

I have attended several days of protest in Portland during the Black Lives Matter protests, and have experienced tear gas attacks by various Law Enforcement Agencies during these weeks several times. I have a firm belief in non-violence, and nothing I do could be construed as "violent." I have been teargassed in crowds of non-violent people, and nearly trampled - were I not experienced in spreading calm and navigating people to safety (despite various uses of "kettling," wherein no avenue of escape is provided - my first kettling in PDX found gas and violent police forces at all four sides of an intersection).

My grievance is that federal and state law specifically ALLOWS for the use of CS and OC on its citizenry while the Geneva Convention bans its use by enemy combatants on each other. If soldiers, whose job it is to kill each other, are barred from using these substances against each other, how can it be legal to use against unarmed civilians?

These are not the least of the Rules of War that various federal and local law enforcement forces have violated during the past several weeks of the PDX Uprising. They have denied and prolonged medical care, attacked and destroyed medical suppliers, members of the press and legal observers, and have engulfed providers of food, both community donators and food carts, in the toxic substance, destroying food.

PPB has flooded neighborhoods throughout the city in the poison, and it is past time that the people no longer be forced to pay to provide these weapons to our police. Please strip the budget of provisions for all banned weapons of war, asphyxiants and blinding agents, and invest that money instead in the community. It is egregious that this has been approved to now, and it is your moral imperative to prevent chemical weapons' use on our streets in the future.

-Ami Axelrod