

# Statement from Eric Clanton: “Keep Building Long Term Strategies”

By **Support Eric Clanton** - August 17, 2017



My name is Eric. I’m currently facing years of prison time as the result of accusations made in the most shockingly hateful parts of the internet. On April 19th I began being targeted by a dedicated swarm of internet trolls known for spewing racism, xenophobia, and misogyny onto the web. Suddenly a hit piece by Milo Yiannopoulos caused the targeting to go viral. Several old social media photos were posted, online accounts hacked, addresses published, hundred of calls to my employers, and countless threats of physical violence made against me, my coworkers, friends and many others. This harassment campaign is where the accusations against me originated.

Dealing with an unintelligible internet force smearing and threatening me online was not easy, and created stress to say the least, but I had every expectation that very few people would take them seriously, especially considering the character and credibility of their sources. However, five weeks later the Berkeley police smashed into two houses, held guns to peoples’ heads, handcuffed, verbally abused, and stole the belongings of over a dozen people including books and zines.

All of this after my attorney Dan Siegel had reached out to Berkeley police on my behalf, and all on the basis of an ‘investigation’ that largely involved detectives reading far right forum posts and studying unverified youtube videos. When I was interviewed at the police station detective Hong had the nerve to say to me, “the internet did the work for us.” My case threatens to set a new standard in which right wing extremists can select targets for repression and have police enthusiastically and forcefully pursue them.

This is just one example of the police doing everything in their power to facilitate and to legitimize the violence and the rhetoric of the so-called alt-right. They are also criminalizing protesters who stood

up to neo-Nazis last summer, hundreds of J20 and standing rock defendants. All of this from a system that has perfected criminalization through centuries of racist policing. All of this moves in a strategy to further chill dissent, and to clamp down on resistance to the dangerous and aggressive growth of the exact kind of white supremacist violence that we saw this last weekend.

RIP Comrade.

Heather Heyer gave her life trying to stop the growth of this hate. She died defending decency, and may she rest peacefully knowing that struggle will continue and multiply. There's little comfort in words at times like these especially for people directly affected, but love and solidarity to her family and to everyone who is still physically and psychologically recovering from this brutality. We've got your back.

To all my supporters:

I want to thank everyone who came to court for me last Thursday or tried to. I know it was much quicker and less climactic than we thought. Supporting me in this bizarre time is not only an act of care, but one of bravery and strength. Seeing that on display makes me feel our collective power. Thank you all for showing up and for all the diverse, creative, and intimate ways that support has materialized outside of court. Thank you especially to the close friends who have cared for me fearlessly and unfailingly.

The fear and anxiety that this creates is by design, and it ripples out by design, BUT we get to decide its effectiveness. Look out for each other, be safe, be careful, and think hard about what all that means in the changing landscape. Keep caring for one another too and don't be afraid. Keep building unity, creative struggle, and long-term strategies for expanding, and strengthening the communities that we live in and want to defend. We're stronger than they are! Solidarity always!

Special thanks to the bay area anti repression committee, the labor action committee to free Mumia Abu-Jamal for helping build support, the community readiness corps for helping keep me safe, and the amazing lawyers who have been donating their time to help me fight this!

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