

Sen. Carpenter assaulted, Capitol statues toppled as protests turn violent

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Protesters last night tore down the statues of Lady Forward and Union Civil War Col. Hans Christian Heg at the state Capitol and assaulted a state senator photographing the events.

But Gov. Tony Evers says this morning that both statues had been recovered and the Capitol building had not been breached.

According to an incident report from the Madison Police Department, the group of 200-300 protesters also tried to break into the Capitol building. The group broke windows of buildings in the area and threw a Molotov cocktail into the City-County Building on Martin Luther King Jr Boulevard.

Sen. Tim Carpenter, D-Milwaukee, in a tweet early this morning called for an end to the violence after being attacked by protesters while taking a photo of the moment.

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“I took this pic- it got me assaulted & beat up. Punched/kicked in the head, neck ribs,” the tweet read. “Maybe concussion, socked in the left eye is a little blurry, sore neck & ribs. 8-10 people attacked me. Innocent people are going to get killed. Capitol locked- stuck in office. Stop violence nowPlz!”

Assembly Majority Leader Jim Steineke, R-Kaukauna, and other Republican lawmakers over Twitter demanded Evers respond to the protests and deploy the National Guard for “adequate protection.”

Evers in a statement this morning called last night’s incident “a stark contrast from

the peaceful protests we have seen across our state in recent weeks.” He decried violence against any person “whether in the middle of the street in broad daylight, at home trying to sleep, going for a run, or happening upon a protest as was the case last night,” and said his thoughts are with Carpenter and wished him a speedy recovery.

“We also cannot allow ourselves to forget the reason why these protests began: because of the murder of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, of the many Black lives taken before them, and because racism and structural inequality still pervade this country,” Evers said. “Our cause and our purpose must continue to be the pursuit of the promise of an equitable, just, and fair state and country, and we cannot delay delivering on these promises any longer.”

Evers indicated both statues had been recovered and Capitol police were able to prevent protestors from getting into the Capitol building. He also warned he was prepared to activate the National Guard and was working with local law enforcement to “understand their response to last night’s events and their plan to respond to similar events in the future.”

A spokeswoman for “a united front of organizers and activists for black liberation” told media outlets this morning protestors are demanding the release of a man whose arrest yesterday set off the demonstrations. Ebony Anderson-Carter also called for a Madison PD officer to be fired and the department to be defunded and resources reallocated to the community.

See the Madison PD report:

<https://www.cityofmadison.com/police/newsroom/incidentreports/incident.cfm?id=26631>

See Carpenter’s tweet:

<https://twitter.com/TimCarpenterMKE/status/1275716467007328258>

See the Evers release:

<https://www.wispolitics.com/2020/gov-evers-statement-on-madison-protests-last-night/>