

TONY BOLOGNA, JOHN PIKE, AND STOP AND FRISK: A BAD COUPLE OF DAYS FOR ABUSIVE COPS

In a move that might make cops think twice before they go nuts on kettled protestors, NYC has decided not to defend Anthony Bologna, the officer filmed spraying defenseless protestors with pepper spray in NY.

New York City has distanced itself from a high-ranking police official accused of firing pepper spray at Occupy Wall Street protestors, taking the unusual step of declining to defend him in a civil lawsuit over the incident.

The decision means Deputy Inspector Anthony Bologna also could be personally liable for financial damages that may arise out of the suit, said lawyers familiar with similar civil-rights claims.

Because Bologna accepted the findings of an internal investigation finding him in violation of department guidelines, it appears, the city has space to say pepper-spraying docile protestors is not his job.

In even better news, John Pike—the UC Davis cop filmed spraying peaceful protestors with pepper spray—got fired, in spite of an internal review finding he acted reasonably.

The police chief at the University of California, Davis overruled an internal affairs panel's recommendation and fired a lieutenant who soaked demonstrators with pepper spray – an incident that sparked protests after it was recorded

and posted online, according to documents obtained by a McClatchy-Tribune newspaper.

The Sacramento Bee (<http://sacb.aa/MABZrq>) reports that investigators concluded Lt. John Pike acted reasonably during the Nov. 18 campus protest and should face demotion or suspension at worst.

But police Chief Matthew Carmichael rejected those findings and wrote Pike on April 27 that he planned to fire him. Pike, 39, was fired Tuesday, according to the Bee.

“The needs of the department do not justify your continued employment,” Carmichael wrote in a letter to Pike, according to the documents, which included the internal affairs investigation report.

I’m curious about the delay between the time Carmichael decided to fire Pike and the time it was official, Tuesday. Hopefully, that time was spent insulating the university against suit.

Finally, there are preliminary reports that the number of stop and frisks in NYC have dropped significantly as the sheer scale of the abusive practice has become clear.

Officers conducted about 134,000 stop-and-frisks between April 1 and June 30, down from more than 200,000 during the first three months of the year.

That’s still too many. But sunshine and embarrassment seems to be making progress there, too.

Update: In related news, the 2004 RNC protestors suing for false arrest and other abuses just won class action status.