

U.S. Protesters Disrupt Opening of Missouri Senate



Jefferson City, January 9 (RHC)-- Demonstrators in the U.S. have disrupted the opening ceremonies of the Missouri State Senate to protest against the police killing of African Americans. Protesters who were particularly angry about the fatal shooting of unarmed Black teenager Michael Brown in the St. Louis suburb of Ferguson in August last year, chanted: "Hands Up, Don't Shoot," "No Justice, No Peace" and "Black Lives Matter."

Michael Brown was killed by a white Police officer who was not charged over the killing. Lt. Gov. Peter Kinder, who was presiding over the chamber, was forced to suspend the proceeding. Police cleared the demonstrators from the visitors' galleries and officers did not allow them in the chamber when the session resumed 30 minutes later.

Demonstrations across the United States erupted in November 2014 when a St. Louis grand jury declined to indict a former Ferguson policeman who shot dead Brown. The protests intensified 10 days later, when another grand jury in New York decided not to indict a white policeman for the chokehold death of Eric Garner, a father of six and grandfather of two. The chokehold death of Garner was recorded by a cell phone and widely seen. In the video, Garner repeatedly told police officers: "I can't breathe!"

The unnecessary use of heavy-handed tactics by police and the racial profiling of minorities, particularly of African Americans, have become a major concern in recent years.

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