
'You can't blame it on police', Atlanta mayor says after 8yo black girl shot dead during protest

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The mayor of Atlanta, Georgia gave an impassioned plea to disclose any information on the gunmen who shot up a car, killing an eight-year-old black girl inside, during a BLM protest.

The shooters need to be brought to justice, because as long as they are roaming free, they pose a threat to everyone, Mayor Keisha Lance Bottoms said during an emotional press conference on Sunday. Staying silent regarding people like them will not keep people safe, and violence undermines the cause that has gained momentum in the past weeks, she said.

"In the civil rights movement there was a defined common enemy. We are fighting the enemy within. We are shooting each other on our streets," she said. "You've shot and killed a baby!"

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The tragedy happened on July 4th near the Wendy's restaurant where an African American man, Rayshard Brooks, was fatally shot by an Atlanta police officer less than a month ago. The restaurant was later torched as the location became a popular protest site.

On Saturday, a crowd of protesters gathered there and erected barricades. A car tried to enter the area to find a place to park, but was blocked by the activists.

In the ensuing confrontation, at least two people in the crowd opened fire at the vehicle, hitting Secoria Turner, 8, police said. She was taken to Atlanta Medical Center, where she died from her wounds.

Bottoms, who is black, spoke next to Secoria's grief-stricken family to urge that the gunmen be handed over to law enforcement. "You don't want in the street somebody who would shoot into a car randomly. If you know them, you need to turn them in," she said.

Secoria was one of two dozen people shot in Atlanta on Saturday, and one of three who were killed by firearms, the mayor said during the press conference. The protesting community needs to acknowledge that it needs reform just as the police do, she added.

You can't blame it on police officers. You can't say it's about criminal justice reform. This is about some people carrying weapons, who shot up a car with an eight-year-old baby. For what?

Her words angered some commenters online, who took it as a case of 'whataboutism', and an attempt to use the tragic death of a child to gaslight those protesting against police brutality.

Others simply said Bottoms has failed as a mayor and needs to resign as she has lost control of the city.
