

Trump shares video on social media featuring image of Biden hogtied with rope

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On Friday, ex-President Donald Trump shared a 20-second video on his Truth Social account featuring a painting depicting President Joe Biden with his arms and legs bound with rope. The violent imagery was attached to a large pickup truck festooned with Trump slogans and pro-police flags.

Appealing to the police, Trump captioned the video with the date of March 28, 2024, Long Island, New York. On that date, Trump appeared at the wake of Jonathan Diller, a New York City police officer who was killed in March. Diller is the first NYCPD cop to be killed in uniform in two years.

While police rarely die on the job from violent interactions with the public, this has not stopped the Trump campaign, as with the killing of Georgia college student Laken Riley, from using the death of Diller to position himself as the candidate of “law and order” in opposition to Biden.

Speaking at Diller’s wake on Thursday, Trump praised the police as “the greatest people we have.”

He said, “The Diller family will inevitably never be the same,” Trump said. “We have to stop it. ... We got to toughen it up. ... We need to have law and order.”

Diller’s funeral on Saturday was attended by some 50,000 police officers.

Since first running for office, Trump has consistently presented himself as an ally of the police in opposition to Biden and the Democrats, who, Trump falsely claims, want to “defund the police.” In reality, despite paying lip-service to police reform, Biden and the Democrats have boosted police budgets across the country, while Democratic mayors are overseeing the construction of multimillion-dollar police training centers in major cities.

On Saturday, the day after Trump posted the video featuring the two pick-up trucks that had pro-police slogans and the image of Biden hogtied, New York Rep. Anthony D’Esposito, a former cop, shared a picture from the Diller procession captioned, “Don’t ever cross us.” This authoritarian declaration, which has been viewed over 6.7 million times, prompted an avalanche of anger from social media users, with many denouncing D’Esposito as a fascist.

The appeals by Trump and the Republican Party to the right-wing and backward elements that dominate police departments bore fruit in Trump’s attempted coup of January 6, 2021. According to a 2023 paper by the Center for Policy & Research at Seton Hall University, titled “The January 6 Insurrectionists: Who They Are and What They Did,” of the 716 people prosecuted in the first year following the attack, 18.5 percent, or some 132 defendants, had a background in “law enforcement or military.”

Over the years, on popular social media sites such as Reddit and Twitter/X, users have uploaded photos of trucks from California to Kentucky to New York that have a similar violent decal. However, Trump’s Friday post appears to be the first time he has directly promoted imagery featuring Biden hogtied with a rope.

In a statement sent to major press outlets Friday night, Steven Cheung, a spokesman for the Trump campaign, defended the post as merely a “picture ... on the back of a pickup truck.” He accused “Democrats and crazed lunatics” of calling for violence and “weaponizing the justice system” against Trump.

Trump’s post Thursday, which is still up as of this writing, is one of many examples of the Trump campaign, and the Republican Party as whole,

normalizing fascist violence against their political opponents.

At a Republican fundraiser in Kansas several weeks ago, Republicans erected an effigy of Biden which they pummeled, and then shared the video on social media.

Trump also reposted an interview featuring Florida Republican operative Laura Loomer and attorney Paul Ingrassia. The latter is a member of the New York Young Republican Club (NYYRC) and was recently interviewed by Loomer because he filed an amicus brief in the Supreme Court in support of Trump's claim of absolute immunity from prosecution.

As a member of the NYYRC, in December of 2022 Ingrassia attended a fundraiser that was hosted by the Club and its president Gavin Wax, a member of the Proud Boys. The gala featured a speech by Georgia Rep. Marjorie Taylor Greene in which she boasted that the January 6 coup would have been successful if she and Steve Bannon had organized it, because "we would've been armed."



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