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“No African Americans take to the streets in protest to demand Whites to love us more. We demand a behavior change!” Rev. George C. Gilbert, Jr.

MARCH 2021

NEWSLETTER

Southern Baptist leaders called Kamala Harris a ‘Jezebel.’



Steve Swofford, a pastor who sits on the Southern Baptist Convention’s executive committee, a church body tasked with running the business of America’s largest Protestant denomination. During a speech at his Rockwall church, Swofford wondered aloud what would happen if President Joe Biden stepped down and “Jezebel has to take over. Jezebel Harris, isn’t that her name?” Swofford said on Jan. 3, according to [Baptist News Global](#).

Another Texas pastor, Tom Buck, compared Harris to Jezebel two days after her inauguration, as people celebrated her historic new role. “I can’t imagine any truly God-fearing Israelite who would’ve wanted their daughters to view Jezebel as an inspirational role model because she was a woman in power,” Buck [tweeted](#) on Jan. 22. Buck later doubled down, stating that his problem with Harris was her “godless character” as someone who supports increasing women’s access to abortion, as well as protecting LGBTQ people’s right to marry.



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H.R. 40: A Serious Reparations Bill or Symbolic Pacification?

By
Natalie H. Rozzell

The question becomes; are these statements made because of race, male chauvinism, or morality? In the history of the black community, to call a woman a Jezebel, it meant that she was an untrustworthy, loose, promiscuous woman who used sex and sexuality for power. When White Male Pastors call Harris a Jezebel, they are suggesting that she should be disregarded. Their disrespect for the office that Vice President Harris holds is a signal to all who hear their words to disregard a black woman who holds the second most powerful seat in our country.

Rev. George C. Gilbert, Jr.



Reparations discussions have been in the media much of late. Everything from online hashtags calling for #ReparationsNow, to colleges, universities, and churches with ties to slavery promising charitable donations, to cities and towns creating programs and



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infusing funds into marginalized neighborhoods, the word ‘Reparations’ is becoming a viral buzzword. Most notably, two impactful legislative agendas have been pushed to the forefront of the reparations debate: Rep. Sheila Jackson Lee [D-TX-18] has reintroduced H.R. 40, also known as the *Commission to Study and Develop Reparation Proposals for African Americans Act*, and the state of California has passed *AB-3121*, a task force to study and develop reparations.

But when speaking of reparations, we have to question why it has taken America so long to address the sin of slavery. Still, there are those who vehemently oppose reparations and feel it will further divide our country. Only 1 in 5 Americans support reparations according to a Reuters/Ipsos poll from June 2020 (<https://thehill.com/homenews/news/504511-1-in-5-supports-reparations-in-new-poll>). Yet, grassroots campaigns and activists around the country continue to fight for proper compensation of the descendants of US chattel slavery, to implement a comprehensive Black agenda and to eliminate the ever-widening racial wealth gap. Many believe reparations

should include, but not be limited to, transformative policies and set-asides specifically for descendants of slavery as well as direct cash payments to those “standing in the shoes” of the slaves who built the United States of America. By taking these steps, which are often viewed as revolutionary, many believe that this will begin to address America’s original sin. Now is the time to fix Black America, but specificity is key in addressing how our community needs to be made whole by a country that continues to benefit from over 200 years of free labor. Who exactly will receive reparations and what does this mean for America?



Reparations for Black American descendants of slavery is not a new concept. Special Field



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Order No. 15 was issued by General William T. Sherman on January 16, 1865 during the Civil War. In this order, forty acres of tillable land were to be confiscated from Southern slave owners and redistributed to each newly freed, former slave. However, the order was rescinded by President Andrew Johnson and land was returned back to white owners. In the many years that followed, activists like Callie House, an early leader in the fight for



**SLAVE ECONOMY
INCOME INEQUALITY
REPARATIONS**

reparations, chartered the National Ex-Slave Mutual Relief, Bounty and Pension Association in 1898 in an effort to compensate freedmen. Throughout the years that followed, many activists and organizations attempted to advocate for former slaves and their descendants. However, in 1989, Rep. John Conyers Jr. proposed the original H.R. 40 Bill into Congress where it stalled for thirty years.

Spurred on by continuous protests, countless incidents of police brutality, and decades of failed economic policies for Blacks, H.R. 40 is now at the forefront again. But will it continue to grow to fruition, be fixed, or die under the shadow of racism?

Two hearings have been conducted for H.R. 40, one in June 2019 and the other on February 17, 2021. Unfortunately, it appears that the bill to study reparations is being set up to fail in several ways. First, there has been a glaring lack of subject matter experts (economists, historians, reparationists) called to testify to the subcommittee. Instead, black actors, ex-football players, and other celebrities have been called as witnesses to oppose reparations. Many of them have no expertise on reparations or Black history, the economic challenges that average African American face, or the lasting effects of slavery, Jim Crow, and mass incarceration on the Black family. In fact, some don't believe there is anything America needs to atone for. They cite the individual experience of their mothers or quote salacious Internet blogs as evidence of why reparations should not be awarded and continue to push a



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“do-for-self” or “bootstrapper” mentality. Regardless of whether an African American “does for self” or becomes educated or rich in America, reparations is a debt that is owed and must be paid to atone for the systematic oppressive atrocities and policies created and carried out by the U.S. government that continue to stifle the upward progress of descendants of chattel slavery. America has paid reparations and issued an apology to the Japanese for their internment during World War II. The U.S. has established an Indian Claims Commission that paid Native Americans for unjustly seized land. The government has even paid monies to Jewish victims of the Holocaust in 2016 to the tune of 11 million dollars. Why should descendants of U.S. chattel slavery be treated any differently?

Another issue is with the H.R. 40 bill itself. In particular, the bill does not specifically call out Black American Descendants of Chattel Slavery as the beneficiaries of the study. Because of this lack of specificity, it opens the door for any melanated person who might have a racial grievance against the federal government to be a part of this bill. The Japanese American

internment reparations were specific to their group and their plight, as should H.R. 40 be specific to descendants of slavery who endured failed Reconstruction, Jim Crow, segregation, mass incarceration and redlining just to name a few.

6 ESSENTIAL EDITS FOR H.R.40 REPARATIONS BILL

- 1. Experts Only**
Commissioners should be selected exclusively by Congress. They should be experts in American history, Constitutional law, economics (including stratification economics), political science, and sociology and they should have expertise on the history of slavery and the Jim Crow regime, employment discrimination, wealth inequality, health disparities, unequal education opportunity, criminal justice and mass incarceration, media, political participation and exclusion, and housing inequities.
- 2. No Pay for Commissioners or Their Organizations**
There should be a paid professional staff. While the Commissioners' reasonable expenses should be met, unlike the present version of the bill, neither they nor any organization to which they belong should receive a salary, honorarium, or the equivalent for performing this vital national service.
- 3. Eligibility Criteria**
The Commission should be directed to set as eligible recipients black American descendants of United States slavery. Eligible recipients would need to show that they have at least one ancestor who was enslaved in the United States—a lineage standard, and, for at least twelve years prior to the enactment of a reparations plan or a study commission, whichever comes first, they self-identified as black, negro, or African American—an identity standard.
- 4. 1776 to Present Window Claim**
The relevant window for the black American claim for reparations dates from 1776 to the present (not 1619 as the bill currently reads). Since the claim for redress must be made on the U.S. government, the beginning date for the claim should be associated with the founding of the Republic, not the landing of enslaved persons at Jamestown, Virginia.
- 5. Effective Racial Wealth Gap Redress Solution**
The Commission should be charged with developing a proposal for redress that will eliminate the gap in black and white wealth in the United States. While black Americans constitute 13 percent of the nation's population, they possess less than 3 percent of the nation's wealth. A reparations plan should be designed to bring the black share of wealth, at least, into alignment with the black share of the population.
- 6. 18 Month Deadline**
The Commission should be directed to complete its report, inclusive of a detailed prescription for legislation to enact a reparations program for Black Americans, within 18 months of its impeding.

The bill also does not commit to closing the racial wealth gap. Without policies that reverse those put in place by the government to marginalize descendants of chattel slavery in America, the racial wealth gap will continue to grow and truly divide Americans. Without equitable access to wealth, homeownership, low interest loans, business growth opportunities, and healthcare, the chasm will widen.

One thing that should be pointed out is that direct cash payments are not mentioned in the



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bill. Even though the term is often misused, reparations is defined as *“the making of amends for a wrong one has done, by paying money to or otherwise helping those who have been wronged.”* Each Japanese person interned was granted \$20,000. Native Americans were provided land and monetary compensation. Tangible payments should be a large part of a comprehensive reparations plan. For hundreds of years, slaves were brought to the United States in chains, against their will to toil for little to nothing while being treated less than human. Cash payments must be a central component of any serious reparations policy. Without monetary compensation, any proposed reparations agenda is little more than an empty, symbolic gesture.



But when payments are mentioned, it seems to cause great contention. Many Americans feel that they should not have to pay. The short answer is they will not have to pay - but the federal government will. There are many bills earmarked for all sorts of programs that most Americans never benefit from directly yet their tax money goes to those programs. Another argument is that reparations will bankrupt America. Even though it is estimated that upwards of 17 trillion dollars is owed to descendants of slavery, if the stimulus checks paid out during the ongoing Coronavirus pandemic are any indication, America can release the funds with the stroke of a pen. Yes, it will be a large chunk of the budget, but it is necessary to bring about significant change and transform America into the fair and equal country it has purported itself to be.

For more information on the issues mentioned above, including other important edits for the H.R. 40 Bill, go to fixhr40.org for more details.



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THE CENTER FOR RACIAL EQUITY & JUSTICE FELL SHORT – HOWEVER WE STILL WON!!!

We would like to thank all who voted for “The Center” for being one of the Social Justice leaders of our nation in the grant opportunity given by Black Voices. While we were not listed as one of the top 25 advocate organizations, see below:



We received 4,334 nominations representing 362 incredible Black Leaders.

Each Black Leader nominated for the Black Justice Fellowship is a testament to the radical commitment to social change across D.C., Maryland, and Virginia.

2021 Honorable Mentions

While they were not selected this year for the top 25, these seven Black Leaders received high praise from the Selection Committee for their outstanding work in communities.

DR. NATALIE SMITH Global Citizens Public Charter School

DR. NATALIE SMITH
Global Citizens Public Charter School

SHAUGHN COOPER Pyrite Studios
SHAUGHN COOPER
Pyrite Studios

REV. GEORGE GILBERT Center for Racial Equality and Justice

**REV. GEORGE GILBERT
Center for Racial Equality and Justice**

ANIYAH VINES The Live Movement
ANIYAH VINES
The Live Movement

CORNELIUS MCDONALD Stay Solid Mental Behavioral Health, Inc.



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CORNELIUS MCDONALD
Stay Solid Mental Behavioral Health, Inc.

AZIYRAH THE POET
AZIYRAH THE POET

MAHADI LAWAL Occupy DC
MAHADI LAWAL
Occupy DC

It is because of your prayers, your gifts and your presence that we are able to be a standout of substantive leadership in our communities and nation.

Thank you!

Rev. Gilbert

Traitors in the Capitol and How We Route Them Out!



Below is a letter and action plan concerning the White House insurrection written by Retires For Accountability (RFA) and signed by The Center for Racial Equity and Justice:

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
The Honorable Chuck Shumer
The Honorable Eleanore Holmes Norton

cc:



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DC Leadership

Dear Congressional Leadership,

On December 29, 2020, our group wrote the following statement to the Leadership of the District of Columbia:

"On behalf of the Retirees For Accountability (RFA), Concerned Residents Against Violence (CRAV), and The Center for Racial Equity and Justice, it has become apparent to us that the President of the United States has become more "Unhinged", deranged, and dangerous. The loss of the 2020 election has encouraged the President to allow Nationalist and White Supremacy groups to have become more notable, vocal and violent. When he announced to the respective groups to "stand back and standby" it revealed the contempt in his character and the influence he has over such

groups. https://www.washingtonpost.com/local/for-dc-protests-proud-boys-settle-in-at-citys-oldest-hotel-and-its-bar/2020/12/27/0eb6afcc-3fb0-11eb-8bc0-ae155bee4aff_story.html. Recently the Proud Boys, one of these fanatical groups, who support this deranged President, descended upon DC, and created mayhem, violence, and violated the sanctity of three places of Worship, burning and defacing their Black Lives Matter

banners. https://www.washingtonpost.com/local/dc-trump-rally-january-6-protests/2020/12/22/1c94ab7a-447a-11eb-a277-49a6d1f9dff1_story.html".

In response to our alert, the City's leadership responded in tandem, over several days, and began to take public safety measures afforded to them, in order to make our City safe from the continued presence of hate and violence, perpetrated by the former president and his followers. We want to thank our Mayor of the District of Columbia, the Chief of the Metropolitan Police Department, the Attorney General of the District of Columbia, members of the Council of the District of Columbia, the leadership of the Faith Community, the leadership of Black Lives Matter, and the many residents of the District of Columbia, for hearing our call and took appropriate actions necessary to "keep the City safe" prior to the 6th of January.



Now comes another alert we would like to share with our Congressional Leadership:



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On January 6th, as the United States Government was in joint session of Congress in order to certify the election results of our legal, and Constitutional mandated exercise of Democracy, the United States Capitol was violent assaulted. The assault did not come from a foreign power, but from insurrectionist, lead by the former president and his co-conspirators, some in Congress. This aggravated assault which resulted in death, injury, and property destruction, until the 6th of January of 2021, has been unheard of since the War of 1812 when the Capitol was nearly destroyed. Not only did the January 6th assault damage the sanctity of the Capitol, and all those within, never has the Confederate Flag of the South, nor the flags and symbol of



hate, racism and white supremacy ever breached the grounds or the United States Capitol. Such an action against the democracy principals and persons charged with our safety and security, and way of life, have endured such a direct assault against us 1812, and 2001-911. When an Act of War against a government and leaders must be termed as "Treason" by those who orchestrate such action. That is what happened

and January 6, 2021, and no-one should forget. Those participating in this insurrection were the descents of the Reconstruction, lynchings, German prisoners of War, Jim Crow, and the Civil Rights Era.

Do we go forward towards a better, beautiful and bold America, or do we excuse those who are contenting to promulgate the "Big Lie" of the 2020 Election, that the election was stolen? We belief that you have an obligation to spare do action on your part, and that of the American people who ensuring that our Democratic way of life is protected and made forever that bastion of hope, freedom and opportunity for so many.

Thus, in the interest of the future of our Democracy, we petition you to do the following:

- 1). Declare an emergency regarding our democratic way of life, and do all within your power to project it.
- 2). Form a joint-non-partisan commission, compromised of former congressional, military, police, corporate, and civilians to look into what happened on January 6th, and everything preceded and after the 6th.
- 3). Continue to prosecute those found to have participated directly in the insurrection, loss of life, and property damage.

In closing, let us never forget the overt actions by those in the previous administration, and present congressional leadership. Let us never forget the



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matters of race, Charlottesville Va, the visit to Russia by congressional leaders, and the presence of Russian top diplomats to the White House immediately after the former President was inaugurated.



Please find below, some reference we believe should help you to know that this is a War we can win, however, only we have the information needed to wage such a war. Those who are now in parts of the United States planning and plotting ways in which they can attain control of local governments across the Country. Let us never forget the past, never forget the mistakes of the past, and ensure we have a winning strategy aimed at continuing to grow our Democracy.

Sincerely yours,
Retirees For Accountability (RFA),
Concerned Residents Against Violence (CRAV), and
The Center for Racial Equity and Justice

References:

Right-wing politics embraces the view that certain social orders and hierarchies are inevitable, natural, normal, or desirable, typically supporting this position on the basis of natural law, economics, or tradition. Hierarchy and inequality may be seen as natural results of traditional social differences or competition in market economies. The term *right-wing* can generally refer to the conservative or reactionary section of a political party or system".

The term social order can be used in two senses: In the first sense, it refers to a particular system of social structures and institutions. Examples are the ancient, the feudal, and the capitalist social order. In the second sense, social order is contrasted to social chaos or disorder and refers to a stable state of society in which the existing social structure is accepted and maintained by its members. The problem of order or Hobbesian problem, which is central to much of sociology, political science and political philosophy, is the question of how and why it is that social orders exist at all.

Heather McGhee's specialty is the American economy—and the mystery of why it so often fails the American public. From the financial crisis to rising student debt to collapsing public infrastructure, she found a common root problem: racism. But not just in the most obvious indignities for people of color. Racism has costs for white people, too. It is the



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common denominator of our most vexing public problems, the core dysfunction of our democracy and constitutive of the spiritual and moral crises that grip us all. But how did this happen? And is there a way out? The Sum of Us

Definition of white supremacy:

1: the belief that the white race is inherently superior to other races and that white people should have control over people of other races The alt-right is a reactionary conservative movement ... It is characterized by an embrace of fascism, *white supremacy*, and misogyny ...— Constance Grady

2: the social, economic, and political systems that collectively enable white people to maintain power over people of other races ... [William] Kelley turned his considerable intellect and imagination to the question of what it is like to be white in this country, and what it is like, for all Americans, to live under the conditions of *white supremacy* ...

Defining a pathological liar A pathological liar is someone who lies compulsively. While there appears to be many possible causes for pathological lying, it's not yet entirely understood why someone would lie this way. Some lies seem to be told in order to make the pathological liar appear the hero, or to gain acceptance or sympathy, while there's seemingly nothing to be gained from other lies. Some evidence from 2007 Trusted Source suggests that issues affecting the central nervous system may predispose someone to pathological lying, Compulsive lying is also a known

trait of some personality disorders, such as antisocial personality disorder. Trauma or head injuries may also play a role in pathological lying, along with an abnormality in hormone-cortisol ratio. A 2016 study trusted Source of what happens in the brain when you lie found that the more untruths a person tells, the easier and more frequent lying becomes. The results also indicated that self-interest seems to fuel dishonesty.



Pathological lying: Pathological lying, also known as mythomania and pseudologia fantastica, is the chronic behavior of compulsive or habitual lying.

Unlike telling the occasional white lie to avoid hurting someone's feelings or getting in trouble, a pathological liar seems to lie for no apparent reason. This can make it frustrating or hard to know what to do if you believe you've met one. Though pathological lying has been recognized for more than a century, there's not yet a clear universal definition of the condition.



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Some pathological lying may result from a mental condition, such as antisocial personality disorder (sometimes called sociopathy), while others appear to have no medical reason for the behavior. The definition of lying is not telling the truth. An example of someone who is lying is someone who is dishonest about where he was and what he did. ...
A lying witness.

been suspended without pay for kicking and dragging Greene, a handcuffed Black man whose in-custody death remains unexplained and the subject of a federal civil rights investigation. Body camera footage shows Master Trooper Kory York dragging Greene “on his stomach by the leg shackles” following a violent arrest and high-speed pursuit, according to internal State Police records obtained by The Associated Press. (Courtesy of the Greene family via AP)

Body cam shows trooper kicked, dragged handcuffed Black man who died in custody

by JIM MUSTIAN Associated Press
Saturday, February 27th 2021
AA



Ronald Greene smiles in an undated photo provided by his family. A Louisiana State Police trooper has

A Louisiana State Police trooper has been suspended without pay for kicking and dragging a handcuffed Black man whose in-custody death remains unexplained and the subject of a federal civil rights investigation. Body camera footage shows Master Trooper Kory York dragging Ronald Greene “on his stomach by the leg shackles” following a violent arrest and high-speed pursuit, according to internal State Police records obtained by The Associated Press. The records are the first public acknowledgement by State Police that Greene was mistreated, and they confirm details provided last year by an attorney for Greene’s family who viewed graphic body camera footage of the May 2019 arrest and likened it to the police killing of George Floyd. The video shows troopers choking and beating the man, repeatedly jolting him with stun guns and dragging him face-down across the pavement, the attorney told AP.

State Police have repeatedly refused to publicly release the body camera footage. The agency has been tight lipped about Greene’s death and initially blamed the man’s fatal injuries on a car crash outside Monroe, La.



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York, who turned his own body camera off on his way to the scene, is seen on other body-cam footage yanking Greene’s shackles and repeatedly using profanity toward Greene before he died in custody. “You’re gonna lay on your f###king belly like I told you!” the trooper says at one point, according to the police records.

York was suspended without pay for 50 hours following an internal investigation that also led to the termination of another trooper, Chris Hollingsworth, who died in a single-car crash after learning he had been fired over his role in the incident. The AP last year published a 27-second audio clip from Hollingsworth’s body camera in which he can be heard telling a colleague, “I beat the ever-living f--- out of” Greene before he “all of a sudden he just went limp.”

“It is now undisputed that Trooper York participated in the brutal assault that took Ronald Greene’s life,” said Mark Maguire, a Philadelphia civil rights attorney who represents Greene’s family. “This suspension is a start but it does not come close to the full transparency and accountability the family continues to seek.” Col. Lamar Davis, who took over as State Police superintendent last year, wrote York that his suspension had been decided by his predecessor, Kevin Reeves, adding he “would have imposed more severe discipline” had it been up to him. Reeves made the decision during his last week in office, before stepping down amid a series of scandals, but York was not notified of the reasons for his suspension until Dec. 29.

York’s attorney did not immediately respond to a message seeking comment.

York told investigators he turned his own body-worn camera off because it was beeping loudly and that his “mind was on other things” after arriving at the scene. “I didn’t think about it,” he said.

The trooper who initially chased Greene, Dakota DeMoss, was recently arrested in connection with a separate police pursuit last year in which he and two other troopers allegedly used excessive force while handcuffing a motorist. Those charges followed a monthslong internal investigation into use-of-force incidents involving troopers in the northern part of the state.

It’s not clear whether DeMoss has been disciplined in Greene’s arrest.

Become a
Partner



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IMPLICIT BIAS AND DE-ESCALATION TRAINING TO WASHINGTON D.C. METROPOLITAN POLICE DEPARTMENT



During the month of February, The Center for Racial Equity and Justice provided a Professional

Development Training for a portion of the Washington, D.C. Metropolitan Police Department in Implicit Bias and De-escalation. During this workshop, we were able to provide skits, monologues, discussion and surveys. We spent a lot of time dealing with the Dehumanization of the black community and how that affects the mind and actions of police officers.



We hope that Washington, D.C.'s MPD will adopt our training program for its Cadets in their Academy as well as for the entire force.

We look forward to working with other departments across the nation. If you would like for us to do a Racial Equity and/or Bias Workshop with your government entity or business, please contact us at: tcfreaj@gmail.com or 202-262-5053



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Pamela Smith named chief of U.S. Park Police



Smith says she will immediately implement body cameras, which the Park Police currently don't use

Pamela A. Smith is the first African American woman to lead the Park Police in the agency's 230-year history. (National Park Service)

By
Tom Jackman
Feb. 25, 2021

Pamela A. Smith, a longtime commander of the U.S. Park Police, was named the permanent chief Thursday by the National Park Service and said she would immediately move to implement body-worn cameras for a department that currently has no cameras in its cars or on its officers.

Smith, 53, replaces former chief Robert D. MacLean, who was promoted in August 2019 to head the Interior Department's Office of Law Enforcement and Security. The acting chief job was then assumed by Maj. Gregory Monahan, who will return to his post as

assistant chief when Smith takes the chief's position on Sunday.

Smith has been a Park Police officer for 23 years, and she becomes the first African American woman to lead the agency in its 230-year history. Park Police officers are stationed in parks in and around Washington, D.C., New York City and San Francisco. As a major, she was the first woman to lead the New York field office, and she has also served as deputy chief of the Homeland Security Division and the Field Operations Division.

AD

The Park Police have been under scrutiny since November 2017 for their handling of the fatal shooting of an unarmed motorist in Fairfax County, Va., by two officers. Bijan Ghaisar, 25, was shot four times as he tried to maneuver his Jeep Grand Cherokee away from Officers Lucas Vinyard and Alejandro Amaya. After federal prosecutors declined to charge the officers in 2019, Fairfax County Commonwealth's Attorney Steve Descano obtained manslaughter indictments last fall against the two officers, which are pending. The officers have said they fired because they feared Ghaisar was about to run over Amaya.

The officers were not wearing body cameras, and their marked SUV did not have a camera. No Park Police officers or vehicles are equipped with cameras. The shooting was captured by an in-car camera of a Fairfax County police lieutenant who followed the officers' pursuit of Ghaisar down the George Washington Memorial Parkway into a residential neighborhood,



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where the officers fired 10 shots into Ghaisar’s SUV. The Fairfax police chief released the video over federal authorities’ objections.

Video shows Park Police fired nine shots into Bijan Ghaisar’s Jeep at close range, killing him. Smith said in a news release that she would establish a body-worn camera program for the Park Police within 90 days. She said it would begin in San Francisco, which she said had 42 employees, and be implemented in Washington and New York by the end of the year.

AD

“Body-worn cameras are good for the public and good for our officers,” Smith said in the release, “which is why I am prioritizing implementing a body-worn camera program within my first 90 days. This is one of the many steps we must take to continue to build trust and credibility with the public we have been entrusted to serve.” She said in an afternoon news conference that “I anticipate this will be broadly welcomed by the members of our agency.”

Kenneth Spencer, president of the Park Police’s Fraternal Order of Police labor committee, said that he and his predecessors had been pushing Congress and department leadership for cameras for years. He said devising policies for camera use and data storage, for reviewing and releasing footage and other issues “is going to take awhile, but it’s great that it’s finally happening. The officers are ready for it.”

U.S. Rep. Don Beyer (D-Va.) and Del. Eleanor Holmes Norton (D-D.C.) have introduced a bill requiring all uniformed federal police officers to wear

body cameras. It was incorporated into a larger crime bill last year and has passed the House but not the Senate. No Justice Department officers use cameras, and only park rangers use them within the Interior Department, officials have said.



Federal body camera bill, inspired by Park Police killing of Bijan Ghaisar, included in House police reform package. Smith’s predecessors did not publicly discuss Ghaisar’s case. After launching the investigation of the shooting and excluding Fairfax police, then-Chief MacLean handed the case over to the FBI and refused to talk about it. Monahan continued that policy during his tenure as acting chief. More than three years after the shooting, the Park Police have not started an internal investigation of the case, pending the resolution of the criminal case against Vinyard and Amaya.

In the news conference, Smith said she was working in New York when the Ghaisar killing occurred, and that “I want to convey my deepest condolences to the Ghaisar family.” She said that she hadn’t been involved in the case but “one of my first priorities as chief of police is to be briefed as to what occurred,” and that she was “certainly looking forward to providing a response.”



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“No African Americans take to the streets in protest to demand Whites to love us more. We demand a behavior change!” Rev. George C. Gilbert, Jr.

The Ghaisar family issued a statement Thursday, saying that “After more than 3 years of silence and lack of leadership, we hope that Chief Smith will bring a new era of integrity and transparency to the Park Police with an emphasis on the safety of the community at large.” The family called on Smith to begin the internal investigation of the case and fire the two officers.

Sen. Mark R. Warner (D-Va.) issued a statement supporting Smith’s body-camera initiative. “It’s been more than three years since Bijan Ghaisar was shot and killed by U.S. Park Police,” Warner said, “and his family is still searching for answers to understand what happened to their son and brother that day. While nothing will bring Bijan back, I am glad to see the new leadership of the Park Police taking steps that could help avert more needless tragedies.”

The Park Police were also criticized for their role in forcefully clearing protesters from the area around Lafayette Square before President Donald Trump walked through the area on his way to St. John’s Church during social justice demonstrations on June 1, 2020. Monahan testified before Congress to defend his officers’ actions. Before that hearing, The Post reported that the Park Police had not recorded any of their radio transmissions on that day because of an improper installation of a new radio system, which Monahan confirmed in his testimony.

Monahan also said the Park Police decided to erect a fence on the north end of Lafayette Square, and “there

is 100 percent zero correlation between our operation and the president’s visit to the church.” Monahan said protesters had been violent at the park for three days before June 1, and that his officers were under assault from projectiles again that day. Smith said Thursday she felt Park Police officers “followed established procedures and regulations during the civil unrest.” People familiar with the selection process, who spoke on the condition of anonymity, said Monahan did not apply for the chief’s position.

“Chief Smith’s commitment to policing as public service and her willingness to listen and collaborate make her the right person to lead the U.S. Park Police at this pivotal moment in our country,” said Shawn Bengé, deputy director of the Park Service. “Over the coming months, leadership of the National Park Service will explore opportunities with Chief Smith designed to strengthen our organization’s commitment to transparency. Her personal and professional experience make her acutely aware of and ready to meet the challenges and responsibilities that face U.S. Park Police and law enforcement agencies across the nation.”

Rep. Raúl M. Grijalva (D-Ariz.), whose Natural Resources Committee held a hearing in September on the lack of cameras by the Interior Department, said that Smith’s announcement “didn’t come in a vacuum. . . . This is what serious oversight can accomplish.”



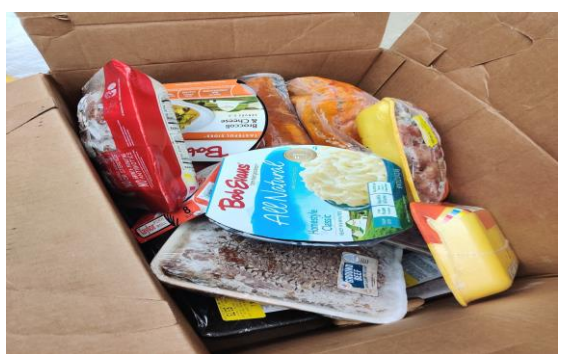
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