



National Archives and Records Administration
Office of the Inspector General

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Date : September 30, 2008
To : Allen Weinstein, Archivist of the United States
From : Paul Brachfeld, Inspector General
Subject : Management Letter 08-016: Security Response at A-1

This memorandum is intended to ensure effective, tested security measures are in place to protect the safety and integrity of the National Archives building (A-1), staff and visitors in the heart of our nation's capital. These concerns are neither theoretical nor abstract, but grounded in direct observation of events that unfolded the morning of September 23, 2008 when security vulnerabilities were exploited allowing protesters to gain access to and remain in control of the southwest corner of the Archives building on Constitution Avenue. NARA's response to this illegal trespass and occupation (DC Code Section 22-302) demonstrated a lack of planning, preparation, coordination and training on the part of security personnel entrusted with the paramount duty of protecting NARA structures, persons and holdings. Based upon the defined "success" of the demonstrators, the potential for copy-cat actions exists with absolutely no assurance they will be as docile as this event. Therefore, it is essential security defects be addressed expeditiously.

In an article published in the Baltimore Chronicle and Sentinel, one of the "Veterans for Peace" demonstrators (identified as Ellen Barfield) who participated in the self-described "Ledge-In" defines the mode of their ruse that allowed them unchallenged access to the building perimeter. Garbed as construction workers they circumvented the moat surrounding the building. Once secure, Ms. Barfield states "it was interesting that the Archives seemed to have no contact with any of the ...law enforcement entities in DC even though it is a Federal Building." Per Ms. Barfield they were even able to reinforce their sundries by having a supporter surreptitiously smuggle water to them when their supplies ran low, despite the fact security had allegedly quarantined the area.

----- Redacted pursuant to FOIA Exemptions b(2) and b(5) -----

Additionally, the protesters were allowed to set their protest time schedule of twenty-four hours and then were permitted to leave without arrest or consequence. This type of capitulation will only encourage further trespassing. As one of the protestors, Elliott Adams, has been quoted as saying "We considered staying longer this time but we are not prepared for longer than this...although we may be back again, soon."

All NARA staff, visitors and stakeholders should be concerned as to the events of September 23rd, and their future implications at A-1 and other NARA facilities including A-2 in College Park, Md. It is imperative that responsible NARA officials take immediate steps to develop, implement and test security measures addressing the vulnerabilities so clearly exposed and exploited by a handful of protesters at A-1.

Paul Brachfeld
Inspector General