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From: Chuck Canterbury [mailto:fopchuck@aol.com]

Sent: Friday, July 29, 2011 6:23 PM

To: Chip DeBlock

Subject: Re: FOP Boycott of LEOAFFAIRS.COM

This will be a decision of the members at the conference. I will chair the debate but ultimately it will be there call.

Chuck Canterbury

On Jul 29, 2011, at 5:15 PM, "Chip DeBlock" <chip@leoaffairs.com> wrote:

July 29, 2011

Chuck Canterbury, National President
Fraternal Order of Police
701 Marriott Drive
Nashville, TN 37214

Dear President Canterbury,

I'm reluctantly sending this letter to you as a result of some recent actions that have been put in motion by a small group of FOP lodges in Florida. As you know, I am the co-founder of the law enforcement website LEOAFFAIRS.COM. I founded the site over 8 years ago with my partner at the time, Jim Preston (Jim is no longer part of LEOAFFAIRS.COM). LEOAFFAIRS.COM consists of an Officer Rights Website and Agency Message Boards that allow officers to talk about work related issues. The site is the largest of its type in the world and has filled a much needed void in the law enforcement community. In fact, LEOAFFAIRS.COM has over 500 agencies online in 18 countries and generates millions of hits per month. You should also be aware that LEOAFFAIRS.COM has published Terms of Use that govern the activity of the site as well as over 400 moderators to help enforce them. We also do not add an agency message board unless someone volunteers to moderate it.

On 02/19/11, at a Florida State Lodge FOP Board of Trustees' meeting, a Resolution was passed to boycott LEOAFFAIRS.COM along with its advertisers. The Resolution seeks to announce and encourage FOP members to honor the boycott, categorizes LEOAFFAIRS.COM as a divisive website and bases the action on negative content of postings that the trustees represented as having caused irreparable harm to their members. This Resolution was forwarded to the Grand Lodge for the purpose of being adopted by all FOP members at the upcoming National Conference in Salt Lake City in August 2011. This information was distributed by the Florida State Lodge via email to FOP members on 02/25/11.

In order to convey the gravity of this situation, there is some information that you should be made aware of. The lodges involved with this pursuit against LEOAFFAIRS.COM

are listed at the top of the next page. In contrast, members of the listed South Florida lodges and other FOP members have been expressing their outrage over lodge presidents and officers supporting the boycott and failing to represent the very rights of law enforcement officers that they have sworn to protect.

Here are the lodges:

Ft. Lauderdale FOP Lodge - President Jack Lokeinsky
Miami FOP Lodge - President Armando Aguilar
Miami Beach FOP Lodge - President Alejandro "Alex" Bello
Jacksonville FOP Lodge - President Nelson Cuba

You might be asking yourself, as I was, what sort of divisive and negative content was posted on LEOAFFAIRS.COM that would irreparably harm FOP members. You also might be wondering who would be posting such content. Also, if there was such content and it violated the Terms of Use, why wouldn't one of the moderators simply remove it? Those are all excellent questions and I have candid answers for them, but they might surprise you.

As far as content, the membership of the listed South Florida FOP lodges has been somewhat critical of their presidents and leadership at times (i.e. losing off-duty during the Super Bowl in Miami Beach). A seemingly cry for help if you will. The postings were allowed to stay online as long as they were made professionally and did not violate our Terms of Use. Original content involving open investigations (i.e. IA and criminal) is prohibited and removed if it appears. References to content from published news sources is normally allowed to remain, but may be restricted so that all related items are under one (the same) topic. Although a lot of controversial content appears on news media blogs in South Florida, our rules for posting on LEOAFFAIRS.COM are much more restrictive.

Now, as for who is posting, it should already be abundantly clear that it is law enforcement officers and FOP members...yes, the very members they claim are irreparably harmed.

Finally, even though we have moderators for these message boards and state-of-the-art software allowing users to simply click on a button to report a post for removal, I understand that there could be a time delay in getting a post removed depending on when the moderator observes it or when it's reported. So, I offered each of these three presidents the capability to moderate their own message boards with as many moderators as they needed. This effectively gave them instant access to remove any and all postings that violated the Terms of Use. Although my offer was initially entertained by some, it was ultimately rejected by all. You should be aware that there are other unions and agencies taking advantage of this arrangement with great success. The reluctance of these three lodge presidents to take advantage of such an opportunity forces me to question their motives, as I believe it should you too.

As if this was not enough, I was recently informed that President Nelson Cuba of the Jacksonville FOP Lodge effectively threatened one of my advertisers to stop advertising

with LEOAFFAIRS.COM if they wanted their products and services to be successful in Jacksonville. The advertiser did in fact stop their advertising on LEOAFFAIRS.COM as a result of this threat and we no longer receive compensation from them. I am extremely disappointed in this tactic and have had to hire attorney Luke Lirot to explore my legal options. In addition, President Jack Lokeinsky promised me he would kick any FOP member out of his lodge who he caught moderating the Ft. Lauderdale PD message board (my moderator subsequently quit out of fear). To make matters worse, President Lokeinsky posted a message on LEOAFFAIRS.COM (dated 10/13/10 at 07:01:47) threatening to have my status as an FOP member in good standing changed, characterizing LEOAFFAIRS.COM as a “garbage filled site” and calling me a “coward”.

I have been an active law enforcement officer for nearly 28 years and a proud FOP member for approximately 25 years. LEOAFFAIRS.COM was created with the best of intentions and we’ve done everything in our power to make sure that it’s run ethically and professionally. Great things have been achieved for those in law enforcement because of LEOAFFAIRS.COM, especially in Florida. We have been directly involved with, caused or heavily influenced many positive outcomes including shelters for the families of first responders during natural disasters in Tampa/Hillsborough County; the acquisition of carbine assault rifles for officers’ safety and the move to a 4 day work week for morale in St. Pete; the ability to carry guns, make arrests and receive training for Florida Probation & Parole officers and the Palm Beach County Sheriff’s Office takeover of the Pahokee and Belle Glade police departments (at the request of the officers) to name a few. LEOAFFAIRS.COM receives commendations for officers from citizens that we, in turn, forward to their respective agency for the officer’s permanent file. In addition, the FOP has successfully used LEOAFFAIRS.COM over the years to communicate with officers and help them unionize. The site has even been featured on MSNBC and in The Washington Post.

What I’m trying to accomplish by sending you this letter is to avoid LEOAFFAIRS.COM being pitted against the FOP and vice versa. In this day and age those of us in law enforcement need all the support we can get from the public, especially unions. I am a firm believer that law enforcement officers need union representation, but the public could become confused if it appears that the FOP is attacking an Officer Rights website. I believe that the national FOP boycotting LEOAFFAIRS.COM and/or our advertisers would send such a message, especially when it became abundantly clear that we offered for the FOP to help moderate the site (as other unions do) and they refused.

I look forward to hearing back from you and appreciate your time.

Sincerely,

Chip DeBlock

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