

CBS's *Face the Nation*

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3 minutes and 55 seconds

MARGARET BRENNAN: But I know something very intense has just happened in Atlanta, Mayor Dickens. I watched a press conference you held last night following the death of a Georgia-based activist. It turned into a riot. This stems, as I understand it, from the shooting death of an activist and the body camera from the policeman who's believed to have shoot this individual doesn't exist. What can you tell us in terms of who is behind the violence that happened yesterday?

ATLANTA MAYOR ANDRE DICKENS (D): Yeah. Earlier this week an individual that was protesting in the woods, a number of folks are in the woods trying to protest against a development of a public safety training center, which is for police and firefighters. A new state-of-the-art training center that's going to allow us to do 21st century policing, allow us to have an emergency vehicle obstacle course and these things that police and fire will be able to work together to be able to bring about, you know, safety in our community and so we're building it, but some folks don't want to see anything built that supports police. So they call it cop city. And these individuals are in the woods protesting it and, unfortunately, they were engaged by Georgia State Patrol, asked them to be able to move out of the woods. An individual shot at the Georgia State Patrol. And the Georgia State Patrol Officer shot back and, unfortunately, that individual was killed and the patrol officer, the state patrol officer, was shot in the abdomen. And so now they had a protest last night. And it was peaceful. But there were some individuals within that crowd that meant violence. They had explosives. They burned down a police car. They broke windows at businesses and so our police department, along with our state and federal partners, took swift action within two blocks and brought that situation under control. And the violence stopped. And those six individuals were arrested. And it should be noted that these individuals were not Atlanta or Georgia residents. Most of them traveled into our city to wreak havoc. And so we love to support people when they're doing right. Peaceful protest is a part of the American — our freedoms. But when you are violent, we will make sure that you get — held accountable.

BRENNAN: I want — I want to pick you up on that point, when you say people from out of town, they're carrying explosives. Is this an organized movement here? Your local paper says this is having national reach with reaction from groups ranging from, "environmental activists, radical anarchists and black revolutionaries." Marjorie Taylor Greene, Georgia congresswoman, I'm sure you know her, blamed Black Lives Matter and Antifa. And that she blamed Democrats. On the facts, seven to 13 people have been charged with domestic terrorism.

DICKENS: ah

BRENNAN: Is this terrorism? Is this crime? What is this? Who's behind it?

DICKENS: Yeah, I won't go as far as whatever that representative said. But what I will say is

that it is a crime. And that's why they've been charged with a crime. And these crimes —

BRENNAN: Domestic terrorism.

ANDRE DICKENS: — and the crimes range from violence to domestic terrorism to assault and battery and some other things. But, yes, it is violent when someone turns to burn down a police car or break out windows or have explosives on them. I don't get into the names. I don't know all the organizations. I'll let y'all decide who did it. I just know they're arrested. And if they come into Atlanta again to wreak havoc, they will be arrested again.

BRENNAN: But do you believe your city is being targeted by organized groups?

DICKENS: In that regard, yes. Those individuals that are protesting against cop city, as they call it, it's really a public safety training center, they don't want to see the very things that they ask for, more police training. We can't train imaginary. We have to do it in a facility that allows for police, firefighters and the community to train together and so this is bringing about the change that we wanted to see in 2020. And now while we're doing it, these individuals don't want to see any resources go towards that training. And so we're going to develop this training center and those individuals will have to come to a halt.