



Written by [William F. Jasper](#) on January 5, 2015

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Federalized Police and a Police Czar?

“We need federal intervention without delay,” declared the “Reverend” Al Sharpton, in his December 8 column for the online *Huffington Post*. Capitalizing on the deaths of Trayvon Martin, Michael Brown, Eric Garner, and other black men to centralize police powers, Sharpton announced that his National Action Network had organized a series of demonstrations, to culminate in a national march on the U.S. Congress in Washington, D.C. on Saturday, December 13.



“Congress must immediately start hearings to deal with laws that will change the jurisdiction threshold for federal cases and policing,” Sharpton insists. “The executive branch has addressed this most pressing issue, and now it’s time the legislative branch do the same.”

“When local prosecutors fail to conduct a fair grand-jury investigation at the state level, as happened in Ferguson and Staten Island recently,” says Sharpton “the threshold is so high for the federal government to be able to take over the case. That must change.... And in order for federal authorities to step in, we must reform current laws.”

What about the U.S. Constitution, the supreme law of the land, which restricts federal involvement in criminal and policing matters to a very narrow area of jurisdiction? Rev. Al cannot be troubled with such trivialities. “The state has already proven that it cannot do the job,” he insists.

On December 13, thousands of protesters joined Sharpton’s March on Washington, and tens of thousands more engaged in similar protests in New York City, Boston, San Francisco, Los Angeles, and dozens of other cities.

This past August the Congressional Black Caucus wrote a letter to President Obama insisting, “The administration must quickly establish a national commission to review existing police policies and practices.” Even more ominously, the radical Congressional Black Caucus (CBC) demanded the appointment of a national police “Czar.” The CBC letter, which was signed by dozens of celebrities, activists, and academics, demanded:

The Administration must appoint a federal Czar, housed in the U.S. Department of Justice, who is specifically tasked with promoting the professionalization of local law enforcement, monitoring egregious law enforcement activities, and adjudicating suspicious actions of local law enforcement agencies that receive federal funding.

In an ironic twist, the CBC letter validly notes that “the militarization of police departments across the country is creating conditions that will further erode the trust that should exist between residents and the police who serve them. The proliferation of machine guns, silencers, armored vehicles and aircraft, and camouflage in local law enforcement units does not bode well for police-community relations, the future of our cities, or our country.” This has been the cry, as well, of many other liberal-left activists



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decrying the alleged “systemic racism” in American society, and especially in our local police departments.

But, as Thomas R. Eddlem pointed out in an online article for *The New American* in August, “The source of this militarization is not endemic racism, however; it has been federal intervention and aid through the Department of Defense’s Law Enforcement Support Office (LESO) under the auspices of fighting the ‘drug war’ and ‘terrorism.’” LESO notes on its website, “Since its inception [in 1991], the 1033 program has transferred more than \$5.1 billion worth of property.” According to LESO, more than 8,000 police agencies are currently availing themselves of military equipment from the Department of Defense 1033 program.

The federal goodies handed out under this program are transforming local police and sheriff’s departments into minions of a nationalized, federalized, centralized, militarized police force, something that has always been anathema to Americans who treasure freedom. There are, of course, many other federal programs under the Departments of Justice and Homeland Security that are also aiding this federalization process, from the FBI’s SWAT schools to various DOJ “consent decrees” and mandates.

Incredibly, though, the “progressives” who are railing the loudest against federal programs that are militarizing our police are also the same voices that are most loudly calling for further federalization of our police to cure the alleged problem of “systemic racism.”

The problem of police abuse will not be solved by nationalizing police authority under a federal “czar,” or by concentrating local law-enforcement agencies under a DOJ-approved Gestapo. Those are prescriptions for even more horrific police abuse. Our Founding Fathers had it right in determining that the most effective means of protecting the individual from oppression by government is to disperse the police power among multiple local agencies, while encouraging an armed citizenry that would serve as the ultimate check on abusive power.

Photo of Al Sharpton: AP Images



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