



Safe and Free

Restore Our Constitutional Rights



- ABOUT THE ACLU
- SUPREME COURT
- LEGISLATIVE UPDATE
- ACTION CENTER
- DONATE NOW
- NEWSROOM

 SEARCH

- Email Page
- Printer-Friendly

Home : Safe and Free : General

Victims of Police Attack During Anti-War Protest at Oakland Port Speak Out (6/26/2003)

Statement of Eric Shaw

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

OAKLAND, CA - I'm a Gulf War veteran and a Marine who understands the duty of patriotic service to protect the ideas upon which this country was founded. I take that patriotic duty very seriously because I understand the sacrifice that Americans have made to make this country a better nation. I understand the sacrifice of the Marines before me that fought at Bellow Woods, Iwojima, and the beaches of Normandy. I also understand the sacrifice made by Americans expressing their demands for responsible government. Americans like Martin Luther King Jr. and Caesar Chavez gave their lives to make this country a better place for all of us. At the docks in Oakland on April 7th, by engaging in a non-violent community picket of war profiteers, we picked up the patriotic struggle to demand responsible government.

What happened that morning was an unjustifiable and shocking display of power. I was with a group of about 100 people that were standing at a distance providing moral support for a group of people who were walking and singing in a picket line in front of one of the entrances to SSA. That was when a group of 30 police officers on motorcycles charged us causing us to turn and flee. Some of us walked while others ran out of fear. A large line of officers in riot gear and face shields were marching behind the motor cycles with shot guns aimed directly at us. As I turned to walk away I heard loud explosions all around me and I felt something violent impact against my lower leg that knocked me to the ground. I couldn't understand why I was being shot at.

Since April 7th, I have had trouble sleeping at night. I had an enormous and painful bruise for many weeks. During the Gulf War, I felt my job was to defend our basic human rights and our nation. I certainly never imagined that I would be attacked by American police officers while expressing my right to free speech - the very rights that I fought for.

If we are to be an America safe and secure in our freedoms and our American way of life, we need to start out by being a better nation with a police that respect our constitutional rights. That's where true patriotism begins.

###

There has never been a more urgent need to preserve fundamental privacy protections and our system of checks and balances than the need we face today, as illegal government spying and government-sponsored torture programs transcend the bounds of law in the name of national security. [Learn more](#) about ACLU's National Security Project (NSP), which advocates for national security policies that are consistent with the Constitution, the rule of law, and fundamental human rights.

ISSUES ↓

IN THIS SECTION

- General
- Detention
- Discrimination
- Dissent
- Secrecy
- Surveillance
- Torture

RELATED INFORMATION

- Publications
- Legal Documents
- Legislative Documents
- Resources
- Fact Sheets
- Court Cases
- Press Releases

WOMEN

and
the Criminal
Justice System



> SAFE AND FREE



LEARN MORE

- ### GET INVOLVED
- > SIGN UP
Stay informed.

 - > JOIN THE ACLU
Become a member.

 - > DONATE NOW
Help protect our rights.

 - > TAKE ACTION
Tell Congress to
Support Equal Marriage

> FREE SPEECH



LEARN MORE

- NEWSFEEDS 
- BLOG
- UNITED STATES
CONSTITUTION