

FBI NEIA Presentation to MCC/MCSO Associations - January 24, 2011

I want to thank your organizations for the opportunity to speak with you. I am aware that many of you are graduates of the FBI NEI. As the new president of that organization, I want to take the few minutes I have to reaffirm the relationship that we have with the MCC and an evolving one with the MCSO.

Our organization is not in competition with either of your organizations. Rather, I believe we compliment the roles that each of us play in the law enforcement profession. We are keenly aware that both of your organization are on the front lines providing the law enforcement governance of your respective cities and regional areas. Your duties require a certain amount of lobbying to insure that you get the support needed to function. The FBI NEIA provides neither of those functions. Training, educational achievement possibly research is our mission. Given that our membership base is limited, we don't expect to be the biggest and the brightest star in the law enforcement orbit. But with your cooperation, we intend to be the best that we can be in the services that we provide. I hope that we can all agree that over the years one can observe the increasing improvement of the delivery of police services. Yet, in my 53 years of public and private protection services, we have not been without a continual barrage of challenges. Regarding our relationship, we are not without challenges: the role Sun Valley's should play in our academic life, recruitment and retention of FBI NEIA membership, simultaneously co hosting the NEIA/MCC annual conferences, providing a NEI training component within a fraternal structure encouraging peer relationships in a family friendly atmosphere.

I believe we handle those commitments fairly well but obviously we are not without critics. If we keep an open mind, they can prove to be a valuable resource. What I wish to share with you today is our desire to provide the most effective and interesting training program possible and still meet each organization's mission and needs. At our last board meeting in Orlando, Florida, there was absolute consensus encouraging us to consider a host of actionable initiatives that could help us maintain our current status with the MCC and going forward with MCSO. Inasmuch as we don't duplicate each other's delivery of services, our educational/training component surfaced as the most immediate vehicle available. Therefore, I would like to provide a brief overview of the training that is tentatively underway. I might add that we were greatly assisted by MCC members such as Rob Davis and our own Dick Ayres. Though tentatively scheduled, our presentation focus will be as follows:

A panel discussion involving several major cities chiefs and sheriffs on illegal immigration enforcement with oppositional viewpoints. (confirmed)

A presentation by the Oakland Police chief and his staff on the circumstances and lessons learned arising from the tragic murders of four officers in a single day. (Awaiting confirmation)

The issue of Islamist terrorism and its impact on domestic public safety. Our speaker is a 11 year US Navy veteran, a medical physician. He and his family are practicing Muslims. The doctor has appeared on numerous radio and television programs speaking out against terrorism countering some of the commentaries provided by individuals and organizations claiming to speak on behalf of the Muslim community. His topic is tentatively listed as "Which Voice Is Islam - What Voice Are You Listening To?". Given the growing threat of domestic terrorism by American born and naturalized citizens there exists a greater awareness on the part of law enforcement executives' to differentiate among the growing voices on the local Islamic landscape. (confirmed)

Recently, there were some publicity given to a somewhat extensive exercise given by the NYPD modeled on the three day multi terrorist attack in Mumbai, India. There were two field exercises that involved a series of attacks on well know tourists sites, Wall Street, Times Square, Macy's even hospitals. I believe the first exercise focused on how to mobilize its force personnel, with appropriate weaponry given the nature of attacks that could simultaneous occur within the city. The second exercise was how best to prepare a response to the city's vulnerable security points. The nature of these threats dictates a change in our operational mindset. Whether it is reasonable or not, the public expect law enforcement to know how to mitigate the terrorist threat that is now facing us.. Hence, it behooves all of us not only to prepare better but to "explain" better!. Commissioner Kelly has agreed to provide a presentation on the lessons learned. (confirmed)

Obviously, Leadership training will not be ignored. Whether they are back ups or future considerations, we also have submissions on police integrity, police officer death related crash fatalities even the importance of budgets. Another future approach could take the form of a series of 30 minute presentations on topics submitted by your organizations. Hopefully, MCC and MCSO members would participate)

An idea worth pursuing is the creation of a "Think Tank" mechanism that would take place at Sun Valley. It would not be a bricks and motor facility, we can't sustain such costs. It may or may not be an idea whose time has come. But I intend to pursue it as there must be a way to tap into the active and retired brainpower and talent that is available in all our organizations. In addition to current problems, it might be worthwhile to focus

on the “Unthinkable Scenarios”. Regarding the latter, there may be no solution in sight but we owe it to those we are sworn to protect to provide some research in this area of emerging catastrophic threats. It’s possible that by pursuing such, “piece meal” solutions may surface that can assist us in mitigating the more difficult but current threats.

I suspect that we are the most researched, examined and criticized body “of experts”. No other profession takes it’s direction from non law enforcement professionals as much as we do. Granted, it’s only my perspective, but law enforcement often reacts to external studies in which we had relatively little participation or input. How many of our policies and procedures in essence take its direction from its critics. Yes, we require oversight. But I suggest we should take a bigger role in shaping an understanding of that oversight. While not excluding outside “experts”, I am suggesting that law enforcement executives take a largest role in identifying problems and finding partial if not full solutions. We are better prepared to be our own critics and as such put our footprint in the game earlier.

I make no claim that I know how law enforcement should police our nation. However, after 53 years in the public and private protection sector, serving in three fairly large agencies, two of which as its chief executive for 12 ½ years, I am entitled to care, observe and offer suggestions. I recognize that a host of practicalities force us to focus on the “urgent” sometimes at the expense of the important. The nature of the democratic process encourages politics, the media and active communities to respond to the “urgent” for a number of understandable reasons. “Urgent” wins elections, sells news in all its forms and comforts much of the community. I don’t know whether we could set better priorities but I can ask. Can we explain “law enforcement” with clarity and greater understanding? Unfortunately, the policing mission requires that we put our officers in harms way. It’s unavoidable that the police are placed in a difficult position. Our police are often required to do something to some one on behalf of someone else, assaults, noise complaints, crowds, parties, traffic, a series of interventions in which both parties may wind up being unhappy. To some extent, police officers are participants in what could be called a “contact sport”. It happens even when we find ourselves in an environment where one group of people demand their right to free speech seemingly in order to interfere with another groups’ right of free assemble. Maybe we can explain that paradox better. In any event, I would like to see us promote the view that our system of law enforcement is not just better than critics charge, it’s the best of the best with all its faults. If this nation is an “exceptional country” (it is), I can’t see why its policing is not exceptional.

With regard to dealing with the ‘unthinkable’, at best it is a goal and not a defined problem. But with the kinds of terrorism that threaten us, maybe it is time to consider, gather some information, analyze its implication and our inability to address it. We are charged with responsibility of the urgent as well as the unthinkable. Why not take or at least share ownership of the process. Shouldn’t we have the ability to exchange skill sets, examine an organization’s mindset, be willing to consider potentially new directions or improve the old ones.

My last subject is our annual conference site, Sun Valley. For some, the facility can be logistically difficult at times particularly if it requires an emergency departure. Sun Valley is not alone in that category. Attendees may take some flack for attending any site that is internationally known. However, Las Vegas, Orlando, Hawaii and a number of tourist cities are equally well known and well conferenced. In any conference, it can be difficult addressing the preferences of various people. But, if peer relationships, exchanges and learning are the primary objectives, Sun Valley has to be at the top of most lists. If a secondary objective is to function at a site where professional and social networking is to take place our current location is ideally suited to accommodate such with a minimum of distractions and the absence of any media. It’s a well known fact that we are followed by the biggest financial retreat attended by the elite of the financial world. I can assure you that we are not paying anywhere near the cost of their conference. I doubt if any site can economically match the long term benefit we have accrued over the years with Sun Valley.

My message today is not simply to describe just what we are doing and what we hope to do. Our real message is that we value our existing relationship with Major Cities Chiefs and look forward to working with you. Hopefully, we can have a similar relationship to the Major County Sheriffs Association

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