

about 400 people on a typical weekend. But it has been closed since mid-March due to the broad shutdown restrictions in place to combat the novel coronavirus.

Damage to the building from Sunday night's fire and vandalism will cost at least \$20,000, Fisher said. But he said the destruction should not become the focus of what has been happening in the streets outside the White House.

Fisher said that when people have talked about the church being burned, he has tried to redirect them, saying it was likely one person who does not represent the majority of people protesting.

"That has pulled away from the more important message that we have to address racism in this country," he said.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Texas.

PROTESTS

Mr. CRUZ. Mr. President, I rise at a time of crisis. For several months now, our Nation has been dealing with two simultaneous crises: a global health pandemic that has claimed the lives of over 100,000 Americans, over 300,000 people across the globe, and an economic crisis that has cost over 40 million Americans their jobs.

And in the midst of these two crises, we are now faced with yet another crisis: a crisis of anger, a crisis of racial division, flames that are pulling this country apart.

This crisis was precipitated by the wrongful death of George Floyd in Minneapolis, MN. At this point, most, if not all, of us have seen that horrifying video: Mr. Floyd, in handcuffs, facedown on the pavement, incapacitated, not posing a threat to anyone, and a police officer with his knee on the neck of Mr. Floyd, pressing down hard on the neck of Mr. Floyd and keeping that knee there for 8 long minutes.

Mr. Floyd begs the officer, pleads with the officer, says he can't breathe. He is in obvious and serious physical distress. Other officers are standing there, watching a defenseless, handcuffed man, pinned to the ground for 8 long minutes, with a knee pressing down on his neck.

As we all know, those actions took the life of Mr. Floyd, and, rightly, following what happened, the U.S. Department of Justice opened a civil rights investigation into the police officers' conduct. Also rightly, I believe, the local prosecutor opened—began—a criminal prosecution, a homicide prosecution, against the officer for his conduct.

Now, anytime you have an officer-involved shooting, it is easy for people to let rhetoric get carried away. It is easy to jump to conclusions. And too many players in the political world, I think, quickly move to demonize the police officer and assume the officer is wrong in every circumstance. That is not how responsible leaders, that is not how responsible Americans should behave. We should wait to see what the facts and circumstances are.

But here we have a video, and we can see what the facts and circumstances are, and there are zero legitimate law

enforcement justifications for what happened to George Floyd—none. We witnessed police brutality and abuse of power, and that is why the officers are being prosecuted.

Those should be propositions that bring all of us together. Watching the death of Mr. Floyd, for so many Americans, brought forth the long history in this country of racial discrimination, a history that began with centuries of slavery in America, a history that has seen Jim Crow laws, that has seen the Ku Klux Klan, that has seen overt and also implicit discrimination.

Young African Americans too often fear interactions with law enforcement, fear that their rights will not be protected. Our Nation's journey toward civil rights has had many troubled stops along the way, but I, for one, agree with Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., that the arc of history bends toward justice. I also agree with the vision that Dr. King put forth standing on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial, to an assembled crowd and an assembled protest, that he wanted to live in a nation where we would be judged—all of us would be judged not by the color of our skin but by the content of our character.

That is a vision that has animated America on our journey toward justice, and outrage at what happened to George Floyd prompted Americans across this country to speak out, to exercise their First Amendment right to speak out for racial justice, to speak out against police brutality, to speak out against abuse of power. All of that is legitimate. All of that is protected by the Constitution.

But then we saw things take an ominous turn, a dangerous turn. What, for some, was legitimate First Amendment speech, speaking out for justice, became co-opted, became taken over by violent criminal radicals.

Now, let's be clear because so much of the news media does not like clarity in this regard. When I say that, I am not saying that everybody speaking is a violent criminal radical. Indeed, there are a great many people speaking out whose heart cries for justice, cries for the justice that has been the many-centuries-long journey of this country.

But there are radicals who cynically took advantage of these protests to sow division, to sow fear, to engage in murder, to engage in violent assaults, to engage in looting, to engage in theft, to engage in intimidation, to engage in fear.

The First Amendment protects your right to speak; the First Amendment protects your right to peaceably protest; but none of us has a right to violently assault another person. None of us has a right to murder another person. None of us has a right to burn the cars of police officers, to shatter the shop windows of shops throughout this country, to engage in acts of terror, threatening the lives of our fellow Americans.

To those radicals who cynically tried to co-opt these protests, I will say

their actions were profoundly racist because they were making a decision to take what should have been a unifying moment to say this will not stand in our Nation. Our law protects everyone, regardless of the color of their skin. Every American—African American, Hispanic, White, Asian American—it doesn't matter; our laws protect everyone. That should have been a unifying moment, and the cynical, violent, radical criminals decided to co-opt these protests to turn them into, in far too many instances, riots—violent riots, terrorizing their fellow citizens.

George Floyd was a native Houstonian—my hometown. I love the city of Houston. George Floyd was active in his church in Houston. Next week, Mr. Floyd will be coming back to Houston for the last time to be buried in Houston. I am proud that last night, in the city of Houston, thousands came out to protest, and there wasn't violence last night; that the people of Houston demonstrated that you can speak, you can speak for racial justice, you can speak out against brutality without engaging in violence.

But there has been too much violence across the country and, sadly, too many politicians who are complicit in violence, who have made the political judgment to turn a blind eye to rioters, to thugs, to murderers, to those terrorizing communities.

The riots must stop. The violence must stop. The first responsibility of government is to keep people safe. Right now, in too many of our cities, government is failing in that task.

Across the country, we see the lives which have been taken. To date, 6 U.S. States and 13 U.S. cities have declared a state of emergency because of the riots they are facing. Chicago police superintendent David Brown said that over the weekend, 132 police officers were injured, there were 48 shootings, and 699 arrests.

In Las Vegas on Monday night, rioters shot a police officer who is right now on life support. Over the past 3 days, Las Vegas police officers have arrested 338 rioters.

In St. Louis, four police officers were shot on Monday night. Fortunately, their wounds appear not to be life-threatening, but a beloved retired police captain, David Dorn, was shot and killed by looters at a pawn shop that same night.

Mr. Dorn joined the St. Louis police force in 1969. He was a dedicated law enforcement officer for nearly 40 years. His wife and the St. Louis community are grieving his loss. Mr. Dorn was also African American.

The phrase "Black lives matter" has become fraught with politics. It is absolutely true that Black lives matter. We should be horrified at what happened to George Floyd, but we should also be horrified at what happened to David Dorn. To those with political agendas seeking demagogue that tear this country apart, somehow David Dorn—another Black man, a different

Black man—who doesn't fit the political story they are trying to tell, disappears from their narrative.

It has become politically controversial to make a statement that every life matters. How far have we gone? Our country was founded on that proposition. The Declaration of Independence tells us we hold these truths to be self-evident that all men—not some men, not just White men or White women, but all men—of every race, of every creed, of every religion—are created equal and are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights that, among them, are the right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

Now, our country has not always delivered on that promise for every American, but that is the journey we have traveled toward that vision.

David Dorn's life matters. For every reporter fanning up division who doesn't stop to honor David Dorn, shame on you. His life mattered, and he didn't need to be murdered by violent looters exploiting the tensions and division.

In protests Monday night in Buffalo, NY, three police officers were run over by a car, breaking a leg and shattering the pelvis of one of the officers.

In New York City, almost 2,000 people have been arrested since the rioting started, and 700 people were arrested just on Monday night. At least two New York City police officers were hit by cars on Monday and nearly 50 New York Police Department officers have been injured since the protests began.

In Salt Lake City, 21 police officers were injured over the weekend, including an officer who was hit in the head with a bat.

On Sunday, during the riot that took place outside the White House when the historic St. John's Church was burned, when arsonists burned the church, 14 Secret Service agents were injured.

In San Francisco over the weekend, at least 20 fires were set, 33 people were arrested for looting, and 2 police officers were attacked.

On Friday night, David Patrick Underwood, an officer in the Department of Homeland Security, was shot and killed during protests in Oakland, CA.

David Patrick Underwood, like David Dorn, was African American. George Floyd's life matters. So does David Dorn's. So does David Patrick Underwood's. No elected leader should sit idly by while David Patrick Underwood or David Dorn or George Floyd is murdered. If Black lives matter, then all Black lives matter, not just those which are politically convenient for politicians.

It has been reported that at least 25 cities in the United States have seen deadly, destructive riots in the last week. According to the Claims Journal, which reports and analyzes the property claims industry, 75 businesses in Madison, WI, have been looted; 50 businesses in Seattle; 50 businesses in

Pittsburgh; and 45 properties in Chicago have suffered damages. In New York City, iconic stores up and down Broadway and Fifth Avenue have been vandalized and looted.

In Atlanta, everything from big-box stores to small businesses have been destroyed, looted, and damaged. In Atlanta, a Black-owned small business, a clothing store, was completely looted in the wee hours of a Saturday morning. To store owner Kris Shelby, the loss was devastating.

Mr. Shelby told the New York Times that "as a black man, and this is a black-owned business, it's just sad." Looting and destroying Mr. Shelby's business does not further the cause of racial justice. It is the act of a cynical, violent thief and a thief willing to be a bigoted racist on top of it.

In Philadelphia over the weekend, nearly 250 businesses were burglarized, over 375 fires set ablaze. Pause and think about that number. One city, Philadelphia, the city of brotherly love—370 fires.

This is wrong. This is shocking. This is horrifying. You are not exercising your First Amendment rights when you are lighting a police car on fire. You are not exercising any constitutional rights when you are burning and terrorizing and assaulting your fellow citizens. Eighteen law enforcement officers were injured in Philadelphia—some hit by Molotov cocktails, others by rocks and bricks. Ross Martinson, the owner of a small business called the Philadelphia Runner, told the Philadelphia Enquirer: "What is left is mush" after rioters attempted to light three fires in his store, stole clothes, stole shoes, smashed the windows, and left the store flooding from the sprinklers.

In Los Angeles, the rioting and looting has brought back painful memories of the 1992 Rodney King riots that resulted in 50 deaths, thousands of arrests, and the destruction of over 1,000 businesses and buildings.

One Santa Monica furniture store, the owner named Roman, told the L.A. Times that over the weekend, "we lost everything in 10 minutes." Roman said that 10 minutes of looting resulted in \$6 million in damages.

Mind you, all of this is happening after months of small businesses being on the verge of bankruptcy from the coronavirus pandemic and the economic catastrophe we are facing.

Now we have local politicians saying: We are not going to let police officers protect your store. We are not going to let police officers protect your livelihood. Everything you own can be taken and destroyed by violent criminals.

In New York, according to ABC7 New York, businesses, such as delis, pharmacies, beauty supply stores, were destroyed and multiple fires set in Fordham in the Bronx on Monday, while the flagship Macy's store and scores of other retail stores were burglarized, looted, damaged, in downtown Manhattan over the weekend and Monday. And

throughout it all, New York police department officers are calling for the politicians to take the handcuffs off them, to let them actually protect their city and protect their fellow citizens. But too many politicians have a different agenda.

If you are not willing to say that what happened to George Floyd was wrong, it was unacceptable, it was criminal, then you should get the hell out of public office. But if you are also not willing to say that what has happened to these store owners, what has happened to these police officers—the stores that have been looted, the officers who have been murdered and assaulted—if you are not willing to say that is wrong, it is criminal, it is unacceptable, and it must stop, then you need to get the hell out of public office. This ain't complicated. Protect people's lives. Protect their rights.

In Minneapolis, where George Floyd was killed, Tiwana Jackson, an African-American small business owner with an eyelash extension studio, told a Business of Fashion reporter that her store had been looted and vandalized during the riots. Tiwana said: "Burning stores down, stealing things—how is that going to get justice for George Floyd?"

She continued: "It almost took my focus away on why this whole thing started in the first place, which was racism."

In Richmond, VA, David Waller saw the jewelry store that he runs—that his grandfather founded in the year 1900—ransacked by rioters over the weekend. Waller and Company is one of the oldest Black-owned businesses in Richmond. How is that justice?

In Washington, DC, not only was the historic St. John's Church burned—where every President we have had has worshipped—but the Lincoln Memorial was vandalized, as well as the World War II Memorial was vandalized, and the Victims of Communism Memorial was vandalized. That is not standing up for justice.

The Lincoln Memorial—Abraham Lincoln led this Nation during the bloodiest war we have ever encountered, the Civil War. Six hundred thousand Americans died in the Civil War. And Abraham Lincoln's vision, restoring this country and ending the abomination of slavery—I have to say, the Lincoln Memorial is my favorite place in all of Washington to go and stand and read the words etched in stone, to read the Gettysburg Address, to read the second inaugural of the President who signed the Emancipation Proclamation, the President whose leadership through that Civil War, whose leadership to end slavery cost him his life at the hands of an assassin. Yet vandals defaced it.

The U.S. Park Police reported that the protests on the National Mall and at Lafayette Park across the street from the White House resulted in 51 injured U.S. Park Police officers. Eleven of those injured officers had to go to

the hospital for treatment, and three had to be admitted because of their injuries.

In my home State of Texas, we have seen riots in Austin, San Antonio, Dallas, and Houston, my hometown—the hometown of George Floyd. In Austin, over the weekend, protesters tried to block a highway and destroyed multiple businesses, including a gas station, a Food Mart, a hotel, a Target, a Foot Locker, and other stores and businesses.

In Houston, another group of protesters closed down Highway 59, and rioters destroyed businesses and injured police officers.

This must stop. There are a host of tools that can be used to stop it. The first lines of defense when it comes to violent crime are the brave men and women of our police departments who are risking their lives every night as they engage with rioters and violent criminals.

Just as it is a slander to say that every protester is a violent rioter, it is also a slander—an absolute vicious lie—to paint every police officer as a racist, to paint every police officer as someone who commits abuse of power and police brutality, as we saw with George Floyd.

Yes, there are some who break the law, and that is why the officers are being prosecuted. The rule of law extends to everyone. If a police officer breaks the law, he or she should be prosecuted. But when we are looking to protect our own families, when we are looking to protect our spouse, when we are looking to protect our children—the people we call on to be our first line of defense are the men and women in blue.

Local officials who have decided politically that they are not going to let the police officers arrest the rioters, but they are going to release the rioters; the media that turn a blind eye and don't report on the police officers being murdered; the Hollywood celebrities who virtue signal and raise money to pay the bail for the people being arrested for violent looting—every one of them is contributing to this problem.

We also have Federal resources. I have spoken with U.S. attorneys in the State of Texas who are directing Federal resources. There are Federal laws on the books against rioting: 18 USC, section 2101, makes it a crime to travel in or use interstate commerce to incite a riot or participate in a riot; 18 USC, section 231, makes it a crime to “obstruct, impede, or interfere” with a law enforcement officer performing his or her duties “in any way” that affects commerce; 18 USC, section 844, makes it a crime to “maliciously [damage] or [destroy], or [attempt] to damage or destroy, by means of fire or an explosive, any building, vehicle, or other real or personal property used in interstate or foreign commerce”; 18 USC, section 1962, the RICO statute, makes it a crime for anyone associated with

an enterprise to engage in a pattern of racketeering activity where racketeering activity includes arson and robbery; 26 USC, section 5861(d) makes it a crime to possess a destructive device, which is defined in a way that includes a Molotov cocktail; and 18 USC, section 2314, makes it a crime to transport interstate or sell goods that are stolen.

All of those are Federal laws that are available for Federal prosecutors, that are available to the FBI. The message that needs to come clear—loud and clear—from every elected official is if you engage in violence, if you engage in looting, if you destroy shops, if you shatter windows, if you light police cars on fire, if you commit acts of violence, if you physically assault your fellow citizens, if you physically assault police officers, if you kill your fellow citizens, if you kill police officers, you will be prosecuted. You will be prosecuted, and you will go away to jail for a very long time.

There are organizations that are promoting this, that are funding this, that are coordinating this—organizations like antifa. For 2 years, I have been calling on the administration to designate antifa as a domestic terrorist organization. They have engaged in acts of violence all across this country. But this past week has been antifa's most shameful act.

This week, the President rightly announced that antifa would be designated as a terrorist organization. That means we can use law enforcement resources to track down—if you are providing funding and organizing, you will be prosecuted. We will use the RICO laws against you, the same laws that take down drug dealers.

If you are handing out bricks to young African-American men, trying to incite them to commit acts of violence, that is a criminal activity. It is also a cynical, bigoted activity. This must stop.

Our first responsibility is to protect our fellow citizens, to protect their lives, to protect their safety, to protect their rights. The President has that responsibility. The Attorney General has that responsibility. Every U.S. attorney in the country has that responsibility. The FBI has that responsibility. The Governors of all 50 States have that responsibility. Mayors have that responsibility. Police chiefs have that responsibility.

It is time for this to stop. It is time for us to come together. And it is time for the demagogues who peddle the vision, who seek personal benefit in fanning the flames of racial animosity, to stop playing games with people's lives.

If you are a Hollywood celebrity and want to make a contribution, make a contribution to a fund rebuilding the small businesses, the African-American businesses, the Hispanic businesses that have been looted and burned and destroyed. Make a contribution to a fund to the families of the police officers murdered. Don't pay to bail out the criminals assaulting those police

officers, burning those African-American small businesses, looting those African-American small businesses. You are not a social justice warrior. If you are lining up, seeking accolades for your support of violent criminals who are deliberately targeting the African-American community, I will tell you right now, you are not advancing racial equality if you are supporting violent criminals who are destroying far too many African-American communities and Hispanic communities. That is not helping the problem.

We need to keep America safe. We need to protect every American, regardless of race, regardless of skin color. We need to come together and keep America safe.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. LOEFFLER). The Senator from Iowa.

CORONAVIRUS

Ms. ERNST. Madam President, for months, as our Nation has confronted this pandemic together, everyone in America—every single one of us—has been asked to make serious sacrifices, whether that has meant working overtime in a hospital caring for the afflicted, temporarily closing a family business, euthanizing hogs and cattle, or forgoing important life events like a high school prom or a college graduation. COVID-19 has brought with it very challenging times.

While we have missed milestones and time together, Americans across the country have stepped up to help slow the spread of this virus and its toll on the lives of our fellow citizens. While we cannot return to life as usual just yet, we are entering a new phase. Step by step, State by State, America is safely reopening.

In Iowa, Governor Kim Reynolds has led our State with a steady hand during this critical time. Under Governor Reynolds' thoughtful plan and guidance from public health officials at the local, State, and Federal level, Iowa communities and businesses are starting to safely reopen, and many activities are carefully resuming. Iowans can once again participate in America's great pastime and play golf. Places of worship are opening for services while taking smart precautions. And while they will not be as crowded as they once were, restaurants and bars are taking the first steps in opening again, as well as are places that we all grew up going to in Iowa—our amusement parks, racetracks, outdoor performance venues, movie theaters, and museums—all with important public health guidelines in mind.

All of this is contingent, of course, upon having smaller groups of people and continuing to practice social distancing—simple precautions that can make a big difference.

While we all yearn for life to return back to how it was a few months ago, we must be smart about taking the appropriate steps. Certainly, we want to see our elderly relatives, gather with our family and friends once again, and