



July 28, 2020

A STATEMENT FROM THE MILWAUKEE EQUAL RIGHTS CHAIR REGARDING THE TRUMP ADMINISTRATION SENDING FEDERAL AGENTS TO THE CITY

Yesterday, I testified before the Public Safety and Health Committee where I stated **we all have a responsibility to uphold civil and human rights**, and that we all have a responsibility to advocate for our community in the face of threats to those rights. We must denounce the deployment of Federal agents in our city and not cooperate in this scare tactic.

Local Milwaukee leaders tossed around the idea that this militarized surge might help reduce crime. It “might”. District Attorney Chisolm even made a football reference to explain the strategy and effectiveness for cooperation with the Feds on the issue. However, this Administration is not playing by the rules, so is it reasonable for us to hope for a fair game?

Let’s be very clear; this is not help the Federal Government is sending.

This is a state-sanctioned gang – with the full powers of the federal government – brandishing law enforcement badges, military weapons, and the cooperation of our local law enforcement.

Men of color are often referred to as thugs whenever there is protesting or violence. Why are these so-called agents not referred in the same way? It’s because there is a blatant and racist double standard used to demean and scare our communities from speaking up for truth and justice. The Federal Government is sending thugs to our city.

Some are uncomfortable with labeling these agents as a gang or thugs. Fair enough. So, then what’s the word for someone who uses violence, or the threat of violence, in the pursuit of political, ideological, or social objectives?

That’s the definition of a terrorist. What’s coming to this city are not just Federal investigators – these are terrorists.

No one is stating that we do not value our Federal partners or want their good-faith partnership for vital programs. What we are clearly saying is that we have seen over and over – even just this month in Portland – how trust and good-faith partnerships are meaningless to this President.

This Administration is ruthless and worthless. This President is a liar and a coward. Why are we taking his word that this will be different than Portland? Why do we believe a President that separates children from their parents and puts them in cages? Why do we believe a womanizer and pathological liar?

Since the Federal government has the sovereign authority regarding Federal property, then they can protect it all they want. However, we must remain resolute in protecting our people and city as well.

We must direct our Department of Public Works to boldly mark off when the Federal property line ends and where our city line begins.

We must urge the Fire and Police Commission to update the police Standard Operating Procedures, specifically SOP 460 or one similar, that references an officer’s “Duty to Intervene” and include federal agencies as well. Our local law enforcement has a Duty to Intervene to protect and serve its very own residents regardless who the aggressor is.

We all have a responsibility to uphold civil and human rights. The time to act and protect our residents is now.

Sincerely,

Chez Ordoñez
Chair | Equal Rights Commission



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