



Quotes of the day

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By Allahpundit

It will be a quiet Black Friday on Ferguson's West Florissant Avenue. The modest commercial strip that runs through the heart of the embattled city has been devastated by rioting and looting. Now, [a haze of doubt hangs over many workers and merchants there who wonder whether their businesses can survive the terrible toll](#) — and the fear of possible uprisings to come.

“To be honest with you, I'm lost now,” Yaacoub told NBC News after touring the charred shell that once was Sam's. The exterior brick walls are the only salvageable chunks. The roof is gone. “I'm not sure money-wise. Money-wise, it's just too hard.

“I had to borrow \$700 to buy some wood, just to put the boards together to close up where (the rioters) came in from, to close the building. It's just too much, you know,” added Yaacoub, who carries insurance coverage for fire damage but isn't certain when or how much he might be paid to begin a rebuild...

“There may be a bunch of store closings after this because, I mean, with the community being so disrupted as it is right now, what really do we have left?” Moore said. “Are they going to rebuild? No, we don't think so.”

Some fear that images of Ferguson on fire [may determine the city's fate for decades to come](#). Will its notoriety as a riot city mark it for rapid descent into blight like the Watts neighborhood in Los Angeles or will the world's attention to its disadvantages make it a magnet for investment that breathes new life into the St. Louis suburb?

Some neighborhoods affected by riots have needed decades to shed their reputation for violence, said Walter Olson, an expert in constitutional studies and a senior fellow at the Cato Institute, a public policy research organization in Washington, D.C. Businesses and residents may also face more practical hurdles as they rebuild. Businesses may find it difficult to get insurance. Property values may plummet...

This is precisely what St. Louis Alderman Antonio French fears. French has stood alongside the protesters since the Aug. 9 shooting and said he's dismayed that destruction by a few people could overshadow the peaceful efforts of others.

“If you have been out here, you know 98% of everything that has been going on for the last over 100 days has been peaceful,” French said.

An Associated Press review of thousands of pages of grand jury documents reveals [numerous examples of statements made during the shooting investigation that were inconsistent, fabricated or provably wrong](#). For one, the autopsies ultimately showed Brown was not struck by any bullets in his back...

Another witness had told the FBI that Wilson shot Brown in the back and then “stood over him and finished him off.” But in his grand jury testimony, this witness acknowledged that he had not seen that part of the shooting, and that what he told the FBI was “based on me being where I’m from, and that can be the only assumption that I have.”

The witness, who lives in the predominantly black neighborhood where Brown was killed, also acknowledged that he changed his story to fit details of the autopsy that he had learned about on TV...

Another man, describing himself as a friend of Brown’s, told a federal investigator that he heard the first gunshot, looked out his window and saw an officer with a gun drawn and Brown “on his knees with his hands in the air.” He added: “I seen him shoot him in the head.”

But when later pressed by the investigator, the friend said he had not seen the actual shooting because he was walking down the stairs at the time and instead had heard details from someone in the apartment complex.

If you make Michael Brown into a symbol of all young black men, you cannot let yourselves admit to or report on any negative facts you discover about him, because then those negative things become facts about all young black men. So if you find out that Michael Brown was a thug who roughed up store clerks so he could steal from them—if you actually have video of him doing it—you can’t report that, because then you are saying that all young black men are thugs, which is clearly racist. So you’ve painted yourself into a corner where reporting the facts makes you racist.

On the other hand, you have also made Darren Wilson into a symbol of all police officers. This creates an incentive for people to rally to his side because they want to defend the police and law and order. There are a lot of us who remember the crime wave of the 70s and 80s, so we’re inclined to cut a little slack to the men on the thin blue line.

Even worse, though, is what you accomplish for those who are inclined to believe Wilson is guilty. Because you’ve made him into a symbol of the entire system, then if he’s guilty, the whole system is corrupt, murderous, and racist and needs to be burned to the ground. So you’ve just validated the worldview of the Ferguson rioters...

It's time to learn all of these lessons before the next contentious shooting, because there *will* be one. In a land of 300 million people, the ordinary course of interactions between public and police will inevitably produce some tragic results. Some of these shootings will turn out to be justified, others won't. And there is no way of immediately knowing which is which. If the media doesn't want to be in the position of inciting a riot each time this happens—and again, that's a big “if”—they need to [learn how to do a more responsible job of reporting on the use of force](#).

“There were death threats out against [Darren Wilson],” Bruntrager said. “There were bounties that had been placed upon his life.”...

“Realistically, he can't go back to being a police officer,” Bruntrager said. “He knows that. There's no illusion about any of this. But it's the way in which he leaves ... that's important to him on different levels.”...

Another attorney told The Post that Wilson's safety had a lot to do with his decision to leave.

“I think I expressed to him, [‘Do you realize your first call \(back on the job\) will be to a blind alley where you're executed?’](#) He took a pause for a minute, thought about it and said, ‘Oh.’ That is the reality,” his attorney, James Towey, told the paper.