

Ed,

Mark Spencer (m Spencer@azplea.com) here on vacation, giving a “shout out” from Chattanooga TN.

I read your article on-line today. It might be helpful to understand the context of Tommy Thompson’s comments.

First, Tommy is a great guy.

Second, Tommy has NOT functioned in a patrol (first-responder) capacity for over a decade. Many consider him far removed from the needs of our cops and our communities. Perhaps this is because his focus is on the needs of the police chief whom he speaks for.

Third, Tommy must have forgotten that just one year ago (NOT “a few years back”) on February 11, 2009 Phoenix Assistant Police Chief Andy Anderson along with Tommy himself clearly communicated to ABC News (see interview and article at <http://abcnews.go.com/Blotter/story?id=6848672&page=1>) that Phoenix was indeed the kidnapping capital of the world. I would encourage Tommy to review what he and his boss told the media. In addition, it might be helpful for Tommy to talk to ICE officials, acquire a drop house map of the Phoenix Metro area, and see that we are also the drop house capital of the country.

Fourth, Tommy just needs to come down to the PLEA office to see that six Phoenix Police Officers were killed by illegal aliens and six Phoenix Police Officers were seriously wounded by illegal aliens. I would think it would be a priority for the PPD to determine and know what the impact illegal immigration is having on their officers and detectives. Perhaps PPD management should look at “every single report.” Tommy stated, “A lot of people wonder if it’s safe here.” Seeing that 20% of jail population at MCSO consists of illegal aliens, it might be fair to conclude from this number that the safety Tommy purports for residents and visitors in Phoenix might not necessarily line up with reality.

Fifth, Tommy is correct in that the numbers (of kidnappings) are going down in Phoenix. In October 2008 Tommy’s boss (Chief Harris) attributed a 24% drop in homicides and a 26% drop in stolen vehicles in the city to the successful implementation of the revised PPD immigration policy (March 2008) – a discretionary phone call to ICE when a person contacted by police is connected to a crime and there is reasonable suspicion that the person is in the country illegally. SB1070 mirrors the basic intent of this policy. (p.s. this revised immigration policy has been in effect for two years with over 3000 illegal aliens deported without any additional costs, crimes, or victims and without a single civil rights, racial profiling, or biased policing complaint).

Sixth, three HIKE detectives came into the PLEA office two weeks ago and communicated their concerns that the feds were failing to seize drop houses that have been used multiple times in Phoenix for human smuggling, that more than half of illegal aliens contacted in Phoenix drop houses are coming in with criminal records, that multiple rapes are taking place in these Phoenix drop houses, that in the last three years the feds have only prosecuted 10 cases against multiple

crossers, and that each “safe” drop house in Phoenix cycles through groups of 45-55 people every other day with each cycle being worth \$35,000 to the smugglers. In addition to this, these HIKE detectives (human interdiction, kidnapping and extortion) said that the number of drop houses is decreasing in Phoenix because they are moving to Mesa (one might wonder why).

Seventh, I wonder when was the last time Tommy took a trip to the border (say, Nogales) and talked with front-line border patrol agents to get their perspective on SB1070 and their opinion of the ability of local law enforcement to discretionarily facilitate federal success in addressing the crime of illegal immigration. Tommy might discover in talking to the border patrol union that they contact only 10% of the people coming over the southern border illegally – the rest (90%) get across without any federal enforcement.

Eighth, Tommy is justified in being bothered when facts are distorted. Perhaps he should be equally bothered when facts are also ignored. Maybe Tommy spoke to ABC National back in February 2009 (pre SB1070) to get federal dollars into the Phoenix Police Department to combat and address the crime of illegal immigration. Now that illegal immigration is politically uncomfortable for Tommy’s bosses, it appears his memory begins to fade along with the change in the priorities of his boss.

Ed, PLEA believes that it is inappropriate when Phoenix Police managers are comfortable in being disingenuous with you and other media outlets. You work too hard and your viewpoint is too valuable.

Sincerely,

Mark Spencer
PLEA