



PORTLAND ON FIRE: THE SUMMER OF VIOLENCE

November 2024

TOPLINE POINTS

- ★ During the summer of 2020, local police in Portland were unable to do their jobs with protestors and rioters overtaking the streets, leading the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) to step in.
- ★ Liberal public officials ignored the destruction and utter chaos that unfolded in the city in the summer of 2020, costing taxpayers millions of dollars in damages.
- ★ An America First approach to public safety emphasizes the need for increased support and respect for law enforcement, accountability for criminal actions, and proactive measures to ensure public safety, contrasting sharply with Harris's policies and rhetoric.

Lenient criminal justice policies can endanger communities, so accountability is essential in ensuring criminal perpetrators face the consequences of their actions. Supporting law enforcement is also crucial. They uphold the rule of law, which is a foundational principle of the Nation, and anti-police sentiments only undermine their efforts to promote public safety. Additionally, rogue progressive prosecutors who implement liberal policies have weakened public safety, and Americans must demand that these officials fulfill their duties to hold criminals accountable and protect the public.

CIVIL UNREST AND RADICAL LIBERAL VIOLENCE SET PORTLAND ABLAZE IN 2020

During the summer of 2020, liberal violent agitators, many of whom were operating under the guise of Antifa, rioted throughout Portland, causing tremendous destruction and leaving crumbled communities in their wake.

- ★ The Portland Police Bureau spent \$6.9 million on overtime pay protecting civilians and local landmarks in June and July 2020 alone.
- ★ Nearly 1,000 arrests were made during the summer of 2020.
 - Over 90 percent of those cases were dismissed or not pursued by the Multnomah County District Attorney's Office, led by rogue progressive prosecutor Mike Schmidt.
- ★ Due to a lack of support from their local officials (Democrat Portland Mayor Ted Wheeler and then-Governor Kate Brown of Oregon), local police often had no choice but to retreat in the face of overwhelming chaos and violence caused by liberal violent agitators.
- ★ Mayor Wheeler and the Oregon Legislature limited the circumstances where police officers could use tear gas to disperse angry crowds. The Portland City Council slashed the police budget and forbade police from cooperating with federal law enforcement.



DESTRUCTION OF FEDERAL PROPERTY

Ahead of Fourth of July weekend in 2020, hundreds of federal agents and law enforcement officers were called in to protect the Hatfield Federal Courthouse, located in downtown Portland, which had become the focus of violence perpetrated by Antifa and other liberal violent agitators. Due to liberal state and local politicians prohibiting local law enforcement from assisting federal law enforcement in protecting the building, weeks of preventable violence and property destruction ensued. Federal law required DHS to protect the federal building, a task made nearly untenable without state and local law enforcement's assistance.

- ★ Amid eight weeks of violence, rioters started fires, bludgeoned and assaulted federal officers, used commercial-grade fireworks as weapons, and deployed saws and power tools in an attempt to break into and destroy the courthouse.
- ★ More than 750 DHS officers were deployed to protect Portland's federal buildings.
- ★ Every one of the approximately 62 people arrested by DHS or other federal law enforcement was connected with the attacks on federal property or federal law enforcement.
- ★ Liberal violent agitators caused over 245 injuries to federal law enforcement officers, some of whom were injured multiple times and some seriously.
 - “The most serious injury to an officer to date occurred when a protester wielding a two-pound sledgehammer struck an officer in the head and shoulder when the officer tried to prevent the protester from breaking down a door to the Hatfield Courthouse,” according to a statement. Other injuries included “broken bones, hearing damage, eye damage, a dislocated shoulder, sprains, strains, and contusions.”
- ★ The damage and destruction caused by arson, looting, and vandalism was estimated to be more than \$2 million, including repairs to the Mark O. Hatfield Federal Courthouse, the Edith Green-Wendall Wyatt Federal Building, the Gus J. Solomon U.S. Courthouse, the Pioneer Courthouse, and the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement building.
- ★ Footage showed Antifa rioters attempting to force their way into the courthouse while chanting “F*** the United States!” Later that same evening, rioters set a fire outside the Hatfield courthouse entrance.
- ★ “This siege can end if state and local officials decide to take appropriate action instead of refusing to enforce the law. DHS will not abdicate its solemn duty to protect federal facilities and those within them. Again, I reiterate the Department’s offer to assist local and state leaders to bring an end to the violence perpetuated by anarchists,” said then-acting DHS Secretary Chad Wolf.



PORTLAND CIVILIANS & PUBLIC OFFICIALS: IN THEIR OWN WORDS

Instead of unequivocally condemning the violence and civil unrest, Mayor Wheeler and Governor Brown refused assistance from federal officials during the 2020 riots.

- ★ Mayor Wheeler signed a [letter](#) asking then-President Trump's administration to pull federal resources out of Portland, Oregon.
 - "The unilateral deployment of these forces into American cities is unprecedented and violates fundamental constitutional protections and tenets of federalism," the letter read.
- ★ In a statement, Portland City Commissioner Chloe Eudaly [said](#) that the Trump Administration violated Portland residents' constitutional rights by inhibiting their citizens' right to protest.
 - "This resolution serves as a statement of our opposition to their presence in our city, direction to our police bureau, a template for policies that other cities can advance, and a national call to action," she said.
- ★ Months after repeatedly refusing to use local resources to stem the violence in Portland, Mayor [Ted Wheeler](#) then [changed his tune](#), promising to "push back harder" [against](#) anarchists and Antifa radicals after [another riot](#) rocked the city on New Year's Eve, admitting that months-long efforts to stem the violence had failed.
- ★ Wheeler admitted it was hard for him and others "to accept the reality that there are just some people on this planet who are bent on criminal destruction; that there are some people who truly just want to watch the world burn."

AN AMERICA FIRST APPROACH TO LIBERAL VIOLENCE AND CIVIL UNREST

- ★ **Accountability**
 - ★ Criminals must be held accountable for their actions. Progressive criminal justice policies that coddle criminals will only make our communities less safe. Americans must insist on law and order, which begins by ensuring criminals face consequences for their criminal behavior.
- ★ **Supporting Law Enforcement**
 - ★ Our Nation was founded upon the principle that no one is above the law. Our country's law enforcement community is tasked with upholding this foundational element of our society, and we must support them in their efforts to do so. Anti-police sentiment and calls to "defund the police" only undermine the law enforcement community and make our Nation less safe.
- ★ **Ending Abuse of the Criminal Justice System by Rogue Prosecutors**
 - ★ Rogue progressive [prosecutors](#) have systematically undermined public safety in the communities in which they have implemented their liberal progressive criminal justice policies. Americans must demand that their local criminal justice officials uphold the obligations of their office and ensure that criminal perpetrators are held accountable for their actions.

