

The function of Park Police is primarily connected with the administrative needs of parks, of interpreting the parks and upholding the law. Within the District of Columbia this concern involves nationally significant areas such as the Mall, Washington Mounment, Lincoln Memorial and Jefferson Memorial—functions such as the Independence Day celebration, Watergate concerts, the Torchlight Tattoo, President's Cup Regatta, special events on the Mall and numerous other occasions requiring a particular responsiveness to varying park uses. It should also be noted that, within the District, Park Police have the same arrest authority as the Metropolitan Police.

The function of the Park Police often goes beyond that of law enforcement officers. Visitors and residents alike rely on these men and women to have particular knowledge of our Nation's Capital and events in the Federal area that forms a focus of national interests and visitation.

As stated in the Departmental Report, the District Police assist the National Park Service in meeting its obligations to the people of the United States.

This, too, is true both within and outside of the District. It must be apparent that the extent, both geographical and functional, of Park Service involvement requires a force instantly responsive to administrative needs, in the National and local interest. Motorized policing of the various parkways for the safety of visitors and commuters, to horseback interpreter in the Central Mall area are two examples of this scope of activity.

Park Police, then are an effective arm and management tool of the National Park Service, and there should not be any insulation permitted which in any manner affects the efficient execution of their mission in this capacity.

The United States Park Police is a unique organization. It is the only Federal Park Police Force in the United States and has behind it a great and proud tradition of public service.

I am deeply concerned that the legislation under consideration would make it awkward for park management to assign operational responsibilities to the Park Police, if, in fact, its administrative alignment were changed.

Mr. Chairman, Members of the Committee, I shall be pleased to answer any questions you may have.

Thank you, sir.

Mr. Dowdy. Thank you, Mr. Castro.

Chief Wright, do you have a statement?

Chief WRIGHT. No, sir.

Mr. Dowdy. We will insert into the record at this point a letter to Chairman McMillan from the Interior Department on his legislation. (The letter referred to follows:)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR,
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY,
Washington, D.C., May 27, 1968.

HON. JOHN L. McMILLAN,
Chairman, Committee on the District of Columbia,
House of Representatives, Washington, D.C.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: There is pending before your Committee H.R. 14430 and H.R. 14448, identical bills, "To establish a Commissioner of Police for the District of Columbia."