

(GENERAL)
COMPTROLLER 267006
FILE NUMBER

FINAL REPORT
OF

SEATTLE HUMAN RIGHTS COM'N ON ALLEGED
MISCONDUCT OF POLICE DEPARTMENT MEMBERS
FOLLOWING DISTURBANCES AT A UNIVERSITY
OF WASHINGTON CONSTRUCTION SITE ON
SEPT. 23, 1969.

6-5-70 Police
6-24-70 file

FILED JUNE 4, 1970

C. G. ERLANDSON
COMPTROLLER AND CITY CLERK

BY J. E. Fenton DEPUTY

ACTION OF THE COUNCIL

REFERRED	TO
JUNE 8, 1970	PUBLIC SAFETY
REFERRED	TO
REFERRED	TO
REPORTED	DISPOSITION
JUN 29 1970	On File
RE-REFERRED	TO
REPORTED	DISPOSITION

REPORT OF COMMITTEE

Mr. President:

Your

PUBLIC SAFETY

Committee

to which was referred the within

FINAL REPORT

would respectfully report that we have considered the same and respectfully recommend that

THE SAME BE PLACED ON FILE.

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SECURITY

ACTION OF THE COUNCIL

COVERED

JUNE 8, 1970

DISCUSSION

PUBLIC SAFETY

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References

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-CHAIRMAN-

CHAIRMAN

F. C. RAMON
CHIEF OF POLICE

THE CITY OF SEATTLE



OUR NO. _____
YOUR NO. _____

SEATTLE CITY COUNCIL

JUN 18 11 07 AM '70

June 16, 1970

Councilman Sam Smith
Chairman, Public Safety Committee
The City Council
City of Seattle

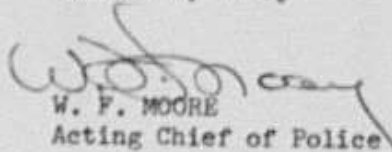
Dear Sir:

Returned herewith is Council File No. 267006 requesting comments regarding the report of the Seattle Human Rights Commission on alleged misconduct of Seattle police officers on September 23, 1969 at a University of Washington construction site.

Seattle Police Department command personnel have taken positive action to insure that all police officers on duty at future unusual occurrences will be properly identified. Further, there is a recognized need to properly sensitize officers concerning the political and emotional factors involved in demonstrations of this nature.

We do take the position, however, that it is necessary and a part of the officers' sworn duty to initiate arrest action whenever there is appreciable property damage or any action threatening the property or safety of persons. Consequently, we disagree with the Commission's recommendation that arrest action not be initiated for non-felony charges since this would virtually mean that property damage would be allowed to go unchecked.

Yours very truly


W. F. MOORE
Acting Chief of Police

WFM:am
Enclosed file

F. C. RAMON
CHIEF OF POLICE

THE CITY OF SEATTLE



SEATTLE, WASHINGTON 98104

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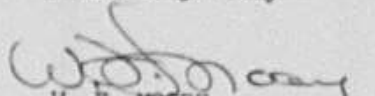
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DEPARTMENT OF

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SEATTLE, WASHINGTON 98104

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Chairman, Public Safety Committee
The City Council
City of Seattle

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CITY OF SEATTLE
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN RIGHTS

Y. PHILIP HAYASAKA, DIRECTOR

Room 305 Seattle Municipal Building • Seattle, Washington 98104 • 583-2754

(Public Safety Committee) C.M.C.

June 2, 1970

Honorable Charles M. Carroll
President
City Council
City of Seattle

Dear Councilman Carroll:

Attached is the final report and recommendations of the Seattle Human Rights Commission on the alleged misconduct of members of the Seattle Police Department following a disturbance at a University of Washington construction site on September 23, 1969.

The conclusions of this report were arrived at only after careful and thorough consideration of the testimony presented by eyewitnesses at a public hearing on October 16, 1969; testimony of police officers on February 6, 1970; viewing motion pictures taken by television newsmen; and studying pictures provided by the news media and the Seattle Police Department.

We wish to emphasize that our primary purpose in conducting the investigation and submitting these findings and recommendations is not to demean the Seattle Police Department, but rather to help achieve the highest level of practices and policies in law enforcement for our city, which in turn, will produce mutual trust between police officers and the community. We are confident this is the desire of the Seattle Police Chief, the Mayor and City Council as well.

Respectfully submitted,

Elliott N. Couden

Elliott N. Couden, Chairman
SEATTLE HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION

EC:jv

FINAL REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF SEATTLE HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION
UPON HEARING INTO UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON CONSTRUCTION SITE INCIDENTS OF
SEPTEMBER 23, 1969

A public hearing was conducted by the Seattle Human Rights Commission on October 16, 1969 into allegations of misconduct by members of the Seattle Police Department on September 23, 1969 following a demonstration at a University of Washington construction site.

The hearing was held pursuant to the fact-finding and advisory functions imposed upon the Commission by the ordinances governing it.

Eyewitnesses were invited to give unsworn statements. A letter was addressed to the Chief of Police requesting that officers having first-hand knowledge of the events appear and give statements.

Fourteen eyewitnesses gave statements. No police officer with first-hand knowledge appeared. Representatives of the Police Department, speaking on behalf of the Chief of Police, based such absence primarily upon the assertion that criminal prosecutions would be jeopardized.

While witnesses were not designated as being either in support of or opposed to allegations of police misconduct, eleven could generally be characterized as being critical of police conduct and three generally in support of it.

Subsequently, the Commission scheduled a second hearing for February 6, 1970 in order to make further effort to receive statements from members of the Seattle Police Department having first-hand knowledge of the events. On this occasion, through the good offices of Acting Police Chief Frank Moore, nine members of the Department appeared and gave statements. They offered to make their statements under oath. The offer was refused in order that their evidence might be received on the same basis as that given at previous hearing. In addition to oral statements, the Commission received a number of pictures taken by the Department as well as those taken by the Seattle Times, brought to the hearing in response to subpoenas. The statements given by members of the Department uniformly

denied that any excessive force was used and generally described such force as was employed as being appropriate response to acts of individuals either resisting arrest or attempting to interfere with the making of arrests of others.

Subsequent to the hearing, members of the Commission viewed motion pictures taken on the date of the incidents by television newsmen, through cooperation of the King County Prosecuting Attorney's Office.

The Commission wishes to emphasize that its primary purpose in conducting the investigation was to form the basis for recommendations to the Mayor, City Council, and Police Department, looking toward the betterment of human relations in the city and the reversal of the unfortunate trend toward alienation between the Police Department and large segments of racial minority population of the city.

With these major goals in mind, we deem it unnecessary in this final report to make highly detailed or individually pinpointed findings of fact. We do wish to report the following general findings:

1. Although there was a direct and irreconcilable conflict in the statements of witnesses as to the extent of and justification for the use of force by members of the Seattle Police Department towards persons present at the construction site demonstration on September 23, 1969, we cannot overlook the fact that a substantial number of reputable and reliable witnesses (as confirmed by some news film) reported the use of police force beyond that required to make arrests and to control persons present.

2. The physical confrontations which occurred were the direct result of a decision on the part of the Police Lieutenant-in-charge to make arrests for acts consisting primarily of property damage occurring out of the presence of the arresting officers. These arrests were described as the rendering of assistance in the making of "citizens' arrests" by individuals who reported that they had witnessed unlawful acts. All of these "citizens'

arrests" were made for property damage only. Although one or more assaults had allegedly taken place earlier, no "citizen's arrest" of any person charged with such assault was attempted.

3. It was undisputed that substantial numbers of the police officers on duty were not wearing name tags or other proper identification on their outer garments, as required by police regulations.

4. Commissioners feel that some members of the Seattle Police Department displayed little or no understanding of or sensitivity to the legitimate aims and aspirations of the demonstrators---the eradication of racial injustice in employment practices---an essential matter of concern to the City.

5. There appeared to be efforts on the part of some citizens to interfere with the making of arrests or to forcefully resist arrest. Such acts cannot be condoned regardless of whether or not the arrests are justified or well advised.

6. Efforts on the part of the Director of the Human Rights Department as well as those of other responsible citizens to curb and prevent further physical confrontation, were apparently regarded as unwarranted and improper intrusions upon police authority.

The Commission, in fulfillment of its advisory duties and functions, makes the following recommendations to the Mayor, the City Council, and the Seattle Police Department:

1. All members of the Seattle Police Department should be required to wear permanent visible name and badge number identification while on duty.

2. Members of the Seattle Police Department, and particularly those in supervisory positions, should be properly sensitized to the legitimate aspirations of members of the community who have been the victims of racial injustice, and the Department of Human Rights will make its facilities

available for this purpose. This is particularly needed in reacting to organized demonstrations in this field.

3. Physical confrontations in emotionally-charged racial incidents should not be initiated by police except for strong and compelling reasons, such as the protection of life or limb or the prevention of serious property damage. We believe it ill advised to initiate such confrontations for the purpose of making arrests for non-felony charges.

4. All citizens share the responsibility to prevent and deter acts of violence. Police action which is believed to be unjustified should be contested by orderly procedures rather than by physical resistance or retaliation.

5. Efforts by responsible citizens to curb physical confrontations and lessen racial tension should be accepted in the spirit in which they are offered and not regarded as improper intrusions upon police authority.

Respectfully submitted,

SEATTLE HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION

June 5, 1970

W. F. Moore
Acting Chief of Police
City of Seattle

Dear Chief Moore:

Attached is File No. 267006, final report of Seattle Human Rights Commission on alleged misconduct of Police Department members following disturbances at a University of Washington construction site on September 23, 1969.

The Public Safety Committee is forwarding the file to you for your information. Please return the file, together with any comments you may wish to make, at your earliest convenience.

Very truly yours,

PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE

SAM SMITH, Chairman

CWL:lm
Att.