/2016: [NAPO letter to the President](#) on need to restore access to equipment after the Orlando shooting

<sup>ii</sup> “The purpose of providing this equipment to LEAs via Federal programs is to enhance and improve the LEAs’ mission to protect and serve their communities. Equipment provided through Federal sources has become a critical component of LEAs’ inventory, especially as fiscal challenges have mounted and other sources of equipment and funding have diminished. LEAs rely on Federally-acquired equipment to conduct a variety of law enforcement operations including hostage rescue, special operations, response to threats of terrorism, and fugitive apprehension. Use of Federally-acquired equipment also enhances the safety of officers who are often called upon to respond to dangerous or violent situations; being improperly equipped in such operations can have life-threatening consequences, both for the law enforcement personnel and the public they are charged with protecting.” (Law Enforcement Equipment Working Group. May 2014. *Recommendations Pursuant to Executive Order 13688: Federal Support for Local Law Enforcement Equipment Acquisition*. pp. 6)