

POLICE REPRESSION



THE U.S. GOVERNMENT'S ANSWER TO THE
JUST STRUGGLE OF OPPRESSED PEOPLE FOR THEIR
DEMOCRATIC AND HUMAN RIGHTS



As the crisis of American capital continues and business finds itself unable to stabilize itself, the oppressed people of America become the principal sufferers of the results -- unemployment, hunger and repression.

Faced with a backlash against civil rights for the oppressed people of America, communities throughout the U.S. have turned to demonstrations at job sites, and to food riots whenever the opportunity presents itself (as it did in New York in the summer of 1977 during the black-out). The answer of American capital to check such protests and forestall riots of the magnitude to those in the decades of the 1960's has been that of POLICE REPRESSION.

Throughout the U.S., police trained and equipped by the Law Enforcement Assistance Administration (LEAA) and the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), and led by the Police Think Tank -- the International Association of Police (IAP) headquartered in Washington D.C., have taken the initiative as the front line of American capital, to repress oppressed people in the communities.

The police repression plan has become obvious over the last five years. Individuals, and groups of policeman, single out community residents for murder. Supported by the various agencies of the U.S. Justice Department and selected members of the press, Grand Juries, and other investigative bodies are called into session to drive protests into legal court channels and to eventually whitewash and excuse police terror in the communities.

Over the last five years, hundreds of innocent Blacks, Puerto Ricans, Chicanos/Mexicanos, Native Americans and others have been brutally murdered by police. A few examples suffice to show and prove what we claim:

- In November of 1973, 15 year old Tyrone Guyton, a young Black man from Oakland, California was stopped on the Freeway for speeding by highway police. Guyton, terrified, tried to run from the car and was shot in the leg. He stumbled and fell. A policeman walked up to the fallen youth and put a bullet through his head.

- In April, 1974, Clifford Glover, a 10-year-old Black child was shot in the back, and killed, by Policeman Thomas Shea in Queens, N.Y. after Glover ran away from the cop who grabbed him as he walked down a dark, Queens street with his uncle.
- In December, 1974, Martin Perez, a teenage Puerto Rican youth was arrested for disorderly conduct in a subway train. An hour later he had been beaten and hung to death in East Harlem's 25th Precinct stationhouse.
- In 1975, Claude Reece, a 14-year-old Black youth was shot and killed by Policeman Frank Bosco in Brooklyn, New York after Reece and other youths tried to run from a basement where they were playing. Reece was shot behind the left ear, at point blank, "execution style."
- Ricardo Morales was shot and killed by Castroville, Texas police. The young Chicano/Mexicano youth was later taken in a police car 400 miles away and buried.
- In January, 1976, San Jose, California police shot in the back, and killed, John Henry Smith, after police alleged that the Black man was running away from them to get a gun. He had been stopped, miles away from home, for a "routine traffic check."

That same month, in that same city, police shot and killed Chicano/Mexicano youth Danny Trevino, after the young man failed to get out of the car fast enough. He was shot in the face once halfway inside the car.

- Jose Barlow Benavidez, a Chicano/Mexicano man, from Oakland, was shot and killed with a shotgun while undergoing a body search outside his car, which had been stopped for a check. Benavidez was shot at point blank range in the face in June 1976.
- Randolph Evans, a 15-year-old Black youth from East New York, Brooklyn, was shot point blank and killed in front of a crowd of people when he asked a policeman, identified as Robert Torsney a question. This happened in November, 1976.





- In May, 1977, Jose Campos Torres, a Chicano/Mexicano youth from Houston, Texas, was shot and killed by police, who later dumped him in a gully. In July, 1977, Jose Reyes, a Puerto Rican from Philadelphia who was wrecking his own car with an axe in anger over a family squabble, was shot and killed by police. Reyes saw the cops getting out of a patrol car and threw the axe away. As he tried to run back into the building where he lived, he stumbled and fell. A policeman walked up to the fallen Reyes and put a bullet in the back of his head.
- More recently, in June 1978, Brooklyn Crown Heights leader, Arthur Miller, was choked for four minutes with a night stick in front of dozens of community residents as he peacefully protested the arrest of his youngest brother. After he had been choked to death, police dumped his body in a squad car and drove him to the precinct house before he was taken to Brooklyn Hospital where doctors pronounced him dead.

In practically every case, a Grand Jury was called following community protests and bad publicity for the police terror action. The return verdicts ranged from justified homicide to innocent for reasons of temporary insanity. In the few instances where police were found guilty, they were either given suspended sentences or seven months in prison at worst!

That these incidents of police terror in the communities throughout the U.S. are not isolated incidents, can be seen in the frequency in which they occur. It is impossible to justify police terror on the basis of temporary insanity, which means nothing more than that the policeman who murdered was insane only long enough to kill. Nor is justifiable homicide a just verdict for killing a person and then burying the body 400 miles away secretly.

When, in June 4, 1977, Julio Osorio and Rafael Cruz were shot in the back by Chicago Police during a Puerto Rican day parade celebration in Humboldt Park, the killings were part of an attack on those hundreds of people gathered in the park. When Arthur Miller was choked to death in Brooklyn, he was a prominent member of the Black community and a leader of a civil rights struggle.

But police have acted mostly at random in a way which implies terrorism directed against the tendency of community residents to become involved in organized protests.



Police theory, as explained by their training manuals and U S. government guidelines, emphasizes "prevention of crime" as the main objective of police work in communities. That is, to prevent things from happening. Because after they happen, it is more difficult and expensive to expend energies in solving them.

There is no question but that police terror in the community follows police theory and guidelines. The clear aim is to prevent demonstrations, organization of residents and by doing this, to eliminate a source of pressure on American capital. The U.S. rulers want peace in the communities. They want to frighten all the tens of millions of oppressed people into passivity concerning their continued politics of unemployment, hunger and repression.

But it would be a costly mistake for all of us to sit idly by and allow them to continue their policy of hunger, unemployment and repression. We need to organize the oppressed people into one single body to protest. And the main target of this protest for this period in time has to be POLICE REPRESSION.

As you may know, the NEW YORK COMMITTEE AGAINST GRAND JURY REPRESSION has always seen as its task organizing and mobilizing our communities around the issue of REPRESSION in general and grand jury repression in particular. During 1977 and 1978, a total of nine persons were incarcerated for refusing to collaborate with two political grand juries in Chicago and New York. Now that all the resisters have been released and presently, there are no active subpoenas, we can now turn our focus to one of the major forms of repression which historically has been used against the oppressed communities. As it has always been our intent to raise the issue of repression in its general and more specific terms, the committee will be known in the future as the NEW YORK COMMITTEE AGAINST REPRESSION.

Every person involved in a demonstration must become aware of what police represents to the struggle for the just rights of oppressed people. Community residents at large must learn to recognize the police terror problem through written literature and forums.

Lastly, the oppressed sectors throughout the U.S. which have been protesting police terrorism in their communities must come together within the framework of a national organization to counteract the nationwide police repression which is coordinated from Washington, D.C. through the Justice Department, The Law Enforcement Assistance Administration (LEAA) Funding Program, the planning of repression by the International Association of Police (IAP), the training of local police departments by the F.B.I. and the local bodies of police officials who give the orders to shoot and kill oppressed people!

HALT POLICE TERRORISM IN OUR COMMUNITIES!

END EXPLOITATION, HUNGER, UNEMPLOYMENT AND REPRESSION BY AMERICAN CAPITAL!



CHRONOLOGY OF POLICE TERRORISM IN
THIRD WORLD COMMUNITIES

1973

- November - Tyrone Guyton, a 15-year old Black youth, is shot and killed by Oakland, California police after he was stopped for speeding, shot in the leg and after falling to the ground, shot again in the head and killed. Grand Jury calls it "justifiable homicide."

1974

- April - Clifford Glover, 10-years old and Black, is shot in the back, and killed, by Policeman Thomas Shea in Queens, N.Y. , after the 10-year old began to run away from the cop. Shea, who has a history of brutality, is still a policeman in Queens.
- December - Police in East Harlem's (El Barrio) 25th Precinct beat and hang Martin "Tito" Perez, a young Puerto Rican arrested earlier for disorderly conduct in a subway. Investigation finds police acted "within bounds."

1975

- Fourteen-year old Claude Reece, was shot and killed by Policeman Frank Bosco, after the young man tried to run away from a basement where he and others played. Reece, who was Black, was shot once in the head, behind his left ear "execution style."
- September - Ricardo Morales, a 26-year old Mexicano-Chicano from Castroville, Texas was shot and killed by police, who later buried him 400 miles away. The Castroville Police Chief was convicted of murder, but was sentenced to from two to seven years, eligible for parole in seven months.

1976

- January - San Jose, California police shot in the back, and killed, John Henry Smith, after police said the Black man was running away from them "to get a gun." He had been stopped miles from home by police making "a routine traffic check."

- San Jose, California police shot and killed Chicano-Mexicano Danny Trevino as he sat in a car with his girlfriend and failed to move out of the car fast enough for police to check his credentials.
- June - Jose Barlow Benavidez is shot and killed by Oakland Police "making a car search," as the young Chicano-Mexicano was being subjected to "frisking." Barlow Benavidez was shot at point blank range with a shotgun to the head.
- November - 15-year old Randolph Evans, a young Black man who stopped to ask Policeman Robert Torsney a question, was shot and killed with a single blast to the head in front of a number of people. A Grand Jury failed to find cause against Torsney because of reasons of "temporary insanity."
- 1977
- May - Jose Campos Torres is assaulted and beaten by police in Houston, Texas. He was later found drowned in a bayou. Five Policeman were found guilty of murder and placed on probation.
- Juan Zuniga, was assaulted by a sheriff and later beaten to death in a jail cell in Sierra Blanca, Texas. No one was indicted in the subsequent Grand Jury investigation.
- June - Chicago police shoot and kill Julio Osorio and Rafael Cruz at Humboldt Park in an attack on the Puerto Rican community gathered there in the aftermath of the Puerto Rican day parade.
- July - Jose Reyes, a Philadelphia, Pennsylvania Puerto Rican was shot in the head and killed by a policeman who jumped out of the car when he saw Torres striking his own car with an axe. Reyes was shot once in the back of the head after he fell. No one indicted by Grand Jury.
- 1978 - Brooklyn's Crown Heights Black community leader, Arthur Miller, was strangled to death by police who choked him for over four minutes, dumped his body in a police car and later drove him to the hospital where he was pronounced dead. Witnesses say Miller had not resisted police but was attacked by 16 cops as he protested the arrest of a younger brother-for driving without a license.

These are but a handful of the hundreds of police murders in Black, Native American, Chicano-Mexicano and Puerto Ricans communities throughout the U.S.

FURTHER INFORMATION: N.Y. Committee Against Repression
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