

Chicago: cops start preemptive arrests on the eve of NATO Summit

By [Global Research](#)

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Authorities in Chicago are gearing up for a weekend of anti-NATO activity in the Windy City, but it's already being reported that law enforcement there might be a little too eager to begin arrests. The home of known activists was raided Wednesday.

The National Lawyers Guild confirms that law enforcement agents broke down the door of a 6-unit apartment building in the Chicago, Illinois neighborhood of Bridgeport at around 11:30 pm on Wednesday. Once inside, they entered the apartment of known activists with guns drawn and then cuffed the residents.

For two hours, tenants were shackled and questioned by officers with the Organized Crime Division of the Chicago Police Department. The Chicago Tribune writes that police reports detailing the incident have been obtained by the newspaper and confirm that nine people were arrested in the raid for allegedly making or possessing Molotov cocktail explosives. Police sources add to the paper early Friday, however, that none of the suspects had been charged.

Attorneys for the accused attest to the innocence of their clients. The reason they cannot prove that they were making Molotov cocktails, they say, is because they weren't — instead, police saw and seized equipment used for home brewing beer.

"As far as we know, there was no liquid in the bottles," Kris Hermes, a spokesman for the lawyer's guild, tells the Tribune on Friday in speaking of the alleged paraphernalia pilfered by law enforcement. Another source with ties to the police tells a Chicago ABC News affiliate that Molotov cocktails were discovered in the raid, but those claims have yet to be verified.

"We have an inquiry that we're checking into as we speak. So obviously we'll have more information," Police Superintendent Garry McCarthy tells ABC7.

Four of the suspects have been released without charge. As of Friday morning, the remaining five were still detained.

Hermes adds to the Tribune that "there's absolutely no evidence of wrongdoing," and that law enforcement officers were simply trying to make the activists "disappear" days before police expect major anti-NATO protests in Chicago.

"We were literally calling all morning and all afternoon to try to contact these people," Hermes says. "That's why we used the term 'disappeared.' "

In a separate statement offered to an NBC News station in Chicago, Hermes adds, "The city

has so far not indicated the reasons for the raid, what they are charging the protesters with, nor provided any evidence of wrongdoing” and that the NLG was still seeking a copy of the search warrant used in the raid.

“Preemptive raids like this are a hallmark of National Special Security Events,” Sarah Gelsomino of the National Lawyers Guild and the People’s Law Office adds in a press release. “The Chicago police and other law enforcement agencies should be aware that this behavior will not be tolerated and will result in real consequences for the city.”

Gelsomino adds that the search warrant used in the raid was allegedly not produced until four hours after the incident and was missing the signature of a court judge.

Following the Wednesday night raid, around 60 protesters marched the streets of Chicago’s North Side to condemn what they say was an illegal raid.

“I could not be more disgusted, enraged, terrified, by and generally totally disappointed with the city of Chicago,” William Vassilakis, who leases the apartment, tells the station.

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