

Lancaster, Pennsylvania got it done!

This was shaping up to be another week of rioting and chaos in an American city. It was Lancaster, Pennsylvania this time, home to Amish villages, cornfields, and other rural attractions. Rioters descended on the town on Sunday night, pillaging, looting, burning, and doing all of the other things we have come to expect, in response to the police shooting of a man who was chasing after an officer while wielding a knife. But then something we have not come to expect: almost as soon as it had started, the rioting stopped.

The next night of protests was [small](#) and for the most part peaceful (really peaceful, not “peaceful” in the way the media has come to use the word). If there have been any protests since Monday, we haven’t heard much about them. Things seem to have quieted down in Lancaster. Order rapidly reemerged from the chaos. Contrast this with places like Portland or Seattle, which saw mass anarchy for months on end. Riots plagued Kenosha and Minneapolis for weeks.

Why was Lancaster so lucky? Why isn’t it the next Kenosha or the new Portland? It seems they did a number of things differently.

1. The Lancaster Police Department released the bodycam footage of the incident within hours. We didn’t have to wait days or months to see if the narrative from the protesters was actually true, as we did with George Floyd and other high-profile police shootings. Granted, the radical branch of the “protesters” don’t much care about the accuracy of their narrative — the truth is an irrelevant detail in their worldview — but it certainly doesn’t help when the false narrative goes entirely unchallenged for weeks on end.



2. The police showed up in force on the first night of the protests. Rioters were given a few warnings to disperse before [tear gas](#) was deployed. Rubber bullets were also used against the rioters as they began to hurl bricks and other projectiles at law enforcement. One protester, sadly for him, [took a rubber bullet to the groin](#).

3. Police [aggressively pursued](#) those who committed crimes throughout the night. Officers in marked police vans chased down the criminals, swiftly arrested them, and carted them off to jail.

4. Here is perhaps the most important part. The arrested rioters were charged with multiple felonies and kept in jail on bails set at [up to 1 million dollars](#). As of Wednesday, at least seven of the accused arsonists and vandals are still in jail, unable to pay the hefty bond.

And this is all it took. Four easy steps to quell the chaos and restore order.

It is not as though the Lancaster Police Department has access to more tools and resources than the police in Portland or Seattle. The difference here is that the people in positions of power actually wanted the law enforced and took basic steps to see that it was done. The police were allowed to do their jobs, and suspects, once arrested, faced real and life changing consequences. It was that simple.

Which only throws into sharper relief the abysmal and inexcusable failures of the cities that failed — rather, refused — to stop the rioting when they could.