

Antifa Members Attack Right-Wing Protestors in Berkeley

Antifa activists attacked a group of peaceful conservatives this weekend in Berkeley, California.

On Sunday afternoon, almost 100 anti-fascist activists swarmed Martin Luther King Jr. Civic Center Park in Berkeley, California to attack Trump supporters who had gathered for a peaceful protest. According to *The Washington Post*, the anarchists who are also known as Antifa were seen "jumping over plastic and concrete barriers" before "the group melted into a larger crowd of around 2,000 that had marched peacefully throughout the sunny afternoon for a "Rally Against Hate" gathering."

The Antifa members hid their faces with black bandannas and hoodies, and examples of their violence included smacking a Trump supporter with a homemade shield and chucking water bottles at a conservative group leader.

The *Associated Press* reported that at least five individuals were attacked, and this includes one man who was beaten up by multiple Antifa members at one time. Berkeley Police Lieutenant Joe Okies told *The Washington Post* that the rally garnered 13 arrests on charges ranging from assault with a deadly weapon to city municipal code violations. Two people were injured in the attack.

Sunday's rally was supposed to be a peaceful protest of far-right marchers who wanted to decry Marxism. In preparation for the gathering, Berkeley had assigned almost 50 police officers around the perimeters and had announced that weapons such as sticks were not allowed at the event. Although the majority of the day was peaceful, Antifa broke the rules by showing up with weapons.

Berkeley Mayor Jesse Arreguin spoke out after the violence occurred and said that hate does not stop hate.

"I applaud the more than 7,000 people who came out today to peacefully oppose bigotry, hatred and racism that we saw on display in Charlottesville," Arreguin said. " ... However, the violence that small group of protesters engaged in against residents and the police, including throwing smoke bombs, is unacceptable. Fighting hate with hate does not work and only makes each side more entrenched in their ideological camps."

Sunday's violence at the "No to Marxism in America" event is not the first time that Antifa has resorted to physicality to oppose their conservative adversaries. In January, one Antifa member sucker punched well-known neo-Nazi leader Richard Spencer, and in February, the group smashed \$100,000 worth of Berkeley property in protest of a speaking engagement by right-winger, Milo Yiannopoulos.

Berkeley resident Kristin Leiumkuhler told *SF Gate* that she did not think violence was a valid tactic.

"We're just puzzled as to why people consider violence a valid tactic," Leiumkuhler said. "We felt disappointed and surprised by how many people were not in any way discreet about being with antifa — in fact being very bold and prepared to be violent."

According to *The New York Post*, Antifa's actions have emboldened right-wingers who said that their violence proved that President Donald Trump was right that "all sides" were to blame for the recent violence at political protests.

"The HATE&VITRIOL spewed by followers of leftist dribble makes their moral superiority claim on anti-hate laughable," Sheriff David A. Clarke, a well-known conservative, said on Twitter.

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