



NATIONAL SHERIFFS' ASSOCIATION

JONATHAN F. THOMPSON
Executive Director and CEO

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NSA STATEMENT ON PRESIDENT OBAMA'S COMMENTS ON PIPELINE MILITANTS

Alexandria, VA – National Sheriffs' Association Executive Director and CEO, Jonathan Thompson released the following statement in response to President Obama's comments concerning North Dakota pipeline militants.

Law enforcement is in the middle of a powder keg in Morton County, N.D., and last night President Obama said: "We're going to let it play out for several more weeks..."

Law enforcement officers are protecting private property and the right to protest in Morton County. There have been 415 arrests in connection with the riots. Just 8 percent are from North Dakota, while the other 92 percent are from 43 other states stretching from Vermont to Florida to California. This includes militant agitators with long histories of violence, including domestic assault, child abuse and burglary.

Protesters have allegedly fired a weapon and thrown Molotov Cocktails at law enforcement and President Obama is "going to let it play out for several more weeks."

Mr. President, this is not a game. As we saw in Iowa this morning, where two police officers were ambushed and murdered, law enforcement is real life and, all too often, real death.

Sheriffs, Sens. Heidi Heitkamp and John Hoeven, Rep. Kevin Cramer, Gov. Jack Dalrymple and Lt. Gov. Drew Wrigley have repeatedly called for assistance from the federal government.

Letting it play out, as the President has recommended, puts precious lives – protesters, workers, tribal members, ranchers, farmers and law enforcement – in danger. Unless the President can provide us with assistance and support, the President should be held partially responsible for the fear, terror, and damage caused by violent, militant out-of-state agitators.

Jonathan F. Thompson
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