

Trump threatens to “send in the Feds” to Chicago

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President Donald Trump has threatened to “send in the Feds” to deal with an ongoing surge in homicides, largely due to gang conflicts, in Chicago, the third largest US city. Last year, murders in the city shot up to more than 760 from under 500 the year before.

Trump tweeted on Tuesday, “If Chicago doesn’t fix the horrible ‘carnage’ going on I will send in the Feds!”

Far from addressing the causes of the social crisis that has given rise to the spike in gun violence, to which Trump has pointed in his own cynical rhetoric about closed factories and lost jobs, the newly installed president is seeking to exploit the situation in Chicago to remove all restraints on police violence against the working class. This is under conditions where police in the United States kill more than 1,000 people a year, with the Chicago police and the Democratic city administration among the country’s worst culprits.

In an interview with ABC News Wednesday evening, Trump expounded on his tweet: “Now, if they want help, I would love to help them. I will send in what we have to send in. Maybe they’re not gonna have to be so politically correct. Maybe they’re being overly political correct.”

In other words, the city must crack down even more violently on working class and poor communities and suppress protests against police brutality. This echoes the position of far-right politicians, police officials and sections of the media that the Obama administration and state and local officials have been guilty of “hamstringing” the police and pandering to protests against a series of police murders over the past several years.

In fact, the Obama administration consistently defended the police and failed to prosecute a single cop caught in the act of killing an unarmed worker or youth.

At the same time, it cultivated racist groups such as Black Lives Matter that work to conceal the basic class issues involved in the epidemic of police killings and channel popular anger into the dead end of support for the Democratic Party.

The Chicago Police Department (CPD) has a long and filthy record of corruption and violence, including murder and torture to elicit confessions, spanning at least six decades. Just this month, the US Department of Justice released a report detailing systematic abuses and violations of citizens’ constitutional rights by CPD, whose officers were found to have fired their weapons indiscriminately, used Tasers to kill, employed deadly force against children, and physically and verbally abused detainees, targeting in particular minority populations and the mentally ill.

Chicago Mayor Rahm Emanuel has responded to Trump’s threats by declaring his openness to working with the new White House. Emanuel expressed his gratitude for the offer of federal assistance, while opposing the deployment of National Guard troops in the city. “Straight up I’m against it,” he declared.

Bringing in National Guard troops is a demand raised fairly regularly by members of his own party, particularly by candidates for City Council seats from Chicago’s impoverished South Side.

Chicago Police Department spokesman Anthony Guglielmi welcomed the opportunity to work with any number of federal agencies.

Trump’s statements on Chicago are a continuation of the law-and-order demagoguery that was a central component of his election campaign. Minutes after he was sworn in last Friday as the country’s 45th president, a page on the White House web site devoted to civil rights and police reform disappeared and was replaced with a page entitled “Standing Up For Our

Law Enforcement Community.”

With the appointment of the right-wing senator from Alabama, Jeff Sessions, as attorney general, Trump is putting in place an authoritarian government that will dramatically escalate the attack on democratic rights carried out by previous administrations.



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