

W

E CANNOT ALLOW OURSELVES TO BE
SCARED INTO SUSPENDING THE CONSTITUTION.
IF WE DO THAT, WE MIGHT AS WELL CALL THE
TERRORISTS AND TELL THEM THAT THEY HAVE WON.
— REPRESENTATIVE SILVESTRE REYES (D-TX)



What is the Border Patrol Doing on Washington's Olympic Peninsula?

While the Department of Homeland Security has told us that they are expanding their presence on the Olympic Peninsula to make us safer —that their primary objective is to stop terrorism and to stem the flow of illegal goods across our borders—their activities tell a different story...

IN THE LAST YEAR, under the auspices of Department of Homeland Security (DHS), the Border Patrol force has undergone rapid expansion on Washington State's Olympic Peninsula, a quiet and rural area of the U.S. which does not border any foreign country. As the number of Border Patrol agents increased from 1 to 4, then to 25, none of this increased manpower was used to provide full or part-time staff at our small international points of entry that currently lack federal inspection (such as Jefferson County Airport) to check for possible illegal goods being transported or to thwart terrorism. The places where smuggling or terrorism are most likely to surface remain unguarded by the agency which claims that their expanding presence is to prevent these threats and to make us more secure.

Instead, checkpoints began appearing throughout our region, in places that have no connection with any "border" or international point of entry—at the Water Street ferry to Keystone, on our highways, and at the Hood Canal Bridge. Activities were directed away from our most vulnerable areas; enormous resources were put into stopping everyone using our highways. Raids began occurring in our immigrant communities. These violations of our civil liberties and targeting of minorities are occurring further and further inland, far from border areas.

"ALL OF A SUDDEN we have these random searches and seizures of everybody and this is happening within 100 miles of our borders. It just shocks me that this is legal, it strikes me that it's immoral, and it violates our sense of community."

— Scott Wilson, Publisher of The Leader

It is reported that there are plans to add an additional 125 or more agents on the peninsula, "based upon the threat". Full page color ads in area newspapers to entice local residents to become BP agents have reinforced those reports. Sector Chief John Bates told us at the Border Patrol Public Forum in November that 25 agents is the "minimum" he needs. For what? Their goal, he said, is to "push that border out". Plans include building a multi-million dollar Homeland Security headquarters and possible detention facility on the peninsula.

How are all these new agents addressing the purported threat that defines their mission?

“THEY TARGET PEOPLE OF COLOR, specifically.” — Melisa Eyle

A former *Peninsula Daily News* employee, Eyle was riding from Port Angeles to Seattle when two Border Patrol agents boarded the Dungeness Line bus at Fat Smitty’s at Discovery Bay, on Highway 101 at the intersection to Port Townsend. She said the agents went straight to the back of the bus to question an Asian man and a Canadian woman. Then they questioned her, a Native American.

“I WAS SHOCKED and surprised. My family has been here since the dawn of time. The bus was full of people—there must have been 30 of us—and they only questioned three of us. We had dark hair and dark skin.”

From the beginning of checkpoints appearing on our highways, and of raids conducted in immigrant communities, the Border Patrol has engaged in surveillance, ethnic and racial profiling, intimidation and fear tactics, and stops and searches without reasonable suspicion, in violation of our 4th Amendment rights. BP agents operate by their own rules, subverting and overriding Washington State law. They have shadowed local law enforcement, used courthouse records to identify hispanics, and taken people out of their homes without warrants. They justify their unconstitutional activities under what the ACLU is referring to as a “Constitution-Free Zone”, an exception to 4th Amendment protections which suspends our rights within 100 miles of the U.S. border.

The apparent intent of the Border Patrol is to establish a federal military presence which supercedes local law enforcement, and to purge immigrant communities on the peninsula, particularly hispanic residents. Among the first “undocumented” people to be deported were two teenage boys of Mexican descent who did not have proper papers. They had lived nearly all of their lives in Forks, a rural community far from any border.

“EDGAR AYALA, a Forks High School athlete who graduated with honors... had been in the United States since infancy.”

— Nedra Reed, Forks Mayor

Eighteen-year-old Edgar’s rapid deportation, along with that of 16-year-old high-schooler Carlos Bernabe who was also a lifelong resident, sparked immediate protests in the Forks community. “Feds out of Forks,” and “Hard-working people are not terrorists!” were among the signs carried. That outcry was followed by raids in hispanic neighborhoods, deporting undocumented people who have been part of the community fabric for many years, dividing parents from children and leaving children behind. BP agents began surveilling area churches where Spanish masses are held, campuses where “English as a second language” classes are taught, and farms that depend on immigrant labor. They appeared at the Jefferson County Courthouse, interrogating people with Spanish-sounding names, and drove onto properties that use hispanic workers.

“I THINK THE BORDER PATROL has gone too far.”

— Roger Short, Chimacum Dairy Farmer

Sequim farmer Nash Huber, Washington State’s largest organic vegetable grower, has won many accolades, including the prestigious American Farmland Trust’s “Steward of the Land Award”. After 30 years of farming, his 400 acres in the fertile Dungeness River Delta became one of the peninsula farms targeted by the Border Patrol. BP agents began driving by his fields two or three times a day and surveilling workers. His expenses skyrocketed as he was forced to hire unskilled people to replace the seasoned hispanic workers who had been farming for generations. Crops were lost without skilled workers to pick them.



“MY PAYROLL WENT RIGHT OFF THE CHARTS – it went up 30% right across the board. We cannot function and continue to be a farm in that situation. It is our political leadership that has failed. The U.S. Congress has caused this problem. The U.S. Congress has to solve this problem.”

– Nash Huber, Nash’s Organic Produce, Sequim

Following this great increase in money and manpower, as of November 2008, after stopping, questioning and surveilling thousands of people on the peninsula—at highway checkpoints, at ferry terminals, in government buildings, on college campuses and preschools, at social and health services, on buses, at places of worship, at workplaces and in neighborhoods—the Border Patrol’s unconstitutional activities had resulted in a total of 22 persons apprehended:

15 undocumented persons

7 US citizens (5 of the 7 charges were dismissed by the US Attorney’s Office)

0 terrorists

The greatest result of this federal intrusion on the Olympic Peninsula has been to reduce—not increase—peninsula residents’ sense of safety and security. This enforcement buildup has created a climate of fear, even among long-time residents who work, own businesses and pay taxes in our communities. Children are afraid to go to school, parishioners are afraid to attend churches, people are avoiding using buses and ferries, and some are afraid even of leaving their homes. Instead of patrolling the border, Border Patrol vehicles patrol neighborhoods from Port Townsend to Forks.

“WHAT I DON’T UNDERSTAND is how a group of people housed under Homeland Security has now become an agent of the INS [Immigration]. None of these people [the peninsula’s hispanic parishioners] are terrorists. It’s not just the hispanics who are being affected here. Any one of us who watches another human being have his rights denied, has his own rights denied.”

– Father John Topel, SJ, Pastor of St. Mary Catholic church

In response to Jefferson County residents’ opposition to Border Patrol practices, both Port Townsend Police Chief Conner Daily and Jefferson County Sheriff Mike Brasfield issued statements of noncooperation. In an effort to gain the cooperation of local law enforcement agencies, the Department of Homeland Security has recently offered police and sheriff departments millions of dollars in grant money through “Operation Stonegarden”. The operation describes participating agencies as “Friendly Forces” and reveals that DHS views undocumented residents as “criminal aliens” who “are drawn here by criminal activities”. This, despite their claims that BP is not engaged in ethnic or racial profiling.

In exchange for the grant funding being offered, Operation Stonegarden requires the participating “Friendly Forces” to detain residents who do not possess proper documents and turn them over to the Border Patrol. It is reported that Clallam County agencies are taking the bait for “free” equipment such as new computers and radio towers. Police Chief Daily and Sheriff Brasfield have again refused to participate.

“IT IS CLEAR that those agencies which choose not to commit to the ‘STONEGARDEN’ agenda for whatever reasons will not be eligible for this federal largesse. There is also an implied message through the “Friendly Forces” language that agencies such as mine that choose not to participate



are unfriendly, and somehow suspect. That is very unfortunate... It is also unfortunate that tax dollars provided by our elected representatives... are held hostage to the very narrow operational agenda of your agency in regards to the non-criminal status of aliens."

— Mike Brasfield, Jefferson County Sheriff

In addition to the violation of our civil liberties, this misdirected federal program is wasting precious physical and financial resources.

"WE STRUGGLE FOR FUNDS... a school bond just failed because people are nervous about the economy."

— Michelle Sandoval, Port Townsend Mayor

At a time of dwindling resources and economic crisis, billions of tax dollars are being poured into manpower, activities and facilities which do not increase our border security, do not contribute to real needs we face, and do not make us feel safer. This funding can be better used to support critical education, health, social services, and infrastructure needs.

"IF YOU CAN EXPLAIN TO ME why we should pay Border Patrol agents to strike fear into local families by staking out public buses, schools, grocery stores and Catholic churches when we don't have money to provide drug and alcohol treatment to the families who cycle through the courts where I work every day, please justify this expenditure of money we don't have."

— Ruth Gordon, Jefferson County Clerk

From Vermont to the Great Lakes to Washington State, opposition is building to this federal enforcement program. On the Olympic Peninsula, residents across political, social, religious, and economic divides are speaking out about the erosion of civil liberties, targeting of minorities and waste of tax dollars by the Border Patrol.

Rather than a "Constitution-Free Zone", we are calling for a "Border Patrol Free Zone". We want our state and federal representatives to reduce the funding for this program, restore our civil liberties, stop targeting minorities, and "Keep the Border Patrol at the border."

TO BE AN AMERICAN IS TO HAVE
BEEN AN OUTCAST AND A STRANGER.
HE WHO DENIES THE OUTCAST AND THE STRANGER
STILL AMONGST US ALSO DENIES AMERICA.

— ROBERT KENNEDY



Uphold Civil Liberties • Redirect Tax Dollars • Protect Minorities