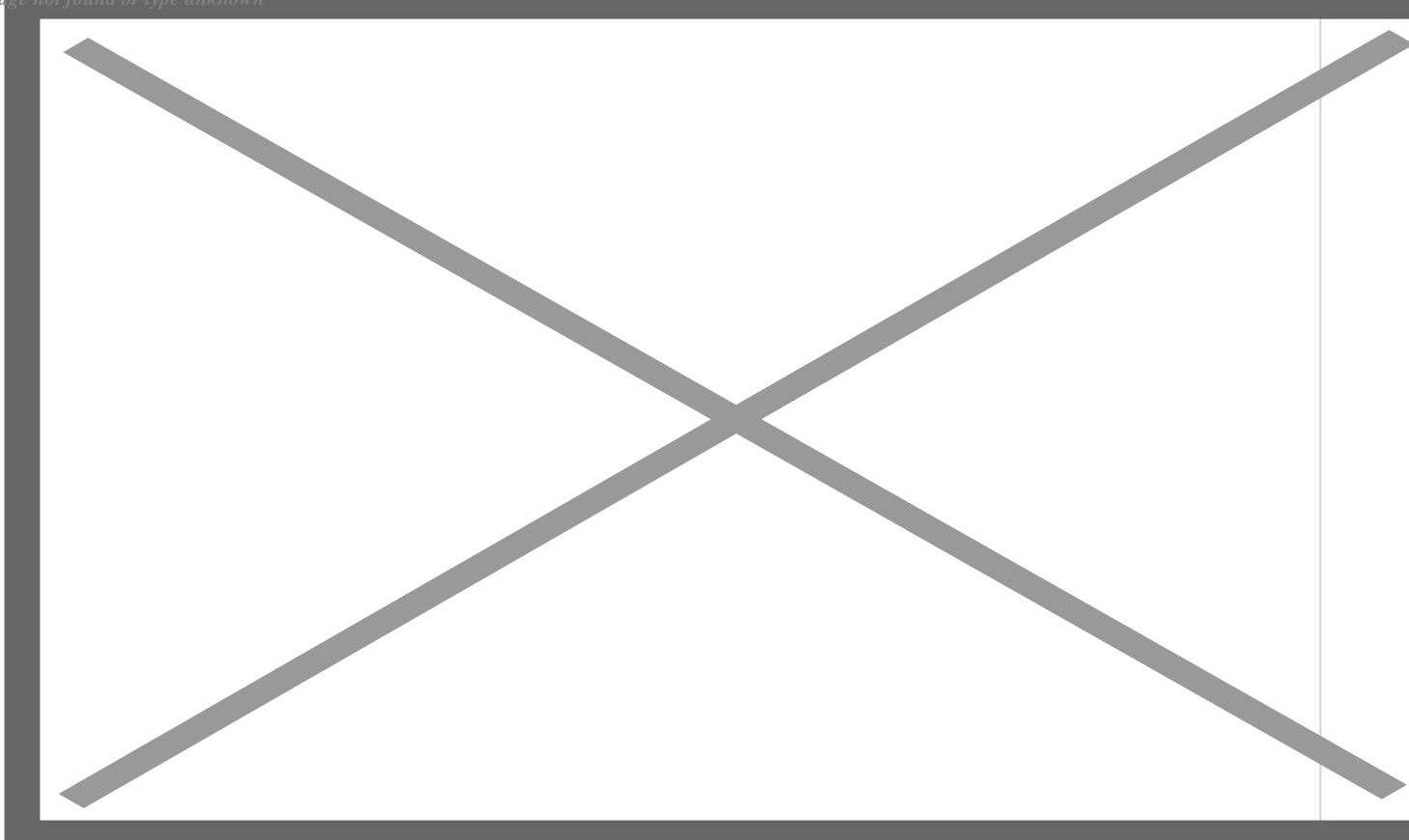


Trump visits Kenosha, calls anti-racism protests "terrorism"

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Donald Trump toured an area damaged during protests in Kenosha, Wisconsin. (Photo: Evan Vucci/AP)

Kenosha, September 1 (RHC)-- U.S. President Donald Trump decried violence at recent racial justice protests as "domestic terror" while denying there is systemic racism within U.S. law enforcement during a visit to Kenosha, Wisconsin.

On Tuesday, the president arrived in the Wisconsin city where protests have continued since police shot Jacob Blake seven times in the back during an encounter on August 23rd. Local officials and members of Blake's family had requested that Trump stay away for fear he would further agitate the situation, which has at times turned violent with property damage and two protesters killed last week.

"We don't need more pain and division from a president set on advancing his campaign at the expense of our city," Justin Blake, an uncle, said in a statement as the family of Jacob Blake, who was paralysed in the shooting, held a "community celebration" during Trump's visit. "We need justice and relief for our vibrant community," he said.

After landing in Wisconsin, a key battleground state in the upcoming election, Trump toured the charred remains of a block besieged by violence and fire and spoke to the owners of a century-old furniture store that had been destroyed.

While meeting with local law enforcement, he blasted Democrats for what he described as enabling the violence and again took credit for deploying the US National Guard to the city, even though Wisconsin's governor activated the troops and sought reinforcements from other state forces without the involvement of the federal government.

"These are not acts of peaceful protests, but really domestic terror," Trump said during a round table with law enforcement, referring to objects being thrown at police officers and property damage.

"Reckless far-left politicians continue to push the destructive message that our nation or our law enforcement are oppressive or racist, they'll throw out any word that comes to them," he added.

The visit comes amid weeks of racial justice protests across the country that began after the police killing of George Floyd in Minnesota in May. Several high-profile killings of Black citizens have since fuelled the discord.

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