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how to  
combine  
theory  
with  
ACTION!



## RACIAL AND POLITICAL REPRESSION: US STYLE

I was moved by Jairaj Daniel's article on Nelson Mandela and Stephen Biko in the last issue of Praxis. Certainly our minds and hearts should be aware of the great quantities of racial violence in South Africa and elsewhere: we lament and protest those sufferings. Our minds and hearts should also be aware that repressive racial violence is not restricted to nations across the sea nor to the past. Behind the subtle smiles of some of our freedom-speaking government officials lies malice that has known few limits. Racism based on basic insecurity and cloistered ethnocentrism, manipulated by an ever-hungry white power elite, is universal.

Much of the American public is aware of the accused implications of FBI involvement in the slayings of both Martin Luther King, Jr. and Malcolm X. However, just as many are pitifully unaware that these implications are related to an extensive campaign of destruction, waged by local officials, the FBI, and officials of the U.S. Dept. of Justice, against nearly all groups or citizens active in the civil rights movement. This campaign was focused primarily upon black nationalists and revolutionaries. Some of these persecuted individuals, who demanded the restructuring or eradication of an inherently racist and repressive system, were known and lauded by their people-- others died without notice.

The FBI, under the direction of J. Edgar Hoover, initiated a counter-intelligence program (COINTELPRO) in the late 1950's. Specific FBI directives have exposed COINTELPRO's application to Black organizations:

The purpose of this new counter-intelligence endeavor is to expose, disrupt, misdirect, discredit or otherwise neutralize

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## MAY DAY: COMMEMORATION OF LABOR'S STRUGGLE

Labor's history is a long and untold one, marked by protests, strikes, organizing and violence. From the coal mines to the factories, workers have always been in a continuous struggle to control their labor and working conditions. Fighting for the right to form unions and to determine the quantity of goods produced, workers in the U.S. in the early 1800's often met with much resistance from employers who were not afraid to unleash brutal private armies, like the Pinkertons, upon striking workers, or, to use sabotage to discredit the worker's goals.

The history of labor demonstrates unequivocally the role of state repression in the course of the decline of the militant labor movement in the U.S. in the 1800's. May 1 marks the day of one of the most illustrative examples of the use of such tactics by the state. Celebrated as May Day throughout the world from India to Greece, it is a day commemorating the Haymarket Affair in Chicago. The battle over shorter working hours is one that has its roots in the early attempts by workers who were working 10 to 12 hour days, to limit the work day to eight hours. An "Eight Hour Day Movement" emerged in 1867 at a time when workers

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# Haymarket Revisited

thought such an action would help the economy if more people could be employed and if everyone worked shorter hours at the same pay. Laborers viewed it as one means of spreading work around and helping people find jobs, who were displaced by the advance of machines.

In Chicago in 1884, a resolution was passed by what was to later become the American Federation of Labor, proclaiming that the eight hour day be adopted by labor unions from May 1, 1886 onward. The sponsor of the resolution, Gabriel Edmonston of the Carpenters Union, chose May 1 as a memorial to those who had tried 17 years earlier to institute the eight hour day and also. because as a carpenter he knew that construction and other industries stared up full force in the spring, bringing with it the renewal of contracts: a good time to win shorter hours.

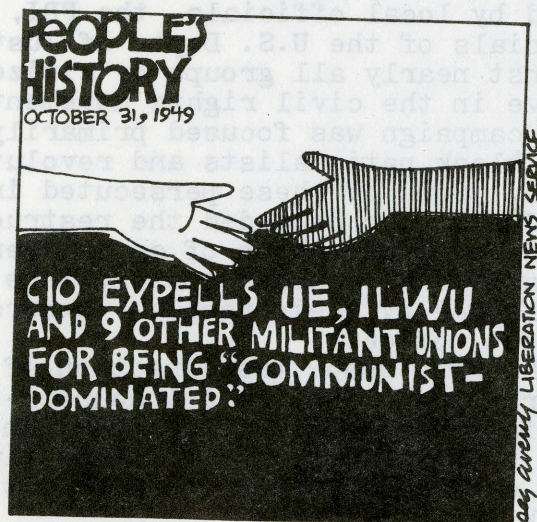
What ensued on May Day was a phenomenal work stoppage of 340,000 workers in 12,000 factories across the country. Eighty-thousand workers in Chicago alone put down their tools to march, singing through the streets, in what is known as the first May Day parade. Before the strike 45,000 workers in Chicago were promised the eight hour day by employers. The march was led by an active and highly respected labor organizer named Albert Parsons, his wife Lucy and their two children. A labor leader, Parsons was both a member of the Knights of Labor and the founder and official of the Central Labor Union with 12,000 members. All along the parade route were Pinkertons, militia officers and police strategically stationed with weapons ready, as the 1,350 members of the National Guard in the state armory were on call.

Other speeches and marches were scheduled for the following days. One impromptu, legal gathering occurred on May 4 near Haymarket square. Drawing 2,500 people, the speakers addressed the crowd from a haywagon. Having dwindled down to about 200 people by the end, there suddenly appeared in the streets 180 policemen in military formation. With people fleeing the streets in fear, the police captain commanded the meeting to disband immediately. In a moment a bomb was thrown into the peaceful crowd.

The bomb was believed to have been the work of an agitator planted by the police to destroy the struggle for shorter hours and the labor movement in general. This was the first time a bomb had been used in this manner in the U.S.

The next day, eight men were arrested and tried though only two of them were at the Haymarket meeting when the bomb was thrown. Worldwide protest over the trial and its significance for workers was widespread. All semblance of rights were disregarded as jurors, admittedly prejudiced, were assigned to the trial and the defendants denied their basic rights. Declared guilty and sentenced to hang, many European worker's movements protested to the Governor of Illinois to grant clemency. One of the defendant's wives, Lucy Parsons, travelled the country for more than a year, desperately trying to raise money for the defendants through speeches and appearances.

On Nov. 11, 1887, four of the eight men were hanged. The other three were later executed and the last sentenced to 15 years hard labor. The last words of one of the Haymarket martyrs, August Spies, indicates the extent of labor's vision: "There will come a time when our silence will be more powerful than the voices you strangle today."



CONTRIBUTORS: L. A. Blum, Cheryl Buffington, Jairaj Daniel, Martha Oesch, Lynette Parker, Joe Stuligross



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## The Falkland Islands-- A Great Deal at Stake...

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The British capture of South Georges Island brings an end to Alexander Haig's frantic attempts to find a nonmilitary solution to the dispute between Argentina and Great Britain over the Falkland Islands. President Reagan placed high priority on the crisis and dispatched his most prominent foreign policy advisor to mediate the crisis. One wonders why 1800 Falklanders received such attention, considering that other important foreign policy disputes have been mediated by lower level diplomats (e.g. the Israel-Lebanon confrontation, and the final negotiations on the return of the Iranian hostages). Closer examination reveals, however, that the Reagan administration has a great deal at stake in the Falklands issue. Washington has no clear favorite in the dispute; rather, its primary object is to find a peaceful solution that embarrasses neither country, both of which are U.S. allies. The President and his Secretary of State are not known for their unrelenting pursuit of peace at all costs, but in this case, military conflict would defeat their interests.

If war breaks out, the strain on the economy could destroy the already weak Argentine junta led by General Leopoldo Galtieri. Galtieri was on the brink of defeat just prior to his invasion of the Falklands. Anti-government demonstrations rocked the capital on March 30, only three days before the invasion. Severe economic problems continue to plague the country, as the inflation rate is more than 110 percent. At least 15 percent of the workforce is unemployed and another 15 percent are officially listed as "underemployed" since they work less than 20 hours a week. A \$32 billion foreign debt has contributed to the declining value of the peso, which has been devalued more than 500 percent in the last 16 months. In addition, Galtieri's military government is one of the most repressive in Latin America, according to Amnesty International.

Thus far, Gen. Galtieri has been highly successful in deflecting public opinion away from domestic failures by generating patriotic support for Argentine control of the Falklands. But opposition forces will benefit from an extended military conflict and if they gain power, Washington would lose one of the strongest supporters of its El Salvador policy. In addition, other anti-Communist right wing governments might question the priorities of an American administration that would sacrifice them in order to preserve relations with European allies. The downfall of the Argentine junta would be a catastrophe for Reagan's relations with other Latin American countries.

The situation is just as precarious in Margaret Thatcher's British government. If Britain is forced to back down, or incur the expense of a long-term blockade thousands of miles away, Thatcher would probably be defeated immediately. Foreign minister Carrington has already been forced to resign and the Conservative government has been harshly criticized for its economic policies. Unemployment reached a record 2 million last year and is expected to rise above 3 million in the near future. Thatcher cannot afford a foreign policy defeat, nor can Reagan afford to lose his closest ally in NATO. Thatcher has supported Washington on virtually every controversial NATO position despite strong opposition from other NATO countries. The opposition Labor Party has strongly criticized Reagan's militaristic nuclear policy and a Labor government would be difficult to placate. The U.S. would also lose credibility in Europe if it allowed its Latin American ally to triumph over its European ally. Reagan wants to avoid further division among NATO allies at all cost.

Washington's interest in the Falklands crisis does not stem from any humanitarian concerns for peace in the region. Reagan sent a non-government official, Philip Habib, to negotiate the much more serious Middle East crisis in 1981. The Secretary of State is in charge of mediation in the Falklands because of the threat to conservative allies of the Reagan administration. The citizens of the nations have been forgotten as the political power struggle continues.



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# Repression - US Style

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cont. from front page

the activities of black nationalist, hate-type organizations and groupings, their leadership, spokesmen, membership, and supporters. . . .no opportunity should be missed to exploit through counterintelligence techniques the organizational and personal conflicts of the leadership of the groups and where possible an effort should be made to capitalize upon existing conflicts between black nationalist organizations.

The express paranoic intent behind the program was to ". . . Prevent the rise of a 'messiah' who could unify, and electrify the militant black nationalist movement." Malcolm X, Martin Luther King, Jr. and Stokely Carmichael were listed as 'targets': two are dead, the other in exile.

"Counterintelligence techniques" included any applicable use of wiretapping, mobile surveillance, interference with mail, burglarizing the offices and homes of members or leaders of black organizations, mailing anonymous threatening letters to supporters or leaders, or leaders, manipulating media sources to discredit leaders or the organization, instructing agencies such as postal, transportation or printing services to prevent communication from leaders or the organization. An army of infiltrators, informers and agent provocateurs were hired to create factionalism and conflict within an organization or between organizations. When such an incident occurred between the US-BPP organizations in Los Angeles, in which two Black Panther Party members and one United Slaves member were killed, the Los Angeles FBI Field Office reported to Washington that their long campaign to bring this conflict about had been a complete success. The tactics were repeated again and again in other cities.

The FBI even revamped the Minutemen organization (a militant right-wing group--many of its members were former or practicing Klansmen) into the Secret Army Organization (SAO) led by a paid FBI provocateur. They were instructed to terrorize (through bombings, killings, or other varied tactics) white radicals and Black nationalist organizations. One should also pay particular attention to the fact that Governor Ronald Reagan of California organized a Special Tactical Squad to 'neutralize' student protests and rallies, ghetto riots, and the activities of Black nationalists. This force attacked the Los Angeles, San Francisco, and Oakland headquarters of the BPP. Some members were killed or wounded, the rest were jailed.

Hoover's characterization of the Black Panther Party as 'hoodlum-type revolutionaries' and 'the greatest threat to the nation's internal security' made them the prime target of COINTELPRO operations. The Party espoused revolutionary doctrine and designed itself as a permanent political vehicle, implementing community survival programs and armed self-defense of their communities, in order to prepare Black Americans for an eventual revolution. Thus a special program targeting 'Key Black Extremists' implemented the most intensive surveillance and sabotage tactics against Black individuals whom the FBI defined as being 'excessively vocal' against racial discrimination.

During the years 1968 and 1969, the FBI encouraged and aided local law enforcement officials to attack and destroy nearly every BPP office in the country (estimated at nearly 70 chapters), no matter the cost in human life. During these years more than twenty-eight BPP members were murdered. From 1966-1970, Party members were harassed locally by false and spurious arrests at exorbitant bail--these incidents were capitalized upon by media sources and were a continuous drain on Party funds. On a federal level, Justice Dept. officials and the FBI, in collusion with Attorney General John Mitchell, fabricated evidence and testimony to initiate felony or conspiracy charges against organization leaders; such as indicting Chairman Bobby Seale of the BPP in the Chicago Conspiracy Trial, a New Haven murder trial, and a 'conspiracy to commit terrorist bombings' in New York. All three trials were initiated and orchestrated by Justice Dept. officials to prevent Seale from continuing to function as a national leader and co-founder of the Party.



It is impossible to recount all the persons who were murdered or imprisoned by COINTELPRO operations. Some of the events here listed were publicized--assuredly one-sided and distorted.

\*Huey P. Newton, co-founder and Minister of Defense of the BPP, was nearly executed by Oakland policemen and accused of the murder of a policeman, while he was unarmed and sustained four bullet wounds in his abdomen and another in his thigh. He survived and was convicted of voluntary manslaughter instead of murder. After a reversal of his conviction by a California Federal Court of Appeals and two re-trials, all charges against him were dismissed. There had never been sufficient evidence to convict him but he had successfully been imprisoned for nearly four years, while the FBI waged its murderous attack upon the Party he had designed and organized to liberate his people.

\*Bobby Hutton, at seventeen the first member of the BPP, was murdered by police bullets while he was unarmed and blinded by tear gas in a fabricated 'attempt to escape'--he was surrounded by more than fifty policemen.

\*Eldridge Cleaver was repeatedly harassed because of his nationwide speaking tour in support of the BPP. His parole status was threatened and revoked for his 'political activities'. Instead of returning to prison, where he believed officials would attempt to murder him, he fled the country to live in exile.

\*George Jackson, who joined the BPP from inside prison walls and organized an alliance between the Prisoners' Movement and the BPP, was indicted for the murder of a guard at Soledad Prison. Because of his pre-trial publicity and support among the general population, he was murdered by officials in another supposed 'attempt to escape'. His brother, Jonathan, was murdered in his attempt to free three prisoners indicted on falsified charges of murder.

\*Fred Hampton, co-founder and leader of the BPP chapter in Chicago, and Mark Clark, lieutenant of the Peoria chapter, were both murdered in a pre-dawn attack on Hampton's Chicago apartment. Nearly 300 police officers were called for 'reinforcements' of the officers directed by Edward Hanrahan of the State's Attorneys Office to battle 8-10 occupants of the apartment. Hampton's personal bodyguard had been a paid FBI informer who supplied the floor plan of the apartment and details of Hampton's movements. Hanrahan was guaranteed immunity if he would follow FBI instructions to attack the apartment and eliminate Hampton, who was slated for national leadership in the Party.

\*David Hilliard, Chief of Staff of the Party, was indicted by the FBI for threatening the life of the President. He had pronounced in a public speech that, if Nixon insisted upon continuing policies of racial oppression, he would have to be eliminated just as the system of racial oppression had to be eliminated.

\*Bunchy (Ralph) Carter and John Huggins, leaders of the Los Angeles chapter, were both murdered by US members in the afore-mentioned FBI-instigated conflict between the two organizations. Much later, it was revealed that the two US assassins were paid by an FBI agent, and two years after their imprisonment were permitted to escape from Alcatraz. They have not been found.

\*In 1969, twenty-one members of the New York chapter were indicted for a 'conspiracy to commit terrorist bombings'. In New Haven, nine Party members of the Baltimore chapter, as well as Chairman Bobby Seale and Mrs. Ericka Huggins, were tried for 'conspiracy to commit murder'. Bail, in both cases, was immediately set at \$100,000 per person. All charges were eventually dismissed, though many of the New York members were charged with contempt and imprisoned. In New Haven, COINTELPRO documents substantiate the FBI provided the corpse, the evidence, prosecution witnesses, and specific trial guidelines to the original prosecutor.

The names of the other twenty-eight Party members murdered during these years were compiled in Party records unavailable to me. The tide of public opinion created by a white press, fed on a steady diet of FBI plants, lies, and distortions, prevented most of the American public from a realistic understanding of the Party's purpose, philosophy, and actions. In most cases, fear of the Party's potential political impact within the civil rights movement supported this national campaign of sabotage and murder. Yet the murder of Fred



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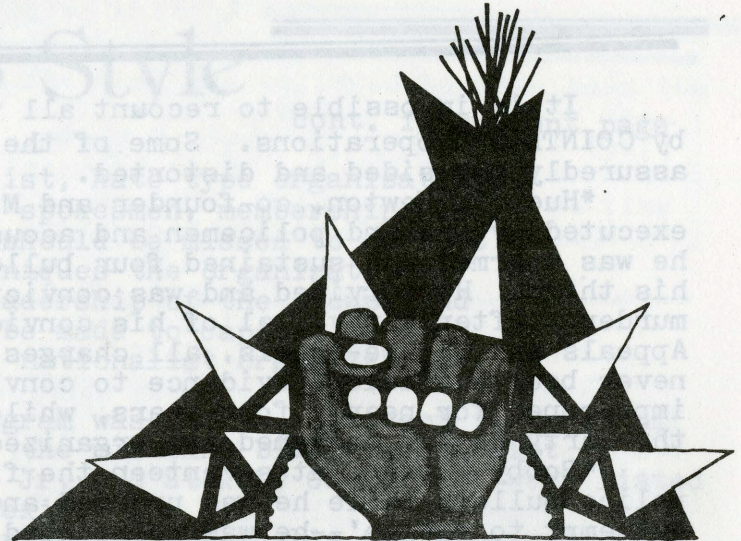
## REPRESSION—US STYLE

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Hampton and Mark Clark was so obviously unprovoked that other national organizations, including the NAACP, the ACLU, and several clergy groups, demanded an 'independent' investigation. As with most other 'independent' investigations, the U.S. Dept. of Justice, the FBI, and the State's Attorneys office in Chicago, concluded that police officers involved had not acted without 'probable cause': the killings were 'justified.'

There are even more Americans who believed the 1971 announcement, by Clarence Kelly, claiming COINTELPRO operations had been discontinued. The ACLU, the Socialist Workers' Party, and the Public Rights Defense Fund have all revealed the same tactics utilized under alternate rubrics in FBI documents well after 1971. For example, in 1976, the FBI claimed they were completely justified in preventing persons who claimed an alternate political viewpoint from getting or keeping jobs.

Certain peril to all civil liberties, for black and white Americans, is threatened by Reagan's current federal administration. Remember, he is an avowed veteran of COINTELPROtype repression and has amply demonstrated his reliance on the use of force as a 'negotiating' tactic. In this light, view his recent approval of relaxed FBI regulations and overt internal surveillance and interference by the CIA. A repressive administration expects resistance from people who have suffered too long to accept such arbitrary destruction of their hard-won personal freedoms without reigniting the struggle. Reagan has not acted without cause and intent in attempting to tighten the bands of 'security' around American citizens before the conflict ferments further. Never underestimate or assume immunity from the extent of violence to which our officials will go to protect a structure which supports such accumulated wealth for the white power elite. Please take heed and prepare.



Jan Peterson/Flowers of Liberation

## BRUTALITY AND HARASSMENT! LINK BETWEEN POLICE & STATE

Sporadically, throughout the history of the United States, the function of law enforcers, especially within the context of a "democratic" society, has been the center of much discussion. The debate has generally focused on the role of police in relation to individual rights and freedom. When police activities have begun to impinge on the individual rights of vocal and/or influential persons, the debate has become extremely heated and the activities of police have come under scrutiny and criticism. As one source writes, "so long as the police can succeed in directing their actions against petty criminals, there will be no complaints. It is only when the denial of due process of law begins to spill over onto the infuriated middle-class citizen that the abuse becomes notorious."

During periods of tension and struggle in this nation when various groups of people have renewed their demand that their needs be addressed and that they have meaningful control over their lives, government officials and society at large have frequently called on police to reduce tensions and restore "order," often by whatever means necessary. Illustrations of this can be drawn from the eras of labor strife and IWW (Industrial Workers of the World) activities, the civil rights struggles, the Black Panther activities, and student protests. As these groups have been silenced or drawn into the mainstream of United States political and judicial processes, control of these groups and abuses of their rights by police have become no longer necessary.



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# POLICE...

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Control of particular segments of the population in this country and the abuse of their rights by police have not, however, been isolated to periods of tension and unrest. Some practices by police in the United States, in particular their abuses of individual rights of members of minority groups, are not uncommon.

News reports, for instance, frequently include accounts of black Americans, hispanic Americans, or native Americans, especially those residing in inner cities, who, while unarmed, have been shot or beaten by police. Although not reported as frequently by the media, similar abuses have occurred on reservations and in small towns.

Examples of abuse by police are numerous, but only a few follow. On March 20, 1980, Ja-Wan MaGee, a 17-year-old black youth from Baltimore, Maryland, was shot and paralyzed for life when an off-duty police officer saw him pull a shiny object from his pocket. This object turned out to be a cigarette lighter. Arthur McDuffie, a black insurance salesman from Miami, Florida, was beaten to death on Dec. 17, 1979, following a chase by police which began when he ran a red light. In Tampa, Florida, eight days before Arthur McDuffie's death, a black man--Alexander Johnson--was stopped for speeding and shot and killed when he allegedly attempted to escape. Another incident took place on Feb. 5, 1979, in Fairfield, a suburb of Bridgeport, Connecticut, where a chase by police ended. Two 15-year-old boys, one black and one Puerto Rican, who were accused of stealing a car, were pulled from the car, beaten bloody, and then charged with assaulting a police officer and resisting arrest. These and other incidences of beatings and shootings occurring across the nation--in Oakland, Los Angeles, Philadelphia, Milwaukee, New Orleans, Birmingham, and Boston--are only a few of those reported by the media and have taken place within the last few years.

Brutality, however, is only one facet of police abuses involving people of color. Harassment is another. Harassment is much more subtle, often more difficult to document, less often reported, and generally more pervasive than outright brutality. Harassment

takes various forms, ranging from name calling and use of pejorative words to stopping and questioning persons whom police consider suspicious by reason of appearance. Michael Hannon, an attorney in Hollywood and a former uniformed officer with the Los Angeles Police Department, commented, "I remember very

strongly one day riding as passenger in a police car and the driver pulled up along side an island in the middle of the street and there was a black gentleman in a suit and tie standing there and he said, 'Good afternoon, Officer,' and the guy driving the police car said, 'Hi, nigger.'" In the fifth ward of Houston, Texas, according to Herman Watson, 40, a juvenile counselor, "...relations between police and blacks in the area are poor....Officers often enter residences without search warrants and question people on the street for no apparent reason."

Police are an important part of the justice system in the United States. Often, decisions as to whom to suspect, whom to arrest, and whom to believe are left to the discretion of the police officer. Because they are under mounting pressure to help stop the rising rate of crime, police are given greater freedom to act. However, when police are allowed to enforce laws arbitrarily or to use their power and authority to intimidate, especially according to biases, this denies members of various groups their rights to equal justice and to their freedom.

Although not new concerns nor new phenomena, instances of police harassment and brutality by their very existence point urgently to the need to document and to bring to an end such practices. However, a blanket indictment of the police serves little purpose and fails to address such issues as public expectations and the function of the police in this society. According to one source, "We (the majority population) want efficiency, quick work, order above all, though we claim to want due process and equal justice as well. Without basic changes to eliminate the obvious injustices in our society, we cannot expect to have all these, but if all else fails, we think we would like to preserve at least the appearance of order ('peace and quiet')." If the function of the police, thus, is to maintain order and this order means perpetuating inequities and injustice that are a part of this society, then even routine police activities logically will not be

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# Police...

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fair or "just." Thus, in order to analyze the issue of police harassment, it becomes necessary to focus on the function of police.

It becomes the State's responsibility to preserve and protect the particular set of relationships and the laws. The State and capitalists are mutually supportive. Because the capitalists control the production process, they are able to control the economy and thus the well-being of the nation. The State in turn provides the mechanisms for maintaining the social relationships (the poor who continue to seek employment and the middle class who act as a buffer between the poor and the capitalists) by establishing laws and enforcing them. Thus the State's role is not neutral. One source writes:

...the Constitution requires that the state, regardless of which groups are "in power" at the moment, enforce contracts and defend private property. Even if its actions are applied equally to all citizens (an ideal frequently violated in practice), the state's defense of property will necessarily perpetuate capitalism --that is, the state will wind up acting on behalf of those with the most property to protect.

As shown above, laws in the United States are designed to preserve a particular set of relationships--a particular order. Whenever groups of individuals threaten or demand a real change in that order, those persons with political and economic power along with many members of the society at large call on law enforcers to prevent disruption or to restore order. Much of society, as well as the State, "fear (a) demand for change enough to use force to oppose it..." one source writes. This fear of change has been translated into many different types of laws. Another source points out:

This society...contains preventive laws and practices. The purpose of these laws is

not to repress people who have become active dissidents, but to control those segments of the population that are viewed as potentially disruptive, before they have become overt political opponents of the regime....Police brutality, frequent arrests, police sweeps, and racism are often designed to prevent potential rebellion from a class that has a self-interest (whether recognized or not) in being critical of the existing political, economic and social system.

It is the police who are allowed and often directed to use force, as a preventive measure, as well as a method of control.

Naked with fear  
offering his arms for  
the imminent embrace  
of a trite  
kiss of derision;  
a temporary sojourn  
in a walk  
to an unknown  
destination in  
darkness  
Beguiled by the incalculable  
phantasy  
as he traipses  
through a pathos  
of gratuitous destruction  
streaked and tempered  
with punctuations of  
perverse satisfaction.  
His body is  
taut in a  
paradox  
of contortions  
flowing with the  
sustenance  
of  
undeniable pain.  
Naked with fear.