
USA-Charlottesville Protesters Criticise Huge Police Presence

12/08/2018



Hundreds of protesters took to the streets of Charlottesville, Virginia, on Saturday as a rally to mark the anniversary of last year's fatal white nationalist gathering turned largely into an anti-police protest.

With chants like, 'Cops and Klan go hand in hand', the protesters' criticisms of both police and the University of Virginia underscored the resentment that still exists a year after torch-bearing neo-Nazis marched through campus, shouting antisemitic messages and beating counter-protesters.

Several students said they were angry that the police response was far larger this year compared with last year, when those attending the white nationalist rally went mostly unchecked.

At one point on Saturday, dozens of officers in riot gear formed a line near where the rally was taking place, prompting many protesters to rush over yelling, 'Why are you in riot gear? We don't see no riot here.'

Law enforcement officers had set up checkpoints with concrete barriers and metal fences, and were searching bags for objects that might be used as a weapon.

Virginia's governor declared a state of emergency earlier this week to help coordinate planning and response to the anniversary weekend.