

White House says has no regrets about tear-gassing peaceful protesters



Washington, June 11 (RHC)-- The administration of U.S. President Donald Trump has said there are “no regrets” about the decision of using tear gas against peaceful demonstrators from outside the White House last week.

The demonstrators were protesting at Lafayette Square outside the White House against police violence and systemic racism sparked by the recent police killing of unarmed, handcuffed African-American man George Floyd. White House Press Secretary Kayleigh McEnany said on Monday night that neither President Trump nor anybody inside his administration had regrets about police’s actions against protesters.

“No there’s no regrets on the part of this White House because look I’d note that many of those decisions were not made here within the White House,” McEnany said. She said that Attorney General William Barr had decided to have police clear demonstrators from Lafayette Square.

“I’d note that many of those decisions were not made here within the White House. It was Barr who made the decision to move the perimeter. Monday night Park Police had also made that decision independently

when they saw all the violence in Lafayette Square,” she said.

McEnany claimed police issued three warnings before using chemical agents to clear protesters from the park and that demonstrators hurled projectiles at law enforcement officers. “That was unacceptable. Park Police acted as they felt they needed to at that time in response,” McEnany said. “We stand by those actions.”

That day Trump had threatened to “dominate the streets” by deploying troops, just before police tear-gassed protesters outside the White House. And Trump said that he believed the situation was “handled very well.”

“I went there because somebody suggested it was a good idea, and I thought it was a great idea, and it was a great idea,” Trump said on Wednesday.

The protesters were driven out of Lafayette Square coughing and limping, with their eyes burning amid clouds of smoke. But the Trump administration then had insisted federal police did not use tear gas on the crowd. “No tear gas was used, and no rubber bullets were used,” McEnany told reporters Wednesday.

Trump has reportedly considered deploying 10,000 troops to quell protests in Washington, DC. According to a senior Pentagon official, Attorney General Barr, Defense Secretary Mark Esper and Joint Chiefs of Staff Chairman Gen. Mark Milley advised President Trump against the deployment in a meeting at the White House, the Washington Post and CBS News reported on Saturday.

“We need to get control of the streets. We need 10,000 troops up here [in Washington]. I want it right now,” Trump said at the last week meeting, according a Pentagon official familiar with the matter.

Trump's advisors reportedly demanded that the president hold off the deployment of active-duty forces, trying to assure the president that National Guards activated by state governors were capable of maintaining order in Washington and elsewhere.

Meanwhile, thousands of people in dozens of cities across the US held demonstrations on Monday against the police brutality, racial profiling and the killing of Floyd.

The protest campaign erupted across the country last month after a video footage of Floyd's killing went viral. It showed former officer Derek Chauvin kneeling on Floyd's neck for nearly nine minutes, remaining in that position even after the victim had become unresponsive.

U.S. police forces in different cities have demonstrated their brutality during protest rallies in recent years by severely beating and arresting protesters and even journalists, using tear gas and rubber bullets, as well as employing helicopter crowd control tactics and other forceful measures.

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