



Written by [James Murphy](#) on July 2, 2020

Florida Sheriff Will Deputize All Legal Gun Owners if Protesters Become Violent

One county sheriff in Florida has had enough of Black Lives Matter propaganda and the anti-police rhetoric being spouted by various members of the media. On Tuesday, Sheriff Darryl Daniels of Clay County, Florida, warned would-be rioters that he will make “special deputies of every lawful gun owner” in his county should he feel that protesters are becoming too much to handle.

Daniels, an African-American, made the remarks during a [video](#) in which he was surrounded by his officers and he ridiculed so-called civil-rights protesters as lawless.

Near the end of the video, Daniels warned any potential rioters that it was not just the sheriff’s office that would defend the county. “If we can’t handle you ... I will exercise the power and authority of the sheriff and I will make special deputies of every lawful gun owner in this county, and I’ll deputize them for this one purpose: to stand in the gap between lawlessness and civility.”

Clay County is in northeastern Florida, a suburb of Jacksonville. It has not yet seen any violent protests or riots, but Daniels had a message for those who might want to change that. “If you threaten to come to Clay County and you think for one second, we’ll bend our backs for you, you’re sadly mistaken,” Daniels said. “I know what happens when lawlessness prevails. And in this day and time God is raising up men and women just like the folks standing behind me, who will have strong backbones and will stand in the gap between lawlessness and the good citizenry we’re sworn to protect.”

Daniels also called out the media for creating and promulgating the false narrative that law enforcement is somehow broken and that the system they serve is inherently racist. “Don’t fall victim to subjecting yourself to this conversation that law enforcement is bad, that law enforcement is the enemy of the citizens that we’re sworn to protect and serve,” Daniels said. “We swore an oath, and in that oath we swore to support, protect and defend the Constitution.”

Daniels said that peaceful protesters would be respected and protected. “Yes, we’ll protect your constitutional rights as long as you remain under the umbrella of peaceful protest or peaceful march, but the second that you step out from under the protection of the Constitution, we’ll be waiting on you. And we’ll give you everything you want.”

Daniels ends the video with the message to would be troublemakers: “You’ve been warned.”

Daniels is a first-term sheriff who is seeking reelection and is said to have higher ambitions for the future: a congressional run. Challengers in the sheriff’s race are calling the video a political stunt and claiming that Daniels is inviting trouble to the county.

Mike Taylor, a former agent with the Florida Department of Law Enforcement and one of Daniels’ challengers, said that Daniels’ message was an insult to the training that officers go through to become





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a deputy sheriff.

“We train under intense situations to control the adrenaline dump,” Taylor said. “And we don’t do a perfect job of it, but we train to be prepared to make decisions under pressure. That’s necessary to be effective. To think we can put anyone in that role and it’ll be okay, we’re asking for a much bigger problem and inviting chaos and anarchy in the streets.”

Taylor — who has been endorsed by former Florida governor Jeb Bush — also questioned Daniels’ intentions in making the video. “I don’t believe it was intended to be a pro-police message. I believe it was intended to be a propaganda message. Real police professionalism actually acknowledges that professionally trained police officers cannot be replaced by a swearing-in ceremony.”

Another campaign rival, former Atlantic Beach Police Chief Michelle Cook accused Daniels of making the protest movement in the nation about himself. “Instead of dealing with the real issue in a meaningful way, he is behaving like a reality show sheriff and calling attention to himself,” Cook said. “To make matters worse, he pulled 18 officers off the streets to be used as props for his taxpayer-funded campaign stunt.”

His rivals do have points about Daniels. And the sheriff is currently under investigation by the FDLE for an incident that occurred when he was with the Jacksonville Sheriff’s office — an alleged false arrest of a female officer that Daniels allegedly had an affair with.

But in spite of those potential flaws, it was still nice to hear a duly-elected official stand wholly behind his force and vow to protect his jurisdiction against the riots we’ve been seeing around the nation. Whether it’s the Minneapolis City Council vowing to disband its police force, New York Mayor Bill de Blasio agreeing to cut \$1 billion from his department’s budget, or the media’s steady drumbeat about these protests all being “largely” peaceful, the nation’s law-enforcement community seems to be in retreat in the face of this short-sighted and politically motivated Black Lives Matter movement.

At least this one county in Florida isn’t retreating.

Image: [Screenshot of video by FOX 30 in Jacksonville, Florida](#)

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