

Mass Looting in Chicago, My Neighborhood Under Siege

By [Stephen Lendman](#)

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I awoke Monday morning to distressing news, alerted me by pre-dawn email from my residential building's management.

I and other building residents were told about overnight vandalism and mass looting of retail shops along Chicago's Magnificent Mile in our neighborhood — a Kristallnacht night of broken glass along the avenue and elsewhere in the city, scattered violence as well.

What happened weeks earlier was repeated post-midnight to pre-dawn Monday morning.

Around midday Monday on my daily walk for exercise, I saw the aftermath firsthand, a surreal scene along the Mag Mile I never saw before in over half a century as a Chicago resident.

The upscale Michigan Ave. shopping area was cordoned off by police, vehicular traffic blocked.

I asked an officer about overnight events and was told about the overnight mass looting and vandalism.

Trucks with workers along the avenue were boarding up shops to protect against further incidents.

As far as the eye could see, large numbers of police and vehicles filled the avenue, likely to remain round-the-clock until city authorities signal an all-clear.

My building's lobby was placed on lockdown. If broken into, on duty staff are able to shut down elevators to prevent hostile elements from reaching and breaking into apartments.

On Monday, Mayor Lori Lightfoot rejected the notion of calling for national guard forces to protect the city's Loop business district and near north side Streeterville neighborhood where I and thousands of others live, saying the following:

"(W)e do not need federal troops in Chicago, period, full stop."

"I'm sure the president will have his way with this incident, but I'm calling upon him to do the things that we do need."

Don't bait us...This is a serious situation. People are concerned about their safety. Officers are concerned about their safety."

“What we’re saying is, as a result of what happened (pre-dawn Monday), there have to be consequences.”

“We’ve got teams of people that are aggressively out there, identifying the people responsible, looking at the plates, and we’re going to bring them to justice.”

The Chicago Tribune described overnight Sunday events as follows:

“(H)undreds...swept through the Magnificent Mile and other parts of downtown Chicago (pre-dawn) Monday, smashing windows, looting stores, confronting police, and at one point exchanging gunfire with officers.”

According to police superintendent David Brown, scores were arrested, 13 officers injured.

“A civilian and private security guard were shot and wounded.”

Preceding what happened, “an officer-involved shooting (occurred) in the (south side) Englewood neighborhood.”

On August 1, the Chicago Sun Times reported a record number of lethal July shootings, more than double the number in the same month last year — “105 murders” compared to 44 in the same 2019 period, according to police data.

On Monday, the Sun Times called my neighborhood, the downtown Loop, and surrounding areas a “key of dynamite.”

“(H)eeps of shattered glass and empty storefronts” followed mass looting and vandalism overnight Sunday.

On Monday afternoon south of my neighborhood, “hundreds of people squared off with police...rocks, bottles and bricks...hurled.”

Looting and vandalism occurred in other parts of the city.

Upscale Mag Mile shops reporting break-ins and looting included Nike, Nordstrom, Burberry, Macy’s, Saks Fifth Avenue, Ralph Lauren, Verizon, Omega, Louis Vuitton, Bloomingdale’s, Hermes, Giorgio Armani, Saint Laurent, and many others.

According to the Sun Times, the latest mass looting and vandalism following what happened in May “puts Chicago at a crossroads,” adding:

“Businesses may be reluctant to rebuild, fearing they won’t be protected. Their customers may not feel safe shopping, dining and going to the theater downtown.”

“Empty-nesters and young people drawn to the city may leave because they, too, no longer feel safe.”

Illinois Retail Merchants Association president Rob Karr issued a statement, saying:

“There’s a limit to how many times retailers are willing to be kicked.”

“It will be difficult after retailers who have invested millions in reopening to have to do it again.”

“There has to be a lot of confidence that they can be protected and, so far, that confidence is lacking.”

The solution isn’t turning my neighborhood, others, and the Loop business district into armed camps.

Until further notice, my neighborhood and surrounding areas are restricted from 9:00 PM to 6:00 AM — a curfew imposed as long as necessary according to city authorities.

One area retail shop owner likely spoke for others, saying “I feel like we are under attack.”

I feel like I’m living in a war zone under siege, hopefully not to be long-lasting.

Pre-dawn Monday, bridges along the Chicago River were raised to prevent looters from easily accessing the downtown Loop business district.

The Chicago Transit Authority “temporarily” halted bus and rail service in the downtown area from 8:00 PM to 6:00 AM.

Normally it operates round-the-clock every day.

What’s going on in Chicago and elsewhere in the country relates to frustration over made-in-the-USA mass unemployment and economic collapse.

Events since January are all about engineering an unprecedented transfer of wealth from ordinary Americans to corporate favorites and high-net-worth individuals.

It’s part of a scheme to further transform America and other Western states into ruler-serf societies — militarized, thirdworldized and controlled by police state rule.

It’s also about enabling corporate America to consolidate to greater size and market dominance by eliminating competition in the nation and abroad.

My neighborhood is under siege from lockdown following mass looting, vandalism and violence.

From sea to shinning sea, America is besieged by its dominant political and Big Money ruling class.

Ordinary people are exploited by engineered harder than ever hard times so privileged ones can benefit hugely.

The US is governed by one-party rule with two right wings.

No matter who’s elected president and to key congressional posts in November, what’s going on will likely continue, causing enormous longterm harm to ordinary Americans with no end of it in prospect.

The only solution is popular revolution. Nothing else can work. Elections assure continuity.

People have power to change things. The alternative is mass unemployment and underemployment, mass incarceration, and militarized police state rule.

Things in America are heading toward full-blown tyranny, a society more unsafe and unfit to live in than already unless challenged by mass activism for governance of, by, and for everyone equitably.

It can't happen any way other than longterm struggle for equity and justice.

If elections could do it, they'd be banned.

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Award-winning author Stephen Lendman lives in Chicago. He can be reached at lendmanstephen@sbcglobal.net. He is a Research Associate of the Centre for Research on Globalization (CRG)

His new book as editor and contributor is titled "Flashpoint in Ukraine: US Drive for Hegemony Risks WW III."

<http://www.claritypress.com/LendmanIII.html>

Visit his blog site at sjlendman.blogspot.com.

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About the author:

Stephen Lendman lives in Chicago. He can be reached at lendmanstephen@sbcglobal.net. His new book as editor and contributor is titled "Flashpoint in Ukraine: US Drive for Hegemony Risks WW III."
<http://www.claritypress.com/LendmanIII.html> Visit his blog site at sjlendman.blogspot.com. Listen to cutting-edge discussions with distinguished guests on the

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