

Angry After Milwaukee Police Shooting, Protesters Turn Against Media, Too

By JOHN ELIGON and KAY NOLAN

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The police in Milwaukee prepared on Sunday to confront protesters angry over the shooting of an African-American man by a city police officer on Saturday. *Joshua Lott for The New York Times*

MILWAUKEE — Demonstrators upset over an officer-involved shooting here took out their frustration on the police and property during street demonstrations over the weekend, but they also directed their anger at the news media.

The Milwaukee Journal Sentinel said that its reporters and photographers were chased from the scene of the protests, and one of its reporters was punched. A local television station, CBS 58, [said its journalists on the scene were attacked](#) and its equipment stolen while covering the demonstrations. Another station, TMJ4, said it had [pulled its crews from the streets](#) because of threats of violence.

Other news organizations were similarly removing their journalists from the field and assessing how to cover the story while ensuring that their reporters were not caught in the crossfire of gunshots, bricks and rubber bullets.

The [hostility toward journalists](#) underscores the frustration on Milwaukee's north side, where many in the predominantly black population feel that they have long been mistreated. Joblessness and poverty are high, and the police are frequently out in force.

"It's about the portrayal of the black community by white media," said Keyon Jackson-Malone, a community advocate who lives in North Milwaukee and hosts a black talk radio show. "Our stories get mixed."

Of the protesters who were hostile toward the news media, he added, "They probably just didn't want them there because of how it's usually portrayed."

Mr. Jackson-Malone pointed to an episode over the summer in which a group of black people and the police engaged in a tense standoff after officers confronted a teenager who had cursed at them. News reports later said the standoff had been the result of two children causing a melee, when that was not the case, Mr. Jackson-Malone said.

The nighttime standoffs over the weekend between protesters and the police were so intense that Mayor Tom Barrett of Milwaukee called for the enforcement of a curfew from 10 p.m. Monday until 5 a.m. Tuesday for anyone under 17.

The police arrested 14 people overnight on Sunday as the city said its ShotSpotter system, which tries to detect gunfire, had been activated 30 times.

An 18-year-old man was shot late Saturday along North Sherman Boulevard, a hub of the violence in northwestern Milwaukee, and the police said he had been evacuated by officers who arrived in an armored vehicle.

Not everyone thought the enforcement of the curfew would help things.

"It's going to agitate the situation," said Nozizwe Zemora-Bey, 29, who was sitting at a portable table she sets up each day across from Sherman Park to sell essential oils, figurines and other gift items. "People feel like they're being told what to do."

During Sunday night's unrest, she said, for hours she was prevented from crossing the street to walk to her house. "I didn't get home until 4 a.m.," she said. "And they made me walk way around all this whole perimeter closed off."

The Journal Sentinel has responded to the tense situation by sending its reporters out in teams of two and asking them to stay in well-lit, public places.

"This is just not a time to be a cowboy," said Thomas Koetting, the deputy managing editor of The Journal Sentinel.

But Mr. Koetting said it was important for the newspaper to look beyond the details of what is happening on the ground during the protests.

"There are deep, rich stories here that we do try to tell and, actually, I think we do a pretty good job," he said. "But, boy, you can always do better in finding out some of the root causes of the anger and the fury that's in that community, that's caused by economic instability and concentrations of poverty and joblessness and so forth."

Although the initial shooting that touched off the violence is the focus of a state inquiry, as required by law, officials in Milwaukee have signaled that they believe the 24-year-old police officer was justified when he opened fire and killed Sylville K. Smith, 23. Both are black.

The mayor said that Mr. Smith had been armed with a handgun when he was shot after he and another person had fled a traffic stop on Saturday afternoon.

Alan Blinder contributed reporting from Atlanta.

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