

Pigs Hit E. Detroit Party

Jerry Lindquist

1970

Out of control riot pigs attacked a crowd of East Detroit youths who were attending a graduation party in early June. Neighboring residents characterized the police action as “unprovoked and unwarranted brutality.”

Many of the residents of East Detroit’s Lincoln Street, where the incident occurred, say they intend to file complaints with their City Council about the repressive anti-youth conduct of the pigs.

On June 8 four hundred E. Detroit teens gathered at the home of one of their classmates about nine in the evening to have a graduation party. Not more than half an hour later several pigs pulled up and told the kids that the party was over. A next door neighbor had begun it all when she turned in a police complaint. Apparently one of the students had strolled across the front lawn of her private property.

Some of the youths then attempted to compromise with the pigs and requested that they be allowed to use nearby Kennedy Park to resume the party. The pigs, of course, abruptly refused to grant permission.

A short time later many of the kids, disgusted with the entire scene, took to the streets and staged a sit-down in front of their friend’s home as a protest.

The scene was still peaceful at this point and Arthur Bailly, a 61 year old tool and die maker who lives across the street from the party site, stated that the youths were neither verbally nor physically abusive toward anyone. He did not understand why the police felt there was trouble at all. “Nothing wrong was happening here in the first place,” Bailly said.

Another half hour later a city fire engine came down the street in answer to a minor fire nearby, and the individuals in the street reluctantly let the fire truck pass. However, when the fire truck later returned from down the block, it stopped and firemen suddenly turned a water hose on the students.

By this time swarms of other pigs, in full riot gear, began arriving at the set from nearby cities like Warren, St. Clair Shores, Roseville and Detroit. The pigs, reinforcing the local garrison, began to prepare for a pig riot against youth.

What followed was described by Frank Fourdreau, a 40-year-old auto mechanic and also a local resident, as the clubbing and beating of young people without any apparent reason. He stated that he noticed several girls beaten and clubbed in the stomach by the rampaging police.

When the smoke had cleared, 21 graduating students were under arrest. Three of them were immediately released by East Detroit Judge Colrock when he set up court at 11:30 that evening. Seventeen people were charged with creating a disturbance and were released on personal bond.

Nineteen year old Brian Gallagher was also charged with assault with a deadly weapon. He was arrested when he allegedly smacked an attacking pig in the face with his belt buckle and caused a cut which required eleven stitches to close. Right On, Brian!

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