

Americans, Police Prepare for Post-Election Violence

Some businesses are boarding up windows. Others are removing items from shelves they fear could draw vandals and looters.

Who will be America's next president isn't the only unknown outcome of Tuesday, Nov. 3. Current dissension and anxiety from increased political rhetoric, COVID-19, mobilization and countermobilization of Black Lives Matter and more are prompting citizens—and law enforcement agencies around the country—to prepare.

“Between the coronavirus pandemic and nationwide protests against police brutality following the murder of George Floyd, one might have to go back to the late 1960s to find a time when U.S. domestic politics resembled such a powder keg,” according to Brookings Institution.

While the public policy organization is tasked with “solving problems facing society at the local, national and global level, it thoroughly targeted President Donald Trump for what it considers to be the potential of small-group, post-election terrorism. No person or organization on the other side of the political aisle was mentioned as potential contributors.”

Aside from the political statements, Brookings' analysis includes an observation that national intensity has increased, in part, during COVID-19 shutdowns, with Americans at home and online consuming more “propaganda and disinformation.”

With a winner-takes-all attitude about the election, contested or unclear election results are a primary concern for individuals, business and law enforcement agencies.

“As Americans, we all have the right to believe whatever we want, but we don't have a right to carry out acts of violence

to further those beliefs,” said U.S. Department of Homeland Security Acting Secretary Chad Wolf in the agency’s “Homeland Threat Assessment, October 2020.” “The Department works with other government, non-government and private sector partners to prevent individuals from making this transition from protected speech to domestic terrorism reflected by violence.”

Wolf goes on to express concern over growing aggression being disguised by the “exploitation of lawful protests causing violence, death and destruction to American communities.”

Law enforcement is training for the worst, and an increasing number of Americans are convinced that things in this nation will soon take a very chaotic turn, according to Michael Snyder in Charisma News.

“In fact, one recent poll found that 61% of Americans believe we are heading toward another civil war,” he said.

In the business realm, windows along popular thoroughfares are being boarded to prevent looting. Walmart announced Thursday that it has removed gun displays and ammunition from shelves and display cases. The decision was made following looting in Philadelphia earlier this week.

And there are many expecting tension to remain high beyond Nov. 3. According to NiemanLab, part of the Nieman Foundation at Harvard, the election could be contested and last for weeks. {eo}