

May 26, 2015

Charles Krauthammer says the mess in Iraq is the president's fault.

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It gets worse. The Gulf states' top leaders, betrayed and bitter, ostentatiously boycott President Obama's failed Camp David summit. "We were America's best friend in the Arab world for 50 years," laments Saudi Arabia's former intelligence chief.

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Our friends in Great Britain can also recognize the president's mistakes. This from The Telegraph,UK.

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Never fear the disasters in the Middle East, [Andrew Malcolm](#) says the president has just the solution - fighting global warming.

Finally, President Obama addressed what he sees as the nation's worst security threat, just days after the fall of Ramadi to ISIS and North Korea's declaration that it has miniaturized a nuclear warhead to fit on an ICBM capable of reaching the United States.

In a speech to graduates at the Coast Guard Academy, Obama said, yes, yes, terrorism is a grave danger. But there's another one. "We cannot, and we must not, ignore a peril that can affect generations," the commander-in-chief declared ominously.

That threat? Global warming.

"Cadets," Obama intoned, "the threat of a changing climate cuts to the very core of your service. You've been drawn to water — like the poet who wrote, 'the heart of the great ocean sends a thrilling pulse through me.' You know the beauty of the sea, but you also know its unforgiving power." ...

Turning our attention, once again, to the disaster in waiting, [Matthew Continetti](#) comments on Clinton's press strategy.

There it was—the classic Hillary charm. Close to a month had passed since the Democratic frontrunner answered questions from the press. So this week, when reporters were invited to gawk at the spectacle of Clinton sitting with “everyday lowans,” Ed Henry of Fox wanted to know: Would the former secretary of state take a moment to respond to inquiries from non-stage-managed reporters?

Before Henry was able even to finish his sentence, however, Clinton interrupted him, tut-tutting his impertinent shouting and raising her hand, empress-like, to quell her subject. After a few seconds of talking over each other Clinton must have realized that she had to give Henry an answer. Whereupon she said, slowly and sarcastically: “I might. I'll have to ponder it.” What a kidder.

After the photo-op was over, Clinton did take six questions from reporters—raising the total number of media questions she has answered since announcing her candidacy in April to a whopping 26. She committed no gaffes, but unleashed the full blizzard of Clintonian misdirection, omission, dodging, bogus sentimentality, false confidence, and aw-shucks populism. Voting for the Iraq war was a “mistake,” like the kind you make on a test; she and Bill are lucky people (that's one way of describing them); Charlotte needs to be able to grow up in an America where every little boy and girl has the chance to go from public office to a foreign-funded slush fund; and family courtier and dirty trickster Sid Blumenthal is just an “old friend” who sent her emails about Libya, where he had business dealings, so that she could get out of her “bubble.”

Not much for an enterprising reporter to go on. And for all we know, the ice caps will have melted before Clinton submits to more questions. It's part of her strategy: limiting press

availabilities also lessens the chances of another “dead broke” moment, of giving answers that raise more questions. Clinton is busy—raising money, positioning herself on the left to thwart a liberal insurgent, doting on Iowa so as not to repeat her defeat there in 2008. Talking to reporters would be a distraction or, worse, an error. ...

Congrats to the president and other leftists - the police in Baltimore have given up. Jonathan Tobin knows who the real victims will be. So we get more unintended consequences of liberal foolishness.

From last summer’s disturbances in Ferguson, Missouri to the more recent riots in Baltimore, the country has been engaged in a debate about police violence that has hinged on accusations of systematic racism. Regardless of the findings about the shooting in Ferguson or the racial identity of the Baltimore officers charged in the death of Freddie Gray, a narrative about police racism has become entrenched in our popular culture that has remained impervious to reason or the facts. One of the consequences of this war on police that has been encouraged by statements coming from the very top of our government, including the president and the attorney general, have been incidents of violence against police. When officers go down that generates some attention, yet less discussed is the way the lives of people in poverty-stricken minority neighborhoods are affected by this attempt to blame the nation’s ills on white racism. But as the Wall Street Journal reports today, it is precisely they who are suffering as arrests have gone down in Baltimore in the last month while violent crime has increased dramatically.

In the weeks after Gray’s death as scrutiny and criticism of the Baltimore police has intensified, arrests have gone down by a rate of 40 percent when compared to the same period of time in 2013 and 2014. What makes this figure so startling is that it includes the hundreds that were arrested during the riots that rocked portions of the city. At the same time, violence in the Western district of the city where the riots occurred has gone up in a way far outpacing the increase in the rest of the city. ...

Not all American cities are governed by Baltimore style idiots. Paul Mirengoff posts on Cleveland's police.

On Saturday, a Cleveland judge ruled that Officer Michael Brelo was not guilty of voluntary manslaughter and felonious assault in the 2012 deaths of Timothy Russell and Malissa Williams following a 22-mile car chase. The judge found that although Brelo did fire many shots at Russell and Williams, so did other officers. Thus, he could not find beyond a reasonable doubt that Brelo’s bullets — and no others — killed Williams and Russell.

The judge also found Brelo not guilty of the charge of felonious assault. He ruled that Brelo’s decision to use force was “constitutionally reasonable.” Although no gun was found in the vehicle of the deceased, the officer’s “perceptions were objectively reasonable,” the judge concluded.

It was feared that, in the aftermath of this controversial decision, the inevitable protests might turn into riots. So far, however, they have not.

Why not? Probably because the Cleveland police have declined to tolerate lawlessness. Paula Bolyard of PJ Media reports: ...

The Cartoonists are strong again.

Washington Post

[You want hypotheticals? Here's one.](#)

The Mess in Iraq Is Obama's Fault

by Charles Krauthammer

Ramadi [falls](#). The Iraqi army flees. The great [60-nation anti-Islamic State coalition](#) so grandly proclaimed by the Obama administration is nowhere to be seen. Instead, it's the defense minister of *Iran* [who flies into Baghdad](#), an unsubtle demonstration of who's in charge — while the U.S. air campaign proves futile and America's alleged strategy for combating the Islamic State is in freefall.

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We are scraping bottom. Following six years of President Obama's steady and determined withdrawal from the Middle East, America's standing in the region has collapsed. And yet the [question incessantly asked](#) of the various presidential candidates is not about that. It's a retrospective hypothetical: Would you have invaded Iraq in 2003 if you had known then what we know now?

First, the question is not just a hypothetical but an inherently impossible hypothetical. It contradicts itself. Had we known there were no weapons of mass destruction, the very question would not have arisen. The premise of the war — the basis for going to the U.N., to the Congress and, indeed, to the nation — was Iraq's possession of WMD in violation of the central condition for the cease-fire that ended the 1991 Gulf War. No WMD, no hypothetical to answer in the first place.

Second, the "if you knew then" question implicitly locates the origin and cause of the current disasters *in 2003*. As if the fall of Ramadi was predetermined then, as if the author of the current regional collapse is George W. Bush.

This is nonsense. The fact is that by the end of Bush's tenure the war had been won. You can argue that the price of that victory was too high. Fine. We can debate that until the end of time. But what is not debatable is that it was a victory. Bush bequeathed to Obama a success. By whose measure? By Obama's. As [he told the troops](#) at Fort Bragg on Dec. 14, 2011, "We are leaving behind a sovereign, stable and self-reliant Iraq, with a representative government that was elected by its people." This was, said the president, a "moment of success."

Which Obama proceeded to fully squander. With the 2012 election approaching, he chose to liquidate our military presence in Iraq. We didn't just withdraw our forces. We abandoned, destroyed or turned over our equipment, stores, installations and bases. We surrendered our most valuable strategic assets, such as control of Iraqi airspace, soon to become the [indispensable conduit](#) for Iran to supply and sustain the Assad regime in Syria and cement its

influence all the way to the Mediterranean. And, most relevant to the fall of Ramadi, we abandoned the vast intelligence network we had so painstakingly constructed in Anbar province, without which our current patchwork operations there are largely blind and correspondingly feeble.

The current collapse was not predetermined in 2003 but in 2011. Isn't that what should be asked of Hillary Clinton? We know you think the invasion of 2003 [was a mistake](#). But what about the abandonment of 2011? Was *that* not a mistake?

Mme. Secretary: When you arrived at State, al-Qaeda in Iraq had been crushed and expelled from Anbar. The Iraqi government had [from Basra to Sadr City](#) fought and defeated the radical, Iranian-proxy Shiite militias. Yet today these militias are back, once again dominating Baghdad. On your watch, we gave up our position as the dominant influence over a "sovereign, stable and self-reliant Iraq" — forfeiting that position gratuitously to Iran. Was that not a mistake? And where were you when it was made?

Iraq is now a battlefield between the Sunni jihadists of the Islamic State and the Shiite jihadists of Iran's Islamic Republic. There is no viable center. We abandoned it. The Obama administration's unilateral pullout created a vacuum for the entry of the worst of the worst.

And the damage was self-inflicted. The current situation in Iraq, [says David Petraeus](#), "is tragic foremost because it didn't have to turn out this way. The hard-earned progress of the surge was sustained for over three years."

Streetwise Professor **[Fiasco on the Euphrates](#)**

by Craig Pirrong

The situation in Ramadi (and Anbar generally) is an utter fiasco, with the Iraqi forces reprising the rout that occurred in Mosul almost exactly a year ago, thereby helping re-equip Isis with brand new American equipment. To paraphrase Wellington: Isis came on in the same old way, and the Iraqi army ran away in the same old way.

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Obama has no one to blame but himself for the appalling choices that face him: he is entirely responsible for this dilemma because of an earlier choice that he made eagerly, indeed,

triumphantly. When a preening and supercilious Obama decided to declare victory in Iraq, and withdraw every American soldier, Marine, and airman from the country, he opened the door for Isis. And once Isis barged through, he was left with two, and only two, alternatives: go back in heavy with a major commitment of American combat forces, or turn the mess over to Iran to sort out.

He is constitutionally unable to make the former choice, so by default, he is left with the latter. This helps to explain (but is not the entire explanation) for his deference to Iran on everything. But this will prove unavailing as well, because for all of its blood curdling rhetoric, Iran does not have the military capacity to achieve anything except get a lot of people killed.

So absent a road to Jerusalem conversion by Obama, Isis will consolidate, and likely expand, its hold in Anbar and other parts of Iraq.

Adding insult to injury are statements from the administration and the Pentagon that are so divorced from reality that they would make Baghdad Bob blush. Baghdad Brett McGurk is probably the worst offender, but he has much company.

As I've written before, you know that most people in the military must be beside themselves watching this. As I've also written, this is being enabled, rather than opposed, by the senior military leadership, especially the outgoing Chairman of the Joint Chiefs. They should all be reading [*Dereliction of Duty*](#), and thinking very, very hard about how its lessons apply to them, today.

The situation is arguably beyond recovery, at least at any affordable cost. And even were Obama to go against ever instinct in his body and decide to intervene with American combat troops, I shudder to think of going to war under such an uncertain and inept commander.

Telegraph, UK

[Why Obama has come to regret underestimating the Islamic State](#)

The terrorists that the White House once dismissed as amateurs are closer than ever to creating a viable nation state

by Robert Spencer

Have any words come back to haunt President Obama so much as his description of Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant last team as a "JV" - junior varsity - team of terrorists?

This wasn't al-Qaeda in its 9/11 pomp, he said; just because a university second team wore Manchester United jerseys didn't make them David Beckham.

How times change. As of this weekend, the JV team is doing a lot better than Manchester United. With its capture of Palmyra, it controls half of Syria.

Its defeat in Kobane - a town of which few non-Kurds had heard - was cheered by the world; its victory in Ramadi last Sunday gives it control of virtually all of Iraq's largest province, one which reaches to the edge of Baghdad.

Calling itself a state, one analyst wrote, no longer looks like an exaggeration.

Senior US officials seem to agree. “Isil as an organization is better in every respect than its predecessor of Al-Qaeda in Iraq. It’s better manned, it’s better resourced, they have better fighters, they’re more experienced,” one said at a briefing to explain the loss of Ramadi. “We’ve never seen something like this.”

How did Isil manage to inflict such a humiliation on the world’s most powerful country? As with many great shock-and-awe military advances over the years, it is easier to explain in hindsight than it apparently was to prevent.

Ever since Isil emerged in its current form in 2013, military and and political analysts have been saying that its success is due to its grasp of both tactics and strategy.

Its strategy is essentially Maoist - the comparison has not been enough made, but now that Isil has declared itself an agent of Cultural Revolution, with its destruction of history, perhaps it will be more. Like Mao’s revolutionaries, it conquers the countryside before storming the towns.

Even now, the fact that much of its territory is rural or even desert is seen as a weakness. But it is beginning to “pick off” major towns and cities with impunity. In fact, where society is fractured, like Syria and Iraq, the “sea of revolution” panics the citizenry, making it feel “surrounded” by unseen and incomprehensible agents of doom.



Displaced Sunni people, who fled the violence in the city of Ramadi, arrive at the outskirts of Baghdad

Like Mao, Isil uses propaganda - its famed dominance of social media - to terrorise its targets mentally. Senior Iraqi policemen have recounted being sent images via their mobile phones of their decapitated fellow officers. This has a chastening effect on the fight-or-flight reflex.

It then uses actual terror to further instil chaos. Isil’s main targets have been ground down by years of car bombs and “random” attacks. It seems extraordinary, but one of the reasons given by Mosul residents for preferring Isil rule is that there are no longer so many terrorist attacks: not surprising, since the “terrorists” are in control.

Only once your enemy is weak, divided, and demoralised, do you strike.

You then do so with an awesome show of force - one which can mislead as to the actual numbers involved.

The final assault on central Ramadi, which had been fought over for almost 18 months, began with an estimated 30 car bombs. Ten were said to be individually of an equivalent size to the 1995 Oklahoma bombing, which killed 168 people.

There is nothing new in saying that both Syrian and Iraqi governments have contributed greatly to the rise of Isil by failing to offer the Sunni populations of their countries a reason to support them.

Some say that focusing on the failings and injustices of these regimes ignores the fact that militant Islamism, like Maoism, is a superficially attractive, even romantic idea to many, whether oppressed or not, and that its notions must be fought and defeated intellectually and emotionally.

That is true. But relying on Islamic extremism to burn itself out, or for its followers to be eventually persuaded of the errors of their ways, is no answer. Like financial markets, the world can stay irrational for longer than the rest of us can stay politically and militarily solvent.

Rather, the West and those it supports have to show they can exert force against force, and then create a better world, one which all Iraqis and Syrians, especially Sunnis, are prepared to fight for.

In March, an uneasy coalition of Shia militias, Iraqi soldiers, and US jets took back the town of Tikrit from Isil. It remains a wasteland, whose inhabitants have yet to return, ruled over by gunmen rather than by the rule of law.

That is not an attractive symbol, for Iraqi Sunnis, of what victory against Isil looks like. If the war against Isil is to be won, the first step is to make clear to Iraqis and Syrians alike what victory looks like, and why it will be better for them.

Investor's Business Daily

[Nevermind terror, Obama tells the military global warming is imminent security threat](#)

by Andrew Malcolm

Finally, President Obama addressed what he sees as the nation's worst security threat, just days after the fall of Ramadi to ISIS and North Korea's declaration that it has miniaturized a nuclear warhead to fit on an ICBM capable of reaching the United States.

In a speech to graduates at the Coast Guard Academy, Obama said, yes, yes, terrorism is a grave danger. But there's another one. "We cannot, and we must not, ignore a peril that can affect generations," the commander-in-chief declared ominously.

That threat? Global warming.

"Cadets," Obama intoned, "the threat of a changing climate cuts to the very core of your service. You've been drawn to water — like the poet who wrote, 'the heart of the great ocean sends a

thrilling pulse through me.' You know the beauty of the sea, but you also know its unforgiving power."

Obama acknowledged there remain "some folks" who deny the controversial phenomenon he's been touting. He didn't mention some other folks who think POTUS chose the prominent military commencement address to talk global warming merely to mollify the dominant left of his party angered last week by his granting a giant oil company permission for deep-water drilling in the Arctic.

That's the kind of thing a Chicago politician would do to make peace among the city's feuding factions. (Scroll down for C-SPAN video of Obama's complete remarks or read [the full text over here.](#))

So, Obama patiently explained the situation to the new college graduates. "The science is indisputable. The fossil fuels we burn release carbon dioxide, which traps heat. And the levels of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere are now higher than they have been in 800,000 years," said Obama, who's been around for 53 of those years.

"I'm here today," Obama added, "to say that climate change constitutes a serious threat to global security, an immediate risk to our national security. And make no mistake, it will impact how our military defends our country. And so we need to act -- and we need to act now."

The commander-in-chief got no argument about planetary overheating from the graduates in their stiff-collared dress uniforms seated hatless in bright noontime sunshine for his 32-minute lecture.

Obama painted an extremely ominous portrait colored by global warming. He blamed climate change for the Nigerian drought that spawned Boko Haram terrorists, as well as the Syrian civil war.

He predicted rising water levels would soon see the world plagued by masses of climate refugees, worse storms and wildfires and food shortages, stressing national economies globally.

The president claimed that rising water imminently threatens thousands of miles of U.S. roads, railroads and power plants, as well as Coast Guard stations.

"Politicians who say they care about military readiness," the president added pointedly, "ought to care about this."

He also warned that rising sea levels could in the next 85 years cost the U.S. about \$200 billion for relocations. Which is only 20% of the \$1 trillion in ineffective stimulus spending that Obama wasted five years ago. Another reason to cut carbon dioxide emissions, he said, is, "I've committed the United States to leading the world on this challenge."

Obama said whenever and wherever he meets world leaders, it's not terrorism, trade, war or nuclear weapons he wants to discuss. The president said he always puts climate change at the top of his agenda. Somehow, all this climate change talk reminded the president the other day [what a good athlete he is.](#)

But don't worry. The president did not waste an entire Wednesday on global warming. While in Connecticut, Obama also squeezed in time to milk about \$1 million from 30 Democrat diners at a Stamford fundraiser

Free Beacon

Miss Uncongeniality

Why Hillary's press strategy could backfire

by Matthew Continetti.

There it was—the classic Hillary charm. Close to a month had passed since the Democratic frontrunner answered questions from the press. So this week, when reporters were invited to gawk at the spectacle of Clinton sitting with “everyday lowans,” Ed Henry of Fox wanted to know: Would the former secretary of state take a moment to respond to inquiries from non-stage-managed reporters?

Before Henry was able even to finish his sentence, however, Clinton interrupted him, tut-tutting his impertinent shouting and raising her hand, empress-like, to quell her subject. After a few seconds of talking over each other Clinton must have realized that she had to give Henry an answer. Whereupon she said, slowly and sarcastically: “[I might. I'll have to ponder it.](#)” What a kidder.

After the photo-op was over, Clinton did take six questions from reporters—raising the total number of media questions she has answered since announcing her candidacy in April to a whopping 26. She committed no gaffes, but unleashed the full blizzard of Clintonian misdirection, omission, dodging, bogus sentimentality, false confidence, and aw-shucks populism. Voting for the Iraq war was a “mistake,” like the kind you make on a test; she and Bill are lucky people (that’s one way of describing them); Charlotte needs to be able to grow up in an America where every little boy and girl has the chance to go from public office to a foreign-funded slush fund; and family courtier and dirty trickster Sid Blumenthal is just an “old friend” who sent her emails about Libya, where he had business dealings, so that she could get out of her “bubble.”

Not much for an enterprising reporter to go on. And for all we know, the ice caps will have melted before Clinton submits to more questions. It’s part of her strategy: limiting press availabilities also lessens the chances of another “dead broke” moment, of giving answers that raise more questions. Clinton is busy—raising money, positioning herself on the left to thwart a liberal insurgent, doting on Iowa so as not to repeat her defeat there in 2008. Talking to reporters would be a distraction or, worse, an error. Everyone knows who she is. And interviews leave exposed the most vulnerable part of her campaign: herself. Nor is it like she doesn’t have anything to hide. She has a whole lot to hide: her record, her emails, her charity, [her brothers](#), and her friends. Why risk it?

This strategy of press avoidance worked for Clinton pal Terry McAuliffe in 2013 when he was elected governor of Virginia. McAuliffe rarely if ever spoke to reporters, and instead visited with carefully selected businesses and interest groups and sob stories to whom he would nod sympathetically and explain, in the vaguest of ways, how he would make the commonwealth a better, more progressive place. McAuliffe’s campaign manager was Robby Mook, who now performs the same job for Clinton. The lesson he must have drawn from his Virginia experience was that the press, at best, is a nuisance and irrelevant to the outcome of an election. Strategic communications, lots of money, television advertising that defines one’s opponent as extreme, and the Democratic “coalition of the ascendant” are enough to win.

At least it's enough to win Virginia in a—surprisingly close—off-year election. But treating the press with contempt may not work at the presidential level. On the contrary: It could backfire. Not because voters care about how the press is being treated; they don't. But because the media are exactly that: the medium through which a candidate is presented to the public. Disturb the medium, tic off its individual components, and the presentation may begin to change.

Slowly and subtly, a candidate may find herself shown to be inaccessible, aloof, conniving, manipulative, privileged, elusive, dishonest. The questions she faces might grow more hostile; the investigations into her wealth might widen; interest in her husband's friendship with Jeffrey "[Lolita Express](#)" Epstein might sharpen. The message she wants to communicate could be displaced by a media-driven caricature.

Republicans know what I'm talking about. They live with it every day: rising stars that go into eclipse, hidden behind media cartoons. Dan Quayle, Clarence Thomas, Dick Cheney, Sarah Palin, Ted Cruz. The latest target is Tom Cotton—see how a Harvard-educated combat veteran is being labeled an amateur, out of his depth, disruptive because of his efforts to stop the nuclear deal with Iran. Our media are fickle, sensationalistic, anxious, insecure, and petty. They're surprising me with their tough coverage of the Clinton Foundation. Imagine what might happen if Hillary *really* begins to annoy them.

The assumption has been that the mainstream press will guard Clinton like they did Obama in 2008—avoid damaging lines of inquiry, play up the gender angle just as they played up the racial one. I don't see it happening yet, however. Clinton can't be happy with the way her candidacy has been portrayed in the media, from her speaking fees to her email server to the family foundation. You can't ascribe this treatment to the conservative press alone—though we've happily played our part.

Since Bill first became president the Clintons have held a suspicious attitude toward the media, an attitude the media seem to have reflected back at them. Obama was new, cool, postmodern, suave; Clinton is old, a grandmother, clumsy, a millionaire many times over who has been one of the most famous people in the world for more than two decades. She has none of Obama's edge, his antiwar bona fides, the quasi-mystical importance his followers bestowed on him. No one would have written a story about Obama like the one McClatchy wrote about Hillary on Thursday: "[Clinton campaigning in a bubble, largely isolated from real people.](#)" That's why she has Sid.

The press will no doubt take a different approach once the Republicans choose a nominee, who can then be written off as primitive or corrupt or inexperienced or stupid. I'm not expecting a revolution here, a paradigm shift in the way the media establishment conducts itself. But I am surprised at the way in which Hillary and her supporters dismiss media complaints as extraneous. Bad press hurts campaigns—ask Al Gore, John Kerry, or Mitt Romney. It can hurt Hillary Clinton too. *Saturday Night Live* is already portraying her [as a power-mad robot](#); think of the damage that could do to perceptions of her over time. And there's plenty of time.

By not talking to the press Clinton has made a strategic choice, as valid as any other. But it may be the wrong choice—in fact it probably is the wrong choice, because most of the choices Hillary Clinton has made since 2006 have been bad. She lost the Democratic nomination, she was the top foreign policy official for a president [who is widely seen to have bungled foreign policy](#), she joined the ethically murky Clinton Foundation and gave high-paying speeches to business groups despite knowing she'd soon be running for president.

It's the same lack of judgment and mismanagement that would cause her to vote for Iraq, then oppose the surge, then support the troop withdrawal; to do Obama's bidding on Russia, Israel, Iran, Libya; to keep up the pen pal correspondence with Blumenthal; to act unlike any presidential candidate in recent memory. Maybe I'm dreaming, but the press could respond by taking someone who's likable enough—and making her not likable at all.

Contentions

[The Real Victims of the War on Police](#)

by Jonathan S. Tobin

From last summer's disturbances in Ferguson, Missouri to the more recent riots in Baltimore, the country has been engaged in a debate about police violence that has hinged on accusations of systematic racism. Regardless of the findings about the shooting in Ferguson or the racial identity of the Baltimore officers charged in the death of Freddie Gray, a narrative about police racism has become entrenched in our popular culture that has remained impervious to reason or the facts. One of the consequences of this war on police that has been encouraged by statements coming from the very top of our government, including the president and the attorney general, have been incidents of violence against police. When officers go down that generates some attention, yet less discussed is the way the lives of people in poverty-stricken minority neighborhoods are affected by this attempt to blame the nation's ills on white racism. But [as the Wall Street Journal reports today](#), it is precisely they who are suffering as arrests have gone down in Baltimore in the last month while violent crime has increased dramatically.

In the weeks after Gray's death as scrutiny and criticism of the Baltimore police has intensified, arrests have gone down by a rate of 40 percent when compared to the same period of time in 2013 and 2014. What makes this figure so startling is that it includes the hundreds that were arrested during the riots that rocked portions of the city. At the same time, violence in the Western district of the city where the riots occurred has gone up in a way far outpacing the increase in the rest of the city.

What's happened here is obvious. Nothing can or should excuse alleged police misbehavior and if the six officers — three white and three African-Americans — are convicted of responsibility for Gray's death while in their custody, they will deserve to be harshly punished. But the willingness of so many people, both on the streets and on the airwaves, to take it as a given that the cops are alien invaders who must be resisted has made it difficult if not impossible for them to do their jobs.

It is understandable that the opprobrium directed at the police would affect their morale. But it goes further than that. As the *Journal* notes, it is now routine for police answering calls to be surrounded by hostile crowds with cameras. In some cases, this impedes their ability to carry out effective police work. In others it simply intimidates the cops who are often coming to the conclusion that it is far safer to simply do nothing than to intervene in situations and risk being accused of criminal or racist behavior regardless of their motivations.

Such a choice runs contrary to their duty to safeguard the public but given the stakes involved, it's hard to blame officers for not risking their careers and freedom. But the real victims of a city with a police force that is reluctant to act are members of the public, not the cops. Those who will suffer the most are the residents of these same high crime minority neighborhoods. It is they

who are most at risk at losing their property and injury and/or loss of life. Those areas of cities where public safety disappears are the same places where employment disappears.

The irony here is that the riots in Baltimore have prompted a lot of discussion about how best to deal with endemic poverty in minority neighborhoods with much finger-pointing at institutions like the police. That the example that prompted this outcry is a city that has been governed by liberals for more than half a century whose political establishment is dominated by blacks and has an integrated police force (as the list of those accused in Gray's death testifies) makes it hard to take some of this discussion seriously. But no amount of racial sensitivity or liberal big government policies can undo the damage done by unchecked violent crime. In such an atmosphere no one can get ahead or indeed maintain any kind of standard of living.

The real consequence of the war on police that has been waged in the media and on the streets of America's cities is a set of circumstances that may well doom another generation of minority kids to poverty and heightened chance of being a victim of violent crime. Those who have done the most to intimidate the police and to transform an unfortunate incident into a national effort to interfere with law enforcement activity may think they have won because they have changed the national conversation about race and the police. But they should weigh this illusory victory against the terrible damage their efforts have done to the people they claim to want to help.

Power Line

[Cleveland police department not repeating the mistakes of Baltimore](#)

by Paul Mirengoff

On Saturday, a Cleveland judge ruled that Officer Michael Brelo was not guilty of voluntary manslaughter and felonious assault in the 2012 deaths of Timothy Russell and Malissa Williams following a 22-mile car chase. The judge found that although Brelo did fire many shots at Russell and Williams, so did other officers. Thus, he could not find beyond a reasonable doubt that Brelo's bullets — and no others — killed Williams and Russell.

The judge also found Brelo not guilty of the charge of felonious assault. He ruled that Brelo's decision to use force was "constitutionally reasonable." Although no gun was found in the vehicle of the deceased, the officer's "perceptions were objectively reasonable," the judge concluded.

It was feared that, in the aftermath of this controversial decision, the inevitable protests might turn into riots. So far, however, they have not.

Why not? Probably because the Cleveland police have declined to tolerate lawlessness. [Paula Bolyard](#) of PJ Media reports:

Cleveland police were taking no chances in the wake of the acquittal of police officer Michael Brelo, going to great lengths to ensure that Saturday afternoon's peaceful protests didn't evolve into violent riots like Baltimore and Ferguson have experienced in recent months.

In addition to having the National Guard on standby, police followed protesters through the streets and arrested anyone who acted violently or refused to obey police orders to disperse. A total of 71 people were arrested. . . .

The first sign of violence occurred when protesters hurled an object at a man who was heading into a bar, striking him on the head. The police, who were following along, promptly arrested the thrower and two protesters who interfered with the arrest.

Next, four protesters attacked patrons of another bar. All four were arrested. Two more were arrested for using pepper spray on the patrons of yet another bar.

Eventually, as more violence loomed, the police ordered the crowd to disperse. When the protesters did not comply, dozens were arrested.

As Police Chief Calvin Williams (an African-American) explained, “when people are given a command to disperse from what started off as a lawful protest and degenerated into random acts of violence against people just standing on the street, we have to move in and enforce our laws.” Makes sense to me.

Thanks to Chief Williams’ approach, no businesses were looted or destroyed on Saturday. Nor were there any reports of injuries that day.

Today, Sunday, about a dozen protesters [blocked a downtown intersection](#) just as the Cleveland Cavaliers NBA playoff game tipped off. Police allowed the demonstration to proceed, which it did for about an hour and a half. There were no reports of violence.

As Baltimore’s protests over the death of Freddie Gray spiraled into violence, I wrote:

Protesters should, within reason, have space to protest. They should never have space to destroy. . . .

The absence of a show of force once it becomes clear that things are going to take a violent turn makes rioting almost inevitable. And a statement like the mayor’s that destruction will be tolerated is even worse; it’s an invitation to violence.

Chief Williams seems to understand this and to have decided that the mistakes in Baltimore will not be repeated in Cleveland. Protesters have been given the space to protest, but the police have come down hard, and promptly, on violence.

Cleveland is hardly out of the woods. It’s possible, for example, that outsiders will flock to the city in the hope of generating serious clashes with the police.

But the odds that we will witness another Baltimore have been reduced considerably by the vigilance of the Cleveland police force and its willingness to nip violence in the bud.



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"I JUST WANT YOU TO KNOW I'M THROWING THE FULL FORCE OF THE U.S. MILITARY BEHIND STOPPING THE **HORROR** OF THIS RISING SEA LEVEL!"



**I'M CONFUSED BY THIS OBAMA/
WARREN SPAT. IS HE SEXIST
FOR DISAGREEING WITH HER,
OR IS SHE RACIST FOR
DISAGREEING WITH HIM?
IT'S A PROGRESSIVE PARADOX.**

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