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Chief Hahn Addresses City Council Regarding Recent Demonstrations City Council Meeting – January 16, 2021

Good evening Mayor and Council, I am Daniel Hahn, your Chief of Police. Tonight we are here to present information regarding protest related activities in our Downtown Core over the last couple of months. But, before I turn it over to Deputy Chief Kathy Lester I would like to begin by talking about the difference between the Root or Cause and the Condition of what we have experienced in our City.

We are the 6th largest city in the most populous state of our Union. The 9th largest Capitol City in the United States of America. We are no stranger to protests. We have daily protests in our City, and have for many years. These protests range from just a few people to thousands of people. They range from speeches at the State Capitol or Chavez Park, to marching in our streets. We have experienced countless protests, for many causes, over the last couple of years including protests regarding Stephon Clark and George Floyd. Over the last two months we have had protests occurring on a weekly basis, mainly on Saturdays, that included people protesting the recent National Election and Health Order restrictions.

In general, with a couple of exceptions, the Sacramento police department has been consistent in our response to protests in our streets – regardless of the protestors beliefs. We have tried to keep our community safe, prevent violence, minimize property damage and ensure EVERYONE’S constitutional rights were protected. One of those exceptions was during the initial George Floyd protests at the end of May and beginning of June when the protests turned violent and destructive. When there was mass looting, attempts to burn down buildings and violent acts toward officers. This is why many businesses downtown are boarded up to this day.

During most protests, including Stephon Clark and George Floyd protests - The people who took to our streets were often very diverse and were demanding changes in Law Enforcement and demanding equity in general. These protests often blocked streets and caused disruption to our normal business in the downtown area and elsewhere. The involved individuals were often emotional, angry, and extremely vocal about their demands for change. Although there were notable exceptions, these protests typically weren’t extremely violent nor did they typically result in mass destruction in our City.

At times, other groups came downtown, such as Antifa. They dressed in armor, wore helmets, vests, carried backpacks full of projectiles, carried unknown liquids, possessed shields and other



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weapons – and were very different than most of the ongoing protests. They were violent and left a wake of property damage in their path.

During the early protests that were often diverse. Some in our local community, publicly stated, posted on social media, or sent other forms of communication calling for me and the Sacramento Police Department to take a more aggressive stance, make more arrests and basically be more forceful with the individuals in our streets – There were calls for consequences and overwhelming force. I haven't seen these same people come with that same energy and those same demands during the latest protests that involve groups such as the Proud Boys. At all times, the Sacramento Police Department made decisions we thought best protected life, both our officers lives as well as members of our community, and property.

Now we come to the last couple of months. Regular protests continue to take place in the Downtown core – often at the Capitol to protest things such as the health order and the recent election. In addition to these protests, other radical groups joined in the activities downtown. Groups such as Proud Boys (which the Southern Poverty Law Center lists as a Hate Group) and Antifa. These groups brag on social media about committing violence on the opposing group. They spend their time, not protesting and exercising their constitutionally protected rights, but by searching each other out to commit violence. They often dress like our military personnel or SWAT officers – they are NOT protesting. As they chase each other around downtown they catch our officers, and our community, in the crossfire. They have assaulted and robbed residents as well as threatened the limited media representatives in our downtown core. They have pulled valuable resources, our officers and professional staff, from our neighborhoods that so desperately need them during a time of significant increases in violent crime. We have routinely assigned almost a third of our entire department to these weekly Saturday occurrences over the last two months. One group, based on what some experts say, is a white extremist group that seems to desire to return to our past while the other groups seems to want to destroy our form of government all together. Regardless of their ideologies – they are both violent and put our community in danger.

I have often heard complete surprise in the reaction of reporters, politicians and the public in regard to what happened in our Nation's Capitol two weeks ago. Radicalized individuals broke into our United States Capitol and stated they wanted to do harm to not only our elected officials but our way of governance. I wasn't surprised at all...well, I was surprised they were able to force their way into our Capitol..but not surprised they were there in those numbers. I wasn't surprised about their ideology and their intent....I wasn't surprised because I know our Country's history and the exact same thing has been occurring in our streets every Saturday for the last two months.



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One possible reason so many people were surprised about what occurred in Washington DC is that our primary media sources haven't covered what has been occurring in Sacramento over the last two months....which is the same as what occurred in Washington DC but on a much smaller scale. Our primary media sources, both National and Local, extensively covered the previous protests regarding Stephon Clark and George Floyd. If you were not downtown or following our department's social media, over the last two months, you would not know about the violence that occurred because it wasn't widely covered by the media. One of the only primary media sources that covered most, if not all, of the Saturday unrest was Capitol Public Radio....who often put out updates to our community on social media. This lack of coverage left room for other groups and individuals to post things that were misleading or not true on social media. One example of information that was not true and widely spread on social media was a when a video was posted that stated a Sacramento Police Officer told a Proud Boy member that SacPD had their 6 (another words their back) and stated this was proof the Sacramento Police Department supports a radical group such as The Proud Boys. We researched this in our Body Worn Camera system and were able to clearly see that in fact it was a member of the Proud Boys saying it to the officers that were trying to keep the two groups apart – not the other way around. Last Friday I had the privilege to virtually spend a couple of hours with the teens of Impact Sac. This is an amazing group of teens that recently, during the health pandemic, developed a mental health resource for teens called Check Yo Vibe. We spent a couple of hours discussing recent protests in our City and across the County – including Washington DC. They said things such as: “They were scared”, “They were angry”, They said, “let it have been US it would have been different”. One teen said they had a friend who condoned the violence in Washington DC but had previously condemned the Black Lives Matter protests. Some said they were scared to go outside. Many questioned why they never saw what was occurring in Sacramento on the news? One teen said the news shows white people in a good light and black people in a bad light. These young people are paying attention, are observant and are more willing than ever to get involved in what I would call the Root...or Cause of what is at the heart of this unrest.

I'm going to give a disclaimer before a move on. I shouldn't have to give this disclaimer but I will because I know the response I will get from many. I love the United States of America. This is my Country. I love the Sacramento community – the community I was born in and lived my entire life and I wouldn't choose to live anywhere else. See, I have to explain this because certain groups in our Country have always been challenged about their patriotism whenever they want our Country to improve and live up to the ideals written in our Constitution. During WWII when the Black Community developed the Double V campaign they were condemned for not being patriotic...simply because they wanted one V for victory abroad and one V for victory



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at home....to end Jim Crow and have equal rights in a Country they were willing to give their lives for. I know I will hear about what I'm saying today.....yet, the people who break into the United States Capitol, threaten to hang and kill our elected representatives and actually kill a police officer are often called Patriots.

The Lost Cause Type Ideology in our Country is alive and well and it has been on display for several months – not only in Sacramento, but across our Country – culminating in Washington DC two weeks ago. Groups who desire to go back to our past – the good old days that weren't so good for everyone. The problem with the Lost Cause Ideology now is the same as it was in the past. What people hear about our Country and the ideals we hold dear.....some in our Country don't always see or experience in reality. It's why, when I talk about Cause and Root, I receive letters, emails, social media posts that California and the West Coast don't have to deal with such issues because we entered the union as a free state, we never had slaves, slavery was a long time ago, Jim Crow is a relic of the past and only in the South, Redlining, Block Busting, Sun Down Towns, Racial housing covenants, discriminatory loan practices and disparate educational opportunities were all either a thing of the past, only in the our Southern states or never existed at all in our beloved country. It's why I regularly hear the only reason I am the Police Chief in my home town after 33 years of policing....is because I am Black. Unfortunately all of this is untrue and these beliefs are born out of ignorance and a lack of knowledge about how we got here.

It is why when diverse groups protest in our streets regarding Stephon Clark and George Floyd (among others), demanding changes to law enforcement, changes to systems they believe are embedded with systemic racism and simply demanding equity in our Country.....they are often called savages, many in our community call for violent or harsh response from law enforcement, we call them unpatriotic and often protestors are told – “If they don't like it, get out of our Country.”

Yet, when a mostly white group, some carrying the Battle Flag of the Confederacy, wearing t-shirts glamorizing some of the worst atrocities in world history, Construct a noose hanging from gallows, yelling racial slurs at Capitol Police Officers, defecating and urinating in the halls of our United States capitol, breaking into the offices of our elected officials, stealing property, damaging property and threatening to hang and kill our elected representatives and, actually assaulting and killing police officers.....Many among us call this group - Patriots.

We, as a Country, need to Address the Root and Cause of our challenges. We need to deal with our history and the issue of race and difference or we will continue to see radicalized groups take to our streets and commit violence. We will continue to see angry, upset and emotional



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people protesting in our streets demanding equity, fairness and for our Country to live up to the ideals enshrined in our Constitution.

It is the Cause and Root that reveals itself when two young black kids are gunned down in our local mall by another young black kid. We respond by calling them savages, that it's just the Black Culture and that this is what happens when you don't have parents. Yet, when Kyle Rittenhouse drives to Kenosha Wisconsin and guns down two people at a protests....we say he is misunderstood, had a troubled childhood and was bullied in school. We start a go fund me and raise 2 Million Dollars to bail him out of jail. And recently he was reported to be in a bar drinking, at 18 years old, with members of the group Proud Boys...a group that has regularly participated in the unrest in our city....taking pictures and flashing white power hand signs. What's the difference between the two. What do you do with groups we consider "Savages", how do you deal with "Savages". If we knew our history we would know how we got here....we would know the root..the cause.

The Sacramento Police Department isn't perfect. I make mistakes, our department make mistakes. We need to continue to get better as a department at safely dealing with protests and our day to day mission... We need to continue to build more trust in our community – especially in our communities that need us the most. With that being said....we, as a department, try to address the condition as well as the root cause: We train our officers in crowd control and provide them with protective equipment along with less lethal equipment and we provide our leaders with incident command training and experiences – this is all to deal with the condition - the actual protest. And we also provide our officers with training and experiences that address the Root Cause of the unrest across our Country – Bias training, the history of how we got here and history's influence on today. We have invited Stanford University, Washington State, Center for Policing Equity, American Leadership Forum and Department of Justice to examine our department, research issues such as bias and relationships with our community and to provide training on bias and history.....but, if we don't address this as a country – our CONDITION will continue to challenge us and we will continue to have unrest in our cities – often in the form of violence. We are fortunate in Sacramento to have a City Manager in Howard Chan that is not only concerned with our Condition but also the Root Cause of our Condition. He has implemented processes to learn our history, address bias and equity. This council has also implemented positions that focus on equity within the City.

Through the unrest and violence in our City over the last couple of months... I could not be more proud of the officers and professional staff of the Sacramento Police Department. The people who have been working the ongoing protests and the violent acts that some groups



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come to our city to inflict on each other, our officers and our neighbors. Our officers and Professional Staff continue to show up, continue to perform admirably in the most trying of circumstances – all while putting themselves in harms way, in addition to their families, in harms way due to the current pandemic ravaging our Country. As you look at cities across our country and the level of violence and destruction occurring – there have been people killed, both protestors and police officers and cities have burned. Sacramento has not experienced this level of violence and destruction – and a large part of that is due to the officers that wear the Sacramento Police Department uniform and our allied agency partners that have come to our City to assist.

In 1962 Malcolm X, who some consider a controversial figure, gave a speech in Los Angeles where he stated we must go to the Cause or Root. Dealing with the Condition is not enough. What we are talking about tonight in the upcoming presentation from Deputy Chief Kathy Lester, and for good reason due to the threat to the safety of our community, make no mistake.....is the Condition.

Until we, As a Country, State and City, deal with the Cause and Root of our condition – we will continue to put our community and officers in the middle of waring factions that don't want our Country to live up the ideals written in our constitution and instead people will continue to be injured and killed in "so called" protests and our collective potential will be stifled. One day after many of us quoted and celebrated Dr. Martin Luther King Jr....we need to live what he preached and not just repeat his quotes.

I will now turn it over the Deputy Chief Kathy Lester to discuss the facts on what has been occurring in our City over the last couple of months.