

Poor Minorities Hurt Most by Violent Protests and Looting

Louis DeBroux



Following the horrific and unjustified death of George Floyd, a black man, at the hands of white Minneapolis police officer Derek Chauvin, large groups of protesters gathered in cities across the U.S. Soon, however, peaceful protests turned into mayhem, with rioters kicking, punching, and throwing bricks at police and even innocent bystanders; setting homes, businesses, and vehicles on fire; and shattering store windows before rushing in to loot everything from the shelves.

Time after time in these Democrat-run cities and even in the halls of Congress, politicians rushed to literally prostrate themselves before not only the protesters but the antifa and those who are setting their cities aflame, eager to show solidarity with them.

In these same cities there is a growing call to "defund the police," redirecting money from police budgets to mental-health programs, public housing, and education. In Minneapolis, decimated by rioters for more than a week, the all-Democrat city council went a step further, promising to "dismantle the police department" altogether, though members didn't explain who will now protect lives and property.

Sadly, it is the poor minorities politicians claim to care so much about who suffer most.

In Chicago, Democrat Mayor Lori Lightfoot gained notoriety recently by threatening citizens with arrest and jail time for violations of her COVID-19 stay-at-home order. Yet she seems completely incompetent at quelling the rioting, looting, and arson that devastated her city.

These same politicians justify such lawlessness by blaming poverty, poor education, or "systemic racism" — a seemingly odd claim for cities run by Democrats for decades.

Whatever the excuses, it won't exempt them from the consequences of their failure to control the waves of crime pouring over their neighborhoods and cities, and businesses are taking notice.

Mayor Lightfoot is now pleading with Walmart and other retailers not to abandon her city after their stores were looted, vandalized, and set on fire, with millions of dollars lost to theft and millions more in damage to the buildings. Walmart is silent on whether it will rebuild.

In Louisville, Kroger is one of two grocery stores serving 60,000 residents in the city's predominantly poor, black West End neighborhood. The store was boarded up in anticipation of protests and looting, yet looters still managed to break into the store and steal carts full of merchandise.

In Minneapolis, the Lake Street Target was almost complete destroyed as looters stole everything in sight, destroyed shelves and displays, and broke open cash registers with hammers.

For years, minority advocates and "social justice" warriors have decried the "food deserts" in poor minority neighborhoods. A food desert is an area where crime, shoplifting, and looting have made it impossible for grocery stores to be profitable.

In Minneapolis, nine of the city's neighborhoods have "nearly become a food desert" after a Cub Foods, Target, two Aldi stores, and numerous neighborhood markets were damaged during protests. Chicago also has new food deserts due to these "protests."

These same activists publicly guilt and excoriate businesses and corporations for refusing to open stores in these poor minority neighborhoods but completely ignore why they won't. Grocery stores operate on an average profit margin of 1-3%, so persistent shoplifting can easily cause the store to lose money, and no business can consistently operate at a loss. And in the aftermath of these riots, it is minority-owned businesses that were hit hardest. With many already struggling to make a profit, and with no cash reserves, they will simply go bankrupt.

Why would any major retailer or small business rebuild in these neighborhoods when politicians are siding with the looters and rioters and against police? Why invest in rebuilding with no assurance this won't happen again?

And once these stores leave, where do residents go? How do poor minority senior citizens get groceries when they don't have a car and all of the grocery stores have permanently shuttered? Many are forced to take a bus or walk miles to the nearest store, only able to buy what they can physically carry back. But what about those too frail or too sick to walk or take a bus?

At the end of the day, what have these "protesters" accomplished? Officer Chauvin had already been arrested when much of the rioting and looting occurred. Those engaged in the rioting and looting claimed to be doing so in an effort to bring attention to the injustices perpetrated against poor minorities.

How? By rioting, looting, and destroying homes and businesses in these poor communities? By destroying black-owned businesses that don't have enough money to rebuild?

William Wright understands. He's a black resident of Chicago's notoriously poor and crime-ridden South Side. The store he takes his grandma to each Sunday was looted and destroyed last week, and Wright wants to know what good it did.

"What did we accomplish, aside from take our property value down and embarrass ourselves?"

Good question, William.