

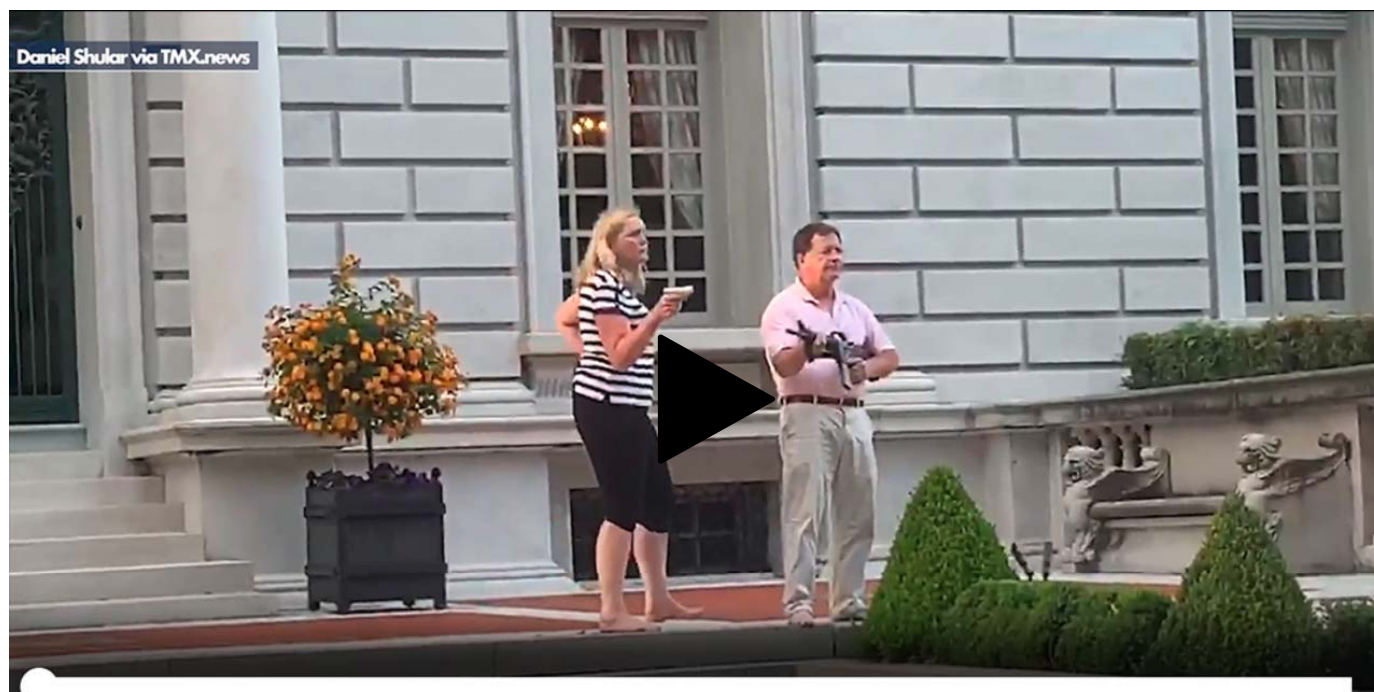
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US PROTESTS · Published June 29

Armed St. Louis protesters broke iron gate, threatened couple before they drew their own guns, attorney says

'We were told that we would be killed, our home burned and our dog killed,' homeowner said

By [Stephanie Pagones](#) | Fox News



00:00 / 00:31



St. Louis couple seen pointing guns at protesters marching toward mayor's home

Couple claims some protesters were armed, broke gate, threatened them.

A [Missouri](#) couple under fire for brandishing guns in the front yard of their home as [protesters](#) passed told [police](#) the group [broke](#) a gate to get onto the private street, and the pair say they only retrieved their firearms when they spotted "multiple" people who were already armed, department records show.

Al Watkins, an attorney for Mark McCloskey, 63, and his 61-year-old wife, Patricia, said the protest was largely peaceful and the pair did not bring their guns outside of the home until two men in particular, both of whom were white, started menacing them.

The McCloskeys, he said, were hesitant to come forward with the full story out of fear that they

would "disparage the importance of Black Lives Matter."



"At the time, their fear was, these people, two in particular, that were marching along with the Black Lives Matter protest participants – all peaceful. They were acting in a fashion inconsistent with the message being given," Watkins said. "My clients were not arming themselves against peaceful protesters, they were arming themselves about people with a really bad motive, a motive that runs afoul of the fundamental tenets of our country."

After the couple brought the guns outside, Watkins said, others began threatening them, unaware of the reason behind the couple's interpreted need to arm themselves.

"My clients, though, had to deal with comments that were from two individuals that were perpetrating these acts of violence and, not charging, but coming toward them and doing so in a fashion that was threatening, menacing, and in a fashion inconsistent with the Black Lives Matter message."

The pair called the St. Louis Police Department shortly before 7:30 p.m. Sunday. They told arriving officers that they had heard a "commotion" and, upon investigating further, "observed a large group of subjects forcefully break an iron gate marked with 'No Trespassing' and 'Private Street'

signs,” according to an incident summary provided to Fox News by the department.

However, [a video showed](#) the protesters walking through the gate and it was unclear when it was damaged.



A broken gate on private property near the McCloskeys' home. (Al Watkins)

The police report does not identify the McCloskeys as the victims.

[ST. LOUIS COUPLE DRAW WEAPONS ON PROTESTERS HEADED TO MAYOR'S HOUSE: REPORT](#)

“Once through the gate, the victims advised the group that they were on a private street and trespassing and told them to leave,” the police summary further states. “The group began yelling obscenities and threats of harm to both victims. When the victims observed multiple subjects who were armed, they then armed themselves and contacted police.”

Based on the couple’s account, police labeled the incident a case of trespassing and assault by intimidation, according to the incident summary. No other police reports were filed that night, a department spokesperson told Fox News.

Mark McCloskey told [KMOV-TV](#) that a mob rushed toward the home as the family was having dinner and “put us in fear of our lives.”

“This is all private property. There are no public sidewalks or public streets,” McCloskey said. “We were told that we would be killed, our home burned and our dog killed. We were all alone facing

an angry mob.”

SISTER OF MURDERED FEDERAL OFFICER DECRIES LACK OF OUTRAGE OVER BROTHER'S DEATH

Viral video posted to Twitter shows the McCloskeys, who are both attorneys, standing outside their Renaissance palazzo-style home in the city's well-to-do Central West End neighborhood. He could be heard yelling while holding a long-barreled gun. His wife stood next to him with a handgun.



Armed homeowners standing in front of their house confront protesters on June 28, 2020, in the Central West End in St. Louis. (Laurie Skrivan/St. Louis Post-Dispatch/Tribune News Service via Getty Images)

Watkins said the McCloskeys have each practiced law for more than 30 years have and "their practices have included, on an ongoing basis, representing individuals in pursuit of protection of their civil rights."

"One hundred percent of my client's clients in those cases have been people of color," Watkins said.

Meanwhile, the protesters were reportedly marching toward Mayor Lyda Krewson's home to demand her resignation.

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The group of at least 500 people chanted, "Resign, Lyda! Take the cops with you!" news outlets reported.

Krewson has faced demands for her resignation after a Facebook Live briefing on Friday where the white mayor read the names of those wanting to defund the police force. The video was removed and Krewson apologized the same day, saying she didn't intend to cause distress.

The names and letters are considered public records, but Krewson's actions caused a heavy backlash.

Protesters nationwide have been pushing to "defund the police " over the death of George Floyd and other Black people at the hands of law enforcement. Floyd, who was handcuffed, died May 25 after a white Minneapolis police officer pressed his knee on Floyd's neck for nearly nine minutes.

The Associated Press contributed to this report.

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