



Written by [Selwyn Duke](#) on January 26, 2020

NYC's New Top Cop Challenges Left; Slams NY's New Crime-spiking Bail Laws

"I can't believe they let me out," Gerod Woodberry told a detective. Woodberry was right to be surprised. He'd already been charged in four bank robbery cases and now had just been charged with collecting \$1,000 from a fifth bank. At least he'd learned a lesson, though — that he could do it again.

And four days later the 42-year-old allegedly hit a sixth bank. That's when he was finally held.



Enabling this crime spree were New York State's new bail laws, says critics. The problem?

Reflecting similar laws in other leftist-run states, under New York's new brainchild, judges can no longer "set bail for a long list of misdemeanors and nonviolent felonies, including stalking, assault without serious injury, burglary, many drug offenses, and even some kinds of arson and robbery," [explained](#) the *New York Times* December 31.

The effects are now being seen, too. "On Jan. 10, a homeless man was released without bail after being charged with [striking two women in unprovoked attacks](#) in Manhattan," the *Times* [related](#) in a later piece. "On Long Island, opponents of the new law have cited a case involving a man charged on Jan. 12 with a [fatal drunken driving crash](#) who had been released from custody two days earlier."

Interestingly, one critic of the new laws is a man appointed by far-left mayor Bill de Blasio himself, new NYC Police Commissioner Dermot Shea (shown). In a Thursday *Times* op-ed, he [complained](#):

Last April, the New York State Legislature passed an ill-considered set of criminal justice reforms that were buried in the state budget bill. As those reforms have taken effect, it has become clear that they present a significant challenge to public safety....

Arrests are down 46 percent since 2013. Eighty-seven percent of arrested persons are released without bail within 24 hours of arrest. The city has the lowest jail incarceration rate compared to the five largest cities in the country, half the rate of Los Angeles and one-third that of Houston. The Rikers Island jail population is 51 percent lower since 2013 and down 74 percent from its high in 1993.

New York is now the only state in the nation that requires judges to entirely disregard the threat to public safety posed by accused persons in determining whether to hold them pending trial or to impose conditions for their release....

According to our calculation, 738 people arrested on burglary and robbery charges in 2018 would have been released without bail or remand under the new law, despite the fact that their collective records comprise 9,926 arrests for crimes including 1,134 robberies, 891 assaults, 524 burglaries, 334 weapons charges, 48 sex crimes (including 15 rapes), and 25 murders or attempted murders. These are not the types of offenders who should be freed to continue their criminal activity.



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But freed and still plying their trade such types often now are. As NY's *Daily News* [reported](#) Friday:

A rise in crime during the first weeks of 2020 is directly tied to bail reforms that took away New York judges' discretion to lock up potentially violent offenders, NYPD commissioner Dermot Shea said Friday.

"In the first three weeks of this year, we're seeing significant spikes in crime," Shea said.

It's not the police department's fault, he said — "either we forgot how to police New York City, or there's a correlation" with the bail laws....

The overall crime rate is up 11%, NYPD CompStat data through Jan. 19 shows. In raw numbers, the police count 5,043 serious crimes this year, up from 4,542 in the same period of 2019.

To anyone aware of what transpired in the 1960s, '70s, and '80s, this can seem like the political version of the film *Groundhog Day*. Slap-on-the-wrist justice was already tried then with the same predictable crime-spiking result. Subsequently, crime plummeted in the 1990s, partially because we started locking more people up for longer periods of time.

But as philosopher Georg Hegel observed, "We learn from history that we do not learn from history," and now we're repeating the same crime-spiking mistake. The only difference is that the earlier pretext for leniency was that criminals are "shaped by their environment" and thus aren't really responsible for their actions, so we needed to trade punishment for rehabilitation; now it's "[the fake meme](#) that the justice system in this country is racist," as *American Thinker* rightly [puts it](#).

Speaking of misconceptions, one operative here is that non-violent offenders pose no threat (and are they really "non-violent"?).

Not only does extracting money or goods directly from a victim involve the implied threat of force, but it by definition creates a potentially violent situation. What if the victim resists? What if he screams, prompting a panicked robber to act rashly?

This is why it's unsurprising that today's "non-violent offenders" often were violent yesterday. Just consider that the aforementioned Woodberry — Gerry Six Times — "had been convicted five times for strong-arm robbery in South Carolina, including one charge that resulted in a 15-year prison sentence," the *New York Times* also informed. Was clairvoyance necessary to know he'd offend again?

This criminal-coddling is the broken-window principle in reverse. Ex-NYC mayor Rudy Giuliani succeeded in lowering Big Apple crime to the point where Gotham became one of the nation's safest big metropolises partially by clamping down on the lesser crimes (e.g., turnstile jumping), with the understanding that the miscreants committing them would perpetrate greater trespasses if not stopped. "Take care of the little things, and the big things take care of themselves." Now many major cities are not only ignoring the lesser crimes, but are putting serious ones in their category.

The new bail laws, though, are simply one by-product of a certain mentality. Another by-product is far-left district attorneys more concerned with releasing criminals than reining them in. A good example is Philadelphia's new George Soros-backed, criminal-coddling DA Larry Krasner, who was exposed in the recent Fox News video below.

American Thinker contends that we're seeing these laws and lawlessness "because leftist Democrats have been reduced to seeking support — and votes — from constituents in urban environments who know someone, a family member or a friend, who is locked up." While this *may* sometimes be a factor,



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there's far more to it. After all, this doesn't really explain San Francisco, a somewhat patrician city that elected the worst of criminal-coddling DAs, Chesa Boudin, the son of Weather Underground terrorists and convicted murderers.

Of course, some of these criminal-enablers may be disruptors, individuals aiming to facilitate the American system's revolutionary remaking by helping tear it down. But I suspect there's another factor, one that thus far may be unexplained.

Devout leftists maintain that the "real" causes of crime are unaddressed deeper issues such as "systemic racism" and "white supremacy." And I believe that many of these social engineers are thinking on some level, "You won't take our sage counsel and implement our progressive prescriptions? Then you're going to have to endure these problems until you eliminate them *our way*."

It also may be a pleasing type of retribution for them. Remember that no one likes having his plans thwarted, and leftists believe it's the "deplorable" resistance throwing a monkey wrench into theirs. Intensely angry about this, the attitude likely is, "If you won't listen, you'll just have to suffer till you toe the line!"

It's all they can do — [not \(yet\) being able](#) to put anyone in gulags.

Photo of Police Commissioner Dermot Shea: NYPD

Selwyn Duke (@[SelwynDuke](#)) has written for The New American for more than a decade. He has also written for The Hill, Observer, The American Conservative, WorldNetDaily, American Thinker, and many other print and online publications. In addition, he has contributed to college textbooks published by Gale-Cengage Learning, has appeared on television, and is a frequent guest on radio.



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