

Thursday, May 3, 2007

### **LA police brutalize demonstrators and the press.**

As I have said before, police misconduct will neither stop nor abate enough until everybody insists on and achieves a radical and positive overhaul of policing and police hiring/ training/supervision/discipline; and a radical and positive overhaul of the criminal justice system, including heavily decriminalizing drugs (and legalizing marijuana, at the very least), eliminating mandatory minimum sentences, and eliminating criminal penalties for activities as minor as prostitution. Thanks to the many people who videotape and distribute tapes of police brutality to shine the light of day on such injustice, from the brutalizing of Rodney King, to the brutalizing of a prosecutor's daughter arrested for loud music, to this police beating, to the UCLA police library tasing of a student without an identification, and the list goes on. Sadly, adding to this video library of police brutality are the videos (see here, too) of the May 1, 2007, Los Angeles severe police brutality with rubber bullets and beatings not only of pro-immigration demonstrators, but also of journalists and news camerapeople. It is bad enough when police brutalize people, but all the more pathetic to see the police brutalizing innocent people catching the brutality on tape. As the Los Angeles Times reported: "The use of force on news crews came despite a legal settlement signed in 2002 calling for the Los Angeles police and city officials to recognize journalists' right to cover public protests even if there is a declaration of unlawful assembly and an order to disperse. Under the settlement, the city agreed to assign a press liaison to such events and to set up designated media areas. The pact resolved a lawsuit brought on behalf of seven journalists who said they were assaulted by police officers while covering the 2000 Democratic National Convention in L.A." Jon Katz.

Posted by Jon Katz in Constitutional Law at 06:00