

US presidential candidate Bobby Jindal calls for prosecution of “sanctuary city” mayors

E.P. Bannon
11 August 2015

Louisiana Governor and GOP presidential hopeful Bobby Jindal recently added to the anti-immigration rhetoric currently dominating the field of American politics. In an interview on Boston Herald Radio last Monday, Jindal explained that he would prosecute mayors of so-called “sanctuary cities” as accomplices to any crimes committed by undocumented immigrants.

Cities such as San Francisco, New York City, Miami and others are known for their relatively lenient policies toward undocumented immigrants, with police stations instructed not to deport them if picked up for minor crimes. The rationale behind the policy is that victimized immigrants can be safe to report crimes without having to worry about facing deportation for doing so.

“I would hold them as an accomplice,” Jindal said of the “sanctuary city” mayors. “Make them criminally culpable.” His comments followed the recent announcement of his “partners in crime” plan to crack down on officials presiding over sanctuary cities.

In addition, city mayors and other officials would be liable for civil suits for damages. “One of the things we can and should be doing right now is cracking down on the sanctuary cities,” Jindal declared. “It makes no sense for these mayors, these local politicians, to be able to ignore the law [and] choose which ones they want to enforce.”

Jindal’s statements reflect the growing distaste for democratic norms within the American ruling class. With no solution to the crisis confronting hundreds of millions of people, figures such as Jindal appeal to the most backward, semi-fascistic elements of American society. Though Jindal did not appear in Thursday’s prime time debate of Republican candidates, his views simply reflect in a crude form the consensus held within the ruling class as a whole.

On an interview with CNN last Thursday, Jindal outlined his own particular plans to further militarize the US-Mexico border. “What we need right now from the Federal government is to secure the border. We don’t need a thousand page bill, we don’t need amnesty. ... We need to secure the border,” he said. “Yes we need to build a wall,” he continued. “Yes we need more boots on the ground. Yes you need technology and sensors, and yes you need heat-flare technology in the helicopters.” He went on to say that the US needed a “higher wall” across the border.

Jindal’s rhetoric points to the growing militarization of American society. Aware of growing discontent within broader layers of the working class, the American political and media establishment seeks to divert attention from the growing chasm of social inequality by scapegoating immigrant workers and transforming the US-Mexico border into an armed camp. In this regard, Jindal’s policies bear little difference to that of any of the Republican or Democratic presidential candidates.

Republican Jeb Bush, the younger brother of George W. Bush, has also called for a crackdown on sanctuary cities. According to CNN Politics, Bush called for the cutting off of federal funds to sanctuary cities. He also detailed plans to further militarize the border by installing more “forward-operating bases,” while implementing high-tech surveillance drones, advanced sensors and radar. He also argued that border patrol agents should have access to federally protected lands, which he described as having “byzantine environmental rules and regulations.”

Bush also put forward a proposal for a “biometric exit” system to track the flow of individuals going to and from the United States. Such a system has already been tested by US Customs and Border Protection, in

which foreign visitors are subjected to finger scans on a handheld device by customs officers. This is yet another way the American government seeks to monitor the movements of citizens and foreign visitors.

Democratic candidate and former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton has a long record of anti-immigrant xenophobic policies. In 2003, she described herself as being “adamantly against illegal immigrants.” During her term as Senator of New York, she pursued policies that would “get tough” on immigrant workers. In a recent national television interview, Clinton joined the Republicans in attacking the policy of sanctuary cities.

In addition to scapegoating immigrants, the American ruling class seeks to use them as a platform of super-exploited cheap labor for Wall Street and the major corporations. Outlining her pro-business orientation, Clinton recently called for “comprehensive immigration reform” that would bring “millions of hard-working people into the formal economy” in order to “increase our gross domestic product by an estimated \$700 billion over 10 years.”

Democratic candidate Bernie Sanders, a self-described “socialist,” has long espoused chauvinism and xenophobia. He has repeatedly attacked immigrant workers, who he accuses of taking jobs from Americans. Sanders has sponsored multiple bills opposing the federal visa program, while supporting the immigration policy of Obama, who has deported more immigrants than any other administration in history. For his efforts, right-wing anti-immigrant talk show host Lou Dobbs called Sanders “one of the few straight-talkers in Congress.”

Jindal’s law-and-order approach further demonstrates the growing sentiment among America’s billionaires that basic democratic norms should be dispensed with. In March, South Carolina Republican Senator Lindsey Graham stated publicly that, were he president, he would use federal troops to hold legislators in session to prevent budget cuts to the military.



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