



REVOLUTIONARY WORKER

Voice of the Revolutionary Communist Party, USA

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STOP POLICE BRUTALITY

Repression, and the Criminalization of a Generation

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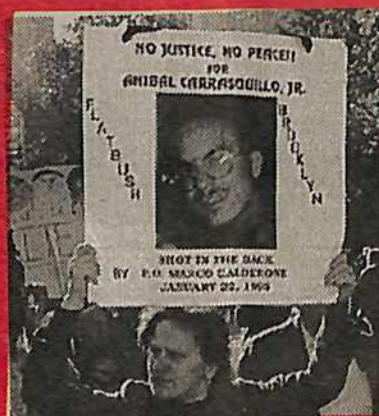
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The *Revolutionary Worker* has played a vital role in building for the Third National Day of Protest to Stop Police Brutality, Repression and the Criminalization of a Generation. The *RW* exposes important cases of police brutality and murder, and spreads news of resistance. The recent four-part series, "Black Youth and the Criminalization of a Generation," is an in-depth analysis of what's behind the system's war on our youth. The *RW* has called on brothers and sisters in prison to find ways to be part of the Oct. 22nd protests.

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As of October 18, 1998 Chairman Gonzalo (Abimael Guzmán) has been held in isolation for...

6 Years, 4 Days

In October 1992, Chairman Gonzalo— leader of the Maoist Communist Party of Peru—was sentenced to life imprisonment by hooded military judges of the U.S.-backed regime in Peru. The fascist regime in Peru is holding this revolutionary leader of the Peruvian people under very brutal conditions in an underground concrete dungeon at a naval base. He is being denied visits by lawyers, doctors and relatives and deprived of proper medical care and reading materials. Peru's President Fujimori has publicly threatened to execute Chairman Gonzalo and boasted of applying psychological torture on him. Fujimori changed Peru's constitution to legalize the death penalty, which could be used against Chairman Gonzalo and other revolutionary prisoners. The Peruvian regime must be prevented from killing Chairman Gonzalo through the death penalty or by other means.

Fujimori has repeatedly claimed that Chairman Gonzalo has made a call for negotiations from prison. In this situation, what possible excuse

can Fujimori now offer for continuing to deny Comrade Gonzalo independent contact with lawyers, doctors and friendly and neutral visitors from outside the prison in a way that meets the basic international standards for treatment of political prisoners and prisoners of war? It is vitally important for people in Peru and around the world to hear what Chairman Gonzalo's views are from Chairman Gonzalo himself—directly and unimpeded. This heightens the urgency of the fight to create an international political climate which compels the Peruvian government to grant access to Comrade Gonzalo by his legal representatives and other friends who can meet and talk directly with him.



Support the People's War in Peru!
Support the Communist Party of Peru!
Defend the Life of Chairman Gonzalo,
Fight to Break the Isolation!

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Three Main Points

by Bob Avakian
Chairman of the RCP, USA

What do we in the Revolutionary Communist Party want people to learn from all that is exposed and revealed in this newspaper? Mainly, three things:

1) The whole system we now live under is based on exploitation— here and all over the world. It is completely worthless and no basic change for the better can come about until this system is overthrown.

2) Many different groups will protest and rebel against things this system does, and these protests and rebellions should be supported and strengthened. Yet it is only those with nothing to lose but their chains who can be the backbone of a struggle to actually overthrow this system and create a new system that will put an end to exploitation and help pave the way to a whole new world.

3) Such a revolutionary struggle is possible. There is a political Party that can lead such a struggle, a political Party that speaks and acts for those with nothing to lose but their chains: The Revolutionary Communist Party, USA.

This Party has the vision, the program, the leadership, and the organizational principles to unite those who must be united and enable them to do what must be done. There is a challenge for all those who would like to see such a revolution, those with a burning desire to see a drastic change for the better, all those who dare to dream and to act to bring about a completely new and better world: Support this Party, join this Party, spread its message and its organized strength, and prepare the ground for a revolutionary rising that has a solid basis and a real chance of winning

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A Salute to the Brave Resisters on the Third National Day of Protest to Stop Police Brutality, October 22, 1998

We revolutionaries in the RCP want to shout out to all the brave resisters on October 22.

We are proud to be standing shoulder to shoulder with people all across the country who are taking a stand on this third National Day of Protest to Stop Police Brutality, Repression and the Criminalization of a Generation.

Our hearts are together with all the people whose loved ones and comrades have been murdered by the brutal enforcers in blue...all those who have suffered beatings and humiliation for being "the wrong color" or "being in the wrong place" or having "too much pride" or not having "the right papers" or speaking "the wrong language."

We are proud to be among the people who have called for this third national day of protest on October 22. Together we are taking an important step on the road toward putting a stop to an intolerable situation...

- where killers in blue go free time after time...
- where the youth are criminalized and disrespected...
- where a blue wall of silence allows crimes like the police torture of Abner Louima to go unpunished...
- where Black people, Latinos, Asians, Native Americans are treated like moving targets by armed and organized authorities...
- where more than 2¼ million people are locked up in federal or state prisons and country jails...
- where more than ¾ million people were imprisoned in less than four years — at a time when crime is dropping...
- where more Black youth are in prison than in college...
- where even the president is not safe from prosecutors running amok...
- and where the fear and anger of many middle class people is misdirected against the people on the bottom, the people under the gun of the police.

Today, the problem of police brutality is coming more into the light. The Stolen Lives Project has documented 1,000 names of people killed by police from 1990 to 1998. Reports from Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch confirm that the epidemic of police brutality continues to rage, that a generation of oppressed youth is being incarcerated, and prisoners in the United States are being subjected to *cruel* and inhuman treatment. More than ever—the VOICES OF THE PEOPLE MUST BE HEARD. October 22 is a chance to make a powerful and necessary statement against the epidemic of police brutality.

October 22 — We are wearing BLACK to remember, to demonstrate our anger...and our resolve.

October 22 — We are saying the NAMES of those whose lives have been stolen from us. We are telling the world how they died. We are calling on all who have been brutalized to come out and testify — alone, no more.

We are resisting, marching, singing, speaking out, lighting candles, standing up for all the people. We are standing on the shoulders of all who have manifested resistance — from Los Angeles to New York, from border to border.

We are putting things back in focus.

Who are the real criminals? Who are the ones that put the dope in the communities and who took the jobs out? Who are the ones building prisons and closing the schools?

All across the country people are beginning to get a different idea on who's really representing justice, who's really representing courage — the political liars and blue-coated brutalizers, or the people who stand up and put out the truth?

Together we are taking some really urgent steps on a path to a different place.

There are times when a movement needs to marshal all its strength for a powerful blow against the oppressor—when people from many different points of view unite to do what needs to be done.

The war coming down on the people signals that this is such a time.

Acting together we can force the truth out. The diversity of who's come together on this can inspire those who've given up hope, awaken those who've been walking in a fog, and shake up those sitting on the fence. The determination that we will show on this Day—and we won't let them turn us around — will draw new forces to our side.

People will see a movement in the streets, and many other arenas of society, based on resisting the brutal murdering "solutions" now in effect. People will see a movement that can transform feelings of isolation and powerlessness into a new sense of solidarity, a knowledge of how to come together to fight the outrages, and a greater degree of organization.

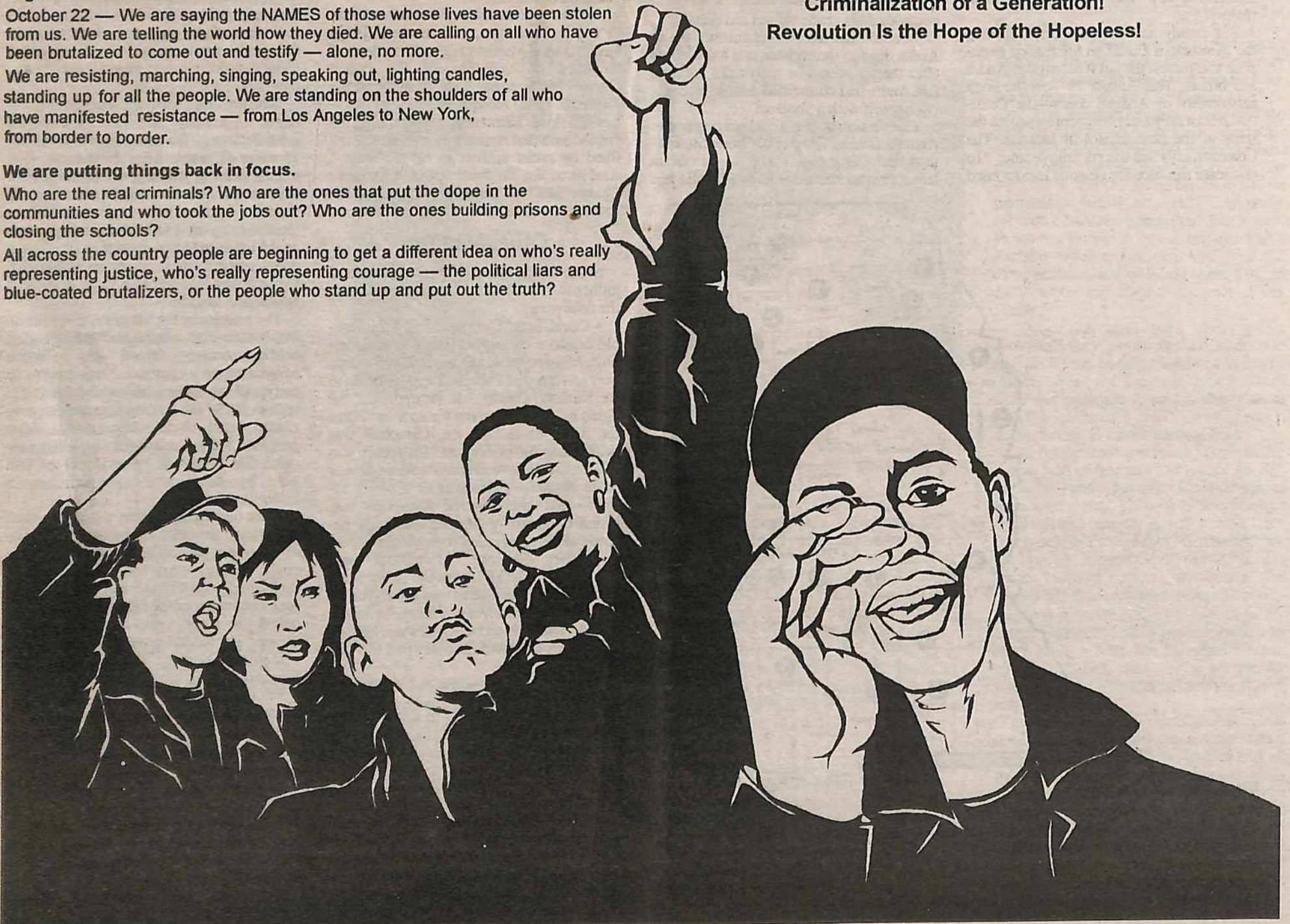
During these last three years we have made a new beginning and new alliances — the people have taken matters into our hands to demand an end to official brutality.

Let's go forward together from this day. We need to bring out ALL the names of those who have been murdered and brutalized. We need to erect memorials in our cities to those who have fallen in this war on the people. We need justice.

We revolutionary Maoists think it will take a great struggle — requiring us to turn our communities into strongholds of resistance and reach out to millions throughout the society—to really stop the power structure and their enforcers from degrading and brutalizing the people. Every day we confront the reality that this rotten system will never jump back without a fight and this power structure can never solve the problems of the great majority of people.

Sisters and brothers, on October 22 the RCP renews our commitment to stand with the people to wage this fight—not to sell out or turn back, no matter what the enemy uses to come at us, whether it be bullets or bribes. We are willing and prepared to take on the responsibility of helping to build the understanding, organization, unity and fighting capacity of the people and to carry this fight all the way through.

**Stop Police Brutality, Repression and the Criminalization of a Generation!
Revolution Is the Hope of the Hopeless!**



Mississippi Jail Lynchings

This article is based on a correspondence from an activist with *Refuse & Resist!* and the October 22 Coalition in Atlanta, as well as material from the Mississippi Coalition for Justice.

In the period between 1987 and 1993, at least 48 people—including 22 Black men—were found dead from hangings in Mississippi jail cells. In each and every case, the authorities declared the official cause of death to be “suicide.”

One of the 22 Black men was 18-year-old Andre Jones. Andre’s family refused to accept the official story of his death, and they uncovered evidence that he was murdered. As they learned of the many other cases of “suicide by hanging” in Mississippi in recent years, a chilling pattern emerged. This is a region with a bloody history of lynchings of Black people. The series of jail cell hangings showed that these racist crimes are not a thing of the past. A headline in the Black-owned newspaper *Jackson Advocate* a few weeks after Andre’s murder read: “Are jailhouse suicides a new way of lynching Black males?”

The family and their supporters formed the Mississippi Coalition for Justice to expose and protest the jail lynchings of Andre and others. This August 21—on the sixth anniversary of Andre’s death—the Coalition held a rally and press conference on the steps of the state capitol in Jackson. The Coalition says that their objectives are: “To eradicate injustice for persons incarcerated

in jails and prisons through the legal system; To insure that law enforcement officials that commit crimes against innocent victims are justly prosecuted; To create public awareness of human rights abuses within the jail and prison system; To establish a legal fund to provide legal representation for unjust treatment of inmates incarcerated.”

Murder of Andre Jones

On August 22, 1992, 18-year-old Andre Jones and his girlfriend were stopped at a police roadblock. Andre was arrested for allegedly having an open beer, carrying a concealed weapon and driving a truck with a stolen license plate. His girlfriend said later that Andre wasn’t carrying a weapon, and his family said the truck belonged to a friend.

Andre was taken to the Rankin County Jail and then transferred to the Simpson County Jail in Mendenhall, supposedly because of overcrowding. The Simpson jail was run by Sheriff Lloyd Jones—known as “Goon” among Black people in the area because of his crude racism and brutality.

“Goon” and his men claim they found Andre dead in the shower stall a few hours after the transfer. The authorities declared that Andre had committed suicide by hanging himself with a shoelace.

This version of events did not ring true to Andre’s family. Charles X Quinn Muhammad said, “Our son, Andre, was a vibrant teenager who had a lot to live for. He had



Andre Jones



and nationwide. Charles Muhammad told the *Jackson Advocate*, “We were guests on the Bertice Berry show in Chicago. We addressed Amnesty International in San Francisco. We have travelled to Dallas and New York City to name a few places. Everywhere we have gone we have found that there are people expressing the same frustrations about losing loved ones in jails under mysterious circumstances.”

In June 1994, the nationally televised *Unsolved Mysteries* aired a segment on Andre Jones. After the airing of the show, the Muhammads received many calls from relatives of jail death victims.

In February 1993, the Commission on Human Rights Abuses in Mississippi held public hearings on jail lynchings and other abuses by law enforcement officials. One of the testimonies was given by Andrea Gibbs, a former deputy sheriff in Harrison County Jail and Youth Detention Facility in Gulfport, Mississippi. She testified, “I’ve personally seen dozens of beatings of Black, white and Nicaraguan detainees. [I’ve seen them] kicked, strangled, slapped, punched, stabbed.” Gibbs, who is white, said that when she and three African American deputies told their superiors about their intention to report these abuses, they were fired.

Gibbs pointed out the connection between the brutality she witnessed and the jail lynchings: “We documented more than 75 cases of people being beaten. What is upsetting is that the majority of the alleged suicides occurred after 1989 [when she and the other deputies first raised concern about the abuses]. Any one of the beatings I saw could have escalated into murder. And it doesn’t take a smart person to realize that the best way to cover that up is to make it appear as a suicide.”

The protests by the Mississippi Coalition for Justice and others and the growing public outrage forced the Clinton administration’s Justice Department to carry out an investigation of Mississippi jails in 1993. The Justice Department concluded that overcrowding and other problems led to inmate suicides—but they ruled that there was no evidence of foul play by Mississippi law enforcement authorities.

Since that federal probe, there have been no official “suicides by hanging” in Mississippi—yet jail conditions in the state certainly have not improved. What does this say? It indicates that the hanging of Andre Jones and many of the other jail “suicides” before the probe were deliberate acts of murder. The federal government, with its investigation, signaled the concern of the bourgeois ruling class overall that the jail lynchings could potentially touch off widespread anger and resistance. And the Mississippi authorities apparently heard that message. But this has not brought any justice for Andre Jones and other jail lynching victims. And the injustice and brutality continue.

As Charles X Quinn Muhammad said at the August 21 action: “Today we people of color are rendered a verdict as soon as we walk into a courtroom. We have only to look at the prisons to see modern-day slavery.”

just graduated from high school and was enrolled at Alcorn State University for the fall semester. He had never been in trouble with the law. He was not charged with any felonies. Therefore going to prison was not an issue in his case. He had no reason to kill himself.”

The family’s suspicions were confirmed when an independent pathologist concluded in his report: “It is physically impossible for a person to pick himself up by a shoestring and hang himself from the rafters of a shower stall without the aid of a chair or stepstool. Accordingly, I interpret this death as a homicide, wherein the shoestring hanging was used to fake the appearance of suicide.”

Andre’s parents are well-known activists in the Jackson area. His mother, Esther Quinn Jones Muhammad, is president of the local NAACP chapter. His father, Charles Muhammad, is the minister of the Nation of Islam mosque in Jackson. Attorney Chokwe Lumumba, representing the family, said that Andre’s parents were “not liked by racist authorities of this state.” And he named the “authorities at Simpson County Jail” as primary suspects in the murder of Andre.

Other Victims

Some of the other victims of suspected jailhouse lynchings in Mississippi include the following:

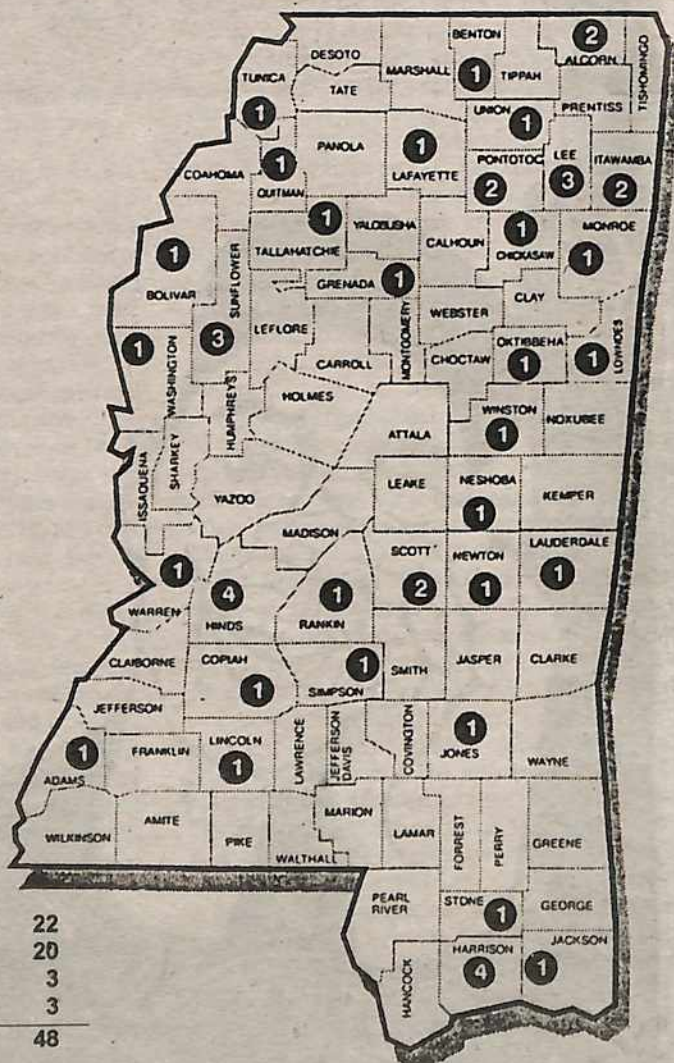
- David Scott Campbell was a 21-year-old offshore oil worker living in Philadelphia, Mississippi. On October 9, 1990, cops beat and arrested Campbell and took him to the Neshoba County Jail. At midnight, the lights in the jail went out for an hour. When the lights came back on, Campbell was dead, hanging in his cell. Campbell was known to date several white women. One of those women—a daughter of a police officer—said she believed Campbell was killed by sheriff’s deputies and cops because of his association with white women.

- Bobby Everette, 19-year-old, was found hanging in a Jackson jail in February 1993. His brother said he saw Bobby for the last time less than five hours before he was found “with one end of a bed sheet knotted around his neck and the other tied to a cell bar.”

- Cedrick Walker was found with a rope around his neck in his Parchman jail cell in July 1993. In a letter to his mother ten days earlier, Walker wrote that he feared for his life and wanted to get transferred to another jail: “I will feel safer there, because you can’t trust some of these officers.”

An Epidemic of Jail Lynchings

As Andre Jones’ family and their supporters fought to uncover the truth, they formed links with others in Mississippi—



Black males	22
White males	20
Black females	3
White females	3
Total deaths	48

A map of Mississippi showing the number of jail hangings in the period 1987 to 1993.



Left to right, front row: Nicholas Heyward, Sr., Iris Baez, Andre English, Ron Daniels. Left to right, back row: Carl Dix, Carmen Ruiz, Lucy Gonzalez, Altagracia Mayi, Anna Jorge.

Special to the RWOR

Press Conferences

A Thousand Stolen Lives

On October 13, the October 22nd Coalition to Stop Police Brutality, Repression and the Criminalization of a Generation held a press conference at the Center for Constitutional Rights in New York City. The purpose of the press conference was to announce the publication of an additional 500 names of people murdered by the police across the U.S. since 1990. These names were added to the list of 500 names that had already been documented by the Stolen Lives Project. The third National Day of Protest to Stop Police Brutality on

October 22nd was also announced.

Andre English, the East Regional Coordinator of the Youth Network for the October 22nd Coalition, was the moderator. English pointed out that the 500 names don't even count cases like Abner Louima and other cases like Rodney King and people who were just brutalized by the police. English said, "So really, this epidemic is not isolated but it is widespread and it is going on across the country.... What we really believe is that that initial 1,000 names is just the tip of the iceberg in

that since we're not getting any help from any law enforcement agencies or any other people as to these statistics, we're having to compile them on our own. So we believe that the statistics and the numbers of deaths are much more broader than that."

The speakers at the press conference included Nicholas Heyward, Sr., whose 13-year-old son Nicholas Heyward, Jr. was shot by the police; Iris Baez, whose 29-year-old son Anthony was choked to death by the police; Ron Daniels, executive director of the Center for Constitutional Rights

and Carl Dix, from the October 22nd Coalition and National Spokesperson for the Revolutionary Communist Party. Other parents whose children were murdered by the police gave interviews to the media including Carmen Ruiz, whose son Dario Diodonet was killed by the police, Altagracia Mayi whose son Manuel Mayi was murdered by a racist mob; Lucy Gonzalez whose son Jovan Gonzalez was beaten by a racist gang; and Ana Jorge, whose son Felix Jorge Jr. was choked to death after police

Continued on page 14

New York

The Fight Over Permits

As we go to press, the New York City authorities have denied a march permit for the October 22nd National Day of Protest to Stop Police Brutality, saying that the march would cause too much disruption of traffic.

Under Mayor Giuliani's administration, the NYPD have murdered *innocent* people. They've cut short many young lives. They've denied justice to families grieving for loved ones. They've painfully disrupted many lives.

Now, when parents and relatives of those who have been killed by the police want to take to the streets to tell their stories and protest police brutality—Giuliani has the nerve to talk about traffic!

Giuliani has created a police-state atmosphere with surveillance cameras all over the city, subjecting everyone to "big brother" scrutiny. He wants to control the streets with an iron fist—deciding who can and can't sell things on the sidewalk, prescribing where people can and can't cross the street, saying what areas, if any, homeless people can try to get out of the cold. And he wants to dictate who can and can't demonstrate in the streets—attacking protesting taxi drivers, unleashing cops on the Million Youth March, and even refusing to allow a parade for Sammy Sosa in the Dominican community of Washington Heights. Now he wants to suppress and censor the very people whose children and relatives have been murdered by the NYPD! This just shows that people like

Giuliani should not be running the city.

On October 22 the people in New York should all take time to remember those whose lives have been stolen by the NYPD. They should stand with the families fighting for justice. They should ask themselves: Do I want to live in a society where armed thugs can take out youth who have their whole lives ahead of them, as if they were nothing? Do I want to live in a society that has nothing to offer a huge section of its youth other than a life on the streets or in prison?

To hell with Giuliani's Hitler logic of keeping traffic flowing while police shoot people down in the streets!

Carl Dix, member of the National Coordinating Committee for October 22nd and spokesperson for the Revolutionary Communist Party said at a press conference, "The people will not allow City Hall and the NYPD to prevent the parents of children killed by police from protesting their deaths and letting the public know the truth about how their children were killed by police. How dare those who are responsible for these killings now try to obstruct efforts to hold this important protest!...I can only say that the cowardice involved in this is typical of Rudolph Giuliani. He can-

not come out and say I oppose this for this reason. He has to hide behind some kind of B.S. about traffic disruptions. Well, we ain't having it. We are confident that many, many people in this city feel it's important to march in protest of police brutality. On top of that, there are many, many more who will not stand by and allow this kind of denial of rights to go down."

Iris Baez, whose son Anthony Baez was murdered after NYPD cop Francis Livoti put him in a chokehold, wrote to the NYPD, "We are asking for a permit. We are trying to bring awareness to different communities about what happened to our children and in the process it would be a therapy for the families. We have a right to march and tell our stories. If you give permits and divert traffic for parades, you can do it for mothers and families of victims of police brutality." When Margarita Rosario, whose son Anthony Rosario and nephew Hilton Vega were shot in the back by police, heard the permit was denied she said, "The Giuliani administration has always covered up police brutality and this is a way of him covering it up. Giuliani has *some* nerve!" Emma Jones, whose son Malik was murdered by police in Connecticut, said, "A permit must be granted so that *mothers* who

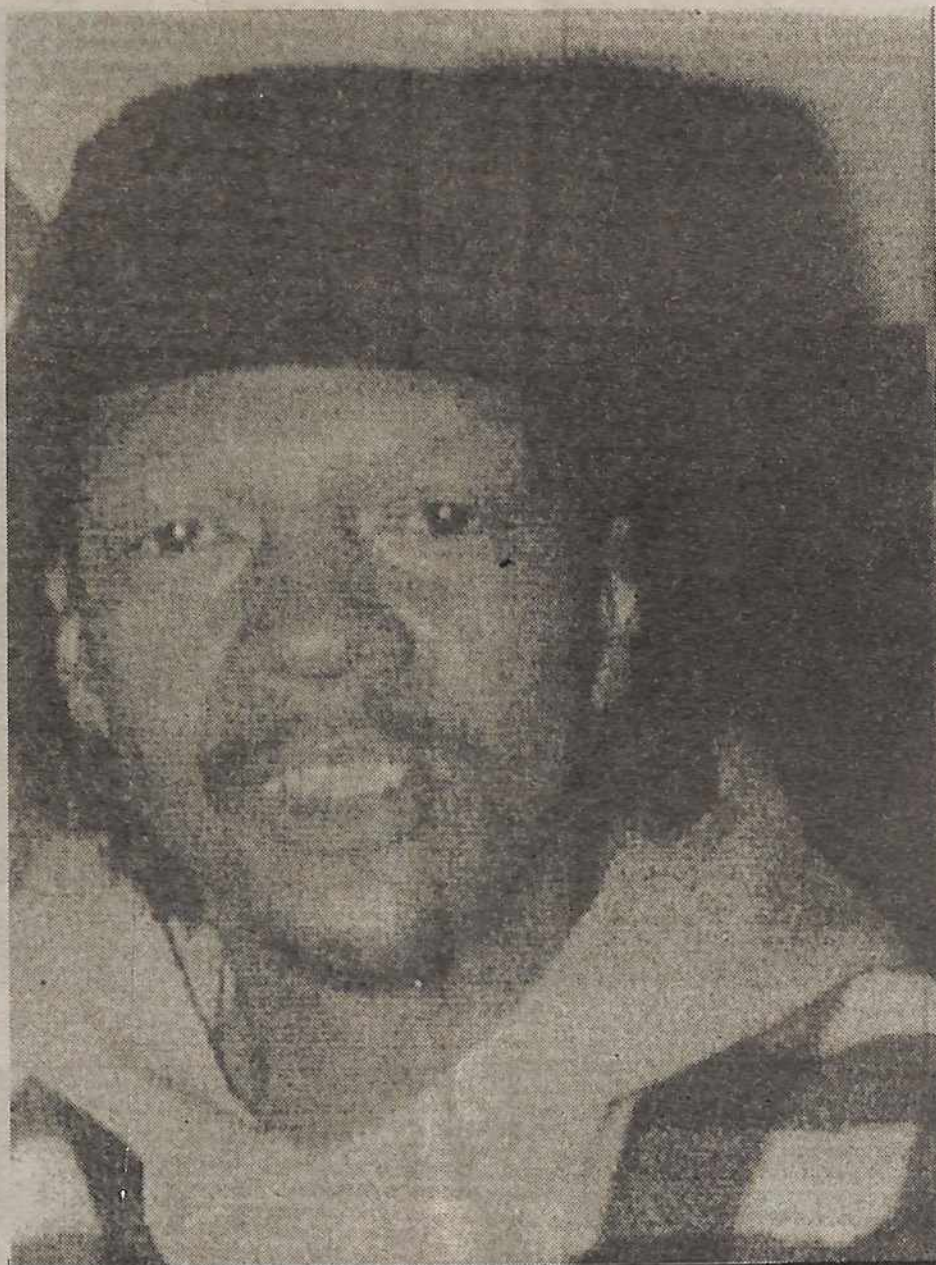
have lost *sons* and daughters can *walk and talk* in *their* own community about the injustice and to demand a *stop* to it!"

The coalition applied for permits in September—the city had plenty of time to deal with any "traffic problems"! The coalition has been given permits for rallies before and after the march, but not for the march itself. At a press conference held after the permit was denied, statements of support were given by Herman Ferguson of the New African Liberation Front; Carol Taylor, author of "The Little Black Book"; Al Hajj Muhammad of the Muslim 4 Political Prisoners Defense Committee and Ray LaForest of the Haitian Mobilization to Defend Immigrants Rights. As we go to press, the coalition has received statements of support from Francis Goldin, literary agent for Mumia Abu-Jamal, the Swiss Peace Movement (in Switzerland) and others. The coalition will hold a press conference Monday morning when lawyers from the National Lawyers Guild, assisted by the legal team from the Million Youth March, will file papers in court to overturn the denial of the permit.

As the editorial in *RW#975*, "Take the Battle to Another Level" said, "We should take every obstacle they set before the people and turn them into stepping stones to uniting still more people against their system's punishing program." □

"We have a right to march and tell our stories. If you give permits and divert traffic for parades, you can do it for mothers and families of victims of police brutality."

Iris Baez in a note to New York City authorities



The Stolen Life of James Harris

The following story was written by an RW correspondent in Cleveland.

As I began to read the *Cleveland Plain Dealer* on Sunday morning, August 16, I saw an article headlined "Police Shoot, Kill Man Wielding Butcher Knife." I knew this was pig bullshit. I knew this was yet another man straight-up murdered by the police, this time the Cleveland Municipal Housing Authority (CMHA) police. I knew from all the past cover-ups by the police that the story in the paper was THEIR STORY. They said James Harris had lunged at the police after he refused to drop a knife. But I knew this was probably yet another case of the police killing a defenseless man.

I got angrier by the minute, thinking of all the cases, like the brother in California who was killed out in a park, watching a Saturday afternoon football game. A crowd of people had shouted to the police, telling them not to shoot—they told the cops the man's friends could get him to drop the knife, but the cops shot him anyway. I thought of how New York cop Francis Livoti had killed Anthony Baez because his football hit a police car in front of his own house—and how Anthony's father had yelled at the cop to stop choking his son. And now James Harris.

I called Mr. Willie Horton, a member of October 22nd Coalition to Stop Police Brutality and the group Black on Black 200. Horton's son had been found hung in his cell in the Fourth District police station on January 1, 1997. Willie had already seen the article and told me, "The police are always ready with a story about why they had to kill another Black person. Yes, I want to go and talk to the family with you." So the next day we drove over to the Out-hwaite housing projects, dark brick buildings, many of them boarded up.

As we were walking in and telling a few people we were from the October 22nd Coalition to Stop Police Brutality, a young woman came up and said, "James' wife lives over there. That's where it happened. Oh, there she is." So we approached Lorene Harris, James' wife, and told her how we read about the murder of her husband in the newspaper and suspected that the police were lying about what happened. Willie let Lorene know right away how his son had been hung by the cops in the Fourth District. Then Lorene took us over to where it happened and showed where the police were when they shot her husband. With deep pain, sadness, and tears, Lorene told us how it all happened.

It was in the early hours of August 15 when James "Bugs" Harris, a 51-year-old Black man, was gunned down in front of his apartment door by two Cleveland Municipal Housing Authority police. James and his wife Lorene had spent the evening together, listening to music, dancing, having a few drinks and just having a good time in their apartment. They got to arguing about a music tape and just couldn't seem to stop. They went outside and were still arguing when James realized he had left his keys in the apartment. He went to the door and tried to pick the lock with his knife. When Lorene saw a couple of police around the corner from their building, she told them to come over, thinking they could talk to James, calm him down, chill him out. But the two white cops came over to the building with their guns

drawn. The only thing James got a chance to do was raise his arms up before one of these lowlife killers shot him in the chest. As James fell, one of the cops shot him again, right outside the door.

As James Harris lay dying, the two murdering cops, Derreck Keidel and Michael Lewis, called for backup. When other cops arrived, the two murderers left the area and the other police handcuffed Lorene Harris and put her in their car. Lorene protested, horrified at being put in the custody of the men who had just killed her husband. But when she yelled to be let out of the car, the police told her they were "protecting her." She told us, "That made no sense, protected from what? Protected from whom?" The real reason was the police were afraid of the crowd gathering of people living in this east side project. In fact, as more and more police arrived on the scene, they threatened the crowd to coerce them to stay back. Lorene told us how being forced to sit in the police car as James lay on the ground dying was, "just horrible." After about three hours in the police car, Lorene was taken to the downtown Justice Center in Cleveland for questioning.

As usual in all police killings of our loved ones, the authorities spew out their lies to cover up their murderous deeds. The articles in the *Cleveland Plain Dealer* quoted the two cops, Keidel and Lewis, who said that James lunged at the police with a knife inside the apartment. In fact, the cops never went inside the apartment.

And James couldn't have lunged at them because they were at least 20 feet away and they shot him as soon as they saw him. They didn't wait for a moment.

Willie and I attended the funeral for James Harris and went with his family and friends to the cemetery. We drove one of James' old friends, Billy, to the cemetery. On the way, Billy talked about how this killing is part of so many people getting killed by the police for no reason, all over the country. Billy talked about how the police just kill a Black man or a youth and just walk away, not thinking anything of it. He said, "They hate the people, and that's what it is about, just like the system."

When we got to the cemetery, friends and family shed many tears for James, as he was lowered into the ground. Even though it was sunny out, I felt a dark sadness mixed with deep hatred inside me for a set-up that would kill a Black man who wasn't hurting anyone, who had been in the Navy and worked hard. As we drove back to the projects, Billy spoke about how this whole system shows a Black man like James and himself no respect. He said, "The system is always making the point that we are nothing, and that's why we have to get rid of it. There's no dignity under this mess. James and I would talk about how the community needs to get together to make changes, to get better living conditions in the projects."

As we drove up to the projects, there were a few long tables with lots of food and pop. Many family and friends, and many

kids who knew James, gathered together to comfort each other. People had prepared huge pans of greens, chicken, corn bread and more and brought them outside. Everyone sat around eating and talking.

Many people told me all about James. Some told me that when they first heard about the killing, they didn't believe it could be James, they just couldn't believe it happened to James—certainly not the bit about his lunging at the police, it just didn't fit. People said James was a laid back, easy-going person who liked to go with his wife and a friend fishing along Lake Erie. He was a quiet man who spent much of the time playing his guitar, creating graphics on his computer, and listening to all kinds of music. People said that when all the kids saw his graphics they asked him for pictures and cards. He loved to make them for the children and others. He was a quiet but thoughtful person who everyone liked and enjoyed being around.

For hours people told me about the everyday, pervasive clampdown in the projects. They talked about how, much of the time, they can't even hang out in front of their building and are forced to take their folding chairs somewhere else. One woman told me, "See over there, across the street where people are lined up with their chairs, they can't sit in front of where they live. That's terrible." The police constantly harass people, giving residents \$145 fines for having an open container. The cops will even look in the bushes for a can of beer so that they can fine someone with a citation.

The enforcers are constantly stopping people, especially the youth, and asking them for ID. If they don't have any, they beat them or arrest them. One person told me, "See that youth down there, he refused to show ID and was beaten over his head with batons, leaving him with scores of stitches. He was taken to jail with a bloodied face and head, and then charged."

"One young mother said, "It's like we in prison here. They treat us like dogs here, no respect. You'll see, just wait, the cops will come around looking to see about open beer. My niece who was a teenager defended herself in a fight with another girl and is in Marysville prison now for seven years and still there. And the other girl only got cut on the arm. It's outrageous what is happening, the way they be jailing our children, taking them away. But fuck it, I want to fight back, I'm interested in getting involved."

People were outraged about the police killing of James, and when they heard about the October 22nd National Day of Protest to Stop Police Brutality, dozens got buttons and people were reading the Stolen Lives Project book—the list of people murdered by the police—to each other. People would speak about people in the book from Cleveland whom they knew about. Several people said that on payday they would buy the SLP book and people signed up to get involved in the October 22nd Coalition.

As people gathered up the empty plates, and put stuff in the trash cans, their faces were sad and drawn because they had lost their friend James who they loved and respected and enjoyed. But through the sad mood was also a feeling and desire to join the movement to stop police brutality and build for October 22. □

The Death of Matthew Shepard

Murder in a Murderous Climate

Near sundown October 8, two bicyclists riding a deserted road outside Laramie, Wyoming suddenly came upon Matthew Shepard. Matthew, a 21-year-old freshman at the University of Wyoming, was spread-eagled, tied on the split wooden rails of a ranch fence. From a distance they thought his motionless body was a scarecrow.

Matthew had been beaten brutally. He had spent 18 hours exposed to near-freezing temperatures and was in a coma. He never regained consciousness. As the news spread, nightly candlelight vigils started in cities and campuses across the U.S. A few days later, Matthew Shepard died in a Colorado intensive care unit.

A Crime of Reactionary Violence

It is believed that Matthew Shepard was kidnapped, tortured and killed because he was gay. The cruel bigotry of Matthew's torture and death have shocked people and moved many to protest.

Two men, Aaron McKinney, 22, and Russell Henderson, 21, are charged with the murder. McKinney's girlfriend Kristen Price says he had been embarrassed because he believed Matthew Shepard "made a pass at him" at the Fireside Bar in Laramie. Price says that McKinney and Henderson decided to "teach him a lesson not to come on to straight people."

McKinney and Henderson apparently tricked Matthew into leaving the Fireside and going for a drive with them. Once on the road, one of them reportedly pulled a pistol on Matthew, announced that they were not gay, and started beating him. They took him to a deserted area outside of town and tied him to the fence. While Matthew reportedly asked them to spare his life, they tortured him, broke open his head with the pistol butt, emptied his pockets and left him for dead in the cold Wyoming night.

After leaving Matthew, the two killers cruised Laramie and attacked two young Latino men who were just walking along the street. One of these men, 19-year-old Emiliano Morales, III, said that McKinney jumped him out of nowhere and opened a gash that took 21 staples to close. Emiliano's friend Jeremy Herrera beat McKinney off with a stick.

Some people, including the Laramie police, have tried to claim that this murder was basically a robbery that got out of hand. But the available evidence, including the racist spree after the killing, shows this was a two-man reactionary rampage. That Wednesday night in Laramie was a painful illustration of the Refuse & Resist! motto, "It's all one attack."

Taking a Stand

There has been a powerful outrage over this killing. And a strong sense that Matthew's death is part of something bigger—that highly placed and influential forces have encouraged a climate in which men like McKinney and Henderson feel empowered to punish homosexuals.

Vigils and rallies have been held in many cities and on many college campuses across



Matthew Shepard

the U.S. People have denounced intolerant and bigoted "traditional morality." And many people justly demand that the society as a whole endorse a clear, public verdict against the persecution of homosexuals.

Meanwhile, television talk shows gave major airtime to Christian-fascists who promote a "new intolerance." The outrage over Matthew's murder is so strong that even these creepy rightists had to denounce the killing—but then they used their TV time as a pulpit to condemn any departure from traditional patriarchal roles and "family values" as immorality and "sin." James Dobson, leader of "Focus on the Family," denied that "the Biblical standard on homosexuality leads to murder" (while knowing perfectly well that Bible explicitly calls for the killing of gay men in Leviticus 20:13). Then Dobson went on to rave that same-sex relationships undermine "the fabric of civilization." CNN's resident rightist Pat Buchanan charged that the murder of Matthew Shepard had been hijacked by forces wanting "special privileges for homosexuals."

The Danger of Supporting "Hate Crime" Laws

Many people have been grappling with how to actually stop gay-bashing—and how to beat back the climate of conservative intolerance and reactionary violence that produces it. President Clinton, Attorney General Janet Reno and many other ruling class figures are trying to recruit such people to support the Federal Hate Crimes Protection Act. This law would widen the powers of the federal prosecutors and the FBI by turning crimes based on "sex, disability and sexual orientation" into federal offenses.

It is a dangerous mistake to support this call. And unfortunately many people have done so at the vigils for Matthew Shepard.

The push for more police-state powers is itself an important part of the current reactionary offensive in the U.S. Having anti-hate crime laws on the books in many states has not reduced reactionary violence—but it has given police new ways to manipulate and exploit politically charged situations. The FBI and Justice Department have a long history of working closely with Klan-types. New laws will not cause police or the FBI to magically become defenders of the persecuted.

The outpouring of outrage over Matthew Shepard is very welcome. It is a sign that many people want to stand against bigotry and reactionary violence.

It would be a sad development if this system succeeded in channeling this outrage into support for broader police-state powers. Regardless of the intentions of many people supporting new "hate crime" laws—backing new police powers will

strengthen, not weaken, the climate of punishment and patriarchy.

Emboldened by the System

Powerful ruling class forces stand behind the two brutal small-town bigots who killed Matthew Shepard (and behind their brethren in the Montana Militia, the suburban Promise-Keepers, and the Klan of Jasper, Texas)—powerful forces that are egging such bigots on, flashing them a green light to crawl out from under their rocks.

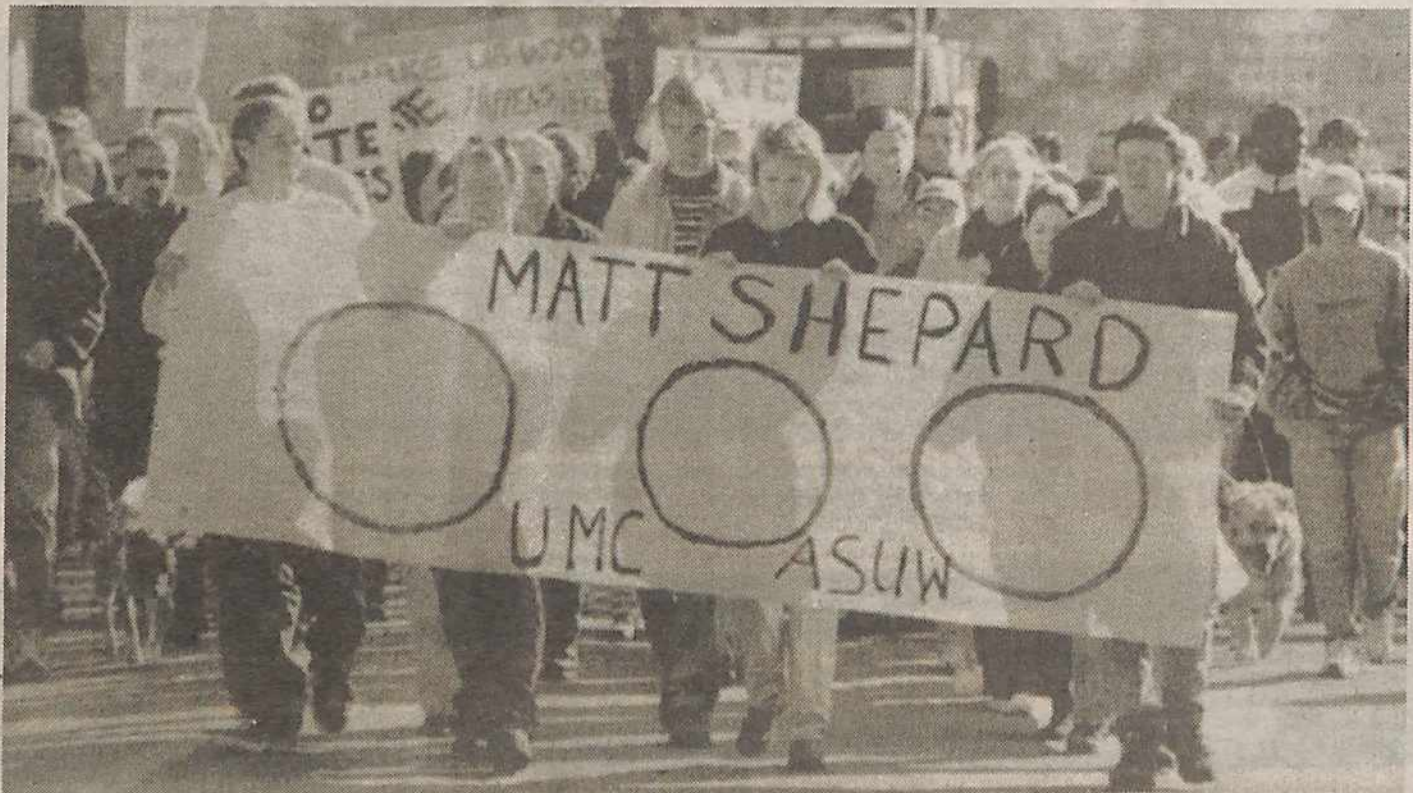
This capitalist system depends on the subordination of women and the enforcement of all kinds of repressive norms. It constantly generates and promotes extreme reactionary forces who rise up to enforce the oppressive practices of traditional male supremacy and patriarchy.

Who can miss that, these days, the whole official political arena is fixated on a morality tale about "traditional values." Sex outside traditional marriage is being treated like a state crime. The very idea of sexual privacy is mocked in Congress. This president (who pushed the conservative "back to the closet" policy of *Don't Ask, Don't Tell*) is now himself publicly asked and forced to tell about his "sins."

Want a glimpse of what the Christian-fascists' "new intolerance" means at the street level? Follow the trail of McKinney and Henderson's late night rampage. The killing of Matthew Shepard is intolerable. These are times that demand consciousness and resistance. □



Flowers mark the spot where Matthew Shepard was left for dead.



University of Wyoming marchers protest the attack on Matthew Shepard, October 10.

STOLEN

These are people whose lives were stolen by police murder. For each face seen here, there were hundreds and hundreds more who were also killed by the police.

The U.S. is in the midst of an epidemic of murder "under the color of law."

Police killings are routinely covered up—with approval and protection from high levels of government. Meanwhile the victims of police murder are portrayed as people who deserved execution and police "street justice."

Statistics showing the extent of police murder are treated like state secrets by the federal authorities—who refuse to release this important information to the public.

The Stolen Lives Project recently announced that they have documented the names of over 1,000 people killed by law enforcement agents since 1990 (including killings by police, border patrol and prison guards). The *New York Times* estimates that 600 people a year are killed by police in the U.S.

A recent Amnesty International report on human rights violations in the U.S. says, "There is a widespread and persistent problem of police brutality across the USA... Police officers have beaten and shot unresisting suspects; they have misused batons, chemical sprays and electro-shock weapons; they have injured or killed people by placing them in dangerous restraint holds.... The majority of victims have been members of racial or ethnic minorities. Many people have died, many have been seriously injured, many have been deeply traumatized."

This epidemic of police murder is intolerable. It must be forced out of the shadows—it must be fought, exposed, denounced and ended. The cause is just. The situation is urgent.

**Stop
Police Brutality,
Repression and
the Criminalization
of a Generation**



Anthony Baez, 29, killed by NYPD chokehold, Bronx NY, Dec. 22, 1994



Rodney "Banks" Laulusa, 30, shot by Honolulu cops 14 times, Jan. 22, 1998



Kuanchung Kao, 33, Silicon Valley engineer shot in his own driveway by cop, Rohnert Park, CA, Apr. 29, 1997



Jonny Gammage, 31, businessman shot by cops for "driving while Black" in all white neighborhood, Pittsburgh, Oct. 12, 1995



Sheila Detoy, 17, shot by police while sitting in car, San Francisco, May 13, 1998



Darryl "Chubby" Hood, 40, tazed, maced and shot over 11 times by cops, Watts, Nov. 15, 1997



Leonard "Acorn" Peters, ambushed and shot by county sheriffs in Round Valley Reservation, California, Apr. 14,



James Rhodes, 26, killed by cops at a bus-stop on his way to college classes, Cleveland, Feb. 19, 1997



Frankie Arzuaga, 15, shot by NYPD in a stopped car, Brooklyn, Jan. 12, 1996



Malice Green, beaten to death by Detroit police, Nov. 1992



Anibal Carrasquillo, 21, shot in the back by NYPD, Brooklyn Jan. 22, 1995



Eric Pitt, 27, killed by NYPD, Queens, Dec. 7, 1994



José Antonio Gutierrez, 14, shot in back by LAPD, July 29, 1995



Charles Campbell, 37, killed by a cop over parking space, Westchester County NY, Oct. 3, 1996



Nicholas Heyward Jr., 13, shot by cops while playing, Brooklyn, Sept. 29, 1994



Eric Smith, 22, deaf man, beaten and shot by police, after being stopped for walking in traffic, Chicago, Apr. 9, 1996



Anthony Rosario, 18, shot for questioning why police were executing his friend Hilton Vega, Bronx, Jan. 12, 1995



Hilton Vega, 21, shot as he lay on the floor during a police raid, Bronx, Jan. 12, 1995



Aswon "Keshawn" Watson, 23, killed by 18 police bullets while sitting in his car, Brooklyn, June 13, 1996



Aaron Williams, beaten to death by 11 cops outside his home, San Francisco, June 4, 1995

Murdered in Cold Blood b

If you know someone who has been killed by police, contact the Stolen Lives Project.

October 22nd Coalition, National Office c/o KHL, Inc., Box 124, 160 First Avenue, New York, NY 10009, 212-477-8062

National Lawyers Guild, 8124 West 3rd St., Suite 201, Los Angeles, CA 90048, 213-852-0578, 213-653-3245 FAX

Anthony Baez Foundation, 6 Cameron 10453, 323-658-8627, 323-653-3245 FAX

LIVES



Jorge Guillén, 40, cops beat his head and put foot on his neck til he died, Chicago, Oct. 3, 1995



Joseph C. Gould, 36, homeless man shot by cop and left to die, Chicago, July 30, 1995



Luke Grinnage, 21, shot by cops when he asked them not to impound his dog, Oakland, July 15, 1993



Raphael Grinnage, 62, wheelchair bound musician shot to death when police shot down his son, Oakland, July 15, 1993



Mark Garcia, 41, cops pepper-sprayed then killed him, San Francisco, Apr. 6, 1996



Pedro Oregón, 33, shot by police, during a warrantless raid, Houston, July 13, 1998



Kim Hong II, 27, murdered by police while visiting from Korea, Orange County CA, Feb. 14, 1996



Angel Castro, Jr., 15, shot after his bike hit a cop car, Chicago, Oct. 23, 1996



Hector Islas, beaten to death by cops, Riverside, CA, Jan. 29, 1997



Yong Xin Huang, 16, 9th grade student thrown through glass door then shot by cop, Brooklyn, Mar. 24, 1995



Esequiel Hernandez, 18, high school student shot by marines while herding goats near the U.S.-Mexican border, Redford TX, May 20, 1997



Kevin Cedeno, 16, shot in the back by NYPD, Manhattan, Apr. 6, 1997



Marc Fitzsimmons, 28, shot in the back by LAPD, LA, July 2, 1998



Stanley "Skeet" Latham, 23, shot by an off duty cop, Chicago, Jan. 1992



Henry Sanchez, beaten to death by Bell Gardens police, California, Oct. 19, 1996



Kuthurima Mwaria, 25, shot by two cops outside his home, Harlem, Apr. 13, 1995



Leonard Lawton, 25, shot in face by cop, Manhattan, Jan. 20, 1996



William "Smoke" Whitfield, 22, shot by NYPD, Brooklyn, Christmas Day 1997



Antehh Gatachen, 30, shot to death by cop, Washington, DC, Oct. 14, 1995



Charles Vaughn, Sr., 60, pepper-sprayed then shot by police, Monterey County, California, May 19, 1998

by Police 1990-1998

Houston: Asesinos

The police murder of Pedro Oregón and the people's determination to stop police brutality

On the weekend of July 11, 22-year-old Pedro Oregón returned to his apartment in the Gulfton area of Houston. After working all week on a landscaping job in Austin, Pedro was looking forward to spending some time with his family and to a soccer game on Sunday. But at 1:30 a.m. on July 12, someone knocked on Pedro's door. When someone opened the door a bit to see who it was, six uniformed cops from the Houston Police Department's "gang task force" came storming in. They began shouting, hitting, and threatening people in the apartment. The cops kicked down the door to Pedro's bedroom and started shooting. Only moments after the cops came crashing through the door, Pedro Oregón lay bleeding to death on his bedroom floor—shot 12 times, 9 in the back.

The cold-blooded police murder of Pedro Oregón sparked broad outrage in Gulfton and throughout Houston. Two weeks after Pedro's death, 200 angry people marched through Gulfton in 104 degree heat in a demonstration called by La Resistencia, and demonstrations and meetings have continued in Gulfton and throughout the city. On Saturday, September 19, a memorial mass was held for Pedro in a nearby Catholic church. The next day, 200 people again marched through the street. Carrying banners and placards with pictures of Pedro, people chanted "perros asesinos" [murdering dogs] and "La Migra, la policía, la misma porquería," [the migra, the police, the same stinking mess] "Justice for Pedro," and other slogans.

The police version of what happened on July 12—which was parroted in the local media—was quickly exposed as a lie. And several weeks after Pedro died, the District Attorney was forced to send this case to a grand jury. But now, almost three months later, the grand jury is still hearing evidence in this case and no charges have been returned.

Pedro's death touched a deep chord in people. People in Gulfton, like proletarians in cities across the U.S., live under constant police occupation. The youth are all treated like criminals. Most people in Gulfton are immigrants, and are very familiar with Migra raids, border wars waged against the people, and a bureaucratic nightmare called the Immigration and Naturalization Service which tears apart families and chews up lives. Among the people in Gulfton, there is deep determination to continue this struggle for justice for Pedro. One man at a march carried a sign he had made himself which expressed this determination. His sign read, "No more bowed heads."

The Making of a Ghetto

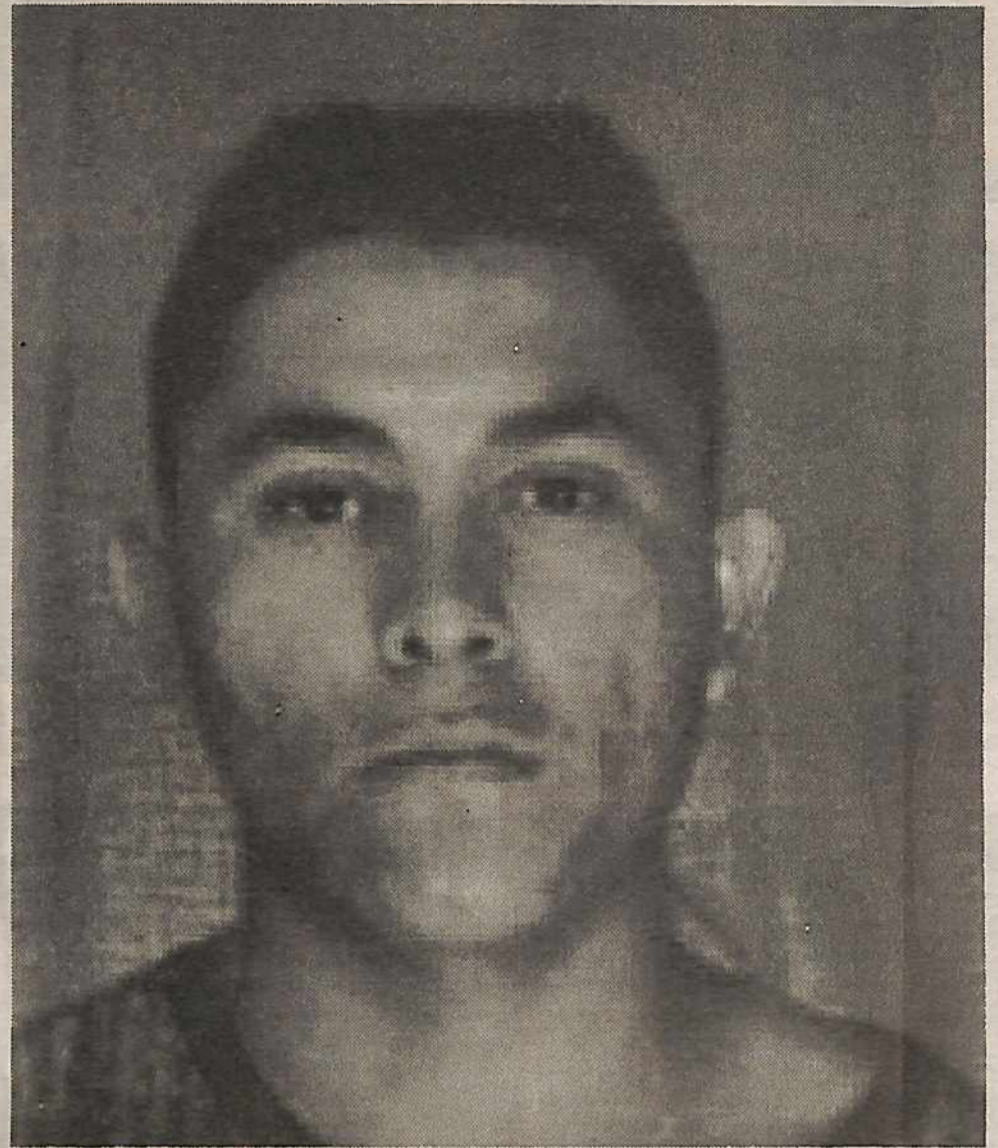
Police and immigration officials have been putting Gulfton in a vice grip for years. In Houston, it is ground zero of the system's "war on drugs" and "war on gangs." Gulfton is the largest barrio of people from Central America in Texas. It is also home to many Mexican immigrants, and some people of other nationalities and origins.

Most of the apartments in Gulfton were built during a real estate boom in Houston in the late '70s and early '80s. Originally the 50,000 apartment units here were designed for young middle class couples and families. But the bottom fell out of this market when the savings and loan scandals of the '80s hit Texas. The owners of the apartment units in Gulfton couldn't pay their debts. Services in the buildings soon began to deteriorate badly. Razor wire

fences were thrown around buildings. Windows were boarded up. People moved out as apartment complexes shut down altogether.

Then other capitalist landlords bought the buildings at bargain rates. Few or no repairs were done on the run-down buildings. Advertising for the units was done only in the Spanish media, especially targeting the many Central American and Mexican immigrants moving into the city. Almost overnight, Gulfton became known in the local media as the "Gulfton ghetto." Collapse in the real estate market combined with bourgeois scandal and greed had transformed a middle class district with modest but tidy apartments into acres of broken glass, barbed wire, backed-up sewage and overflowing dumpsters. Political authorities and media hacks blamed the masses who lived in Gulfton for causing a situation which in fact victimized them.

An HPD substation was opened in Gulfton in 1990, and immediately began



Pedro Oregón



Travis Morales (center) at a demo in front of the apartment where Pedro Oregón was killed.

what the *Houston Chronicle* then described as "the largest crackdown ever embarked upon by the Houston Police Department." Hundreds of people were arrested, most of them youth busted on petty misdemeanor charges cooked up by the cops. Many people were deported. This marked the beginning of years of constant and intensifying police terror against the people in Gulfton. "Gang task forces" and "drug task forces" were given free rein to run roughshod over the youth. And as some community activists have pointed out, schools, parks, and libraries aren't to be found in this neighborhood. Police repression is the only "service" the city offers the people of Gulfton.

The Fight for Justice vs. the System's Lies

To many people in the area, the murder of Pedro Oregón is a savage concentration of the mistreatment and brutality continually dished out by the enforcers of this system. People are tired of the constant abuses,

the unending police and Migra harassment, the attitude of the authorities that brands any young person living in Gulfton as a criminal.

One man told the newspaper *El Dia* during the first rally for justice for Pedro Oregón, "We Hispanics come here to work, to look for better opportunities in life. We don't come here so that they can kill us, so they can abuse us without enjoying the privilege of justice. Also, we Hispanics are a force and we can unite ourselves. We are not going to allow the authorities to abuse us for the simple fact that we are Hispanic. We are a force and we are going to show it." People in Gulfton—many of whom fled U.S. sponsored death squads in El Salvador and Guatemala—commonly call the police in the U.S. *soldados* (soldiers), because they are so much like the soldiers who rampaged through the countryside of their homelands.

Many of the people who have stepped forward to protest the murder of Pedro Oregón have a lot of experience themselves with brutalizing, murdering cops, and an

unjust court system that backs them up. And they have joined with others like members of the Nation of Islam, University of Houston professors and students, and La Resistencia to fight police brutality. A coalition has formed around the slogans "Justice for Pedro Oregón, Jail the Murdering Police for Life!"

The police and the system they serve have been exposed and put on the defensive by the struggle of the people. But they are lashing back, in ways that are both open and not so obvious.

The lies the police concocted to try to justify the murder of Pedro Oregón have a familiar ring to oppressed people in Houston and throughout the country. The first words the *Houston Chronicle* used to describe Pedro were "drug suspect." Police also said Pedro was a "suspected drug dealer" and claimed he pointed a gun at them and then "shots were fired"—which killed Pedro and winged one of the killer cops in the shoulder.

But the lies of the official story soon began falling apart. There were no drugs

in Gulfton

found in Pedro's apartment. An autopsy revealed there wasn't a trace of drugs or alcohol in Pedro. The cop who was shot was wounded by one of his fellow pigs when they blasted off over 30 rounds at Pedro. A gun Pedro had to protect himself and his family was never fired. And the cops even violated several of the regulations of Houston Police Department policy. They had no search warrant authorizing them to go into Pedro's apartment, and they had no arrest warrant for Pedro. The snitch who supposedly told them drugs were dealt from Pedro's apartment was not a "registered informant" with HPD, as is required by department policy.

Johnny Holmes, the Harris County District Attorney in charge of presenting cases to grand juries in Houston, has been responsible for sending more people to the execution chamber than any other prosecutor in the country. He fought and maneuvered for years to keep Ricardo Aldape Guerra on death row for killing a Houston cop, even though all the evidence showed that Ricardo was innocent and that the legal case against him was a racist frame-up from beginning to end.

Holmes quickly defended the cops who shot Pedro Oregón. Even though he admitted the cops didn't have any authority to enter the house, Holmes said the cops didn't violate Texas homicide laws. His argument is basically that even if everything the cops did before they shot Pedro was a violation of the system's own laws and the HPD's own policies, the police were legally justified to shoot Pedro—because any attempt to resist police officers is illegal.

Holmes also seems to be trying to drag out the grand jury presentation as long as possible, hoping peoples' anger will cool down by the time the jury comes back with a decision. A leaflet put out by the Pedro Oregón Justice Coalition said, "District Attorney Johnny Holmes will present this case to the grand jury without charges. He is trying to justify the murder of Pedro Oregón. He does not want to charge the police. He says that if Pedro had a pistol then the police had the right to kill him.

What an idiot. Like a gang or a death squad in the night, the police brutally broke into Pedro's apartment. The murder of Pedro Oregón cannot be justified. We demand justice. Jail the murdering police for life. We are not afraid. Continue fighting. We will fight until the truth comes out."

The System Lashes Out

Meanwhile, the police have threatened and tried to intimidate the people fighting for justice, especially those who live in Gulfton. At the marches and rallies, the cops have kept paddy wagons in the vicinity preparing for mass arrests, and dozens of cops have been mobilized for "traffic control."

The authorities are clearly worried about this struggle getting "out of control," and some dirty tricks and suspicious activities have been aimed at the struggle and at known political leaders and organizers.

Within a week after the murder of Pedro, plainclothes police went through the Gulfton apartments where Pedro had lived. In a cruel and sinister act they went door-to-door, asking for Pedro Oregón, saying they had an arrest warrant for him. In another incident at a demonstration, a woman active in many struggles in Houston said she was approached by a well-dressed woman she suspected was a plainclothes cop. The woman said "Give Travis Morales a message for me. Tell him to rest in peace." Travis Morales is well known in Houston as a supporter of the Revolutionary Communist Party and a spokesperson for La Resistencia.

Then, a few days before the mass march and for justice for Pedro, a suspicious article appeared in the newspaper *El Dia*. There have been several articles in *El Dia* sympathetic to the struggle for justice for Pedro Oregón. But this article was very sinister. It claimed to be based on a conversation with an activist in the coalition involved in this struggle. Its headline said that "violence was foreseen" in the struggle for justice for Pedro. The article claimed some people in the coalition were talking about taking violent measures if the decision



reached by the grand jury was not considered favorable. The article didn't name any names, but pointedly referred to the Moody Park Rebellion of 20 years ago, when people on Houston's Northside rose up in righteous rebellion one year after the police murder of Jose Campos Torres. The article claims that an activist in the coalition told the paper, "We know that there are members of our organization who participated in the Moody Park Rebellion 17 years ago and who have mentioned the use of violence in case the Grand Jury doesn't formally accuse the officers." The article further states that plans for "violent reactions" have been part of discussions within meetings of the Justice for Pedro Oregón Coalition.

Everyone in Houston knows that Travis Morales is the one person most associated with the Moody Park Rebellion. He was deeply involved in the year-long battle to win justice for Joe Torres. After people rose up and rebelled against an outrageous court decision which essentially let off the cops who killed Joe Torres, Travis defended the rebellion at a City Hall press conference, stating that, "This was a glorious day in the history of the Chicano and Mexican people when they gave the capitalists and their

cops a small dose of the justice they deserve." He was arrested on charges of "felony riot" and put in jail on half a million dollars bail.

Travis sees all his political work from the perspective of contributing everything he can to preparing for proletarian revolution, when the time is right and the situation ripens. And he upholds the right of people to defend themselves in the face of police brutality. He and other supporters of the RCP active in the struggle for justice for Pedro Oregón have made their revolutionary point of view clear.

The *El Dia* article represents a crude and obvious attempt to possibly set up Travis Morales and others on criminal charges. In fact, no such discussions have taken place within the coalition. And the person who was supposed to have been the source of the *El Dia* article wrote a letter, published in the paper the following day, which repudiated the article's accusations.

Peoples' struggles in the U.S. have been filled with examples of fabricated and police-planted stories used to set up revolutionaries and activists, and to disorient and confuse the people. Often, articles filled with lies have been used by the police as justification for attacking revolutionaries. For instance, in 1970 the Houston newspapers contained hysterical articles claiming Carl Hampton and other young revolutionaries associated with the Black Panther Party were eager to engage police in armed confrontations. In July 1970 the Houston Police Department and other police agencies launched a massive attack on Party headquarters on Dowling Street in which Carl Hampton was murdered and several other people were severely wounded. All attempts like the *El Dia* article, which aim to divide and set back the struggle, need to be denounced and exposed.

People in Gulfton and elsewhere in Houston are saying that Pedro Oregón will not be forgotten. And there is strong determination among many people in Gulfton to continue the fight for justice for Pedro Oregón whatever the grand jury decides. People don't want this struggle to stop until the cops are indicted, tried, and serving time for murder. And as October 22 approaches, some people who have been active in this struggle are beginning to make the connection between carrying forward the fight for justice for Pedro Oregón and fighting against all police brutality, repression, and criminalization of the people.

**Justice for Pedro Oregón!
Jail The Murdering Police for Life!**



March through the streets of Houston, September 20.



Mumia Abu-Jamal

Revolutionaries Must Not Be Killed for Their Beliefs—The People Must Defend Them

Revolutionaries, who embody the highest interests of the people and inspire the masses in fighting for these interests, are very precious to the people. And, particularly where revolutionaries hold firm to their principles in the race of persecution at the hands of the oppressors—including long years in jail and the threat of execution—it is extremely important for the people to rally to the defense of such revolutionaries and to refuse to accept the “right” of the oppressors to carry out this persecution and “legalized murder.”

... This is the case of Mumia Abu-Jamal, whom the government is moving to execute in the near future, on the basis of another frame-up and cover-up.

Bob Avakian, Chairman of the RCP, USA

The RW received the following commentary:

A Presidency of Betrayal

by Mumia Abu-Jamal

Column Written 9/10/98
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Whoever fights monsters must take care not to become a monster himself. For, as you stand looking deep into the abyss, the abyss is looking deep into you.

Nietzsche, *Thus Spake Zarathustra*

In light of the current, developing controversy over the Presidential sex scandal, the nation embarks on a trek of forgiveness, even as it enters on a discourse on the limits of power.

While, for any man, this is an uncomfortable reality, it is doubly so for a man of his stature, faced with this occurring in the harsh, merciless glare of klieg lights and in the hungry maw of the majoritarian media.

The President, faced now with a cynical and skeptical public, has begun to seek wider, public stages for his mea culpa, mea culpa, mea maxima culpas (Latin for “My fault, my fault, my most grievous faults”). It has the air of ritual in it, the stuff of play-acting on life’s twirling stage.

There is an obvious problem with the most recent spate of mea culpas by President William Jefferson Clinton. It is that it comes after a long, undeniable history that goes not so much to sexuality, as it goes to power: This President’s history of the treatment of his alleged allies is, in a word, troubling.

Consider Labor: their millions marched in his support.

Clinton’s Response: A Genuflection to Wall Street by the passage of NAFTA (North American Free Trade Agreement), a nefarious agreement that weakened labor on both sides of the Rio Grande, which strengthened the hand of capital, by giving them a powerful tool with which to threaten labor (“Sign off on this give-back, or we’ll move to Mexico!”).

Consider Blacks: Who voted for him in overwhelming numbers.

Clinton’s Response: His skillful use of the ‘black faces in high places’ strategy, while ostensibly in support of the Black bourgeoisie, masked an attack on the Black working poor, who were central, subliminal targets of a “New Democrat” attack, designed to ease White, suburban anxiety. In this context, the so-called Welfare ‘Reform’ Act, the Anti-Habeas Corpus Bill (so-called Anti-Terrorism Bill), and his administration’s opposition to the Racial Justice Act are utterly understandable. The public dissing of strong, outspoken Black women like rapper Sista Souljah, Law Prof. Lani Guinier, and Dr. Joycelyn Elder was also a calculated effort to appeal to white ethnics, by showing he could put Blacks in their place: subordinate. His treatment of Haitians was patently immoral.

Consider Gays: From coast-to-coast, his

core fans.

Clinton’s Response: He supported gays in the military, only to flip when the right-wing barked.

The ulterior motive of the Democratic Leadership Conference (of which Clinton was head) was to take the Democratic Party back from the leftist hijackers. Clinton, with his great smile and homey, Southern charm, was a chief operative in this plan, to broaden (read: Whiten) party appeal. This meant consciously betraying the expendable interests of those who supported him the most and the longest, to capture the Un-Holy Grail of a right-wing that hated him with total passion.

Early in the Lincoln Administration, Journalist and agitator, Frederick Douglass lambasted Lincoln’s policy as “simply and solely to reconstruct the union on the old and corrupting basis of compromise, by which slavery shall retain all the power that it ever had, . . .” [Douglass’ Monthly (Aug. 1862), p. 692-93].

Later, of course, under the pressure of losing the War, Lincoln signed the Emancipation Proclamation, not to free slaves, but to save the Union.

The Clinton Administration was built on the sands of Betrayal, a betrayal that didn’t begin with a girl named Monica, and didn’t end there either. □

Richard Pryor Routines... Or Why Pigs Are Pigs

by Bob Avakian



The following is an excerpt from "Hill Street Bullshit, Richard Pryor Routines, and the Real Deal" by Bob Avakian, Chairman of the RCP. The complete essay, written in 1983, is in the book, Reflections, Sketches & Provocations by Bob Avakian.

Recently I was reading reports of police assaults on Black people and of Black people fighting against the police in Memphis and Miami. This called to mind a story I was told a while back. A rookie cop was riding in his police car with his veteran partner when a report came in that there was a Black man in the vicinity with a gun. As their car screeched around the corner, a young Black man suddenly appeared sprinting up an alley—into a dead end. "Shoot him!", the older cop screamed, "Go on, shoot him—it's free!"

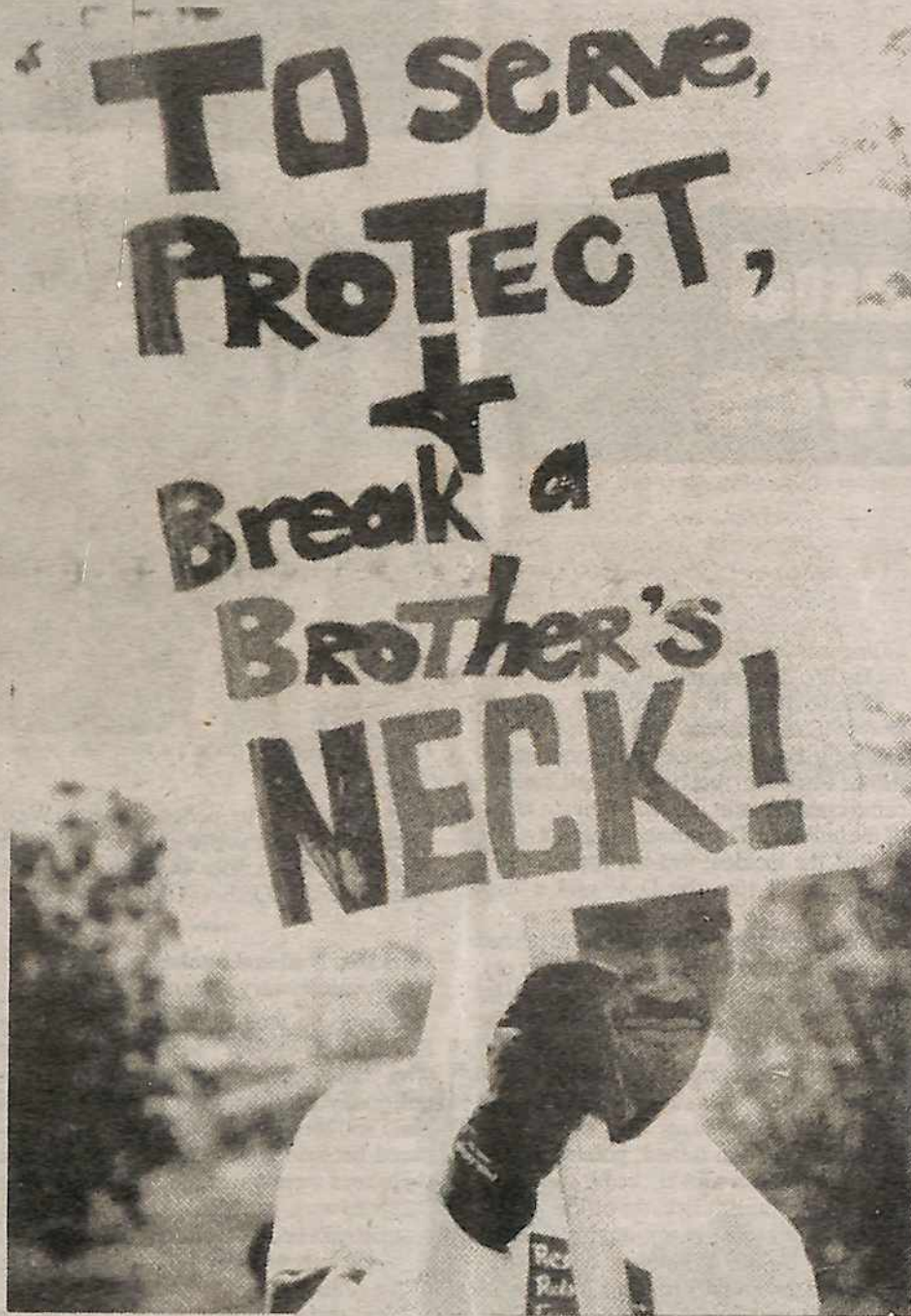
"It's free!" Think about that for a second. "It's free!" In other words, here's a chance that gets a pig to sweating and salivating with anticipation—a chance to "kill a nigger" with the already provided cover that a Black man—a Black man, any Black man—was reported in the area with a gun. This is an opportunity too good to pass up: "Go on, shoot him—it's free!"

Well, in this case, the rookie was not ready for that—perhaps he was one of those rare ones who joins a police force actually believing the "serve and protect" bullshit—and that particular Black man did not die that day. But one of the most telling things about this whole incident is the fall-out from it: The rookie cop had to resign. If he wasn't ready and willing—if he didn't have the proper attitude to do what his veteran partner was calling for, what came naturally to the seasoned "peace officer," what any pig in his place and in a pig's right mind would do—then there was no place for him on the force. It was *he*, the rookie, who hadn't learned, and couldn't learn it seems, what it's all about—it was *he* who was the outcast and felt he had to resign.

Pigs are pigs. Of course, that's an image, a symbol—in the most literal sense they are human beings, but they are human beings with a murderer's mentality, sanctioned, disciplined, unleashed by the ruling class of society to keep the oppressed in line, through terror whenever necessary and as the "bottom line," as they like to say. Terror against the oppressed is even a special reward for "carrying out the dangerous and thankless duty" of being the "thin blue line" between "civilization on the one side and anarchy and lawlessness on the other." Think about it once again: Terror against the oppressed is not just part of the job, it's also a reward. That is one of the deeper meanings of the story at the start: "Go on, shoot him—it's free!"

Maybe some liberals (of the "left" or "right") will object that these stories I've recounted are after all only stories, and even if we allow that they themselves are true stories, still they are only a few cases—the famous "isolated incidents" perhaps. Well, anyone who still really thinks that, or says it, has got to answer one basic question about the following Richard Pryor routine:

"Cops put a hurtin' on your ass, man, you know. They really degrade you. White folks don't believe that shit, don't believe



cops degrade;—'Ah, come on, those beatings, those people were resisting arrest. I'm tired of this harassment of police officers.' Cause the police live in your neighborhood, see, and you be knowin' 'em as Officer Timpson. 'Hello Officer Timpson, going bowling tonight? Yes, uh, nice Pinto you have, ha, ha, ha. 'Niggers* don't know 'em like that. See, white folks get a ticket, they pull over, 'Hey, Officer, yes, glad to be of help, here you go.' A nigger got to be talkin' 'bout 'I AM REACH-ING INTO MY POK-ET FOR MY LICENSE—'cause I don't wanna be no motherfuckin' accident!'

"Police degrade you. I don't know, you know, it's often you wonder why a nigger don't go completely mad. No, you do. You get your shit together, you work all week, right, then you get dressed—maybe say a cat make \$125 a week, get \$80 if he lucky, right, and he go out, get clean, be drivin' with his old lady, goin' out to a club, and the police pull over, 'Get outta the car, there was a robbery—nigger look just like you. Alright, put your hands up, take your pants down, spread your cheeks! Now, what nigger feel like havin' fun after that? 'No, let's

just go home, baby.' You go home and beat your kids and shit—you gonna take that shit out on somebody."

from *That Nigger's* Crazy*, 1974

The question is this: Why, at the crucial points of this routine, does Pryor's audience erupt in tense, knowing laughter, coupled with prolonged applause? Can it be for any other reason than the fact that Pryor has indeed captured and concentrated—with humor, higher than life, as art should be, but the stone truth, all too true, at the same time—a situation that is *typical* for the masses of Black people in the U.S.? Something which, if it has not happened

directly to them (and the odds are pretty good that it has), is subject to happen to them tomorrow, or the next day, and has already happened to a relative or friend. To anyone who wants to defend the police, to say nothing of prettifying them, showing them as just ordinary human beings, etc., etc., ad nauseam; and even anyone who wants to raise pious doubts and petty amendments about calling them what they are, without reservation or apology; you can't get around this question: you have to confront it straight up. And don't tell me Pryor's audiences aren't a fair representation: The response will always be the same from any audience that includes a significant number of the masses of Black people, or other oppressed masses (as, in fact, is the case with the audience for Pryor's live performances).

A relevant fact here, drawn directly from "real life." I read in a recent *RW* the report about the announcement by the Los Angeles District Attorney that—once again—no charges would be brought against the two pigs who beat and choked a 28-year-old Black man, Larry Morris, to death without any justification, even according to the authorities. The *RW* article went on to expose that "This is just the latest in more than 200 'investigations' of police murders [that is, murders of people by police] since the forming of the D.A.'s 'Operation Roll-out.' This program has so far endorsed the police's right to kill every time." And after everything else, we're still bound to hear from some quarters how this is just Los Angeles, where the police are known to be particularly brutal etc., etc. This really shouldn't have to be answered, but it does, so let me answer it by turning again to a Richard Pryor routine, this one from the same performance, in Washington, D.C. in 1978, as the one cited at the start of this article:

"Police in L.A., man, they got a chokehold they use on motherfuckers. Do they do it here, do they choke you to death? (Voices from the audience, many voices from the audience: 'Yeah!') That's some weird shit. Cause I didn't know it was a death penalty to have a parking ticket."

But for the masses of Black people in this "great land of freedom and justice for all" it can be—and it has been for hundreds, at least, every year. Of course, this kind of freedom and justice is not reserved for Black people alone in the U.S., though they are special "beneficiaries" of it. It also lashes out and ensnares millions of the masses of other oppressed nationalities, immigrants (so-called "legal" as well as so-called "illegal") and in general those who are without wealth and therefore without power, including many white people, for whom Officer Timpson is hardly a friend, either.

In short, the armed force of the bourgeois state exists for the purpose of suppressing, by force and arms, the proletariat and all those who would step out of line and challenge this "great way of life" founded on robbery and murder, not only within the U.S. itself but throughout the world. And that, simply, is why pigs are pigs, and will always be pigs—until systems that need such pigs are abolished from the earth. A hard truth—but a liberating truth.

* This material is reproduced here as it was performed by Richard Pryor at the time, including the use of the word "nigger"; this is for the sake of accuracy and not out of any disrespect for his feeling, after a trip to Africa, that he should no longer use the word "nigger" because it is dehumanizing.

A Thousand Stolen Lives

Continued from page 5

stuffed toilet paper down his throat.

At the press conference, the Coalition distributed a videotape with public service announcements against police brutality by Reg e. Gaines, poet, writer of *Bring in Da Noise, Bring in Da Funk*; Iris Baez; Father Lawrence Lucas, New York priest & activist against police brutality; Nicholas Heyward; Wyclef Jean, musician; Danny Hoch, actor; Joie Lee, actor; Goodie Mob, hip hop group; Margarita Rosario, mother of Anthony Rosario, killed by New York police; Rashida Grinage, whose son and husband were killed by Oakland, California police and a PSA with video footage of Jerrold Hall who was killed by California police.

The following are excerpts from the statements given at the press conference:

Nicholas Heyward, Sr.:

My name is Nicholas Heyward, Sr. My son Nicholas, Jr., was a 13-year-old honor student at I.S. 293 in Brooklyn, attended church at the Church of God and Christ. Nicholas was also a role model to other youths in the community and at school.

Nicholas was playing a game of cops and robbers with some friends after school on September 27, 1994 in the Gowanus housing complex in which he lived. I was told by Brooklyn D.A. Charles Hynes that officer Brian George had received two 911 calls about men with guns, and that he responded alone.

Hynes said that the stairwell was dimly lit and that Nicholas and the officers met simultaneously. The officer had removed his gun from the holster upon exiting the elevator and also had a flashlight in his hand. The officer claimed to have heard a clicking sound and claims to have believed Nicholas' toy was a real gun. He then shot Nicholas. But in fact the plastic gun does not make a clicking sound and has orange neon pieces on it that show it is a toy.

The bullet hit Nicholas in the abdomen. He died eight hours later. The three other boys Nicholas was playing with informed the D.A. that Nicholas dropped the toy gun and told the officer, "We're only playing! We're only play..." and the officer shot while Nicholas was in mid-sentence. The Brooklyn D.A. closed the case, saying the

killing was justified and that the cop feared for his life. This sounds all too familiar.

In June 1997, in a deposition with my lawyer Carl Thomas and Officer Brian George's lawyers present, George stated that he was not in fact on a 911 call when he came upon my son. He was doing a check of the building. The stairwell was not dimly lit, and the incident did not happen "in a split second" like the D.A. said it happened.

The officer stated that when he pushed open the stairwell door with his gun out, that no one was there, and that Nicholas jumped down the stairs in front of him. The officer says he did and said nothing in reaction. The officer said that Nicholas then jumped back up the stairs and that the officer still said nothing. The officer then stated that my son turned, pointed the toy gun at the officer and clicked it four times and after the fourth click, the officer fired...

I no longer can see my son Nicholas off to school: his life was stolen.

No longer would I hear his laughter: his life was stolen.

No longer can his brother Quentin mirror his bigger brother's image: his life was stolen.

No longer can Nicholas fulfill his dreams of becoming a great basketball player and doctor: his life was stolen.

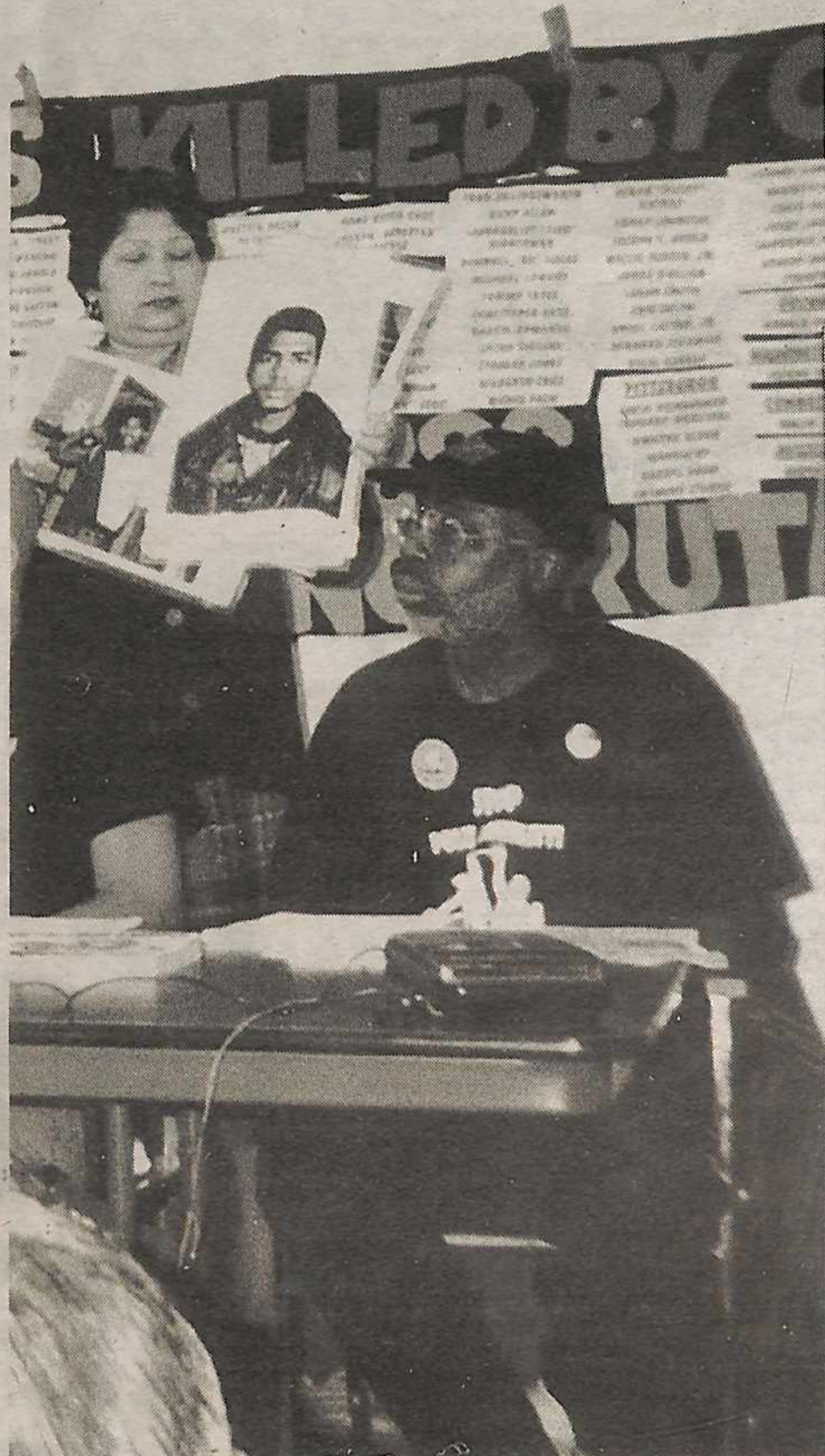
No longer can Nicholas speak to tell you what really happened on September 27, 1994.

His life was stolen, added to the list of many names collected by the Stolen Lives Project, a grassroots movement by the October 22nd Coalition, Anthony Baez Foundation and the National Lawyers Guild.

People are coming together to stop the epidemic of police murder. 'Cause that's what it is: murder. This murder is being supported and allowed to continue by the Giuliani administration, which has taken no action against these cops—only given them the "benefit of the doubt."

Most of the people in the Stolen Lives book are young, African-American, Latino and other people of color, innocent and breaking no laws. These lives were stolen and the system did nothing to give justice to the families.

On October 22, come rally and march with the families whose loved ones had



Anna Jorge and Carl Dix at the New York press conference.

Special to the RWOR

their lives stolen by police brutality. Wear black in support and in memory of all those who have died under the gun of police brutality. NO MORE STOLEN LIVES.

Carl Dix, National Spokesperson for the Revolutionary Communist Party:

When you look through the list of the Stolen Lives Project you see young people who have been murdered because the police say they thought their toy gun was real. You see young people who were murdered because the chief of police thought their keys were a weapon. You see people unarmed shot in the back and the police justification being that they made some sort of suspicious move and threatened the life of the officer.

Now the authorities tell us that police brutality and police taking someone's life is a rare occurrence. I say that when a grassroots documentation effort finds 1,000 cases—and counting—just in the 1990s, how can they be a question of rare occurrences? How can it be rare when you see how many cases we have documented of immigrants crossing the border in search of work and survival who end up dead at the hands of the Border Patrol and police in this country?

The authorities also say that it's just a few rogue cops that are responsible for police brutality. Well, I say it can't be like that because the majority of cops maintain a blue wall of silence that helps them cover up the crimes of law enforcement. And it also can't be like that when the D.A.s almost never indict a cop who kills somebody, when judges refuse to convict. It can't be a question of just a few rogue cops, but a green light being given to brutal, murdering cops by the system.

Now, the list that we're releasing today for the Stolen Lives Project should open the eyes of many to what we've been saying and that is that there is an epidemic of police brutality spreading, like Ron said, like a cancer all across this country. And it

should also spur many to act to stop this epidemic of police brutality.

A way right now to do that here in New York City is to be with us on October 22nd when we march from Union Square Park, 14th and Broadway, down Broadway to City Hall and lay the problem of police brutality at the feet of the architect of New York's police-state program. And that's Adolf, no I mean Rudolph. No, I mean Adolf Giuliani. You know, Giuliani is a national poster boy for the form of policing that is unleashing cops to spread terror in all too many communities. I mean he's going around the country speaking here and there and that's his claim to fame—"the man who brought order to New York City." And we see how he does it. We see it here with these parents in terms of what that comes down to and this is just the tip of the iceberg.

On October 22nd, a lot of the victims of Giulianiism and many other people who stand for justice are going to show that there are a lot of people here in New York City who reject Giuliani and his police-state program.

Iris Baez:

I feel that police brutality is an epidemic in this city and the Stolen Lives has come to show that there's over 1,000 names now. And the police are supposed to be monitoring and taking notes and documenting names, which they haven't started. And this is 1998. And we want to tell them we're documenting the names, would you like the list? You know, the mayor will not accept what's happening. But we want to let them know that we're here, we're documenting and we can show it to him. And we have the new names that we can show him too. So he could get off the high horse and start accepting responsibility that the police are killing children out there, innocent victims.

I never thought there was a problem with the police department until it hit home. Once it touched me, then I started coming



Donna Dymally, with a picture of her son Marc Fitzsimmons who was shot by the LAPD.



Left to right: Rodney King, Rev. Andrew Robinson-Gaither, Herman Harvey, Donna Dymally, Lorine Harris, Amparo Juarequi, Constance Flamin and Cynthia Arnold at the L.A. press conference.

Stolen Lives Project in Los Angeles

The Stolen Lives Project held a press conference at the Los Angeles Federal Building on October 15. It was widely covered by the press, especially the Spanish-language media, including local TV stations and the international networks Univision and CNN-Telemundo.

Rev. Andrew Robinson-Gaither of Faith United Methodist Church and others told the stories of some of the more than 1,000 people whose names are on the "stolen lives" list of people who have been killed by law enforcement. Rodney King came to give his support, telling reporters, "If there wasn't a problem with police brutality and the police beating people and shooting innocent people for nothing, I wouldn't

be out here." Other participants included poets Keith Antar Mason and D'LO, movie producer David Lester and several family members whose relatives have been killed by the police. Raquel Fonte of the Central American Resource Center in Pico Union (CARECEN), spoke and read a statement from Maria de los Angeles Aguilera, the wife of Oscar Cordova Velez—who was shot to death by Border Patrol agents in San Ysidro on September 25. Less than 24 hours later, another immigrant, Leonel Valenzuela, was also shot and killed along the border. Both men were unarmed. Their names were among those added to Stolen Lives.



Lorine Harris, L.A., October 15.



Rodney King, L.A., October 15.

out. I started saying, what's happening? You know, these kids are not supposed to die...

Why are they arresting innocent people out in the street? And then after they arrest them, they have to lie about it, to make up a story so that they can lock them up and have the excuse. Well, this is why we did it. And then the ones that have let's say the toy gun—how could a cop not tell a toy gun from a real gun? I mean these are trained professionals...

This week I had a problem with Livoti's mother. [Livoti is the cop who killed Anthony Baez.] She got on television saying that she feels for her son that's in jail. But how many innocent ones are in jail hurting? What about their mothers? They didn't deserve to go to jail, but yet they're in jail. So what about their mother? Who's going to feel sorry for their mother? Nobody. So this is what we're here for. We have to do something and it does fall back on you guys. You are the ones that can make a difference. You have to put pressure so they know that you know that you're going to keep an eye on them so they won't continue doing this.

We don't make up these names, they give it to us. We don't make them up. We don't go in the telephone book and pick them out... We don't play with the numbers. These are facts and facts that call us and tell

us these things. We just go and see if it's true. If we find out, we document it. What we don't know we don't put down. We only put down what we know. So let's get together and let's start working to end police brutality and the abuse.

Ron Daniels, Executive Director, Center for Constitutional Rights:

"The United States of America has become, particularly New York, the focal point for the question of policing in the world today. The Giuliani model, Giuliani time, if you will, is being seen as the prototype, the model for police departments in the world today. Of course, all across the world there are people like the October 22nd Coalition and others who are vehemently protesting this kind of quality of life, zero tolerance policing, much of which emanates from the fact that there is a fundamental crisis not only in this country but in the world today.

It would be a mistake to see police brutality and misconduct outside of the context of growing inequality in the world today, where large numbers of people are living in poverty and inequality and where we have in this global economy—they're a little shaky right now, but—a significant number of people who really control most

of the wealth. And as a result, what we have is an effort, as opposed to investing in the quality of life for real—in terms of education and health care and housing and all of the things that would, in fact, enrich the lives of human beings—we have a growing emphasis on zero tolerance and on punitive measures and the growth of the prison, jail industrial complex, the death penalty.

That is the way in which it is seen that the population is to be controlled in the absence of the agenda for social justice and for human development in this country and the world. And so this October 22nd activity is very crucial... There are horror stories on top of horror stories on top of horror stories in New York with Mayor Giuliani. And that's why, again, it's important to put a stop to it in New York because it is spreading like a cancer across this country. Giulianiism and his concept of policing is spreading across this country and across the world. So it's important that we intensify the struggle here."

Statement issued by Amnesty International USA:

The concerns regarding police brutality that the Stolen Lives Project reflects are ones that are shared by Amnesty International. Indeed, the systematic abuse of

citizens, particularly citizens of color, by police in many of our largest cities is a major focus of Amnesty's report on human rights violations in the United States, released just a week ago.

As recently as 1991, 5 percent of the American people (approximately 12.5 million people) and 9 percent of all people of color in this country reported in a Gallup poll that they had been mistreated by the police. Under the Police Accountability Act provisions of the 1994 Crime Control Act, the Justice Department is required to compile and publish regularly detailed national data on police use of force. Such data is not, however, available in any satisfactory form. That private organizations have undertaken to begin such a compilation is highly commendable. But that they should have had to do so is both a tragedy and an indictment of the government.

The only way the American public will ever demand an end to harassment and unjustified killings by the police is if they know the full extent and nature of the problem. The Stolen Lives Project makes a valuable contribution to that education. What is required now is to put our knowledge to work to stop the police violence that has made this project necessary in the first place.

Dr. William F. Schulz, Executive Director, Amnesty International USA

