

Police refuse to release video showing shooting of Salt Lake City teenager

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Protests broke out over the weekend in Salt Lake City, Utah, after police shot a teenage boy, Abdi Mohamed, Saturday night. Mohamed remains in critical condition, and more protests are planned throughout the week.

On Sunday, the Salt Lake City Police Department (SLCPD) announced that it would not be releasing video footage from the body cameras of the two officers involved in the shooting, citing an “ongoing investigation.” The officers’ names have also not been released.

Witnesses told local news that a fight broke out between Mohamed, 17, and an unidentified older man shortly before 8:00 p.m., and Mohamed picked up a nearby broom handle. Police already in the area responding to another call ordered Mohamed to drop the broom handle and then immediately opened fire.

The man that police claim Mohamed and another individual were hitting with sticks did not require medical attention.

One witness, Selam Mohammed, told Fox13: “The police said ‘drop it’ once, then they shot him four times. We were trying to break it up before the police even came, but the police ran in on foot and pulled their guns out already. They already had them, like, as soon as [the officer] was running he was already grabbing for his gun, not even trying to Tase him or anything.”

Abdi Mohamed is from Kenya and moved to the US 10 years ago with his family. He lives in West Valley City, a Salt Lake City suburb, with his girlfriend, Becca Monson, and their son. “He was a really caring, good, loving boyfriend, and a really good, caring, loving father,” Monson told Fox. “He just wanted to make sure we were loved and we were happy.”

The SLCPD told reporters Saturday night that at least two officers were involved in the shooting. Crowds of

people at the scene started yelling at police and throwing rocks and bottles. The shooting took place near a shopping mall and the Road Home, a homeless shelter.

The police responded by calling in backup from neighboring police departments. Over 100 officers showed up in riot gear to disperse the crowds and barricade a four-block area around the scene. Public transportation in the area was shut down for three hours. Witnesses told reporters that the police used pepper spray and Tasers on the crowds. SLCPD acknowledged that they had detained some protesters, but they have not confirmed how many or what they were arrested for.

Detective Ken Hansen, with the Unified Police Department, told reporters that “there were pockets of that disturbance for hours.”

Police kill on average three people a day in the United States and injure significantly more. According to the *Guardian*, 169 people have been killed by police so far this year, following 1,140 last year. A separate tally, by killedbypolice.net, put the number of individuals killed in 2015 at 1,205.

Popular anger over police brutality finds no expression within the political system where Democrats and Republicans have jointly supported the militarization of police under the guise of “combating terrorism.”



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