

CECI N'EST PAS LA VIOLENCE: THE TREACHERY OF CHAD WOLF

I've had this image stuck in my head since the non-lawyer, movie-villainesque Secretary of Homeland Security complained about violence in Portland, Oregon.



In a now-deleted tweet, acting DHS Secretary Wolf posted this with three other photos in which he is looking at graffiti deposited on the federal courthouse's exterior walls.

Violence, he calls it.

His nonsensical labeling called to mind a surrealist work with which you are likely familiar:



Image: La Trahison des Images (The Treachery of Images) by Rene Magritte, c. 1929, owned by Los Angeles County Museum of Art, via Wikipedia. Displayed here under Fair Use.

Just as this is not a pipe, what Wolf displays in his photos is not violence even if he calls it that. This palimpsest of paint is not “the intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against oneself, another person, or against a group or community, which either results in or has a high likelihood of resulting in injury, death, psychological harm, maldevelopment, or deprivation.”[1]

It's graffiti expressing outrage against state violence, a protest not unlike that in December 16, 1773, when protesters demonstrated against the state by tossing tea into Boston Harbor.

Tossing the tea wasn't violence. It was a protest expressing rejection of oppressive state policies which denied colonists both representation and fair competition in the marketplace.

The graffiti in Portland protests and rejects systematic abuses by police – the intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against persons of color which has resulted in higher rates of injury, death, excessive prosecution, and constant low level fear of police.

Wolf has been pushing this 'graffiti is violence' argument for days now. You'd think

someone with a bachelor's degree in history would have learned that graffiti is historically anything but violence.



Photo: Ancient Pompeii graffito caricature of a politician, by Zebulon via Wikipedia (CC0)

What destroyed Pompeii wasn't the graffiti on its walls.

He's also gone on a right-wing media tour, shifting his language to equate vandalism with terrorism. What horse shit. It wasn't burning boxes and spray paint which took down the World Trade Center, giving rise the department he now leads.



Wolf has linked protests and vandalism – the latter can't be blamed solely on protesters in

the absence of any investigative effort to determine if agents provocateur were involved – with “violent anarchism,” using that label 72 times in a list of grievances against anti-racism protesters. Again, more bullshit.

It’s amazing how few federal employees and Portland police have been injured amid all this violence Wolf claims has occurred; it’s equally amazing how the streets of Portland continue to function under the pressure of all these anarchists.

The Oregonian points out the PORTLAND CHAOS images “come almost exclusively from tiny points in the city” during late-night moments when “only a couple hundred or fewer protesters and scores of police officers are out in...coronavirus-hollowed downtown”
<https://t.co/FowmNuywhH>

– Daniel Dale (@ddale8) July 18, 2020

Gosh, just look at the devastation – people walking about pandemic-emptied streets unimpeded, minding their own business. Unmarked security forces conducting undocumented warrantless arrests are the answer to this kind of outrageous calm, aren’t they?

Chad Wolf is an idiot who’s damaged what little remained of Homeland Security’s legitimacy. Even employees within DHS have expressed concerns about their mission under Wolf’s questionable leadership.

NEW: The DHS response to protests in PDX has disturbed & angered many employees, who called the deployment of the federal force an unusual maneuver that could do long term damage to the agency’s reputation.

From conversations today with 17 DHS employees:<https://t.co/znp7wsx5kn>

– Hamed Aleaziz (@Haleaziz) July 21,

2020

Wolf certainly isn't ensuring the security of this country by actively targeting American citizens exercising their First Amendment rights, sending out personnel untrained in crowd control and riot response to deal with amorphous groups' peaceful protests, armed to the teeth and ready to toss pepper spray and non-lethal loads at the drop of a hat, fomenting violence.

Federal police strike protester with baton, use pepper spray and tear gas outside courthouse in Portland
pic.twitter.com/VX2xTVaaYq

– Zane Sparling (@PDXzane) July 19, 2020

It's so patently obvious Wolf's minions have no intention of deescalating tensions and aren't there to protect federal property but instead to mete out punishment even on passive dissenters. Indeed, *Wolf is the source of violence.*

Navy vet seen in viral vid clashing w/federal officers in Portland tells @ABC he wants to use attention on him "to refocus this whole discussion back to Black Lives Matter."

"If I had been a black veteran...do you think I would have gotten as much attention as I did?"

pic.twitter.com/OZHsFCqkE3

– Evan McMurry (@evanmcmurry) July 22, 2020

This Navy veteran who reminded Wolf's minions of their oaths put them on notice. Any of these federal employees who are not upholding their oaths by executing unlawful orders and violating civil rights should be investigated and prosecuted. They have personal agency and should be pushing back at Wolf for failing his own oath

of office.

Meanwhile, the real work of Homeland Security is given short shrift in order to unlawfully surveil Americans using protests as a pretext to treat citizens like hostile foreign adversaries. This is yet another distortion of words and meaning, shifting the identity of our country's enemies from intrusive foreign agents and terroristic white supremacists to citizens who have legitimate protests against a system which is killing Americans with impunity.

Seriously, though: is Chad Wolf going to start spying on moms, invading their Facebook groups, Instagram cooking posts, and bookclub blogs to suss their plans this evening?

Jesus Christ feds came out of the courthouse in Portland and fired a flash bang at the moms against police brutality. At least one of these mothers is pregnant.

pic.twitter.com/4qajHKtvaq

– Joshua Potash (@JoshuaPotash) July 19, 2020

Is he going to start calling mothers 'enemies of the people'?

Here come the Moms, headed the Justice Center in Portland. (video by @abrookeherbert)
pic.twitter.com/3H1ZYHcPDx

– The Oregonian (@Oregonian) July 21, 2020

When moms in yoga pants and bike helmets are under attack for protecting peaceful protesters, Wolf needs to stop the word games and ask himself just who the real enemy is, and whose side he's really on.

As one sign held by a mom read, "Step Off,

Chad.”

It's time for Wolf to go.

[1] Definition from The World Health
Organization's *World report on violence and
health*