



Tim Burns
Office of Police Ombudsman
The Old City Hall Building
221 N. Wall Street, Suite 238
Spokane, Washington 99201

Re: Formal Complaint of actions by officers of the SPD in federal court on 11-04-11

Dear Mr. Burns:

Please consider this letter as a formal complaint regarding the actions of some approximately 50 officers of the Spokane Police Department as reported by the Spokesman-Review and other media on 11-04-11. These officers were in attendance at a custody hearing in the Federal District Court in *US vs. Karl Thompson*. SPD Officer Thompson who was previously out of custody during this trial was ordered into custody by the US Magistrate pending his sentencing. As the US Marshalls lead Ofc. Thompson out of court a contingent of SPD officers stood and upon command saluted Officer Thompson.

The prepared statement as reported by the S-R from the Mayor and Chief Kirkpatrick is disingenuous:

... 'The courtroom behavior of some officers, though protected as free speech, does not reflect the values we stand for,' Kirkpatrick later said she had warned officers that they could not attend the hearing while on duty. She has directed the city's human resources director to check for violations of that directive.' Kirkpatrick said she understood reactions like Reagor's from the community. 'Was it insensitive to the Zehm family? Sure,' Kirkpatrick said of the salute. 'Was it actionable? No.'

While I can understand the need to show emotional support for Ofc. Thompson this was totally inappropriate, misdirected and uninformed. **This action within a courtroom of the Federal District Court was very disrespectful, openly defiant and contemptuous of the rule of law, the sanctity of the court and of course to the victim's family. This was a discredit and embarrassment to all law enforcement officers that serve.**

Yes, this was protected free speech but these officers are still bound by SPD policy and lawful orders of the Chief. This display is indeed an actionable SPD policy violation under the following sections:

Standard 4.4:

Members of the Spokane Police Department shall maintain a level of conduct in their personal and business affairs in keeping with the high standards of the Spokane Police Department

Standard 4.9:

Members of the Spokane Police Department shall at all times conduct themselves in a manner which does not discredit the law enforcement profession or the Spokane Police Department

Standard 4.10:

Members of the Spokane Police Department shall not be disrespectful, insolent, mutinous or insubordinate in attitude, or conduct, or by disregarding a lawful order.

Standard 4.11:

Members of the Spokane Police Department shall be courteous and respectful in their official dealings with the public, fellow members, superiors and subordinates.

Standard 6.3:

Members of the Spokane Police Department shall conduct themselves so as to set exemplary standards of performance.

Former SPD Major Crimes Detective Brian Breen is doing an investigation to determine which officers were in attendance both on and off duty. He will be filing a complaint. I request my complaint be merged with his investigation, findings and complaint.

Because a SPD Command Rank Officer, Major Craig Meidi, was in attendance Chief Kirkpatrick should recuse herself from this investigation. There was also a report of assaultive behavior by an SPD officer on a member of the press. The Mayor should seek outside counsel to determine whether an outside agency should investigate whether this assault occurred and whether or not any of the conduct of the officers constituted a violation of SPD Policy and Procedure.

Sincerely,

/Signed/

Ronald J. Wright

