Twitter Thread by e. hashman

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I am real mad about the Elastic relicense so I'm going to vent a bit.

Say that I contributed some code to Elastic, under the original open source license. That license defines the terms of our engagement. Me: "hey I improved your code, can you include this fix so I and everyone can use it?" Elastic: "sure!"

They require a CLA, which assigns ownership of my fix to the project steward. The idealistic reason to do this is to protect the long-term health of the project: if copyright law gets totally rewritten, we can update the license to reflect our original intent!

But this also requires me to trust in the steward organization to do the right thing. As the copyright holder on the project, I gave them the power to update the license to *anything* they want. Which, in this case, Elastic did.

Elastic didn't pick another open source license, which would provide the same guarantees for how I can use, contribute to, and redistribute the software. No, instead they said "thanks for contributing, your code is proprietary now, f off so we can make more money"

As a consequence of signing their CLA, I can no longer use MY OWN GODDAMNED CODE in their future releases however I want. I've signed my rights away.

By using an open source license and accepting contributions, they asked the community to trust them with their CLA. Implicitly: not just at the time the public made contributions, but for the life of the project! Instead they chose to set that trust, and their community, on fire.

I don't care if you use a proprietary license. You've been clear about your intent. I can make an informed choice not to work with you.

Replacing a FOSS license with a proprietary one is a violation of trust and a giant "fuck you" to everyone who worked with you in good faith.

This is why I won't contribute projects that require a CLA without community governance. If there isn't a CLA, the project can't change the license unilaterally and must continue to honour the original terms of my engagement.

I give away my code for free so *everyone* can use it for free... for better or for worse.

Elastic: If you're going to exploit people, you could at least pay them for their contributions. I hear you have a 14B market cap. ■

to conclude.....

To give you an idea of the approx. number of non-(elastic employee) contributors affected by this:

```
$ git clone git@github.com:elastic/elasticsearch.git && cd elasticsearch
$ git log -- . ':!x-pack' | grep Author | sort -u | egrep -v 'elastic\.co|elasticsearch\.com' | wc -l
1676
```