

**Remarks During an Emergency Operations Center Tour in Kenosha, Wisconsin
September 1, 2020**

The President. So I came to thank the law enforcement, the police. They're incredible. And the National Guard has been truly amazing. They all got together. They coalesced. The minute they got here, it was over.

And I'd like to ask you to say exactly what you told me, because I think it's really very interesting. You can take that off, if you'd like.

Sherriff David G. Beth of Kenosha County, WI. The——

The President You take it off, and I'll just stay a little further away. Right?

Sherriff Beth. Since this first occurred on Sunday night, we've had resources from all of the State of Wisconsin, and actually members of the Federal Government have been here, really, since the first day.

National Guard started coming Monday, and those numbers kept increasing. We've got officers from 40 different agencies throughout Wisconsin: the DNR, the State Patrol. And we've made a few phone calls and—on I believe it was Wednesday—more members of the Federal Government started arriving, and our numbers kept increasing.

And as all of these different members and our—what we do kept improving every single day. The operation kept improving.

And, truly, I want to thank the President, who's standing right here. I want to thank everybody who's part of this operation to help keep Kenosha safer and protect the people and protect the properties. And it's been getting better every single day. And I want to thank everybody.

The President. And the whole State of Wisconsin. It's been an incredible coming together of a lot of great people, especially law enforcement and the Guard.

Senator Ron Johnson, maybe you could say something, please.

Senator Ronald H. Johnson. Well, again, Mr. President, first of all, thank you for coming here and thank you for your decisiveness. Congressman Steil got here on the ground early, talked to the local leaders, and found out the local leaders wanted help. And so we put a call into you. And I know how accessible you are. You called them back immediately, offered whatever assistance.

[*At this point, Sen. Johnson continued his remarks, concluding as follows.*]

This should be a model on how we can end the rioting throughout America. But again, thank you for your resolve and your decisiveness.

The President. Thank you, Ron. And whether it's Portland, Oregon, we could have that done so quickly, so easily, your head would spin. It would end immediately. Last night they attacked the mayor's house. It's ridiculous.

All they have to do is ask, and we'll be there within—literally within minutes. We're set. We're all set to go in. We already have a big force there protecting the courthouse, and it's totally protected. We have 300 people; they're Homeland Security. It's totally protected.

Congressman, maybe you could say a few words? You called me originally, and we appreciate it. Please

Representative Bryan G. Steil. Thank you, Mr. President, for being here. I think today is a great opportunity for Kenosha to really begin to heal and to rebuild the city.

[Rep. Steil continued his remarks, concluding as follows.]

We now have public safety, we need to maintain public safety in Kenosha. Now we need to also heal. And today is an opportunity to begin the rallying cry to rebuild Kenosha and make it stronger than ever.

I can't thank you enough for being here, Mr. President.

The President. And who rejected the call originally?

Rep. Steil. Our Governor, Tony Evers, rejected your offer.

The President. But ultimately, he called, he said okay, and we sent in the group, and they had a lot of great people here to start with, I have to say.

Would you like to say something, please?

Chief of Police Daniel G. Miskinis of Kenosha, WI. Just a great deal of gratitude for everybody from across the State in law enforcement, the Federal Government, and certainly the Wisconsin National Guard and, I understand, from several other States.

What transpired here is an attack on America, and it can't happen in any community. The way to stop this is to act decisively while still protecting rights, but putting an end to it. And we appreciate the assistance.

The President. This ended within an hour, as soon as we announced we were coming, and then they saw we were here. This ended immediately. And it should be that way all over. Chicago could use a hand. New York could use a hand. Although, I'll tell you, if you let—New York's Finest and Chicago Police Department, they do a great job, but they're not allowed to do their work. A lot of times, you're not allowed to do your work. And they could do it themselves, but you have to be decisive, and you have to be tough, and you have to be strong, and you have to be willing to bring people in.

So the Federal Government, like it was in Wisconsin, the Federal Government is waiting; we just wait for a call. In Oregon, we have Portland, which is just every night—93 nights. And every day, we call: "Do you want us? Do you want us?" And last night they attacked very viciously the mayor's house, and we were ready to go in, just in case, if it got any worse. But it was bad. And this man just stands here and says, "No, we have a democracy. It's"—you don't have a democracy when that happens, actually; you have the opposite of a democracy.

So I want to thank you all—thank all of you for being here. But this is in really great shape, and we're looking at a couple of other locations. Now, we can do them all at one time. We're very well equipped. Our National Guard is great, and our military is beyond any military in the world. It's totally restocked and in great shape. We won't have to use military. I don't think we'd have to use military, but we're ready to go with whatever power we need to use.

In Washington, DC, we have a radical, liberal Mayor, a Democrat, and she's—I guess she just doesn't get it. But she's trying to work with the White House and with Secret Service, but it would be so easy to solve that. So we may have to do something there. It will take approximately 15 minutes.

You don't see people ripping down statues anymore, because I signed, essentially, a law. I signed a statute that: If you knock down a statue, you knock down a monument, it's 10 years in

prison. And amazingly, it stopped. You haven't had any problems since then, Ron. right? So it stopped.

So I just want to thank everybody. You have done a fantastic job. Ron, thank you very much. Congressman, great job. Really great job. Thank you all very much.

Shooting of Jacob Blake, Jr., by Police in Kenosha, Wisconsin/Protests and Civil Unrest

Q. Mr. President—[inaudible]—Jacob Blake? And do you believe the shooting was justified?

The President. Well, we have the pastor here, who's tremendous. He's a tremendous gentleman. I'm going to meet him in a little while. He represents the family. And I think it's probably better off if that's handled locally right now. It's under investigation, as you know. So I think it's much better. I actually suggested we handle it locally.

I was going to speak to the mother yesterday. I hear she's a very fine woman. I was going to speak to her. But then, I heard there were a lot of lawyers on the phone. I said: "I have enough lawyers in my life. I don't need to get involved with that." I spoke with the pastor. The pastor is going to see me in a little while. He is really a terrific guy, if you know him. He's a terrific guy. So I look forward to that.

But we're going to—this is going to heal very quickly. We're going to help them from an economic standpoint, and we're going to make a contribution to your law and to what we call "law and order." Some people think those are two terrible words: law and order. And they're not terrible at all. They're beautiful. They have to be used judiciously. They have to be used properly.

But I wish somebody would have called. When I called the Governor, I wish he would have accepted night one, instead of night three. Because night one, those stores would still be up. But he's better than many. He accepted. In all fairness to the Governor, he accepted. And when he accepted, it all ended.

So I want to thank the Governor, and I want to thank everybody, but, in particular, I want to thank your police and your great people from law enforcement. They've done a fantastic job. I want to thank you all. You've done a fantastic job.

Thank you all very much. Great job. Thank you.

Thank you very much, everybody.

Q. Mr. President, do you have a message for the Blake family? A message for them? The father—they said that your style of government increases racial divisions.

The President. Yes, thank you very much, everybody. Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:24 p.m. at Mary D. Bradford High School. In his remarks, he referred to Mayor Edward T. Wheeler of Portland, OR; Mayor Muriel E. Bowser of Washington, DC; James E. Ward, Jr., pastor, Insight Church in Skokie, IL; Gov. Anthony S. Evers of Wisconsin; and Julia Jackson, mother of Mr. Blake, who was shot multiple times during an encounter with police in Kenosha on August 23 and was treated at Froedtert Hospital in Wauwatosa, WI. A reporter referred to Jacob Blake, Sr., father of Mr. Blake.

Categories: Addresses and Remarks : Kenosha, WI :: Emergency operations center, tour.

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