

Police Use Armored Vehicle to Disperse Protesters in Milwaukee, USA



Milwaukee, August 15 (RHC/TELESUR)--Tensions rose again Sunday night as police used an armored vehicle to disperse protesters in Milwaukee, where a police officer had shot and killed Sylville K. Smith on Saturday, leading to a rebellion of long-repressed racial tensions in the Sherman Park neighborhood, that prompted Wisconsin's Gov. Scott Walker to call out the National Guard.

About 20 police in riot gear faced a group of more than 100 protesters in the standoff, leading to multiple arrests, according to ABC news.

Milwaukee police claimed they used the armored vehicle to recover and bring a shooting victim to the hospital. No details were released on whether the person was a protester, officer or bystander, or how the person was shot or by whom.

Earlier in the evening, a candlelight vigil was held to mourn the death of Smith, attended by Smith's family and local residents. About 200 people lit candles and gathered around the spot where Smith was shot.

One of Smith's sisters, Kimberly Neal, said as she wept, "My brother was no felon ... My brother was

running for his life. He was shot in his back."

"We are not ignorant and stupid people," a pastor told the crowd, echoing a feeling among many of the city's African-Americans that they are systematically mistreated. "Every single person needs to be looked upon as human beings and not like savages and animals."

Mildred Haynes, Smith's mother, told the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel earlier Sunday, "I am lost," saying police were providing very little information about her son's killing. "My son is gone due to the police killing my son."

Police Chief Edward Flynn said Sunday he had viewed video from the officer's body camera and it showed Smith had turned toward him with a gun in his hand after a traffic stop.

At a news conference with Milwaukee Mayor Tom Barrett, Flynn said the officer who fired the fatal shot was a Black man as well.

Flynn said the officer stopped Smith's vehicle because it drew his suspicion, only to turn out to be a rental car. He then chased Smith several dozen feet on foot into an enclosed space between two houses, in what amounted to 25 seconds before the fatal shooting.

Tensions between police and Milwaukee residents have been high for weeks, with residents and police recently clashing over the July 4 weekend.

With Blacks and Latinos representing 56 percent of the city's population, Milwaukee is the nation's most racially segregated metropolitan area. In a PBS documentary from earlier this year titled, "Why is Milwaukee So Bad for Black People," it documents how the city is divided along racial lines, with Black people experiencing significant systemic discrimination and violence.

Milwaukee police have been accused by activists of practicing racial discrimination, unduly targeting people of color, particularly Black men.

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