

May 3, 2015

Time to examine the trainwreck in Baltimore. Kevin Williamson starts us off saying liberal Democrats own the disaster in American cities.

... St. Louis has not had a Republican mayor since the 1940s, and in its most recent elections for the board of aldermen there was no Republican in the majority of the contests; the city is overwhelmingly Democratic, effectively a single-party political monopoly from its schools to its police department. Baltimore has seen two Republicans sit in the mayor's office since the 1920s — and none since the 1960s. Like St. Louis, it is effectively a single-party political monopoly from its schools to its police department. Philadelphia has not elected a Republican mayor since 1948. The last Republican to be elected mayor of Detroit was congratulated on his victory by President Eisenhower. Atlanta, a city so corrupt that its public schools are organized as a criminal conspiracy against its children, last had a Republican mayor in the 19th century. Its municipal elections are officially nonpartisan, but the last Republican to run in Atlanta's 13th congressional district did not manage to secure even 30 percent of the vote; Atlanta is effectively a single-party political monopoly from its schools to its police department.

American cities are by and large Democratic-party monopolies, monopolies generally dominated by the so-called progressive wing of the party. The results have been catastrophic, and not only in poor black cities such as Baltimore and Detroit. Money can paper over some of the defects of progressivism in rich, white cities such as Portland and San Francisco, but those are pretty awful places to be non-white and non-rich, too: Blacks make up barely 9 percent of the population in San Francisco, but they represent 40 percent of those arrested for murder, and they are arrested for drug offenses at ten times their share of the population. ...

... The evidence suggests very strongly that the left-wing, Democratic cliques that run a great many American cities — particularly the poor and black cities — are not capable of running a school system or a police department. They are incompetent, they are corrupt, and they are breathtakingly arrogant. Cleveland, Philadelphia, Detroit, Baltimore — this is what Democrats do.

And the kids in the street screaming about "inequality"? Somebody should tell them that the locale in these United States with the least economic inequality is Utah, i.e. the state farthest away from the reach of the people who run Baltimore.

Keep voting for the same thing, keep getting the same thing.

But of course, the president says it's all caused by the rascally republicans. Noah Rothman of Hot Air has the story.

... But the president conceded that he has no real plan to address the chronic hopelessness that bedevils cities like Baltimore when he claimed that what this moment truly called for is more infrastructure spending. And he would get it, too, if it weren't for those darn Republicans.

"If we are serious about solving this problem, then we're going to not only have to help the police, we're going to have to think about what can we do, the rest of us, to make sure that we're providing early education to these kids. To make sure that we're reforming our criminal justice system so it's not just a pipeline from schools to prisons. So that we're not rendering men in these communities unemployable because of a felony record for a nonviolent drug offense. That we're making investments so they can get the training they need to find jobs.

*That's hard. That requires more than just the occasional news report or task force, and there's a bunch of my agenda that would make a difference right now in that. **I'm under no illusion that under this Congress we're going to get massive investments in urban communities.** And so we'll try to find areas where we can make a difference around school reform, and around job training, and around some investments in infrastructure in these communities trying to attract new businesses in."*

That might have made the president's dispirited liberal base voters, many of whom reside in these hopeless urban environments, feel better, but this is about as naked an admission of powerlessness as you could get. And the president is correct to concede his impotence. The federal government has squandered much of its credibility among urban minorities. ...

John Nolte of Breitbart has an answer to that.

Contrary to the emotional blackmail some leftists are attempting to peddle, Baltimore is not America's problem or shame. That failed city is solely and completely a Democrat problem. Like many failed cities, Detroit comes to mind, and every city besieged recently by rioting, Democrats and their union pals have had carte blanche to inflict their ideas and policies on Baltimore since 1967, the last time there was a Republican Mayor.

In 2012, after four years of his own failed policies, President Obama won a whopping 87.4% of the Baltimore City vote. Democrats run the city of Baltimore, the unions, the schools, and, yes, the police force. Since 1969, there have been only two Republican governors of the State of Maryland.

Elijah Cummings has represented Baltimore in the U.S. Congress for more than thirty years. As I write this, despite his objectively disastrous reign, the Democrat-infested mainstream media is treating the Democrat like a local folk hero, not the obvious and glaring failure he really is.

Every single member of the Baltimore city council is a Democrat.

Liberalism and all the toxic government dependence and cronyism and union corruption and failed schools that comes along with it, has run amok in Baltimore for a half-century, and that is Baltimore's problem. ...

Daniel Henninger says it's Al Sharpton's Baltimore.

... When Al Sharpton popularized the chant, "No justice, no peace," it was unmistakably clear that "no peace" was an implicit threat of civil unrest.

Not civil disobedience, as practiced by Martin Luther King Jr. Civil unrest.

Civil unrest can come in degrees. It might be a brief fight between protesters and the cops. It might be someone throwing rocks through store windows. Or it might be more than that.

Whenever groups gathered in large numbers to start the "no justice, no peace" demonstrations and listen to incitements against "the police," we would hear mayors, politicians, college presidents and American presidents say they "understood the anger." They all assumed that any civil unrest that resulted would be, as they so often say, "containable." Meaning—acceptable.

In Ferguson, it was barely so following the Missouri grand jury's decision in November not to indict a policeman for Michael Brown's death. Businesses were demolished. As they were when street violence erupted in Berkeley, Calif. New York's police stood aside while marchers intimidated much of the city and marauded through department stores.

But what the whole nation watched on television Monday for about nine hours in Baltimore was not "containable." ...

David Harsanyi says of course the democrats deserve blame for what's happened in Baltimore.

... Where does the blame for the civil unrest lay? In plenty of places. Some of those places have absolutely nothing to do with politics and can't be fixed by any Washington agenda — imagined, or otherwise. The tribulations plaguing cities like Baltimore are complex, having festered for years. But does that excuse the bungling of Democratic Party governance? Does it change the fact that massive amounts of spending have done little in the war on poverty?

And if Democrats claim they are uniquely empathetic towards the poor and weak, that welfare programs can never be reformed only expanded, that perpetually pumping "investments" into cities is the only way to alleviate the hardship faced by citizens, it's more than fair to gauge the effectiveness — not to mention the competence — of those allocating and overseeing those policies. Because Republicans may be horrible, but they aren't running Baltimore.

The above are all prose. Trust Roger Simon to write poetry.

After festering for half a century, we're witnessing the endgame of LBJ's Great Society.

Who wasn't hugely depressed watching the non-stop coverage of the Baltimore riots Monday night? So sad. How has it come to this? We're back in Watts, only it's five decades later !

Well, it's not exactly the same. It was white businesses that were trashed in Watts — this time they were black ones. And there was another, even more important, difference...

Commentators were repeatedly asking, where are the parents? Ben Carson — the neurosurgeon, potential Republican presidential candidate and onetime Baltimore resident — urged the city's parents "Please, take care of your children."

Great idea, but here's the problem. They don't have 'em. According to liberal CNN's Don Lemon, 72 percent of African-American children are born out of wedlock. His stats were born out by the Centers for Disease Control. One can only imagine what the stats would be broken down for those Baltimore neighborhoods that were rioting. The presence of a father in the home would be a rarity indeed. And a lot of the moms are probably holding their fatherless homes together for dear life, desperately trying to make a living when their kids are pouring out of school. No one was home.

Of course, it wasn't always that way. The black family was the bulwark of that community. So what happened? I'll be blunt, since I was once part of the problem and equally culpable — liberal racism. Ever since the days of Lyndon Johnson, social welfare programs aimed at making the lives of "colored people" better actually made them worse. ...

Just to show what Simon called "liberal racism" is still running strong, [Peter Wehner](#) highlights a conversation between Jon Stewart and George Stephanopoulos. ... *The argument Stewart and Stephanopoulos were throwing out—we're dramatically under-investing in America's cities—is liberal claptrap. To stay with the issue of education, the problem with American education in general, and large urban school districts in particular, isn't lack of funding. It's lack of accountability and transparency, lack of competition and choice, lack of results and high standards. We obsess on inputs and ignore outputs. What often happens, in fact, is the worst school districts often get the most money based on the flawed premise that the reason the schools are failing is lack of funding.*

We're spending an enormous amount of money on a system that isn't producing, and it's liberal interest groups (e.g., education unions) and the Democratic Party that are ferocious opponents of the kind of reforms that would improve American education. What exactly are the compelling public policy and moral arguments for opposing school choice for kids in the worst schools in America? There are none. The opposition is based on wanting to maintain and increase political power. If it's the kids who suffer, so be it. Progressivism has an agenda to achieve, after all. ...

National Review

[Riot-Plagued Baltimore Is a Catastrophe Entirely of the Democratic Party's Own Making](#)

by Kevin D. Williamson

A few weeks ago, there was an election in Ferguson, Mo., the result of which was to treble the number of African Americans on that unhappy suburb's city council. This was greeted in some corners with optimism — now, at last, the city's black residents would have a chance to see to securing their own interests. This optimism flies in the face of evidence near — St. Louis — and far — Baltimore, Detroit, Philadelphia, Cleveland, Atlanta, Los Angeles, San Francisco . . .

St. Louis has not had a Republican mayor since the 1940s, and in its most recent elections for the board of aldermen there was no Republican in the majority of the contests; the city is overwhelmingly Democratic, effectively a single-party political monopoly from its schools to its police department. Baltimore has seen two Republicans sit in the mayor's office since the 1920s — and none since the 1960s. Like St. Louis, it is effectively a single-party political monopoly from its schools to its police department. Philadelphia has not elected a Republican mayor since 1948. The last Republican to be elected mayor of Detroit was congratulated on his victory by President Eisenhower. Atlanta, a city so corrupt that its public schools are organized as a criminal conspiracy against its children, last had a Republican mayor in the 19th century. Its municipal elections are officially nonpartisan, but the last Republican to run in Atlanta's 13th congressional district did not manage to secure even 30 percent of the vote; Atlanta is effectively a single-party political monopoly from its schools to its police department.

American cities are by and large Democratic-party monopolies, monopolies generally dominated by the so-called progressive wing of the party. The results have been catastrophic, and not only in poor black cities such as Baltimore and Detroit. Money can paper over some of the defects of

progressivism in rich, white cities such as Portland and San Francisco, but those are pretty awful places to be non-white and non-rich, too: Blacks make up barely 9 percent of the population in San Francisco, but they represent 40 percent of those arrested for murder, and they are arrested for drug offenses at ten times their share of the population. Criminals make their own choices, sure, but you want to take a look at the racial disparity in educational outcomes and tell me that those low-income nine-year-olds in Wisconsin just need to buck up and bootstrap it?



Black urban communities face institutional failure across the board every day. There are people who should be made to answer for that: What has Martin O'Malley to say for himself? What can Ed Rendell say for himself other than that he secured a great deal of investment for the richest square mile in Philadelphia? What has Nancy Pelosi done about the radical racial divide in San Francisco?

Mychal Denzel Smith, toy radical at *The Nation*, offered the usual illiterate slogan "f**k the police" and declared of the rioters: "I also hope they break s**t." Writers at *Salon* also endorsed violence for its own sake. "I do not advocate non-violence," Benji Hart affirmed. Most of this can be credited to juvenile posturing, and it should be noted that the rioters in Baltimore mostly are not burning down tax offices or police stations but are in the main looting businesses and carrying out acts of wanton opportunistic vandalism — that's not a revolt, but a crime spree. Meretricious "black rage" rhetoric notwithstanding, what we have seen in places such as Ferguson and Baltimore is much more ordinarily criminal than political.

But there is a legitimate concern here — from which no one seems to be willing to draw the obvious conclusion: There *is* someone to blame for what's wrong in Baltimore.

Would any sentient adult American be shocked to learn that Baltimore has a corrupt and feckless police department enabled by a corrupt and feckless city government? I myself would not, and the local authorities' dishonesty and stonewalling in the death of Freddie Gray is

reminiscent of what we have seen in other cities. There's a heap of evidence that the Baltimore police department is pretty bad.

This did not come out of nowhere. While the progressives have been running the show in Baltimore, police commissioner Ed Norris was sent to prison on corruption charges (2004), two detectives were sentenced to 454 years in prison for dealing drugs (2005), an officer was dismissed after being videotaped verbally abusing a 14-year-old and then failing to file a report on his use of force against the same teenager (2011), an officer was been fired for sexually abusing a minor (2014), and the city paid a quarter-million-dollar settlement to a man police illegally arrested for the non-crime of recording them at work with his mobile phone. There's a good deal more. Does that sound like a disciplined police organization to you?

Yes, Baltimore seems to have some police problems. But let us be clear about whose fecklessness and dishonesty we are talking about here: No Republican, and certainly no conservative, has left so much as a thumbprint on the public institutions of Baltimore in a generation. Baltimore's police department is, like Detroit's economy and Atlanta's schools, the product of the progressive wing of the Democratic party enabled in no small part by black identity politics. This is entirely a left-wing project, and a Democratic-party project.

When will the Left be held to account for the brutality in Baltimore — brutality for which it bears a measure of responsibility on both sides? There aren't any Republicans out there cheering on the looters, and there aren't any Republicans exercising real political power over the police or other municipal institutions in Baltimore. Community-organizer — a wretched term — Adam Jackson declared that in Baltimore “the Democrats and the Republicans have both failed.” Really? Which Republicans? Ulysses S. Grant? Unless I'm reading the charts wrong, the Baltimore city council is 100 percent Democratic.

The other Democratic monopolies aren't looking too hot, either. We're sending Atlanta educators to prison for running a criminal conspiracy to hide the fact that they failed, and failed woefully, to educate the children of that city. Isolated incident? Nope: Atlanta has another cheating scandal across town at the police academy. Who is being poorly served by the fact that Atlanta's school system has been converted into crime syndicate? Mostly poor, mostly black families. Who is likely to suffer from any incompetents advanced through the Atlanta police department by its corrupt academy? Mostly poor, mostly black people. Who suffers most from the incompetence of Baltimore's Democratic mayor? Mostly poor, mostly black families — should they feel better that she's black? Who suffers most from the incompetence and corruption of Baltimore's police department? Mostly poor, mostly black families.

And it's the same people who will suffer the most from the vandalism and pillaging going on in Baltimore, too.

The evidence suggests very strongly that the left-wing, Democratic cliques that run a great many American cities — particularly the poor and black cities — are not capable of running a school system or a police department. They are incompetent, they are corrupt, and they are breathtakingly arrogant. Cleveland, Philadelphia, Detroit, Baltimore — this is what Democrats do.

And the kids in the street screaming about “inequality”? Somebody should tell them that the locale in these United States with the least economic inequality is Utah, i.e. the state farthest away from the reach of the people who run Baltimore.

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Hot Air

Obama on Baltimore riots: Blame Republicans

by Noah Rothman

On Tuesday, Barack Obama admitted that the situation faced by the impoverished residents of American urban centers like Baltimore is a hopeless one.

Oh, he didn't say that outright. The president waxed noble about police excesses, the aspirations of those born into poverty, and the need to create opportunities for millions of primarily minority city dwellers. But he admitted that he has nothing even resembling a plan to lift America's minorities out of poverty when he resorted to lamenting the lack of infrastructure spending out of a recalcitrant Republican-led Congress.

In response to a question about the violence in Baltimore posed during a joint White House press conference alongside Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, Obama delivered a perfectly anodyne and unremarkable 15 minute lecture about the lamentable state of affairs in America's cities. There wasn't much to object to in his response; it was a platitude-laden sermon about the school-to-prison pipeline, criminal justice reform, and excessive drug sentencing. Many leading Republicans would agree with the president's assessment of the social ills that plague urban centers. Don't believe me? Check [The New York Times](#).

But the president conceded that he has no real plan to address the chronic hopelessness that bedevils cities like Baltimore when he claimed that what this moment truly called for is more infrastructure spending. And he would get it, too, if it weren't for those darn Republicans.

If we are serious about solving this problem, then we're going to not only have to help the police, we're going to have to think about what can we do, the rest of us, to make sure that we're providing early education to these kids. To make sure that we're reforming our criminal justice system so it's not just a pipeline from schools to prisons. So that we're not rendering men in these communities unemployable because of a felony record for a nonviolent drug offense. That we're making investments so they can get the training they need to find jobs.

That's hard. That requires more than just the occasional news report or task force, and there's a bunch of my agenda that would make a difference right now in that. **I'm under no illusion that under this Congress we're going to get massive investments in urban communities.** And so we'll try to find areas where we can make a difference around school reform, and around job training, and around some investments in infrastructure in these communities trying to attract new businesses in.

That might have made the president's dispirited liberal base voters, many of whom reside in these hopeless urban environments, feel better, but this is about as naked an admission of powerlessness as you could get. And the president is correct to concede his impotence. The federal government has squandered much of its credibility among urban minorities.

"Inevitably, there are now calls for President Obama to intervene and calm nerves in Baltimore," [The Atlantic's David Graham observed](#) on Tuesday. "But what would it mean for the federal government to get involved? Does it mean Obama coming to town and delivering a

speech, as he has after so many national tragedies? Such a step might offer a quick salve, but it wouldn't do much to address the underlying causes of anger."

In fact, the federal government hardly has much credibility here either. Segregation and poverty in West Baltimore are rooted squarely in federal policy. Redlining of Baltimore neighborhoods, conducted under the auspices of the Federal Housing Authority, helped to ensure that black residents were segregated into black neighborhoods and built less equity. In 1995, a federal judge found that the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development had violated the Fair Housing Act, placing public housing only in poor black neighborhoods and thus concentrating and perpetuating a cycle of poverty. The government also failed to prevent Wells Fargo from a new form of redlining leading up to the housing bubble, in which black residents of the city were targeted for discriminatory lending.

The ratio of black unemployment to white unemployment that was narrowing to near parity before the 2007-2008 recession is again a measure of dispiriting inequality. African-American unemployment rates remain persistently higher than those of whites.

"Even among people with similar levels of education, the black unemployment rate is higher," [The Times reported last year](#). "Indeed, joblessness is higher among blacks in every education level tracked by the labor department."

That report noted that minority poverty rates have declined by over 5 percentage points since 1980, but the current 27.2 percent of African-Americans living below the poverty line is "astronomical." It is far more than double the 12.7 percent of whites living in a similar condition.

These problems predate Obama's presidency, and they will persist long after he leaves office. The persistence of these issues also puts the lie to the notion circa 2008 that the president's administration would put an end to systemic inequality along with halting the rise of the tides. Obama acknowledges his own powerlessness with yet another plaintive appeal to the value of roads and bridges. Not to mention the dastardliness of those Emmanuel Goldsteins in the GOP.

Breitbart News

Baltimore Is a Democrat Problem, Not America's Problem

by John Nolte

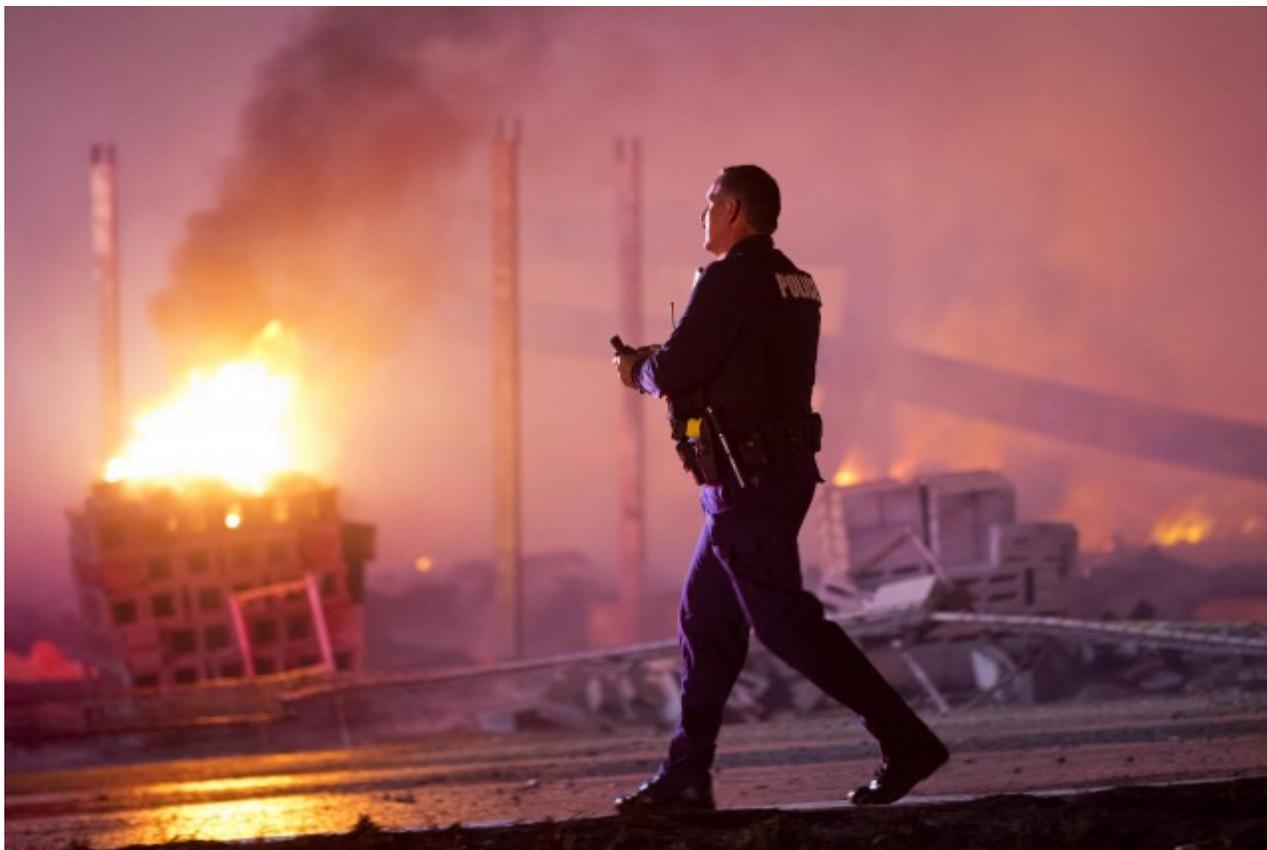
Contrary to the emotional blackmail [some leftists](#) are attempting [to peddle](#), Baltimore is not America's problem or shame. That failed city is solely and completely a Democrat problem. Like many failed cities, Detroit comes to mind, and every city besieged recently by rioting, Democrats and their union pals have had carte blanche to inflict their ideas and policies on Baltimore since 1967, [the last time there was a Republican Mayor](#).

In 2012, after four years of his own failed policies, President Obama won a whopping [87.4% of the Baltimore City vote](#). Democrats run the city of Baltimore, the unions, the schools, and, yes, the police force. Since 1969, there have been only two Republican governors of [the State of Maryland](#).

Elijah Cummings has represented Baltimore in the U.S. Congress for more than thirty years. As I write this, despite his objectively disastrous reign, the Democrat-infested mainstream media is treating the Democrat like a local folk hero, not the obvious and glaring failure he really is.

Every single member of the Baltimore city council is a Democrat.

Liberalism and all the toxic government dependence and cronyism and union corruption and failed schools that comes along with it, has run amok in Baltimore for a half-century, and that is Baltimore's problem. It is the free people of Baltimore who elect and then re-elect those who institute policies that have so spectacularly failed that once-great city. It is the free people of Baltimore who elected [Mayor Room-To-Destroy](#).



You can call the arson and looting and violence we are seeing on our television screens, rioting. That's one way to describe the chaos. Another way to describe it is Democrat infighting. This is blue-on-blue violence. The thugs using the suspicious death of Freddie Gray (at the hands of a Democrat-led police department) to justify the looting that updates their home entertainment systems, are Democrats protesting Democrat leaders and Democrat policies in a Democrat-run city.

Poverty has nothing to do with it. This madness and chaos and anarchy is a Democrat-driven culture that starts at the top with a racially-divisive White House heartbreakingly effective at ginning up hate and violence.

Where I currently reside here in Watauga County, North Carolina, the poverty [level is 31.3%](#). [Median income is only \\$34,293](#). In both of those areas we are much worse off than Baltimore, that has a poverty rate [of only 23.8% and a median income of \\$41,385](#).

Despite all that, we don't riot here in Watauga County. Thankfully, we have not been poisoned by the same left-wing culture that is rotting Baltimore, and so many other cities like it, from the inside out. We get along remarkably well. We are neighbors. We are people who help out one another. We take pride in our community, and are grateful for what we do have. We are far from perfect, but we work out our many differences in civilized ways. Solutions are our goal, not cronyism, narcissistic victimhood, and the blaming of others.

One attitude we don't have here is the soul-killing belief that somebody owes us something, which, of course, is a recipe for discontent. Because if you're not getting what's owed to you, how can you be anything but angry?

Democrats and their never-ending grievance campaigns; their never-ending propaganda that government largess is the answer; their never-ending caves to corrupt unions; their never-ending warehousing of innocent children in failed public schools — that's a Democrat problem, not America's problem.

I might believe Baltimore was an American problem if the city was interested in new ideas and a new direction under new leaders. But we all know that will never happen. After Democrat policies result in despair and anarchy, Democrats always demand more of the same, only bigger.

And the media goes right along.

And things only get worse.

I wish you all the luck in the world Baltimore. And I truly wish you had the courage to change. If you ever do, send up a flare. Until then, there is nothing anyone can do for you. You are victims of your own choices, and no one can make choices for you but you.

As far as the good people of Baltimore trapped by the terrible voting of your fellow citizens, I suggest you buy more guns until you can move to a city not run by those who see rioting as [part of the Master Plan](#).

WSJ

[Al Sharpton's Baltimore](#)

"No justice, no peace" finally blew into an urban riot.

by Daniel Henninger

'No justice, no peace.'

In Baltimore now, they've got both.

When [Al Sharpton](#) popularized the chant, "No justice, no peace," it was unmistakably clear that "no peace" was an implicit threat of civil unrest.

Not civil disobedience, as practiced by Martin Luther King Jr. Civil *unrest*.

Civil unrest can come in degrees. It might be a brief fight between protesters and the cops. It might be someone throwing rocks through store windows. Or it might be more than that.

Whenever groups gathered in large numbers to start the “no justice, no peace” demonstrations and listen to incitements against “the police,” we would hear mayors, politicians, college presidents and American presidents say they “understood the anger.” They all assumed that any civil unrest that resulted would be, as they so often say, “containable.” Meaning—acceptable.

In Ferguson, it was barely so following the Missouri grand jury’s decision in November not to indict a policeman for Michael Brown’s death. Businesses were demolished. As they were when street violence erupted in Berkeley, Calif. New York’s police stood aside while marchers intimidated much of the city and marauded through department stores.

But what the whole nation watched on television Monday for about nine hours in Baltimore was not “containable.” It was anarchy, an urban riot. It was civil unrest on a scale that left stores destroyed while buildings and blocks of inner-city Baltimore burned.

Every public official remotely in range of these “no justice, no peace” demos the past year over policing controversies in Ferguson or Staten Island had to understand, privately, that one might come to this. But not a single person in authority ever seriously pushed back against this message. No one said Al Sharpton or his clones should ratchet back this demagoguery lest the emotions unloosed and enlarged by social media in a city like New York, St. Louis or Baltimore blow into a big urban riot. Now it’s here, and parts of Baltimore are wrecked.

The one positive thing we learned watching the riot Monday is that these Baltimore neighborhoods have black leaders who know the difference between preening and progress.

Brandon Scott, a young city council member, spoke with blunt eloquence about being born in 1984 but knowing that the riots of 1968, whatever their justification, had left Baltimore physically and emotionally ruined for years. And now they were on the brink of again losing what he and others had tried to build in their neighborhoods. It was heartbreaking to hear the pastor who watched his new affordable-housing units for the elderly poor burn down Monday night.

In a better world, Baltimore Mayor Stephanie Rawlings-Blake would step down, and Brandon Scott would step in to start the road back.

Al Sharpton never missed a beat Monday. With heavy rocks bouncing off the anti-riot shields of retreating police, he announced a May march from New York to Washington to publicize police violence against minorities. Naturally he criticized the looters.

President Obama called the Baltimore riot “counterproductive.” He said, in what apparently was a complaint, “I can’t federalize every police force in the country and force them to retrain.” The president mentioned federal grants for body cameras. Body cameras are an excellent idea. In fact, images from the shoulders of every cop in America should be streamed real time on the Web around the clock so everyone can watch and hear the details of cops interacting with every level of the community. Then let’s talk about who and what needs to change.

Mr. Obama said, “There’s a bunch of my agenda that would make a difference right now.” And then the president said: “Now, I’m under no illusion that out of this Congress we’re going to get massive investments in urban communities.” We’ll let Josh Earnest deny what the president was saying with this unattractive remark.

But over the past 40 years, even before Mr. Obama thought of it, Congresses like this one have committed uncounted billions of federal dollars to fund every conceivable project for urban

America. Still, he's right. Some communities remain about as stricken as they were in 1975, or 1968.

As to his contribution, Mr. Obama said, "We're making investments so that they can get the training they need to find jobs." But one has to ask: What jobs?

On Wednesday morning the year's first-quarter GDP growth rate came in—0.2%. Next to nothing. For the length of the Obama presidency, with growth significantly below norm, unemployment for blacks aged 24 and younger has hovered between 30% and 50%. That's the real powder keg, not the police.

As to Baltimore, familiar support will materialize from New York when the Sharpton retinue arrives in the burned out Baltimore neighborhoods on his way to a meeting in Washington with the new attorney general. What this means is that when Reverend Al walks out of the neighborhood, Baltimoreans will be in the same place they were this week before he showed up. No justice. Less peace.

The Federalist **Of Course Democrats Deserve The Blame For What's Happening In Baltimore** ***Republicans may be horrible, but they aren't running Baltimore***

by David Harsanyi

If a person happens [to point out](#) that Baltimore's criminally inept government has been run exclusively by Democrats since 1967 (with one Republican mayor since 1947), and features not a single council member who isn't a liberal, they may be called a "[lazy apparatchik](#)." Because not everything, you see, is reducible to mere party politics.

Now, if an economic renaissance sparked by the progressive policies of Stephanie Rawlings-Blake had lifted Baltimore from poverty, I imagine Democrats would be eager to claim credit for the accomplishment. Entire political debates are predicated on the effectiveness of partisan ideas. We blame presidents for recessions they probably have little to do with, yet, according to liberal pundits, the party overseeing a city riddled with poverty, failing schools, high crime rates, and racial tension bears no responsibility for what's happening.

The president disagrees. Sort of. After a night of violence and looting in Baltimore, Barack Obama spoke to the press and said that "we," as a country, "have to do some soul searching" – by which he meant "they," as in conservatives, need to get on board.

Obama said that solutions to mend Baltimore's suffering were sitting *right there* in Washington; unpassed due to ideologically inflexible Republicans. "And there's a bunch of my agenda that would make a difference right now ..."
[Obama claimed](#), before going on: "Now I'm under no illusion that under this Congress we're going to get mass investments in urban communities, and so we'll try to find areas where we can make a difference, around school reform and job training and some investments in infrastructure in these communities trying to attract new businesses in."

What piece of legislation have Republicans obstructed that would have helped keep families together in Baltimore – *right now*? Which proposal would have created jobs to turn the city

around? What law has Obama lobbied for that would have made Baltimore's police department – which has been answering to one party for decades – more compassionate or effective? Is there a criminal-justice reform effort that Obama's been spearheading all these years that we've all forgotten about?

Yes, the war on drugs is a disaster. Democrats are complicit in that war, too. And Democrats are also in charge of a city school system that has huge failure rates. Yet, the Baltimore also [consistently](#) ranked in the top five among the nation's 100 largest school districts in spending per pupil. Like most big city districts, there is no accountability. It's Democrats who consistently sink conservative education reform ideas (ones that, in many cities, are popular among African-American parents) for their union patrons.

For that matter, when did the president ever offer comprehensive legislation that would have brought “mass investments” to inner cities or reformed how government functions in urban communities? Was it when Democrats controlled both houses of Congress and the White House? Or was it after?

As Ramesh Ponnuru [observed](#):

If I were president and thought I knew an obvious way to bring peace and prosperity to troubled cities — and felt pretty strongly about it — I'd maybe mention it before my seventh year in office. Drop it into a State of the Union address, for example. But it just isn't the case that we're a new federal program away from fixing the problems Obama identified. It isn't the case that conservatives are standing in the way of what everyone knows would work because we just don't share Obama's compassion.

As Obama notes, the citizens of Baltimore (and all of us) have an alternative. They can care more, just like he does. “But that kind of political mobilization I think we haven't seen in quite some time,” he explains. Rather than resort to counterproductive violence – the kind of violence numerous leftist pundits were justifying – Baltimore can vote for candidates who reflect and act on their concerns. Candidates who will demand the police be accountable to civilian oversight. There are African Americans in elected office and power positions throughout the city, so surely there is no active racist faction undermining the ability of blacks to participate in democracy. Right now, they need better Democrats in Baltimore.

Where does the blame for the civil unrest lay? In plenty of places. Some of those places have absolutely nothing to do with politics and can't be fixed by any Washington agenda — imagined, or otherwise. The tribulations plaguing cities like Baltimore are complex, having festered for years. But does that excuse the bungling of Democratic Party governance? Does it change the fact that massive amounts of spending have done little in the war on poverty?

And if Democrats claim they are uniquely empathetic towards the poor and weak, that welfare programs can never be reformed only expanded, that perpetually pumping “investments” into cities is the only way to alleviate the hardship faced by citizens, it's more than fair to gauge the effectiveness – not to mention the competence – of those allocating and overseeing those policies. Because Republicans may be horrible, but they aren't running Baltimore.

Roger L. Simon

Why Baltimore: An American Tragedy

After festering for half a century, we're witnessing the endgame of LBJ's Great Society.

Who wasn't hugely depressed watching the non-stop coverage of the Baltimore riots Monday night? So sad. How has it come to this? We're back in [Watts](#), only it's *five decades* later !

Well, it's not exactly the same. It was white businesses that were trashed in Watts — this time they were black ones. And there was another, even more important, difference...

Commentators were repeatedly asking, where are the parents? Ben Carson — the neurosurgeon, potential Republican presidential candidate and onetime Baltimore resident — urged the city's parents ["Please, take care of your children."](#)

Great idea, but here's the problem. They don't have 'em. According to liberal CNN's Don Lemon, 72 percent of African-American children are born out of wedlock. His stats were born out by the [Centers for Disease Control](#). One can only imagine what the stats would be broken down for those Baltimore neighborhoods that were rioting. The presence of a father in the home would be a rarity indeed. And a lot of the moms are probably holding their fatherless homes together for dear life, desperately trying to make a living when their kids are pouring out of school. No one was home.

Of course, it wasn't always that way. The black family was the bulwark of that community. So what happened? I'll be blunt, since I was once part of the problem and equally culpable — liberal racism. Ever since the days of Lyndon Johnson, social welfare programs aimed at making the lives of "colored people" better actually made them worse. The assumption behind these programs is that African-Americans — always, constantly, forever unequal and not up to the task — needed a leg up. They got the message. Wouldn't you?

And wouldn't it make you pretty angry, too? Not that that's an excuse for violence, not even faintly. The whole system is corrupt, top to bottom.

No wonder the mayor of Baltimore made the inane comment (and then pretended she didn't) about giving the rioters [space to wreak their havoc](#). That's the logical extension of the Great Society, this time given forth by a black woman graduate of Oberlin. She didn't even comprehend at the time the insult to her own people inherent in her comment. When I heard her [welcoming Al Sharpton](#) in the press conference, I cringed.

So what do we do? As a onetime *white-privileged* civil rights worker, I'm probably the last one to say, but we should do some serious rethinking. Some of the ideas that go back to Jack Kemp — turning these communities into tax-free empowerment zones encouraging local people to pull themselves up by the bootstraps — have never really been tried to any significant extent. And they are the only thing that makes any kind of sense to me. (I admit to being heavily influenced by Dambisa Moyo's fascinating [Dead Aid](#) that showed that African countries who fared best were the ones who received little or no foreign aid.)

But whatever we do, it shouldn't be the same old same old. We know that doesn't work.

Contentions

What Jon Stewart and George Stephanopoulos Got Wrong

by Peter Wehner

Last night on *The Daily Show*, in talking about the Baltimore riots, [this exchange](#) took place between host Jon Stewart and ABC's George Stephanopoulos:

Stewart: Right now it seems the easy thing to do is to say, "There are criminals on the streets and they're creating violence." That's the easiest thing in the world to do and not to address in any way...

Stephanopoulos: It's true but it's not enough....

Stewart: It's not enough at all. And it's a small percentage of it. And you just wonder sometimes if we're spending a trillion dollars to rebuild Afghanistan's schools, like, we can't build a little taste down Baltimore way. Like is that what's really going on.

Stephanopoulos: This is what drives me crazy you just got applause when you said that line. Any single politician in the country gets applause when they say that line. Yet it doesn't happen.

Stewart: Because I think ultimately what they count on is that those applause lines will be obscured by the reality of the real power structure within Washington....

Where to begin? Let's start with Stewart's claim that we have spent "a trillion dollars" to rebuild Afghanistan's schools. Not quite. In fact, not even close. Between 2002 and 2012, USAID [invested \\$885 million in education projects in Afghanistan](#).

As for their broader point, which is that we have spent a huge sum of money on Afghanistan's schools but we're not spending enough for cities like Baltimore: Those claims are also false. Let's focus just on education in Baltimore, so we can do an apples-to-apples comparison.

As [this article](#) points out, according to data from the Census Bureau, the Baltimore school system ranked second among the nation's 100 largest school districts in how much it spent per pupil in fiscal year 2011. Baltimore's \$15,483 per-pupil expenditure was second to New York City's \$19,770.

As for [where the United States ranks](#):

The United States spent more than \$11,000 per elementary student in 2010 and more than \$12,000 per high school student. When researchers factored in the cost for programs after high school education such as college or vocational training, the United States spent \$15,171 on each young person in the system — more than any other nation covered in the [Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development] report.

That sum inched past some developed countries and far surpassed others. Switzerland's total spending per student was \$14,922 while Mexico averaged \$2,993 in 2010. The average OECD nation spent \$9,313 per young person.

As a share of its economy, the United States spent more than the average country in the survey. In 2010, the United States spent 7.3 percent of its gross domestic product on education, compared with the 6.3 percent average of other OECD countries.

The argument Stewart and Stephanopoulos were throwing out—we're dramatically under-investing in America's cities—is liberal claptrap. To stay with the issue of education, the problem with American education in general, and large urban school districts in particular, isn't lack of funding. It's lack of accountability and transparency, lack of competition and choice, lack of results and high standards. We obsess on inputs and ignore outputs. What often happens, in fact, is the worst school districts often get the most money based on the flawed premise that the reason the schools are failing is lack of funding.

We're spending an enormous amount of money on a system that isn't producing, and it's liberal interest groups (e.g., education unions) and the Democratic Party that are ferocious opponents of the kind of reforms that would improve American education. What exactly are the compelling public policy and moral arguments for opposing school choice for kids in the worst schools in America? There are none. The opposition is based on wanting to maintain and increase political power. If it's the kids who suffer, so be it. Progressivism has an agenda to achieve, after all. Sometimes you need to break eggs to make an omelet.

A confession: I think Jon Stewart is a fine comedian and George Stephanopoulos a fine journalist. I've had good things to say about both in the past. Yet they are both deeply liberal, and now and then their liberalism pours forth in uninformed ways. Their *Daily Show* interview is an example of ideology dressed up as moral concern, which can sometimes lead to moral preening.

A final point: For all their self-proclaimed compassion, liberals and liberalism are, in important respects, doing significant damage to the young people in America, and most especially to the most vulnerable in our midst. Messrs. Stewart and Stephanopoulos don't seem to realize this, but they should. Because human lives should take priority over political ideology.



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JUSTICE THURGOOD
MARSHALL



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OF
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"PROGRESSIVE"
CITY
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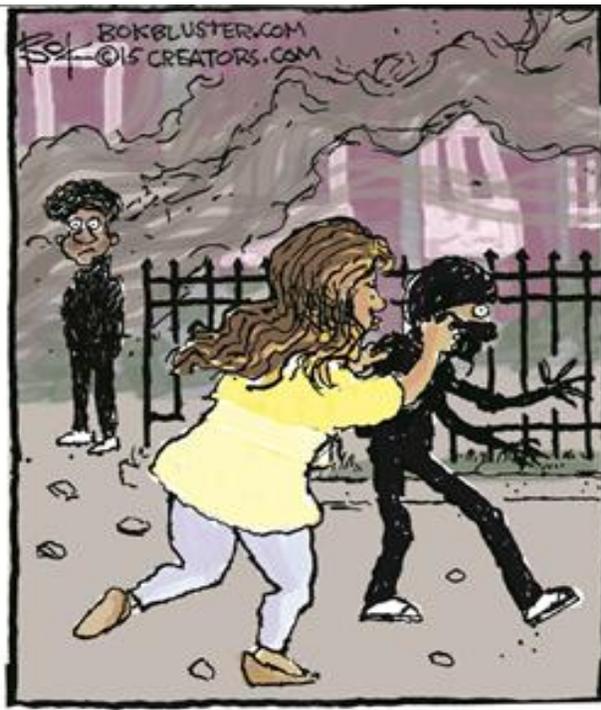


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