



MORTON COUNTY SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT

Kyle L. Kirchmeier, Sheriff



News Release

For Immediate Release

October 10, 2016

Contact: Morton County PIO (701) 426-1587

27 Rioters Arrested Today in Two Protest Events

Mandan, N.D. – Morton County Sheriff Kyle Kirchmeier and Cass County Sheriff Paul Laney updated the media at a press briefing Monday afternoon on today's protest, which resulted in the arrest of 27 rioters.

At approximately 7am Monday morning, Morton County Sheriff's Department received a call that two protesters had locked themselves to DAPL equipment southwest of St. Anthony. The two protesters utilized the "sleeping dragon" method to lock themselves to the equipment on private property. They were subsequently arrested and charged with felony charges of reckless endangerment and misdemeanor charges of disorderly conduct, inciting a riot, and criminal trespass; an additional protester was arrested with criminal trespass. After the arrest, the small group disbanded and left the area.

Approximately two hours later, law enforcement received an alert about a large convoy of around 100 vehicles that were assembling about two miles south of St. Anthony on Highway 6. Law enforcement then closed Highway 6 between County Road 138A and Highway 21 due to the large group of rioters. St. Anthony and Flasher schools were notified around 8:30am, per protocol, and they instituted lock-down procedures. Law enforcement officials told them numerous times to leave the area around 10am. After the crowd refused to leave, 24 individuals were arrested and charged with a variety of charges, including inciting a riot, engaging in a riot, and criminal trespass.

When asked about the events, Sheriff Laney said, "While some would like to say this was a protest, this was not a protest – this was a riot. When you have that many people engage in that kind of behavior, inciting others to break the law, cheering others on as they do break the law, refusing to leave when they are asked to leave, that's not a protest... Today 27 arrests were made – not because we wanted that to happen, because those people on scene chose for that to happen."

Laney continued "The other thing I want people to pay attention to is how many North Dakotans are in this bunch...if past behavior is predicting future performance here, you're going to find very few. These are people with an ideology and an agenda that is not from here and they're bringing it here.

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What started out as a North Dakota issue, with North Dakota people and the Standing Rock tribe, has excelled well past that.”

Today's arrests bring the to-date total to 123 since August.

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