

On April 30, 2015, at approximately 10:50 p.m., while riding my bicycle in the 500 blk. of Duval Street, I observed an incident involving a Key West police officer and another male. A crowd of approximately twenty people had gathered near the Walgreens store where the incident was playing out. There was a police car parked near Walgreens on the odd side of the street and the officer and a man, later identified as a Mr. Carswell, were located. I was seated on my bicycle, still in the street, less than twenty feet from the police officer. I was located on the even number side of Duval Street. I would say I had a clear unobstructed view of the incident and the persons involved. I could not only see the action, but was able to hear both the officer and Mr. Carswell.

To the best of my recollection- Mr. Carswell was dressed in shorts and was not wearing a shirt. Carswell was ordered to sit and did so without argument. As soon as Carswell was seated on the curb the police officer began shouting at him in a very loud voice. The officer repeated nearly the same words and phrases in a very loud and threatening manner, at times rounding the seated Carswell. I can remember several sentences said in a very goading and aggressive manner: "You are a trouble maker"; "How many times do I see you drunk"; "You are a trouble-maker"; "You are always causing trouble"; "You are a fucking bum". With every sentence the officer seemed to escalate his tone and aggressive manner toward Carswell.

At no time did I hear the officer say to Carswell that he was under arrest. At no time did I hear Carswell make any statement. Carswell did not use foul language or show any disrespect to the officer. Carswell did not act in an aggressive manner or make threatening statements or actions.

The officer continued a tirade of verbal abuse against Carswell. I then observed Carswell lift himself from a seated position. It was at this time that the officer ordered him to sit and used a Tazer that caused Carswell to fall to the sidewalk. The officer continued shouting and attempted to handcuff the fallen victim. After firing the Tazer the officer jumped on Carswell and applied the Tazer directly to his mid-section, holding it there for some time, causing the victim to moan loudly.

While the officer was on the victim another police vehicle arrived, parked in front of the San Carlos.

When I left the scene, the officers were handcuffing the victim.

I was present approximately for six minutes during this incident.



Joseph Pais