

Don't Follow the Feds

June 17, 2019

"Federal agents never wear body cameras," *The Washington Post* reports, "and they prohibit local officers from wearing them on their joint operations."

That's why a growing number of local law enforcement agencies are doing what Atlanta's police chief and mayor "decided late last month," pulling "out of joint task forces with the Drug Enforcement Administration, the FBI and the U.S. Marshals Service."

The Justice Department supplies the usual excuses for their lack of transparency: they are "protecting sensitive or tactical methods" and "concerned about privacy interests of



St. Paul (Minn.) Police Chief Todd Axtell argues, referring to the Justice Department's funding and training of local police forces in body-camera usage. "It's ironic they aren't complying with what they preach to be so important in policing."

Ironic? Sure.

Par for the course? Indeed.

The bad example federal police agencies set is hardly limited to body-camera use. In states where legislation has reduced or ended the outrageous practice of civil asset forfeiture — whereby police can take and keep cash and property from people never accused or convicted of any crime — the Feds are there again to facilitate the thievery known as "equitable sharing."

"Federal forfeiture policies are more permissive than many state policies," a 2016 *Post* report explains, "allowing police to keep up to 80 percent of assets they seize."

Make sure your local and state police don't follow the Feds.

This is Common Sense. I'm Paul Jacob.

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third parties." But as Houston Police Chief Art Acevedo reminds, "if there's a legitimate need to redact any [footage], there's a process available for that through the courts."

It is the height of hypocrisy, for the use of body cams has been "what they've been preaching,"