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# **“Antifascism Doesn’t Start by Confronting Fascists in the Streets, it Starts Way Before That”**

**A Report from DC**

D.C. Youth Liberation Front

2020

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On Friday, November 13th, many of us were at work or doing homework/schoolwork. We got a tip that MAGA chuds were at the White House fence, tearing down artwork that has been there since the beginning of the George Floyd and black liberation uprising. Being unprepared, we frantically scrambled to get the word out with the help of other collectives and organizations that have continuously been protesting since the beginning of this movement.

As numbers started to show up in solidarity with the people protecting the fence, many of the MAGA chuds retreated; most

of them going to Harry's Pub and getting drunk. This gave the community the opportunity to go and collect the pieces of art-work that had been torn down that were still semi-intact. We continued to show up and, as our numbers grew, many of the MAGA chuds left. Over the course of the next couple hours there were a couple of assaults, but fortunately nothing major occurred. Pretty soon the plaza was quiet again, and many activists left to prepare for the next day.

*The next couple of paragraphs offer three perspectives of what went down that day and night. We understand that what went down can be triggering for some people so we would just like to give a warning beforehand.*

## **Saturday, November 14th, 2020**

**Bex:** The day of the 'Million Maga March' started with out-of-town Trump supporters tearing down more art from Black Lives Matter Plaza. We mobilized at the plaza in an effort to protect the art and keep our fellow protesters safe from right-wing violence. For most of the day at the plaza our community, which has been continuously growing since late May, stood united to fight against bigotry as well as support and uplift each other.

During the evening we marched to Harry's Pub; a known pro-Trump and far-Right hot spot, and confronted a racist group gathered outside the bar having drinks. Together we stood against their racism, fascism, and bigotry. In response, we were met with violence and brutality. Racists, outside Harry's Pub, quickly formed a mob of over 100 people, they came rushing toward our much smaller group of activists with

Several comrades were stabbed, three of whom were hospitalized. One victim (who was wearing a ballistic vest, and so was unharmed) said a sergeant watched it happen and laughed. A member of our collective was piled on top of by ten Proud Boys, and left with head trauma and in need of staples. I myself was hit a few times, and ran out of pepper spray trying to defend myself.

Liberals, when discussing the Holocaust, use the slogan, "Never Again." To the reader, I would urge you to consider "Never Again" means: "Right Now." The Proud Boys attempted to murder queer black folx because they had the audacity to fight for their right to exist. Antifascism is the opposition to racial, ethnic, or identitarian violence like this by any means necessary. If more antifascists, better prepared to defend black lives, had come out that night, we would not have experienced the collective trauma we did. And we would have better been able to communicate our message: fascism is too dangerous, destructive, and horrific a phenomenon and ideology to ever build, grow, or come to power again.

Unfortunately we have learned that the Proud Boys and MAGA chuds are planning to return to DC on December 12th. If you are able to, please show up to counter the Proud Boys and MAGA chuds. Follow us on Twitter @dcylf as well as our comrades @All\_Out\_DC on Twitter for updates on the 12th counter demonstration. We'll see you in the streets!

Solidarity,  
– DCYLF Crew

the clear intent of causing pain and destruction. The fascists grabbed whomever they could and brutally beat them. Many victims were sprayed with bear mace, which is much more painful than regular pepper spray. Others had been hit in the head with flying cans and water bottles. Three activists were stabbed, with many more permanently traumatized. Seeing friends with blood dripping down their faces, and complete strangers who had marched beside me all night lying unconscious on the ground, is something I will never forget. Proud Boys and Trump supporters assaulted us for daring to believe that racism and bigotry didn't have a place in our society. Those who harmed us were attempting to silence us. It did not, and will not, work. We are still here, we are healing together, and we continue to fight for what's right.

**Wrench:** To be honest most of the night was pretty stressful. We marched around downtown DC chanting many of the usual Black Lives Matter chants. We passed the White House headed to Freedom Plaza where groups of drunk MAGA supporters stood and instigated fights. Antifascists were pretty tame; stealing hats from Trump supporters who had assaulted people. A couple of shoves were traded between us and the Trump supporters and we continued to Freedom Plaza, where another mini-brawl occurred. Again drunk MAGA chuds assaulted us with long PVC pipes and flag poles. We responded by taking and burning pro-Trump merchandise, in the middle of Freedom Plaza.

We next continued to Harry's Pub and found drunk Proud Boys chanting their usual slogans from behind a police line. After about five minutes, or maybe a little bit more, we contin-

ued up the street. Later we passed the Trump Hotel and out of nowhere a line of cops with bicycles emerged from a side street and surrounded the hotel. We continued to march and ended up close to Harry's Pub. By this time the police who had been following us since the very beginning of our march were gone. I honestly don't think I can recollect what happened. All I remember is seeing the Proud Boys run at us and our shield line form. Another thing I can remember is a couple of us standing in front of the shield line and getting pulled into the sea of drunk, red-faced, and angry Proud Boys. I remember seeing a couple of fascists making stabbing motions but they were surrounded by other Proud Boys and I could not make out what was going on. Comrades carrying shields continued to join the shield wall. Police came from behind us pointing some type of chemical spray weapon at us. A small police bike-line formed between us and the Proud Boys. Of course, as usual, the police bike-line was pointed toward us.

At this point, many of us were screaming "medic" and people were being led away by medics and comrades alike. Our collective decided to move to a safe location. Once there, we started to attempt to find the missing folks. When we reunited with our collective we then headed to an even safer location and called it a night. We continued throughout the next couple days checking in with each other and making sure that we were doing OK because that night a lot of people were exposed to sights that people normally don't see.

I think one of the major things we learned was that talking to other groups and creating coalitions is something that we should always do, especially when dealing with large opposing

crowds. The more turnout you get, the safer it is for everyone and we did not have enough people. The main reason was that we didn't have enough time to organize and were caught off guard. Overall, I think that while this was unfortunate, it was also a learning experience. I think the major lesson that we had forgotten is that antifascism does not start by confronting fascists in the streets, it starts way before that. Even though we did not have much notice, we still could have used other tactics that do not just involve confronting fascists in the streets. I think this was the major take-away because it is very important to always use a diversity of tactics.

**Dexter:** At the end of the day, even the least fascistic chuds were violent and destructive. MAGA assholes came into Black Lives Matter Plaza, a space meant to uplift the voices of Black folx, and destroyed everything they were able to. We tried to play catch-up, responding to different situations as they arose across the city, but even the traffic seemed to be in their favor, as we couldn't manage to drive across town at all. Things got far worse as night came.

Crowds of what had initially just been chuds and Trump-lovers turned to large groups of Proud Boys and other fascist militants. Throughout our march, they routinely confronted and assaulted our comrades. Whenever our group and theirs drew close to each other, MPD would hastily form a line of officers between us, but only cracked down on antifascists. Several times, police allowed Proud Boys to pass through their line, but beat us back with shoves, thrown bicycles, and mace. After a few hours of small skirmishes, the Proud Boys found us on a block without MPD. The ensuing brawl was truly horrific.