

CHOP Report

By Jonah Lehto (Seattle, June 26) Today at the CHOP, tensions were high after some bulldozers were moved near CHOP's barriers. This led to shouting "red alert, CHOP can't sleep!" Some protesters laid down in front of bulldozers. Police were stationed a block away to protect the Seattle Department of Transportation.

People in the CHOP are naturally concerned and are more on edge than usual. There has been quite a bit of mainstream media around and they seem to only turn their cameras on if they can find a conflict. The CHOP chief of security was heard to advise CHOP protesters to be aware that media is trying to capture unfavorable optics.

Although the media likes to claim that the protesters' demands are unclear, they are spray painted everywhere and are in front of the CHOP's barrier on 12th and Pike. Protesters are demanding a 50% budget cut. Police have responded with a 100% service cut, including ambulances, and a work slowdown to the entire neighborhood with up to fifteen minute response times to the neighborhood being reported by the police themselves. The second demand is to help fund black communities and restorative justice, housing, and healthcare. These are services only the people of the CHOP are attempting to provide through mutual aid. The third demand is freedom for all arrested protesters. This demand has not been responded to. Some negotiations are now occurring.

In the middle of the streets of CHOP, there are porta-potties for people to use. Even though the porta-potties are in the middle of the road, they may use bulldozers to clear out people and barriers but bulldozers seem unlikely to be used on the porta-potties. A bulldozer can only push things aside, and it remains to be seen if the protesters' demands will be pushed to the side, or treated seriously.