

In the interest of fairness, objectivity, and balance we felt it both prudent and necessary to print the official police reports of the FSU and Fayetteville city police departments concerning the February 22 police attack on FSU's Bryant Hall. In the words of Dragnet's Jack Web: Just the facts, Ma'am, the facts. Ed.



February 24, 1997

ADMINISTRATIVE

MEMORANDUM TO: Ronald E. Hansen
Chief of Police

SUBJECT: Bryant Hall Event
Fayetteville State University

I have conducted an extensive review of the events concerning the incident at Bryant Hall at Fayetteville State University. This cover report is intended to be a summary of events only. Included in the review are reports given by officers and supervisors on the scene.

Our department's first involvement with the Fayetteville State University students started at 0008 hours on February 21, 1997. Two officers and Sgt. McNair responded to the Days Inn on Bragg Blvd. in reference to a disturbance by "unregistered guests" who were smoking marijuana, playing very loud music and displacing motel property." The officers arrived and found evidence of the complaint along with 60-70 persons either in the vicinity of two of the registered rooms or in the parking lot. The crowd was loud but manageable by the officers. The crowd was asked to leave by motel management and they did. They were somewhat vocal at the officers but no arrests were made. The officers inspected the rooms that the students were in and detected a strong odor of marijuana. The beds had been taken apart and put into the bathrooms in order to accommodate more people. The fire alarms had been covered with wet towels. Apparently this was done so that the marijuana smoke within the rooms would not set the alarms off. One suspect detained on the scene admitted to possession of marijuana, but he had swallowed the evidence; therefore, he was not charged. (See Officer Hagen's Report).

The two motel rooms were registered to Roderic Diggs. A criminal history check revealed among other charges that he was arrested and found guilty of Possession of Crack Cocaine (Felony). It is evident that illegal drugs were being used at the party which apparently was being sponsored by Mr. Diggs, a Convicted Drug Felon. I think it is reasonable to believe that the students left the motel out of concern of being connected to illegal drug activity.

At 0035 hours Dorm Director called Fayetteville State Police Officers concerning "Illegal activity taking place at Bryant Hall." The illegal activity was believed to be related to suspected illegal drug use near or in the dorm. Fayetteville State Police Officer Butler and Lieutenant Johnson arrived on the scene. They discovered the parking lot at Bryant Hall was congested with students and vehicles. They estimated 100 students were in the area. They were described as being "very noisy from music in cars and students". Lt. Johnson instructed Officer Butler to get on a loud speaker and order the students to disperse. Lt. Johnson approached Shawn Arnold, who was a student in the crowd. Arnold was loud and disruptive, using profanity and stating he did not have to clear out. Lt. Johnson informed him if he remained and continued to cause a disturbance he would be arrested. Apparently some friends ushered Mr. Arnold away. Officer Butler continued trying to get the students to disperse by talking to them on the P.A. system on his vehicle. The crowd refused to disperse. Lt. Johnson called their dispatcher and requested assistance from the Fayetteville Police Department. Later on, Mr. Arnold returned and was arrested by FSU police.

At 0049 hours we received a call in reference to Fayetteville State University Police requesting assistance due to a disturbance they were having. Our first officer on the scene observed a large unruly crowd of students in the parking lot and on the balconies of Bryant Hall. Crowd estimates range from 60 to 150 depending upon which reports are read. Students who were observed at the Days Inn were also identified in the crowd. The officer made contact with Fayetteville State Police Officials. The officer was told that they (FSU police) had given an order for the crowd to disperse and they had refused. The FSU officers wanted any persons who refused to disperse to be arrested. Our first responding officer states that the crowd is loud, using profanity, throwing objects at them, and in general unruly. Our officer suggested that additional Fayetteville police officers be summoned to the scene before any arrest are attempted. At that point additional officers are summoned to the scene from our department.

The atmosphere of the students in the parking lot and in the dorm continued to become more hostile. As officers arrived, the students are described as threatening in nature, shouting obscenities and throwing objects. The description of objects reported thrown at or on the officers range from various liquids to feces as well as other unknown objects. The students are shouting "Fuck the police," "The roof is on fire, let the mother fucker burn, etc. (For additional references please refer to the officers statements.) At this point, no arrest are made.

As the officers and supervisors arrive they gather primarily in the parking lot. The first supervisors to arrive are Sgt. McNair, Senior Sergeant, Sgt. W. Waters, and Sgt. Glascock. Sgt. Glascock and Sgt. Waters gathered the officers together. They were

instructed to avoid confrontation with the students if at all possible until they could determine what the Fayetteville State Officials wanted our department to help them with. They were also told to pair up with one another for their own safety until they received additional instructions.

Sgt. McNair established contact with the Fayetteville State University Police Lieutenant. McNair and Lt. Johnson (FSU) agreed that he (Lt. Johnson) should give the students another order to disperse into their dorm rooms. Lt. Johnson gave another order. The students refused to comply. Sgt. McNair then made an announcement informing the students to disperse and go into their dorm rooms. That order was ignored. He waited 6-7 minutes. There was no sign that the crowd would disperse. Sgt. McNair ordered the Fayetteville Officers to disperse the crowd in response to the Fayetteville State Police Officer's requests with the intent of getting them into their dorm room. Any student that wanted to leave by vehicle was free to do so. The Fayetteville State Police Officers lead our officers through the dorm hallways. As they did so, most of the students returned to their dorm rooms. Four students which refused to comply with the orders were arrested. Two by Fayetteville Police and two by Fayetteville State Police Officers. Two of the subjects that was arrested received a scratches on the facial area when they resisted arrest. They was examined by Fire Medics. They required no medical treatment. Sgt. McNair was one of the officers that was involved in the arrest.

Based on my review of the reports, small teams of officers went through the hallways of all three floors as well as the balconies. I have no reports of Fayetteville Police Officers going into any dorm rooms. Sgt. McNair states that none of our officers went into the rooms or used pepper spray eventhough the officers were armed and prepared to use the spray if needed.

After the officers had completed the walk through of the dorms they regrouped in the parking lot with the supervisors. In between this time, Captain Fisher had arrived. The dorm walk through proved to be limited in success. As the officers completed walking down a hall way and leaving, the students simply came back out to the balconies. However, some degree of order appeared to be restored and Captain Fisher had instructed the supervisors to start releasing the officer back to their zones. At that point, someone inside the dorm set off the fire alarm which caused the students to evacuate the building. As many as 150 students were now in the parking lots or in the general area. This caused a mixing of students who probably were not involved in the disturbance and those that were. It did not appear reasonable to cause the students to go back into the dorm with the fire alarm going off. The students exiting the dorm at that time were not as hostile eventhough they were vocal. Captain Fisher decided to continue with the plan to reduce the number of officers by pulling our officers out of view. A small group of about 6 officers remained on or near the scene while the rest left.

When Captain Fisher arrived he asked for the Fayetteville State Police to make contact with any ranking Fayetteville State Officials, specifically the Chancellor or Dean or Students to respond to the scene. It appeared all attempts made were unsuccessful. At some point as some degree of order was returning, Chief Bell and Captain Moore arrived on the scene. Upon my arrival, the large part of our officers had already returned to duty. I made contact with Chief Bell, Captain Moore, and Captain Fisher. I asked Chief Bell if he needed any more assistance from our units. He stated that he did not. Captain Fisher and I left at that time along with the remaining Fayetteville Police units.

Based on my review of the reports and CAD print outs, we had approximately 20 to 23 officers/supervisors engaged in the event at one time or the other. That is not a unreasonable number of officers if they are going to be required to maintain order or disperse a crowd numbering 60 to 150 people. The crowd had refused every command to disperse starting with the first command given by the Fayetteville State Police officers prior to our arrival. Officers did carry mace canisters but no mace was used by Fayetteville Police Officers based on the supervisors and officers statements. No student has made any complaint to our department about being mace to date. I have no reason to believe that any Fayetteville State Police Officer used any mace.

The only injury in the whole event was the minor cuts that two of the suspect received as they resisted arrest. They required no medical attention. No officers or other students were injured.

The video tape supplied by an unnamed student supports the supervisors and officers statements. The audio on the tape clearly demonstrates the verbal and threatened hostility of the crowd toward the police. The video clearly shows that our officers were well disciplined, orderly and used restraint during hostile provocation on the part of the students. It does not show any evidence of unnecessary force on the part of any officers.

Another point brought to my attention was that students alleged that our department only sent black officers to the campus. This is not true. Officers responded from the adjoining zones without regard to race. Some specialized units such as Patrol Support also responded. The Communications department would not have known if white or black officers were responding.

One K9 unit arrived on the scene as a back up officer. He removed the K9 from the vehicle and started walking toward the perimeter of the dorm. He realized that the K9 might enflame the crowd so he returned the K9 to the vehicle. The K9 officer then returned to assist his fellow officers in crowd control. Contrary to some students allegations no K9 units were used for crowd control.

Fire Medics and a Fire Engine was dispatched to the area. It is a practical and practiced procedure to have Fire and Rescue units available when their are large unruly crowds. There is always the potential for injuries and fire. If mace would have