

Seattle Protest Report, 7.20.20

By Jonah Lehto

Seattle protests have grown in numbers in response to events in Portland receiving national attention. This attention has included statements by Trump officials that the Portland model will be used as a model nationally. However, as previously reported here on Peter b. Collins, feds - specifically the FBI and possibly others, were already used to clear the CHOP on July 1st. Reporting on events in Portland, the Seattle Times now reports that feds were sent to Seattle under the same mobilization model as Portland "prior to July 4th" but that they have since allegedly been withdrawn. As a comment, it appears to be confirmed that the clearing of the CHOP was the first major action involving feds nationally.

From demonstrations yesterday, Seattle Police report that the East precinct experienced a small fire from a "large mortar-type" firework thrown into the building. However, footage of the firework reveals the device was more akin to a firecracker. Nevertheless, unconfirmed police sources continue to allege and be reported that the device was mortar-like in design.

Police also allege that a distinct subgroup of protesters broke away from one of two main demonstrations yesterday and had "baseball bats" and broke big box store windows and engaged in graffiti. "Baseball bats" are unconfirmed and it is also unconfirmed whether this "very organized" small group were even actual protesters. For the allegations, see:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IWBcgq40Fuw>

An opinion column in the Seattle Times by writer Naomi Ishisaka is now calling for police reports to achieve the same scrutiny as any other reports, citing a history of falsity. For example, in the police killing of Manuel Ellis, his state was described as a type of "excited delirium," but numerous critics have called the use of this term as "pseudoscience" and dishonest. Citing another example, on

June 11th, Seattle police reported that fees were being required to enter the former Capitol Hill Occupied Protest zone and referred to this as the crime of extortion. On the following day, police chief Carmen Best was forced to admit there was no evidence of extortion or any similar crime in the area of CHOP.

<https://www.seattletimes.com/seattle-news/stories-the-police-tell-and-how-to-resist-them/>

Historically, Police can report by tweets or blotter entries what allegedly occurred at an alleged crime scene or active investigation with little scrutiny or evidence being provided, and without using the usual qualifiers applied to other sources of information like "alleged" or "according to unconfirmed reports."

In other news, Mayor Jenny Durkan is alleging that the Seattle City Council's ban on crowd control weapons cannot go into effect without the approval process set forth in the federal consent decree. As the former federal prosecutor, Durkan negotiated this decree. Among other things, at several points this process calls for "police voices" to be heard. The decree's procedures will delay the implementation of the council's ban until those accused of wrongdoing and found by a unanimous council vote to have abused the weapons they were provided with can be heard, even though police had ample opportunity to lobby the city council. It appears from my perspective that the decree is being used procedurally to enhance police chances to commit the very police brutality it is supposedly designed to limit. And, as in Portland, the feds can and have been brought in to circumvent any limitations put on local police by their elected democratic representatives by having the feds use the prohibited weapons.