

FOPR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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ROAD RAGE AT BERKELEY CRITICAL MASS

Police Again Fail to Protect Bicyclists' Rights

VIDEO FOOTAGE AND QUALITY AUDIO AVAILABLE

Last night just after 8 PM, as dusk approached, a motorist with his wife deliberately ran into the side of the monthly Berkeley Critical Mass bicycle demonstration as they peacefully paraded through town spreading their monthly message about climate change, promoting bicycling and reducing automobile and oil dependency.

Three bicycles were destroyed and two demonstrators were injured and bleeding, although they refused medical treatment at the scene. Two children who were traumatized cried; a young woman who was injured cried.

Bicyclists managed to stop the attack when one was able to reach into the van's window and turn off the vehicle. Cyclists were terrified that the driver would continue and crush bicyclists, particularly when they were trapped between their bicycles and the ground. Two bicyclists report the motorist brandished a knife on them. Many felt the motorist was drunk. The motorist honked repeatedly and shouted as he attacked.

An army of police descended upon the scene. Unfortunately, as all too often happens, police did not protect the rights of the bicyclists despite video evidence showing the attack. Police fabricated that bicyclists were "pushing their bicycles under the car," an outrageous claim. Police refused to charge the motorist. They refused to press charges on behalf of the injured victims. They refused to execute a citizen's arrest. They did not search and impound the motorist's knife, claiming he "had a right to protect his car." Although many felt the motorist was drunk driving, police evidently failed to even run that basic test.

The demonstration had already toured much of Berkeley without negative incident, and was returning from a sojourn atop Indian Rock. Bicyclists did absolutely nothing to instigate this. They entered the intersection on a green light. There is no excuse for the motorist. Witnesses say the motorist ran a red light to attack. This exemplifies why there is a need for critical mass demonstrations.

VIDEO & AUDIO IS AVAILABLE, AS ARE WITNESS INTERVIEWS.

*To view a web movie of some of the footage, go to
<http://bclu.org/20070511>*

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