

Protests against police brutality spread throughout the U.S. and around the world



Washington, June 2 (RHC)-- Protests against police violence continue to rage across the United States. Thousands have been arrested, including 2,000 people in Los Angeles alone. Cities across the country have imposed curfews. Twenty-three states have called in the National Guard.

Protests have also spread across the globe, reaching France, Germany, Australia and New Zealand, among many other countries. The European Union's top diplomat said the EU is "shocked and appalled" by George Floyd's killing, calling it "an abuse of power" by police.

The protests began a week ago, after a white police officer in Minneapolis pinned African American George Floyd to the ground by his neck for eight minutes while Floyd gasped for air, repeatedly saying "I can't breathe."

Two separate autopsies Monday confirmed Floyd's death was a homicide. The officer, Derrick Chauvin, was charged Friday with third-degree murder and second-degree manslaughter. Three other officers who were also at the scene have been fired but not charged.

George Floyd's memorial service is planned for Thursday in Minneapolis, and his funeral is scheduled for next Tuesday in Houston.

In other news, NBC News reports that Minneapolis police records show officers used neck restraints over 230 times over the last five years and made at least 44 people unconscious.

Meanwhile, news reports from the White House show that as Trump addressed the nation from the Rose Garden Monday evening, blasts could be heard from nearby Lafayette Park as the National Guard and police officers fired tear gas, rubber bullets and flashbangs to disperse a peaceful protest. Many officers wore riot gear; some were on horseback.

Moments later, Trump walked through the now-cleared park to have his photo taken with a Bible in front of St. John's Episcopal Church, which was boarded up. Trump was accompanied by Attorney General William Barr, Joint Chiefs of Staff Chair Mark Milley and Defense Secretary Mark Esper.

The president's actions were widely denounced. D.C. Episcopal Bishop Mariann Edgar Budde criticized Trump for using the church as a "backdrop for a message antithetical to the teachings of Jesus." The chief of police in Arlington, Virginia, pulled his officers from D.C. after they were used to clear the park, saying their safety and the safety of others was endangered for a photo op. And Senator Ron Wyden of Oregon wrote on Twitter: "The fascist speech Donald Trump just delivered verged on a declaration of war against American citizens."

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