



Written by [David Kelly](#) on June 5, 2023

Biden Visit Disrupts Air Force Academy Graduation

A perfect Spring day with bright blue skies mixed with building thunderstorms along the rampart range of the Colorado Rockies welcomed more than 900 cadets and their families and guests to a long-anticipated day of celebration. After four years of hard work and dedication, the 65th graduating class of the U.S. Air Force Academy (USAFA) received their Bachelor of Science degrees and commissions in the U.S. Air Force or Space Force last Thursday at Falcon Stadium just north of Colorado Springs.



AP Images

I, like thousands of others living nearby, awaited the Air Force Thunderbirds airshow to commence, signaling the end of the USAFA graduation as they fly over the stadium while the new second lieutenants toss their hats into the air.

The graduation ceremony capped a full week of events celebrating the cadets. That included a lengthy [speech](#) from President Biden filled with political rhetoric mixed with praise for the graduates. Biden proudly proclaimed, “You are the very embodiment of the American military excellence, and you are ready for anything. Anything. As I look out today, I give you my word as a Biden: I’ve never been more optimistic — never been more optimistic about the future of this country, in no small part because of you. I mean it sincerely.”

Biden’s visit to USAFA won’t be remembered for his speech. His visit will be known as the “sandbagging” incident after he tripped over a sandbag and fell on the stage. The media and political strategists turned that incident into the main news story speculating on Biden’s health and his ability to not only serve as the nation’s current leader, but his ability to win reelection in 2024.

What the media failed to cover was the level of security in and around Colorado Springs for the president’s visit, which caused major disruptions to citizens throughout the community. Major streets and corridors throughout the city, including the interstate, were closed — in some cases for more than an hour — while the Biden motorcade meandered to and from USAFA.

Biden arrived in Colorado Springs the night before during rush hour, causing major headaches for thousands of commuters who had no alternate routes to avoid the motorcade. To make matters worse, according to [The Gazette](#), Colorado Springs Police and the El Paso County Sheriff’s Office (EPCSO) said “they did not provide advance notice of road closures because the Secret Service directed them not to for security concerns.”

The Gazette shared:

“There’s always a security issue when the president comes to town,” said EPCSO



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spokeswoman Cassandra Sebastian. “That’s why we’re not allowed to give any hint of what the motorcade route might be.”

“We’ve all known for a while that the president was coming, and that certain security measures would be taken,” said CSPD spokesman Robert Tornabene.

The only agency that provided road closure information Thursday morning was Colorado State Patrol, which, in a follow up tweet, apologized for the short notice.

Sebastian is right about the havoc caused when a president comes to town. But it has not always been that way. For decades, USAFA was a typical college campus that rarely kept out visitors. People could drive onto the grounds and picnic, hike or bike the local trails, watch the cadets marching, or visit the famous chapel and tour the campus. That free access to USAFA ended after 9/11, as the campus became like any other military installation with heavily armed guards, concrete barricades, and limited access for visitors.

This heightened security at USAFA and across the nation in the post 9/11 United States changed everything. It exposed the soft tyranny of the police state that the government forced on Americans in the name of keeping us all safe from harm. The police state only placed a stranglehold on people’s freedom and liberty.

Since 9/11, presidential visits to Colorado Springs and USAFA have gone from simple motorcades causing brief traffic interruptions to what the city suffered through last week. When President Bush spoke at USAFA graduation in 2008, security was tight, but the motorcade passed quickly with only a brief sweep of the motorcade route ahead of time by the Secret Service. I was stopped by a Secret Service agent as I waited for the president’s motorcade to pass by after I recognized the motorcycle cops sitting at strategic intersections on a major parkway near my home. The agent asked that I and my daughter remain on the sidewalk as the motorcade passed.

In 2016, when President Obama visited and spoke at USAFA, security was over the top. His motorcade shut down major streets, causing delays for drivers, while a Black Hawk helicopter hovered and circled a few hundred feet above the vehicles. Observing the helicopter with its door gunner in position to react at a moment’s notice is a sight I’ll never forget while I sat as an easy target in traffic. It also bolstered my opinion that the United States is a police state.

What’s truly bothersome is that the federal government feels there is a need for such heavy security for an elected official. Why do thousands of people who are just trying to get on with their daily lives have to suffer through major disruptions? How many millions of tax dollars were spent to protect and provide security for these presidential visits?

It seems as if the president and those responsible for his security don’t care about the everyday lives of Americans or the disruptions they cause. Biden’s false narrative on equity and inclusion doesn’t apply when it comes to his security. As for Colorado Springs residents, they can count on more major disruptions in the future.



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