

## Democratic Hypocrisy: **COVID Lockdown Protests Bad; Riots Good**

**W**hile Democratic mayors and governors have been unbending on lockdown orders and social-distancing guidelines during the coronavirus outbreak, they've proven their hypocrisy in response to the mass demonstrations and riots over the in-custody death of George Floyd.

In Minneapolis, where Floyd died in police custody, Mayor Jacob Frey responded to claims that his coronavirus lockdown orders violated the First Amendment by claiming in-person worship services could spell a "public-health disaster." But while Minneapolis has been burning for days as a result of riots and demonstrations over the death of Floyd, Frey's response is to hand out masks to rioters and allow public gatherings of more than 10 so that "protesters" can burn buildings.

"The city encourages everyone to exercise caution to stay safe while participating in demonstrations, including wearing masks and physical distancing as much as possible to prevent the spread of COVID-19," a news release read. "The city has made hundreds of masks available to protesters this week."

In other words, it is justifiable to burn a police station, but you better not cough without a mask when you do so.

Fox News recalls New York Governor Andrew Cuomo's intolerance of protesters who demanded an end to the coronavirus lockdowns last month. Cuomo declared at a news conference, "You have no right to jeopardize my health ... and my children's health and your children's health," and has fined business owners who have attempted to reopen.

But for Cuomo, the protests against George Floyd are another story. Cuomo said on May 29 he "stands" with those who defy stay-at-home orders to demonstrate against the death of Floyd.

"Nobody is sanctioning the arson, and the thuggery and the burglaries, but the protesters and the anger and the fear and the frustration? Yes. Yes, and the demand is for justice."

What about the anger and fear and frustration of individuals who are fed up with the state's response to the coronavirus and the lockdown orders, scared that their businesses will never be able to recover, and angry that they have lost their rights? And what right does the governor have to determine which laws are okay to break and by whom?

New York City Mayor Bill de Blasio said on May 31 that



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he supports the "non-violent protests" over Floyd's death, a very different tune from April, when he told the Jewish community after a funeral gathering violated the social-distancing guidelines that "the time for warnings has passed."

"I want to just say anyone who wants to protest, we're going to protect your right to protest, but please also respect [that] the cop in front of you did not create the problem," de Blasio told listeners on the *Brian Lehrer Show* on WNYC radio.

The *New York Post* reports the protesters in New York City have "largely flouted social distancing rules," but this

prompted no criticism from de Blasio, who said in May that large gatherings "spread the disease and help kill people."

Just last month, de Blasio declared that public protests over advocating for reopening the city were prohibited. "We're not allowing any kind of gathering, period," the mayor said at a press briefing.

"I don't care if it's 20 people or a hundred people or a thousand people, it's not going to be allowed. So the point is, if you gather, NYPD is coming there to give you a summons and if you resist, to arrest you, period, across all communities."

The rules have changed dramatically, however, when it comes to the Floyd rallies, even as they, unlike the coronavirus protests, have devolved into full-fledged riots with violence and looting.

What's more, de Blasio has asked police to respond to the violent and destructive protests with "a light touch" because the protesters are "undeniably angry for a reason."

Los Angeles Mayor Eric Garcetti threatened to cut power and water to businesses that reopened during the stay-at-home orders and vowed to stop "irresponsible and selfish" behavior during the so-called public health crisis. But mass gatherings are suddenly acceptable as protesters violently demonstrate against "racism." "I will always protect Angelenos' right to make their voices heard," Garcetti said.

In Washington, D.C., Mayor Muriel Bowser threatened violators of coronavirus stay-at-home orders with jail time and fines of up to \$5,000, but Bowser's stance on social distancing and lockdowns has changed in response to the mass demonstrations over Floyd's death.

"We are grieving hundreds of years of institutional racism.... People are tired, sad, angry and desperate for change," the Democrat said. Never mind the fact that the rioters attacked a news crew or injured dozens of Secret Service agents.

Americans are waking up to the double standard, however. ■

Raven Clabough has been a writer for THE NEW AMERICAN since 2010.