



Armed guards and retail theft rings: America's streets now resemble a third world nation as organized crime ramps up, citizens buy ballistic armor

## Description

A gas station in Philadelphia, tired of all the crime taking place in his parking lot, has hired armed security guards to patrol the premises, projecting a show of force against would-be drug sellers, prostitutes or thieves. As reported by Fox 5 in New York:

*Neil Patel, operator of a Karco gas station at Broad and Clearfield streets in North Philadelphia, recruited Pennsylvania S.I.T.E Agents clad with Kevlar vest and AR-15s or shotguns. "We are tired of this nonsense; robbery, drug trafficking, hanging around, gangs."*

In a society where police are widely de-funded and where citizens are growing increasingly desperate due to food inflation, joblessness, supply chain shortages and worsening scarcity, prepare yourself to see a lot more private security guards.

I'm predicting that before long, **we'll see private security guards at some grocery stores**, guarding against flash mob looters that target the meat section of the store.

We'll also likely see more armed security guards at banks, government buildings and commercial retail locations.

This is something I've seen before — in South America, where armed gangs and thieves are a constant threat to law-abiding citizens and business owners. The hiring of armed security guards is a frequent sight in developing nations, but until recently it was almost never seen in America.

Now, all that is about to change.

## Walmart CEO warns stores could close due to rampant theft

Retailers like Target, Best Buy and Walmart are losing billions of dollars each year to organized crime rings. Target alone has lost a reported \$400 million this year due to organized theft operationstargeting its stores, reports Business Insider:

*“Along with other retailers, we’ve seen a significant increase in theft and organized retail crime across our business,” Brian Cornell, Target’s CEO, said during the company’s third-quarter earnings call. Missing inventory has reduced Target’s gross margin by more than \$400 million in 2022 compared with last year, and Target expects those profit losses to grow to \$600 million by the end of the fiscal year, Target CFO Michael Fiddelke said.*

The key phrase in all this is **organized retail crime**. This isn’t merely spontaneous, simple shoplifting, it’s a whole new type of large-scale theft where teams of thieves are prepped and coordinated to hit a retail establishment and clean out its most valuable items in seconds. The stolen goods are then sold on Ebay, Amazon and other online marketplaces, or delivered to local buyers in exchange for cash.

According to the National Retail Federation, organized retail crime has skyrocketed by 26.5% in 2022, year over year. It now costs retailers over **\$100 billion per year** in losses. As the NRF explains:

*The individuals that drive the increase in retail crime are part of criminal enterprises that steal large quantities of merchandise to later convert the stolen goods into cash. These stolen items are sometimes sold on online auction sites and marketplaces with their origins not properly verified.*

Scott Glenn, Home Depot’s vice president of asset protection, describes the maturity and complexity of these retail theft gangs to Business Insider:

*...[D]espite their ubiquity, Glenn said it is important not to underestimate shoplifting groups. He said that they can be helmed by “good administrators” and function somewhat akin to shadow businesses. Glenn said that in some cases, these professional shoplifters will steal “right up to that felony threshold” without ever crossing the line.*

My prediction is that stores like Home Depot, Lowe’s, Best Buy and Costco will soon have to either shutter entire stores or hire armed guards to protect them. This won’t happen in every city, but in certain areas it will become a business necessity.

As CNBC reports, Walmart CEO Doug McMillon is already stating that rising retail theft could force Walmart stores to close. Target is sounding a similar warning:

*Walmart isn’t the only big-box retailer dealing with an uptick in theft. Last month, Target Chief Financial Officer Michael Fiddelke said shoplifting has jumped about 50% year over and year, leading to more than \$400 million in losses in this fiscal year alone. Most of the shoplifting is organized retail theft, rather than petty theft, Fiddelke said.*

McMillon also blames “woke” prosecutors for the problem, revealing his belief that left-wing district attorneys are refusing to prosecute crime. “Speaking on CNBC’s Squawk Box Tuesday, he said that woke district attorneys’ policies need to be ‘corrected’ or the company will be forced to raise prices or shut stores,” reports the UK Daily Mail:

*Walmart CEO Doug McMillon admitted that theft has become a major issue for the chain known for its low prices, saying woke district attorneys' lenient policies need to be 'corrected.'*

In other words, if local prosecutors won't charge thieves and lock them up, Walmart is going to leave town for good. And who can blame them?

## **More Americans are arming up, and body armor sales remain strong**

In response to the perception of rising violent crime and thefts, firearm purchases by Americans have exceeded one million firearms per month for 38 consecutive months, reports 19FortyFive.com:

*"The estimated sales through September 2022 amounted to about 12.7 million units, about 2.1 million units off the 2021 pace and about 4 million units less than in 2020 but still significantly higher than the 9.7 million units recorded in 2019 – all for January through September of the respective years," said SAAF Chief Economist Jurgen Brauer.*

Although 2022 isn't the strongest sales year in recent memory, gun purchases remain steady and will likely exceed 15 million firearms sold before the end of this year.

Body armor is also becoming an item of interest to regular people who previously believed police would protect them but are now realizing that security is a personal responsibility. "I see a large number of people, the people that call, by and large are new to ballistic products.," I was told by Lyman Bishop, founder of HopliteArmor.com (a Brighteon sponsor) which sells U.S. engineered and U.S. manufactured ballistic armor products for civilians. He continued:

*They're just coming to terms with the fact that things are sliding down hill and they want to be safe. One customer was overseeing a gas station. He said there has been an increase in altercations, he mentioned hearing gunshots in the immediate area more frequently. Another customer told me a story about a home invasion where a woman got hurt, an elderly woman in his neighborhood, and that there had been several home invasions in a relatively nice area, and it prompted a number of people in that same area to buy ballistic protection from us. My average customer that's calling in now is older, typically over 60. I've seen a sharp spike in retirement-aged people buying armor.*

Everyday people, it seems, are realizing how quickly America is devolving into a third world environment with the risk of violent crime ever present.

## **Democrats ban body armor and try to block firearms purchases by law-abiding civilians**

So what do Democrats do to resolve the problem? NY Gov. Hochul banned body armor for civilians, making sure residents have no means to protect themselves from the gunfire of criminals and home invaders. When police can't respond because of rising crime and plummeting funding, civilians are apparently not supposed to have any reasonable means to protect themselves either. At least not in New York. (Perhaps this is why so many right-minded people are leaving the state...)

In Oregon, a ballot measure that recently passed requires onerous new training and purchase restrictions that are clearly designed to make it nearly impossible for citizens to purchase a firearm. The measure has been temporarily suspended. "Federal Judge Karin Immergut on Dec. 6 denied plaintiffs a temporary restraining order (TRO) on the implementation of Ballot Measure 114," reports The Epoch Times in a story entitled, "Chaos and Confusion Over Oregon's New Gun Control Measure." From that story:

*Passed with just 50.7 percent of the vote, Ballot Measure 114 requires Oregonians to undergo a background check and take a class, which does not yet exist, to obtain a permit to purchase a firearm. It also bans magazines that hold more than 10 rounds.*

The catch-22 in this, of course, is that **no training programs exist in the State of Oregon that would qualify a person to purchase a gun under the new law**. Thus, it is impossible to complete the requirements. This is not an oversight, it is the intent.

## **If you live in certain areas, you are no longer safe in your own home, and your own government is actively working against your ability to protect your safety**

The bottom line? The very same left-leaning government officials who are defunding police, releasing violent criminals onto the streets, frequently refusing to prosecute violent crime and disparaging law enforcement for doing their jobs are also going to extraordinary lengths to make sure that civilians cannot protect themselves with firearms and ballistic armor. The objective is clear: To transform America's streets into chaos-ridden war zones where civilians are helpless against rising criminal gangs and trafficking cartels.

The chaos, it seems, benefits certain people in power, and they want the chaos to expand, even if it means innocent Americans are robbed, raped or murdered in the process. Crime, it seems, **has become a convenient tool of the political Left in America**. Democrats are now the pro-crime party, and citizens are increasingly realizing they will have to be their own first responders.

My recommendation? Acquire tools. Get training. Practice and drill. Obey local laws and learn safe operations and storage. Become proficient or become a victim. And if your current state won't allow you to own full-capacity magazines, firearms and ballistic armor to protect your life, *leave and find another place to live*.

I cover all this and more in today's Situation Update podcast:

– Gas station hires armed security guards to stop crime

- PRIVATE security will flourish as America's streets become more violent
- Walmart CEO says rampant shoplifting may force stores to close
- The cycle of desperation is accelerating: Inflation, job loss, poverty, crime
- Gear that can help you stay alive: Ballistic armor, folding self-defense firearms
- Balenciaga translated to mean, "Baal is King"
- Pentagon to drop vaccine mandates after Congress forces funding issue
- Who is shooting up the power grid? Looks like a false flag operation
- Power grid sabotage will provide cover for coming currency collapse
- Black Rutgers professor claims all white people are villains
- Roundtable interview with Seth Holehouse and John Perez

by: Mike Adams

### **Category**

1. Crime-Justice-Terrorism-Corruption
2. Main

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