

## Courageous Black Secret Service Woman Revealed Scandal

Written by Trice Edney Newswire  
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**A Black Secret Service agent is being hailed as the heroine in what is reportedly the worst scandal in the agency's history.**

Paula Reid is the 46-year-old special agent responsible for blowing the whistle on the sex scandal that turned the esteemed agency into so much fodder for the 24-hour news cycle and cable talk shows. Reid, the head of the service detail down in Latin America, discovered that at least 11 agents, including two supervisors, had brought prostitutes back to their hotel rooms in Cartagena, Colombia, just days before the president arrived for an international summit. Such action posed a significant security risk for the commander-in-chief.

Officials are praising Reid for her swift action.

"She acted decisively, appropriately," said Maine Sen. Susan Collins, the ranking member of the Homeland Security Committee, and one of Congress' lead investigators into this incident, on ABC's "This Week" on April 22.

The other, New York Congresswoman Carolyn Maloney from the House Oversight Committee, added, "I talked to [Secret Service Director Mark] Sullivan last night, and he was commending her leadership, too. She really went in there and cleaned up the mess."

In the wake of Reid's probe, six agents have been fired, six others are being investigated and 11 military personnel are also under scrutiny. Officials are also examining whether this incident was part of a pattern.

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“I recognize that the vast majority of Secret Service personnel are professional, disciplined, dedicated, courageous. But to me it defies belief that this is just an aberration,” Collins said. “There were too many people involved. If it had been one or two, then I would say it was an aberration. But it included two supervisors. That is particularly shocking and appalling.”

Reid’s leadership in this case is also shining a light on the paucity of women and minorities within the Secret Service.

“I can’t help but wonder if there’d been more women as part of that detail if this ever would have happened,” Collins said Sunday on the weekly news talk show.

According to Maloney, the agency comprises only 11 percent women. “I can’t help but keep asking this question, where are the women? We probably need to diversify the Secret Service and have more minorities and more women.”

*Special to the Trice Edney News Wire from the Afro American Newspapers{jcomments on}*