



Friends Of The Border Patrol

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NEWS RELEASE

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Chertoff award to Ahern defines DHS condoning culture of corruption, and compromises inside CBP

DHS rewards status quo and culture of corruption, ignore officers complaints

Chino, CA – This past Friday, November 20, 2008 Michael Chertoff, Secretary of the Department of Homeland Security awarded Customs and Border Protection Deputy Commissioner Jayson Ahern with the department’s highest award, the Secretary’s Gold Medal.

CBP Commissioner Ralph Basham issued the following statement to employees: “Secretary Chertoff took obvious pride in presenting this award, saying that Mr. Ahern’s efforts and work ethic represent the heart and soul of DHS; epitomizing the highest level of commitment and dedication to the Department.”

“As someone who works beside Jay Ahern every day, I can attest that no one within CBP can surpass his depth of knowledge, dedication to mission, commitment to our work force or grasp of the issues we face today and into the future. In my mind, there can be no more deserving recipient of the Secretary’s Gold Medal. I’m very pleased that my colleague and friend has been recognized for his contributions within CBP and DHS.” – Ralph Basham, CBP Commissioner November 21, 2008.

“Such statements and the award itself are an absolute travesty and disgrace in light of what we know about Ahern today. These actions show that DHS senior leaders continue to ignore facts and the many questions surrounding key officials running the agencies, specifically Jason Ahern. They also show a lack of moral integrity, invite questions of character, and highlight their failure to protect and defend the Constitution and people of this nation considering their complete inability to secure America’s borders and ports of entry a/k/a One Face at the Border, though “farce” in place of “face” is a far more appropriate word. The greatest failure of all has come from CBP itself.

“When will Congress cease to ignore DHS actions in rewarding these individuals who leave America compromised, and call them on the carpet for security compromises and in-house corruption that has existed like a cancer and must be eradicated today? FOBP unequivocally denounces this undeserved award that has only served to tell employees that the culture of corruption is condoned at the highest level,” stated Andy Ramirez, FOBP Chairman.

Earlier this month, Friends of the Border Patrol released a comprehensive report uncovering corruption and security compromises within the government titled “Unjustifiable and Impeachable: The FOBP Report on DHS, DOJ, and the Courts.”

Andy Ramirez authored this report, which includes a section addressing CBP featuring 32 Exhibits documenting compromises, corruption and unconscionable incidents that go back 15 years in some cases, and that specifically and directly cites instances of serious misconduct that occurred under the supervision of Jayson Ahern during his various assignments in the Office of Field Operations, formerly known as U.S. Customs.

Several key exhibits identify a well-known sex ring operating within Customs and Border Protection and they specifically name Jayson Ahern repeatedly. The Miami Herald in 1998 and 1999 reported a number of incidents of alleged misconduct going back over 10 years (FOBP Report Exhibit 28), and instead of thoroughly investigating and disciplining the participants, Commissioner Ray Kelly merely transferred the various individuals involved, including Ahern. Many of these same individuals now run the Office of Field Operations, Ahern rising to CBP Deputy Commissioner himself.

This unethical behavior is a common practice that goes on to this day, as identified in the report.

FOBP understands that the office of Civil Rights must certify that Ahern has met all DHS policies and has not been involved in any discrimination or EEO violations prior to receiving this award. This is disingenuous, as Ahern has been specifically cited and named in the case filed in Miami, Florida as Denise Calleja vs. Michael Chertoff on October 10, 2008; case number 08-22848 (Exhibit 3 in our report). Point 19 of that complaint states as follows: "Complainant made allegations of a sex ring within Miami International Airport CBP involving current CBP Deputy Commissioner Jayson Ahern."

It must be noted there have been many complaints filed by officers as well as reports published over the years by the media. It clearly is the policy of DHS to reward agency managers, including Ahern, with cash awards and medals for sex rings, assaults, harassment, violence, destroying evidence, and covering up corruption as well as security compromises as identified in "Unjustifiable & Impeachable."

Our report identifies compromises in national security in key ports of entry and along America's borders, which have allowed narcotic and human traffickers to control the borders. Some incidents involving explosives and armaments improperly processed and cleared through our ports of entry, which are all under CBP jurisdiction. Our federal law enforcement officers have been obstructed by policies benefiting nations given unequal and unfair trade and economic advantages. These same senior executive service managers, including Basham, Ahern, Aguilar, and others have received lavish rewards for advancing the Bush Administration's policies as stated in the release announcing award winners by the Office of Personnel Management and now DHS Secretary Chertoff and CBP Commissioner Basham.

We renew our call that the Congress launches an investigation into the many incidents reported within the FOBP report, including the phony investigations that turns into harassment against whistleblowers, and that they put an end to the awards of medals and cash rewards for failing to secure America.

To read our reports and learn more visit www.FriendsOfTheBorderPatrol.com/impeachable.htm

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