



FROM REBELLION TO REVIEW BOARD:

Fighting for Police Accountability in Newark

In March 2016, the Newark city council created a civilian complaint review board with oversight of the police. The American Civil Liberties Union of NJ called this act the culmination of a “50-year fight” for reform.

This exhibit examines that fight from the perspective of the activists and organizations that led it: women and men like Louise Epperson and Ramon Rivera and organizations as different as CORE and Garden State Equality.

Police accountability was never the only issue. These activists saw it as part of bigger struggles over civil rights, political power, social services and spaces of their own.

This is not a simple story of success. How did differences within and between these communities help and hurt their efforts? What can we learn from this history to make a more just and equitable Newark today?

The companion Spanish-language exhibit, *Acción Latina: Protesta y Transformación Socio-cultural en Nueva Jersey*, broadens the story beyond Newark by examining the forgotten Latinx riots that took place in four New Jersey towns in the 1960s and 1970s.

While some of these stories are familiar, they have never been put together in an exhibit that helps us understand the present moment of reform in Newark and discussions over police-community relations everywhere.

We want to hear what you think - share your thoughts on social media with #R2RNewark

This exhibit has been created by graduate and undergraduate students at Rutgers University–Newark. The ideas expressed here do not represent those of the Newark Public Library or Rutgers University.

RACE, REBELLION, & REFORM

SIMMERING FRUSTRATION(S)

By the 1920s large numbers of Germans, Irish, Italians, and Jews (among them future New York City Mayor Edward Koch) had settled in Newark. African American migrants from the south were moving to the city as part of the Great Migration. Living separately but near each other, these communities competed for access to jobs, housing, and political power.

White ethnics dominated city hall. They didn't give black people, who were a small but growing percentage of the population, a voice in government. Shut out of the political process, African Americans gained a foot in the door with the hiring of the first black police officer, Carlton B. Norris, in 1930. He was promoted to detective a few years later. Ironically, Norris developed a reputation as "not a friend to (black) folk" for his "heavy handed" use of the "Billy club."

The first black person hired by the police with the intent to serve as a liaison and representative of "the community" had now become "persona non-grata" with the community. Relations between the police and the black community would grow into one of the most explosive issues in the city within a few decades.

WHAT CAUSED THE 1967 NEWARK REBELLION?

Three key issues that caused the 67 Rebellion were urban renewal, African American political disenfranchisement, and police misconduct.



This picture of the neighborhood boys around "seated Lincoln" in 1929 promoted an ideal vision of the city of Newark, which did not match the reality of power struggles between white ethnic groups and the new African American migrants relocating from the south.

Credit: Newark Public Library, Courtesy of the *Star-Ledger*

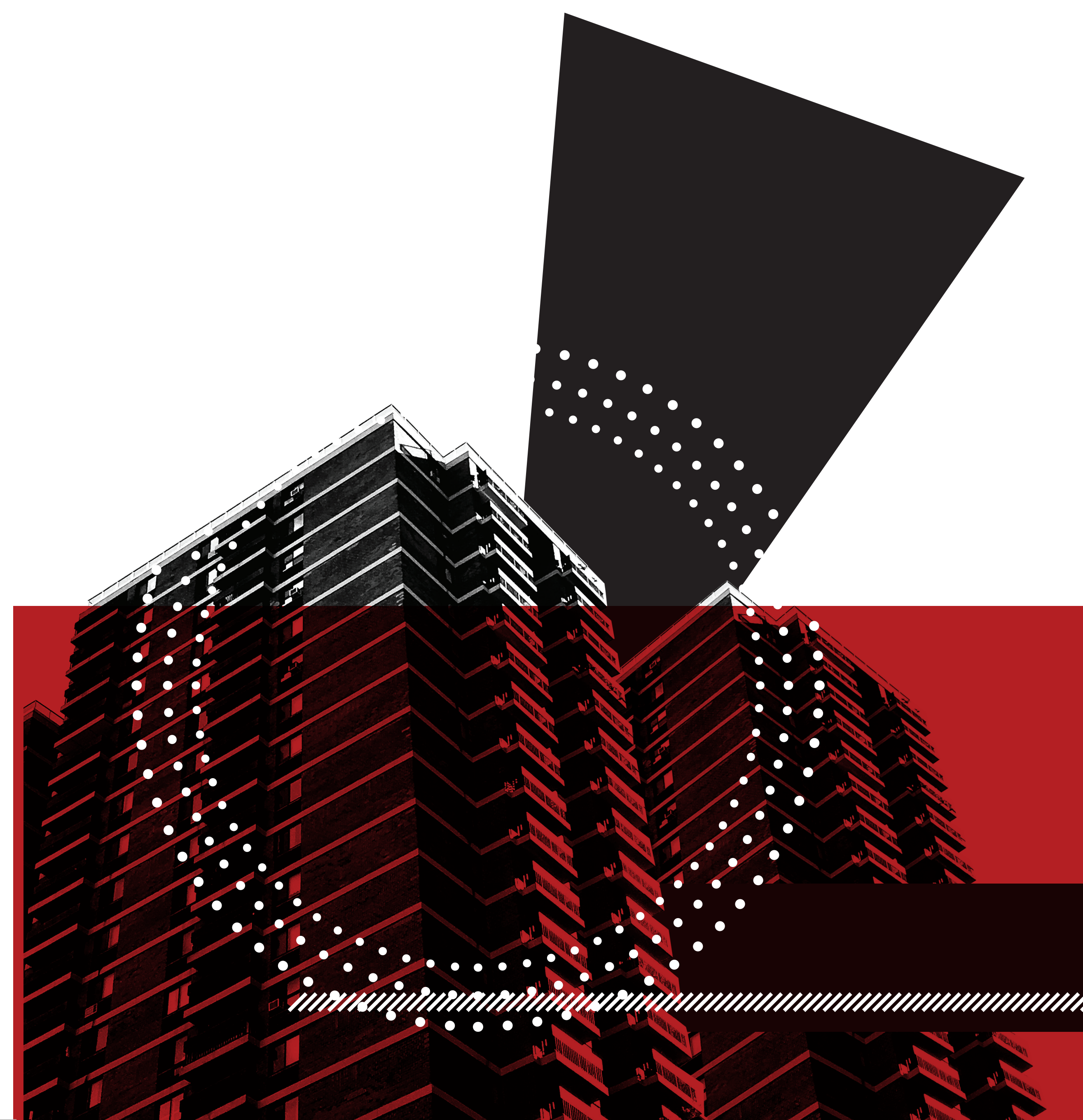


Members of the Newark Community Union Project, seen above, protested police brutality in 1965. Norman Fruchter, an NCUP member, recalled "whenever the campaigns moved into the streets, they always brought a huge police presence and a whole lot of nervousness... The more scared they were, the more they responded out of proportion."

Credit: Newark Public Library, Doug Eldridge Collection

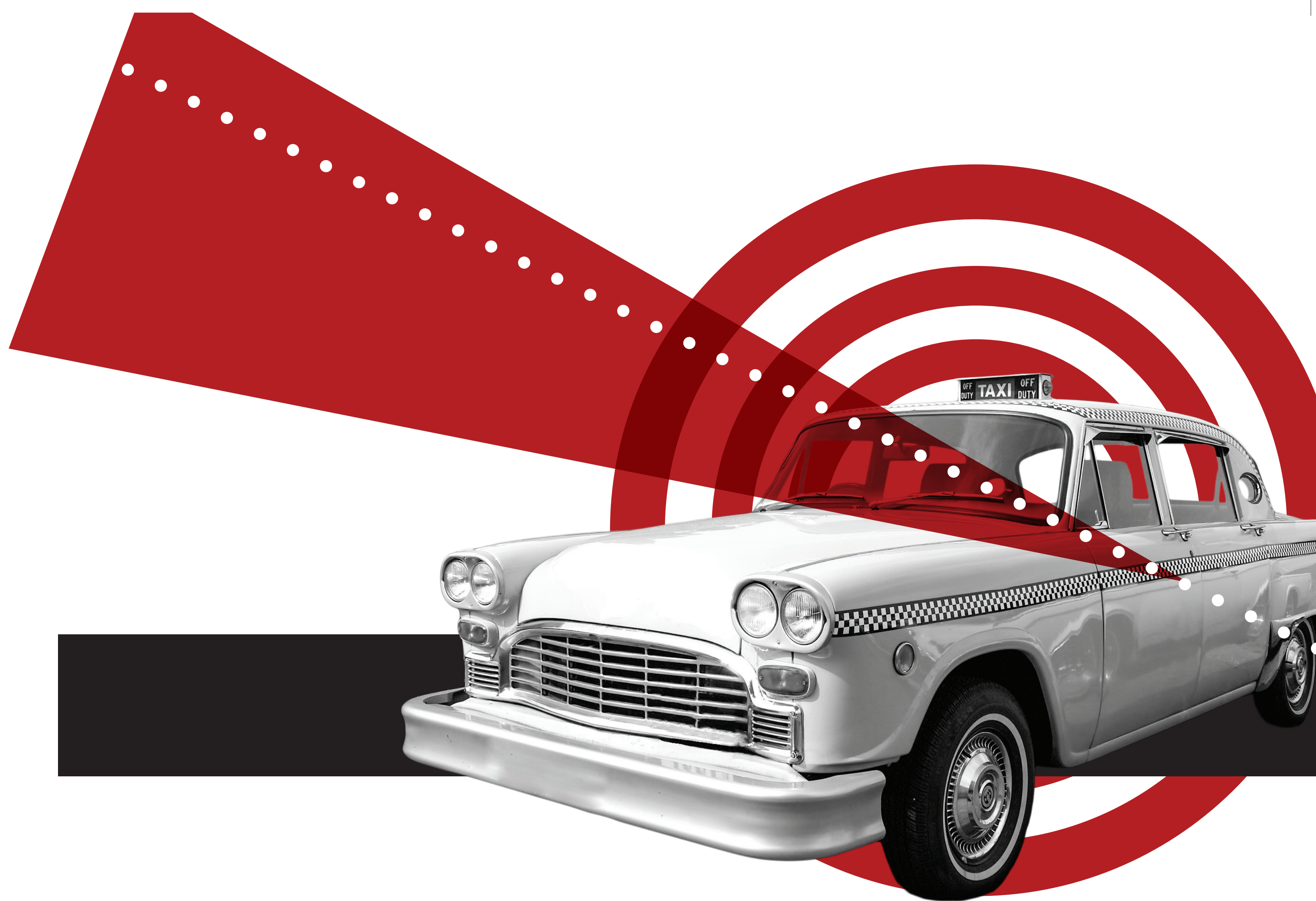
"The type of politician that then began to dominate city hall was a self-made man, usually from the lower middle class, closely identified with a specific ethnic, religious, or political group, and tending to speak for special interests rather than the general welfare."

**—Stanley Winters
Historian**



“Urban renewal had the effect of driving a wedge through the heart of Newark’s black community.”

—Max Herman
Historian



URBAN RENEWAL

Newark had one of the most active urban renewal programs in the country. The plan to build a massive medical school on 150 acres in the Central Ward angered residents, mainly people of color, who would lose their homes. Community member Louise Epperson organized public meetings against the medical school. Grassroots opposition grew with the creation of the Committee Against Negro and Puerto Rican Removal. After the rebellion subsided and thanks to community protests, an agreement for less acreage to build the school passed.

LACK OF POLITICAL POWER

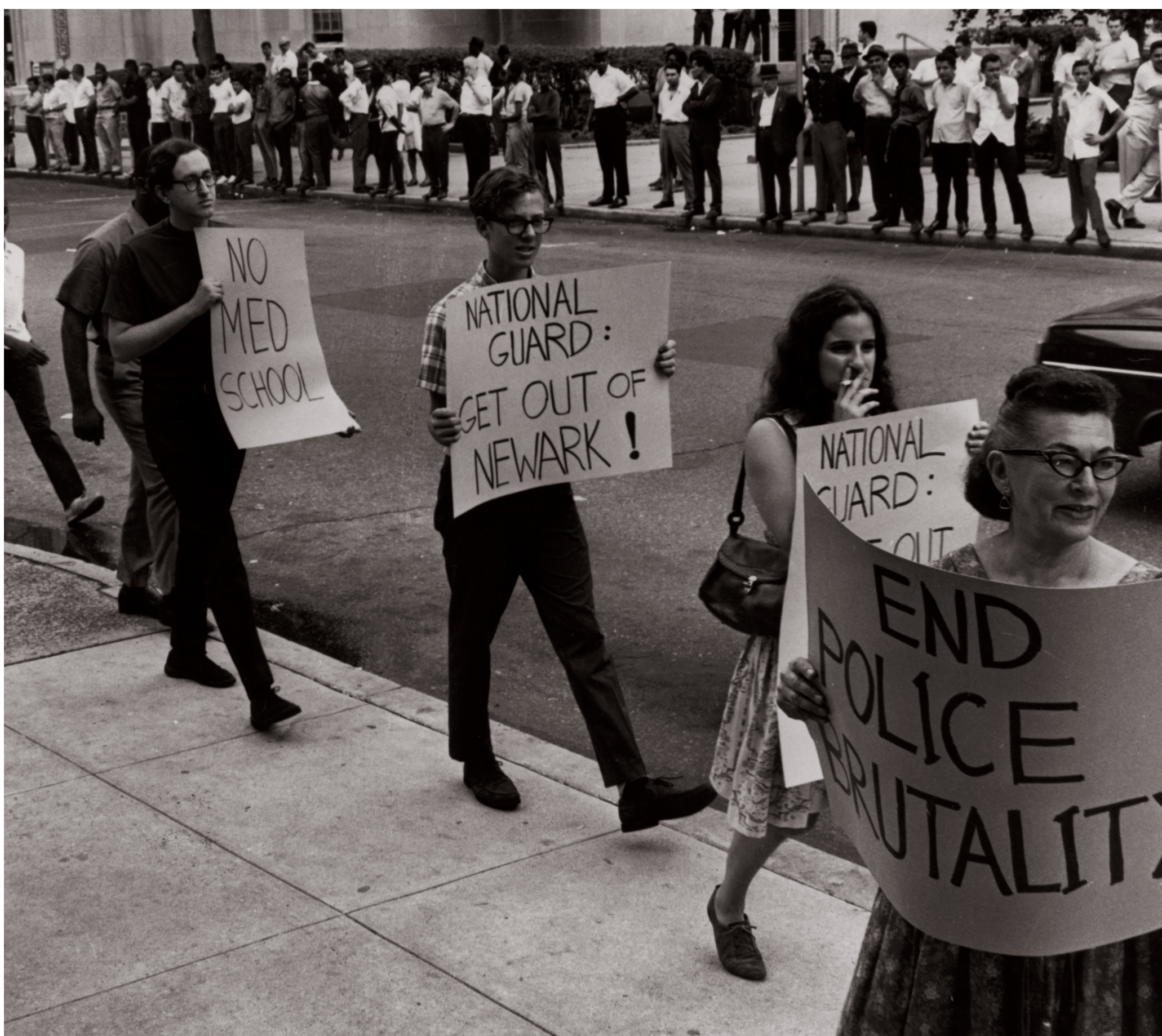
In 1967, Newark appointed an African American educator to serve as the president of the school board. Whites occupied the remaining seats. Since Newark had recently become a black majority city, with the African American population topping 50 percent in 1965, parents challenged the board’s ability to represent their interests. When the position of secretary to the board opened, Mayor Addonizio appointed James Callaghan over the more qualified Wilbur Parker, New Jersey’s first African American certified public accountant. Community members questioned why they had so little control over their children’s future.

POLICE MISCONDUCT

The *New Jersey Afro-American* reported on several incidents of police brutality between 1964-1965. Benjamin Banker died under mysterious circumstances while being held in police custody. On June 12, 1965 Lester Long was shot and killed by a police officer. A few weeks later Bernard Rich died in a jail cell. Activists took to the streets but Mayor Addonizio refused to organize a civilian review board. Instead, he launched the Newark Police-Community Relations Training Program to settle tensions.

THE PREDICTABLE INSURRECTION OF '67

A July 1967 traffic stop went awry when police beat John Smith, a young, black taxi driver. Rumors of his death sparked several days of violence in Newark’s Central Ward. Businesses were looted. The streets became a war zone of indiscriminate shootings by Newark and New Jersey police forces and the heavily militarized National Guard.



As indicated above, not all acts of resistance during the Rebellion were violent. New levels of anger over combined forces of police brutality and the medical school project resulted in widespread community opposition from a variety of diverse activist groups.

Credit: **Newark Public Library**, courtesy of the *Star-Ledger*



Protesters demand a civilian review board in 1965. Robert Curvin, leader of the Essex County chapter of the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE), warned that the “people were fantastically aggrieved” over the lack of police accountability following the arrest of cab driver John Smith.

Credit: **Robert Curvin**

COMMISSIONS BATTLE OVER REFORM

Between July 28, 1967 and May 1968, three commissions investigated the causes of the Newark Rebellion and offered recommendations. The National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders, also known as the Kerner Commission’s, report concluded, “Our nation is moving toward two societies, one black, one white—separate and unequal.” It argued that racial integration and federal investment in cities was needed to prevent future riots.

Ten of thirteen findings in New Jersey’s Lilley Commission Report called for reforming law enforcement. It recommended Mayor Addonizio name a “five-man Board of Police Commissioners, made up of outstanding citizens representing the total Newark community...to receive and review all citizen complaints of police misconduct, or a civilian review board.”

On the other end of the spectrum, the state Police Benevolent Association’s report disagreed with the Lilley Commission. They were “appalled and shocked” at the state commission’s findings and asserted that the “accusations and allegations made are without any proof, unsubstantiated, and Un-American.” The Fraternal Order of Police threatened a lawsuit if Newark created a civilian review board.

Mayor Addonizio was pulled between his black supporters who wanted police reform, white constituents who opposed it, and the police. He refused the recommendation to create a civilian review board.

“I must again in candor say to you members of this Commission - it is a kind of Alice in Wonderland - with the same moving picture re-shown over and over again, the same analysis, the same recommendations, and the same inaction.”

—Kenneth Clark
testimony before the Kerner Commission



When she testified before the Lilley Commission, community activist Louise Epperson focused on the actions of law enforcement, “The police department and the State troopers and all this militia shooting people down unwarranted. It was worse than the Boston Massacre.”

Credit: Newark Public Library

EXHIBIT C-117. HOMICIDES —					
No.	Name	Address	Age	Race	Location
1.	Rose Abraham	42 Blum St., Newark	45	N	Brought to hospital by husband
2.	Elizabeth Artis	38 Prince St., Newark	68	N	At home
3.	Tedock Bell	411 Bergen St., Newark	28	N	Brought to hospital by friends
4.	Leroy Boyd	322 Belmont Ave., Newark	37	N	On sidewalk, Belmont & Avon
✓ 5.	Rebecca Brown	293 Bergen St., Newark	29	N	At home—in apt. window
6.	Mary Helen Campbell	380 Hawthorne Ave., Newark	40	N	In a car at High & Spruce Sts.
7.	Rufus Council	1 Prince St., Newark	32	N	On sidewalk at 69 So. Orange Ave.
8.	Isaac Harrison	176 Howard St., Newark	73	N	In the street at Springfield & Broome
9.	Jessie Mae Jones	255 Fairmount Ave., Newark	31	N	On her stoop, 255 Fairmount Ave.
✓ 10.	William Furr	2 Hollywood Ave., Montclair	24	N	On the sidewalk at 125 Avon Ave.
11.	Hattie Gainer	302 Hunterdon St., Newark	53	N	In her apt., 302 Hunterdon St.
12.	Raymond Gilmer	555 Ferry St., Newark	20	N	In the street at 744 Bergen St.
13.	Rufus Hawk	103 Spruce St., Newark	24	N	At or near 949 Frelinghuysen Ave.
14.	Oscar Hill	497 Belmont St., Newark	50	N	
15.	Robert Martin	24 W. Market St., Newark	22	N	On the street at Broome & Mercer
16.	Albert Mersier	117 Oliver St., Newark	20	N	On the sidewalk at 368 Mulberry St.
17.	Eddie Moss	240 Livingston St., Newark	10	N	Passenger in car at Hawthorne near Belmont
18.	Cornelius Murray	16 Wainwright St., Newark	28	N	On the sidewalk, Jones near Springfield
19.	Victor Louis Smith	32 Barclay St., Newark	22	N	In a hallway at 26 Edmond Place
20.	Michael Pugh	340—15th Ave., Newark	12	N	On the sidewalk in front of his home
✓ 21.	James Rutledge	171 Lehigh Ave., Newark	19	N	Inside of Jo-Rae Tavern, Bergen & Custer
✓ 22.	Eloise Spellman	322 Hunterdon St., Newark	41	N	Inside her apartment
23.	James Sanders	52 Beacon St., Newark	16	N	At or near Sampson's Liquor Store, Springfield & Jones
24.	Richard Taliaferro	124 No. 7th St., 100—11th Ave., Newark	25	N	Leaving a store at So. 8th St. & 11th Ave.
✓ 25.	Det. Fred Toto	58 Smith St., Newark	33	W	Broome & Mercer Sts.
26.	Capt. Michael Moran	66 Eastern Pkwy., Newark	41	W	At scene of a fire, Central & So. 7th St.

During a three day period, over 13,000 rounds were dispersed by state militia resulting in the death of twenty-three black citizens. A total of twenty-six people lost their lives, eight of those by indiscriminate police fire, as this excerpt from the Lilley Commission report shows.



“You wouldn’t really tell someone you were Puerto Rican. You called yourself Spanish. And the reason you did that is because in those days, if you were Puerto Rican you were considered a bad person.”

—Willie Sanchez

HARAMBEE! ¡VENCEREMOS!: CHANTING HOPE INTO REALITY

Although the 1967 Rebellion is more famous, Newark Puerto Ricans “rioted” in 1974 to protest police misconduct. In demanding political power, they worked with established African American organizations, but also created their own community institutions.

CULTURAL BRIDGES & CULTURAL DIVIDES

By 1970, Puerto Ricans were 12 percent of Newark’s population, mainly clustered in the North Ward. Many migrants envisioned Newark as a promising new home but faced discrimination due to the cultural traditions they brought with them. To police, a group of Puerto Ricans gathered on a porch were loitering. To the Puerto Rican community, this was simply socializing like they did back home. Few officers spoke Spanish. The lack of interpreters led to further mistreatment. Frustrated, and sharing a history of disenfranchisement with Newark’s African Americans, Puerto Ricans saw an alliance as an opportunity to create change.

**¡VENCEREMOS! HARAMBEE!:
WE WILL WIN!**

In November 1969, 2,700 members of Newark’s African American and Puerto Rican community assembled at the Black and Puerto Rican Political Convention to elect the “Community’s Choice” for mayor. Participants brainstormed a political platform that provided solutions for issues such as education reform, urban renewal, and policing. Among platform items were demands for more police officers of color and the establishment of a civilian review board.

The convention concluded with the “Black and Puerto Rican crowd chanting together in Spanish and then Swahili: Venceremos! Harambee!” which meant, “We will win!” However, a major flaw of the black and Puerto Rican coalition was that Puerto Ricans were merely absorbed into the black community rather than seen as a separate cultural group.



Dr. Hilda Hidalgo, community activist, Rutgers professor, and member of the 1969 Black and Puerto Rican Convention, urged the community to vote in the mayoral election. She wrote, “Without attending the convention you will lose, Ken will lose, Blacks will lose, Puerto Ricans will lose, Newark will lose.”

Credit: **Puerto Rican Community Archives,**
NJ Hispanic Research & Information Center, Newark Public Library



The publication *Black New Ark* (1972-74), following in the tradition of African American presses, reported on African American and Puerto Rican issues. Segments like “Listen to the People!” asked residents their opinions on topics like creating a civilian review board. Joe Jackson supported the board because, “I’ve seen brothers terribly beaten while handcuffed for no reason at all and nothing is ever done about it.”

Credit: **John Cotton Dana Library, Rutgers University-Newark**

UNITY & POWER

In 1970, together the African-American and Puerto Rican community successfully elected Kenneth Gibson as Newark’s first African American mayor. Even with the win, African-Americans continued to support one another against police repression. In 1973, Puerto Rican community activist Ramon Rivera was a victim of police brutality by Newark’s police tactical squad. Showing solidarity, the *Black New Ark*, covered Rivera’s arrest and called for the creation of a community police review board.

BRANCH BROOK PARK: THE FINAL STRAW

One of the most important events of Puerto Rican culture and heritage in Newark was the celebration of Las Fiestas Patronales in Branch Brook Park. However, 1974 proved to be a year unlike any other. Mounted police interrupted a dice game. In the scuffle that followed, a little girl was nearly trampled.

The incident served as the final straw and ignited the Puerto Rican riot of 1974. In an attempt to diffuse the situation, Mayor Gibson invited the community to city hall to voice their concerns. Once there, the community realized they needed representatives to negotiate with Gibson and founded the People’s Committee Against Repression and Police Brutality, spearheaded by community activists Sigfredo Carrion and Amiri Baraka.

“The establishment of a Police Review Board is one progressive change which is needed to insure equal enforcement of law and justice to the oppressed people here in Newark.”

–*Black New Ark*



Black Newark often covered issues within the city’s Puerto Rican community. This article highlights an attack on Puerto Rican activist, Ramon Rivera. According to the article, Rivera was not allowed phone calls and was denied access to sanitary facilities and medical attention while in police custody.

Credit: John Cotton Dana Library, Rutgers University-Newark



Following the initial outburst, Mayor Gibson asked the crowd of Puerto Rican citizens to join him at City Hall and hopefully come to a resolution. They marched from Branch Brook Park and gathered outside on its front steps in hopes of being heard.

Credit: NJ Advance Media

1970s



Mayor Kenneth Gibson with Ramon Rivera, Director of La Casa de Don Pedro and once a Gibson supporter. Given the city's economic issues as well as Gibson's political inexperience, the ties with the Puerto Rican community were later severed. Gibson's promise to tackle the issues that plagued the Puerto Rican community went unfulfilled.

Credit: **La Casa de Don Pedro**



A young Ramon Rivera addressing the community. His vision has always been to “organize the community and empower them; to become self-motivated and independent so that we can made decisions ourselves.”

Credit: **La Casa de Don Pedro**

STEPS TOWARDS ACCOUNTABILITY

The riot resulted in some of the most violent interactions between Puerto Ricans and police. Fernando de Cordova was fatally shot and David Perez was clubbed to death. They were both Newark residents. Following the acquittal of the officer who shot de Cordova, a new protocol established in 1975 required officers to wear visible nametags and file a report every time a weapon was fired while on duty. Although a civilian review board had yet to be established, residents and the Newark police department made a step towards police accountability.

COMMUNITY ACTION BECOMES COMMUNITY SUPPORT

In response to the riot, Mayor Gibson stated, “The reason we had a disturbance in Newark is because we had 10,000 people in a park. It had nothing to do with bilingual education, housing or any other socio-economic factor.” For many Puerto Ricans, Gibson’s response demonstrated the cultural disconnect between the black and brown communities. Puerto Ricans realized to effectively address the cultural issues in their community they needed to invest in their own institutions. One notable organization strengthened by the riots was Ramon Rivera’s La Casa de Don Pedro. For over 40 years La Casa has been committed to issues affecting Latinxs in Newark. Today, the organization honors the legacy of Rivera’s activism against police misconduct by serving on Newark’s Civilian Complaint Review Board.

“The Puerto Rican community has yet to see indications that the Gibson administration is going to deal with equity in reference to them. The attitude is one of skeptical hope, and what the Gibson administration does or does not do will have tremendous impact on black and Puerto Rican relationships.”

–Hilda Hidalgo



RACE, SPACE, AND CONTROL IN NEWARK

PUSHING THE WAR ON DRUGS

After mass protests and riots in the 1960s, Americans elected Richard Nixon president on a “law and order” platform in 1968. He declared a War on Drugs in 1971. President Ronald Reagan expanded on Nixon’s ideas in the 1980s. Reagan’s hard-line approach included mandatory minimum sentences for sale and possession of illegal substances and the creation of drug free school zones that gave even stiffer penalties to those caught with drugs near a school. State of New Jersey followed suit, passing Title 2C in 1979, which defined over 240 acts as criminal.

The main way that the police quantified the effectiveness of the War on Drugs was through number of arrests. Their methods, including stop-and-frisk policing and monitoring of public spaces typically occupied by people of color, led to the mass incarceration of black and Latinx men and women. In Newark, stings in public housing complexes allowed police to break up drug rings, but created an environment of constant surveillance for innocent residents. Police even sectioned off entire neighborhoods, forcing everyone to show ID to get past the barricade.

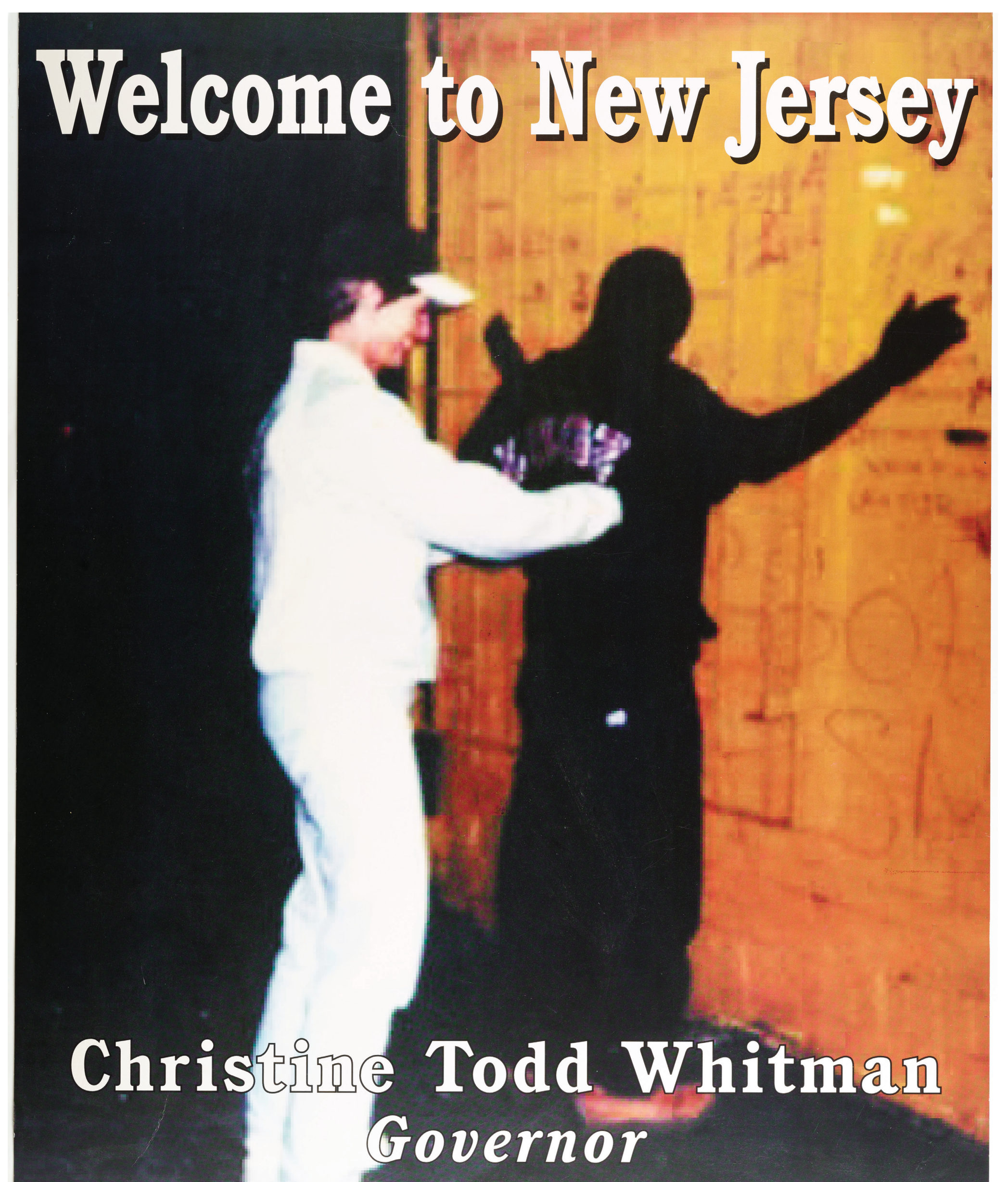
Such tactics deepened the rifts between the police and community.

Some young people protested the tight control of their neighborhoods by stealing cars to joyride and perform “doughnuts” (spinning cars to leave skid marks). These acts of bravado, fictionalized in the 1995 film *New Jersey Drive*, were a way to assert ownership of the street.

“Some kids play sports for identity...
Some kids read books to be somebody.
And some kids steal cars. So one kid
is the quarterback, and one kid is the
president of the eighth-grade class
and one kid is the doughnut man.”

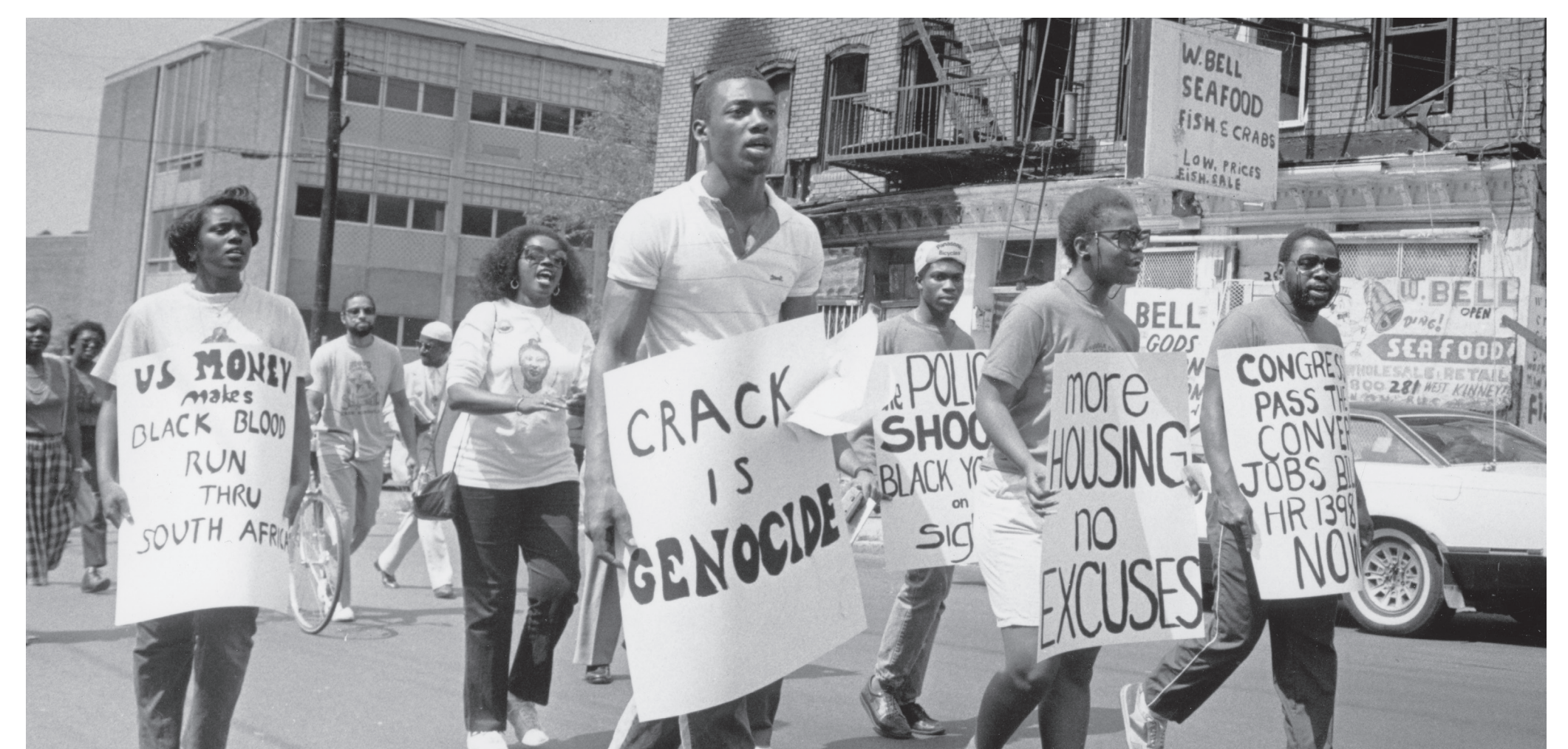
—Sgt. Henry Alston
of the Newark police auto-theft squad

1980s



In the late 1990s, then Governor of New Jersey Christine Todd Whitman was photographed frisking a black man in the city of Camden. Even then people were starting to question these methods, which unfairly target men of color, as racial profiling.

Credit: **Anonymous Owner**



A 1986 protest by the People’s Organization for Progress against police brutality and lack of jobs and housing. These factors contributed to young men of color getting involved in the drug trade, something that the War on Drugs failed to address.

Credit: **Credit: Newark Public Library, courtesy of the Star-Ledger**



REZONING RACIAL BOUNDARIES

The deaths of Bilal Colbert and DeFarra Gaymon—two African American men killed by police for being in the wrong place at the wrong time—led to new calls for police reform.

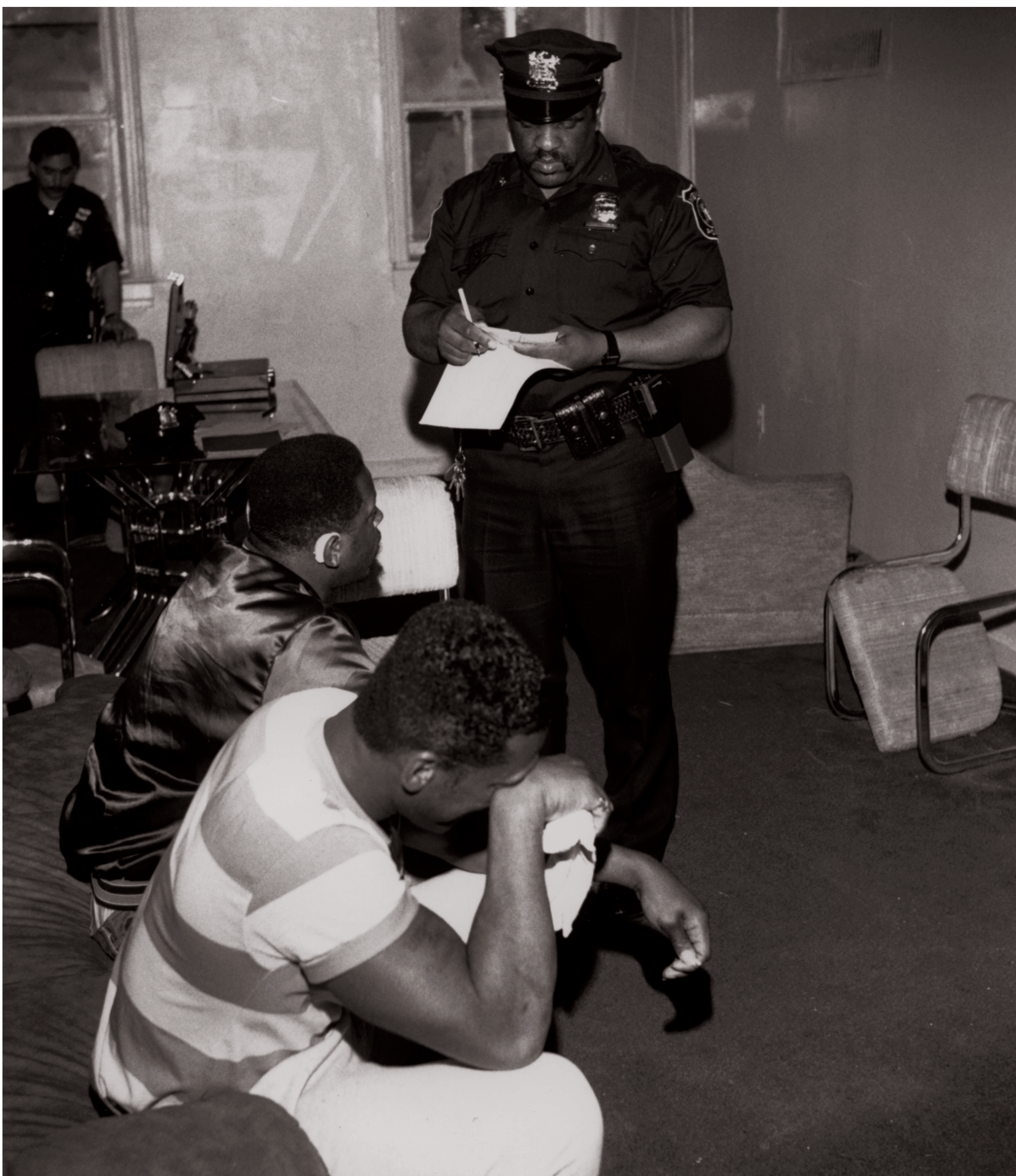
On April 30, 2011, 29-year old Colbert was killed by an Irvington detective while buying snacks for his girlfriend’s two daughters. This incident occurred on the corner of 22nd Street and 18th Avenue, in a “drug-infested” neighborhood targeted by police. Reports suggest that Colbert was ID’d for a supposed stolen license, and previous drug convictions. At the time of the incident, Colbert wasn’t engaged in any criminal activity.

The Essex County Sheriff’s office, in response to complaints from locals, established a “sting” task force to arrest men engaged in sexual activities within Newark’s Branch Brook Park. In July of 2010, 48-year old DeFarra Gaymon was shot and killed by a plainclothes detective while walking through the park. No evidence has surfaced since the event to suggest whether or not Gaymon was guilty of any crime. As a man alone in the park, Gaymon was immediately suspected of engaging in illegal activities.

Community groups, such as Fathers Against Drugs and the People’s Organization for Progress, formed in response to individual incidents involving police and citizens of Newark, while other statewide organizations joined the fight.

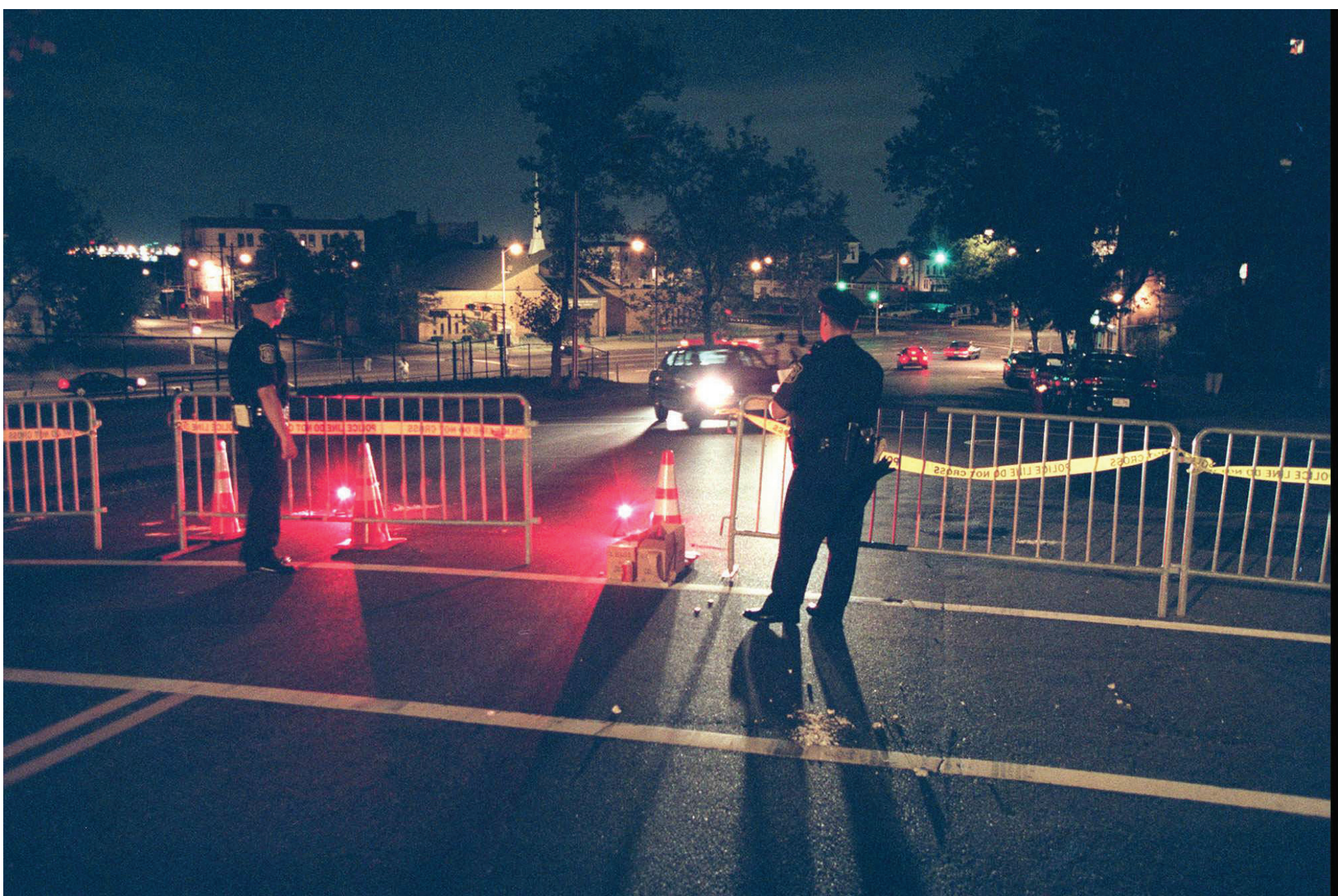
“How can the police police the police? If they can shoot down our kids, who are mostly black and Latino, and walk away without anything happening to them, then what’s being done?”

—Amiri Baraka



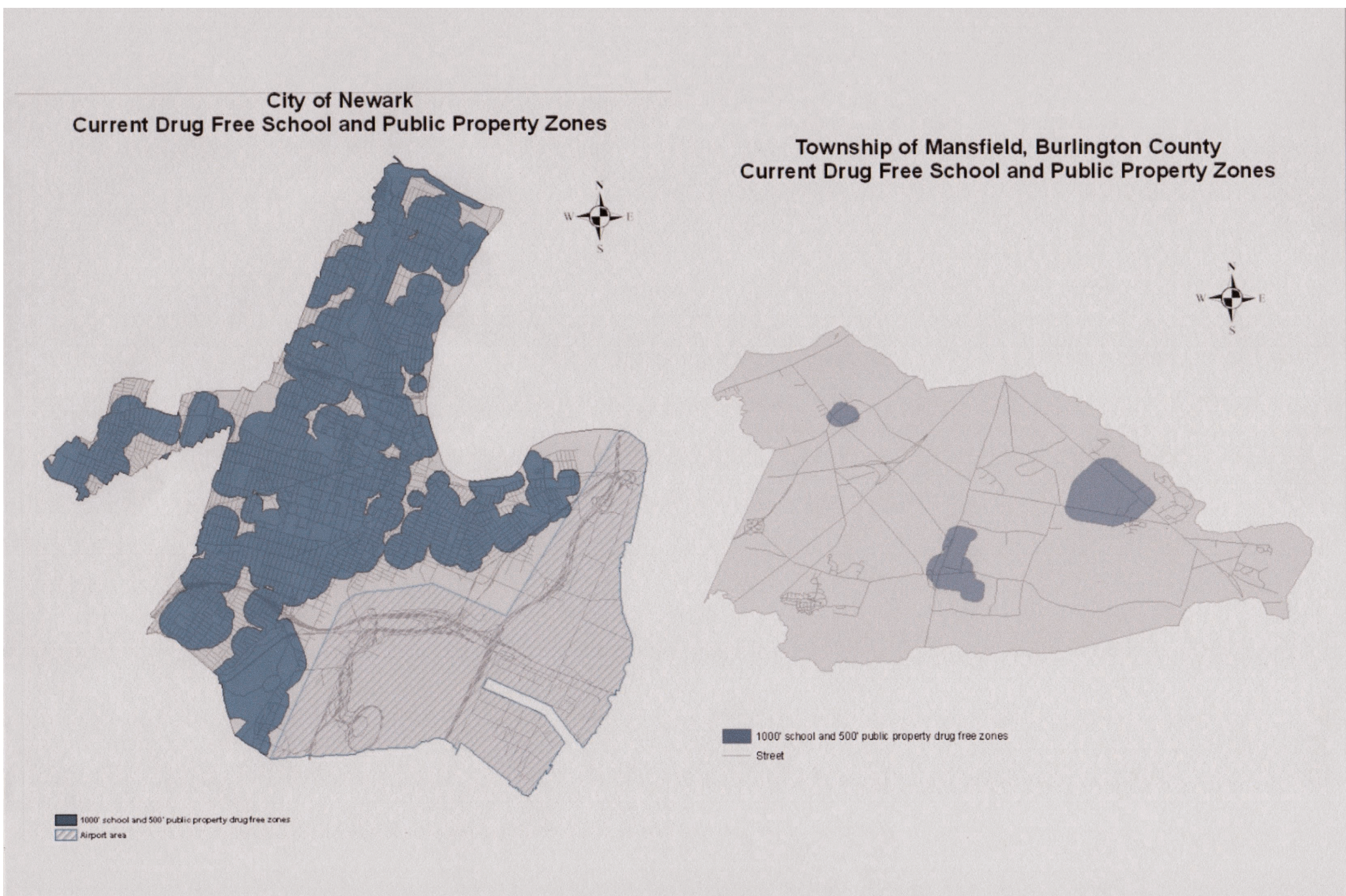
Two men were questioned and checked for warrants by police for loitering outside of a building known to be a drug hangout. As part of the War on Drugs, police staked out public housing complexes as way to get a large volume of arrests and stop drug rings.

Credit: Newark Public Library, courtesy of the *Star-Ledger*



Police used barriers to target and isolate areas of Newark with drug connections. Aside from monitoring the premises 24 hours a day and rousing residents at night to check the building for drugs, officers restricted the movement of residents and required them to show ID before being let into their neighborhoods.

Credit: New Jersey Advanced Media

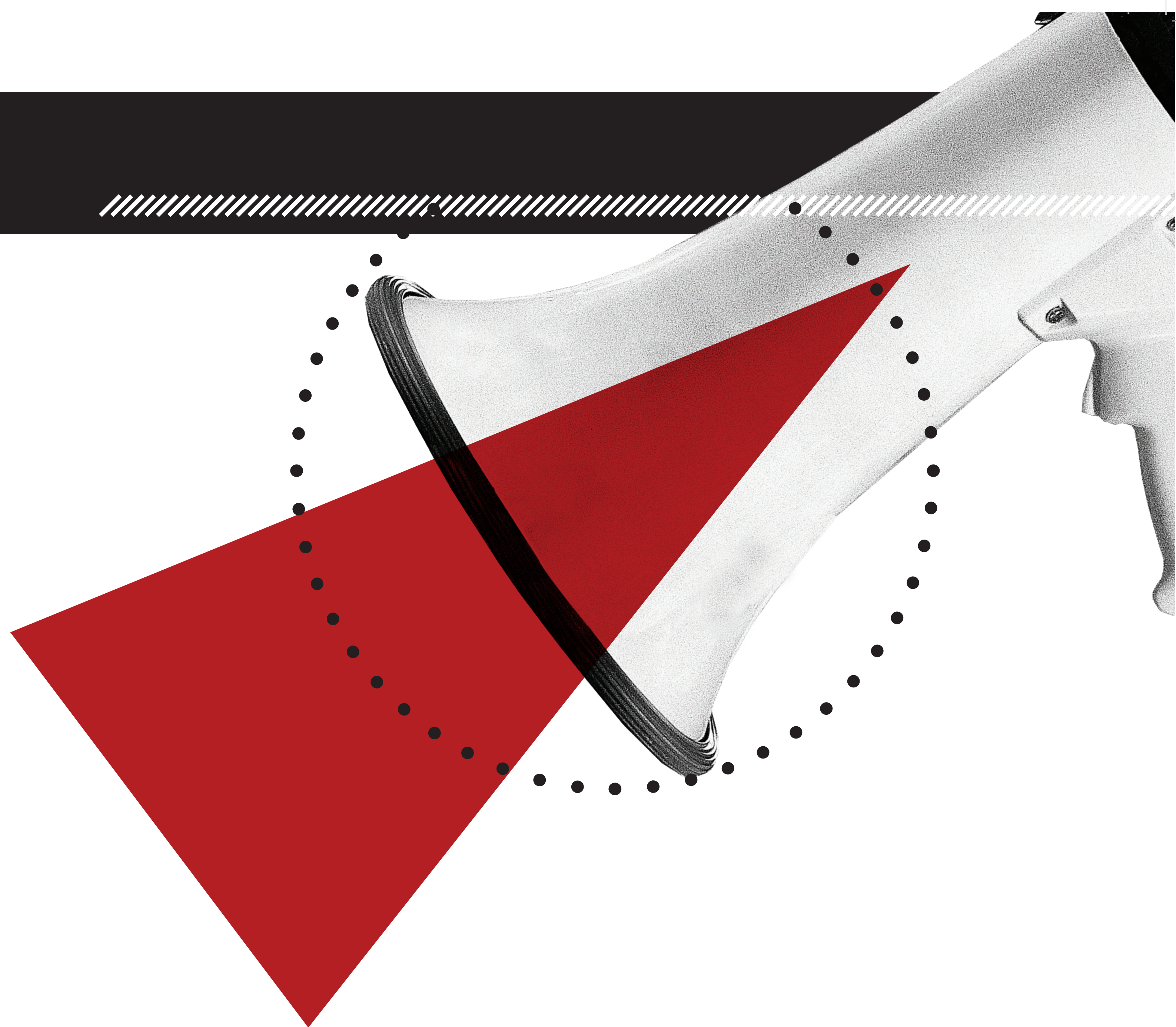


Compared to a predominantly white suburb, 75% of Newark is designated as a drug free school zone, which carries with it extra criminal charges.

Credit: New Jersey Commission to Review Criminal Sentencing / Modified by Tyler Palmese

"A police review board does not mean we are antipolice; it means we are antipolice brutality."

—Larry Hamm



People's Organization for Progress Chairman Lawrence Hamm calls for justice for Bilal Colbert. Community leaders and organizations in Newark have been involved in attempts to curtail police misconduct by demanding a civilian review board to address police misconduct.

Credit: *Star-Ledger*



Branch Brook Park in Newark was the primary location for the Essex County Sheriff's Office to patrol for gay sexual activity. As this photo represents, taken in November 2016, the presence of police surveillance continues in Branch Brook Park.

Credit: *Mary Rizzo*

"HOW CAN THE POLICE POLICE THE POLICE?"

Continuing the protests of the 1970s and including longtime activists like Amiri Baraka and his son, now-Mayor Ras Baraka, community activists in the 1990s and the 2000s reinvigorated calls for the creation of a civilian review board over the police after stories such as Colbert and Gaymon's came to light.

Because Gaymon's death was due to police targeting homosexuality, Garden State Equality, an LGBTQ advocacy group, became involved. As a result of their efforts, along with other organizations, the gay sex sting squad was disbanded and the Gaymon family was awarded \$1.5 million in a civil case three years later.

The community's response to Bilal Colbert's death began on May 3 with a vigil hosted by the NAACP. Two days later in conjunction with the People's Organization for Progress, a demonstration was staged throughout Newark and Irvington demanding intervention from the federal government. New Jersey's senators listened, and petitioned the Department of Justice to investigate, which it did in 2011.

In 2014, the Department of Justice released its report, calling for a number of reforms to "make Newark a more equitable community...and also a safer one." The investigation provided a blueprint for change. Two years later, the Newark city council responded by creating a Civilian Complaint Review Board. These may be the first steps towards establishing a better relationship between the police and citizens in Newark.

2000s

Acción latina: Protesta y transformación socio-cultural en Nueva Jersey

EL DESPERTAR DE ELIZABETH: UN PARO AL TRATO DE CIUDADANO DE SEGUNDA CLASE

Agotados por años de racismo y corrupción policíaca, cientos de miembros de la comunidad latina se lanzaron a las calles de Elizabeth a protestar. Más de 200 residentes fueron arrestados, llevando a los líderes comunitarios a formar alianzas en busca de amnistía. Ante la negativa del alcalde Thomas Dunn y la consecuente represión, se crearon organizaciones de interés latino abogando por mejorar la calidad de vida.

TENSIÓN ENTRE LOS PUERTORRIQUEÑOS Y LA POLICÍA DE CAMDEN

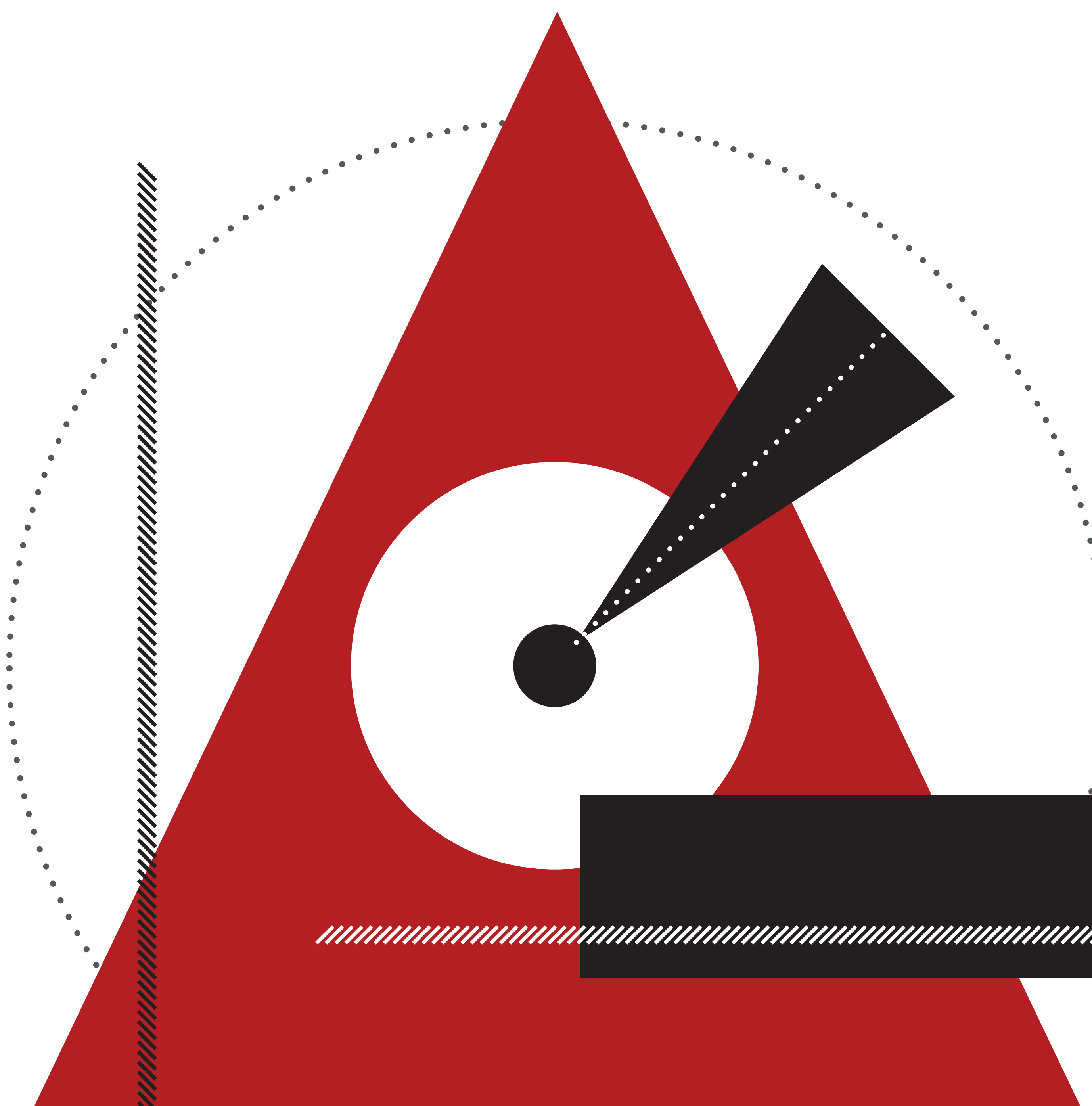
En agosto de 1969, dos policías golpearon brutalmente a Horacio González, residente de la ciudad de Camden, iniciando una serie de divisiones entre la comunidad puertorriqueña y la policía. A consecuencia de los disturbios, dos jóvenes murieron y la comunidad sufrió pérdidas físicas y sociales. El alcalde Nardi suspendió a los dos policías involucrados en este incidente. Como resultado, en 1976 se funda la *Puerto Rican Unity for Progress* para organizar a la comunidad y se crea un centro comunitario.



En Elizabeth cientos se unen a una protesta pacífica en respuesta a la represión racial. Alrededor de sesenta estudiantes de secundaria se unen a la causa.



Las comunidades alrededor de Camden se involucraron en las protestas. Steven Brand, vecino de Pennsauken, fue una de las víctimas de la violencia policíaca.





Varios obreros puertorriqueños vivían en áreas de bajos recursos en condiciones inadecuadas. La política controvertida de ciudades como Jersey City no tomaba en cuenta a estas personas.

La reacción puertorriqueña

PROTESTA CONTRA LA INJUSTICIA POLICIAL EN EL CONDADO DE HUDSON

Durante los años setenta, la comunidad puertorriqueña en el condado de Hudson se caracterizó por su constante lucha contra el abuso policial. En Hoboken, por ejemplo, el arresto del líder comunitario Luis López por intervenir durante un conflicto entre el grupo *Movilización juvenil puertorriqueña* y las autoridades, llevó a que más de 400 puertorriqueños protestaran en el destacamento policial. Estos esfuerzos contribuyeron a la implementación de sistemas de apoyo que a la larga beneficiarían a la comunidad.



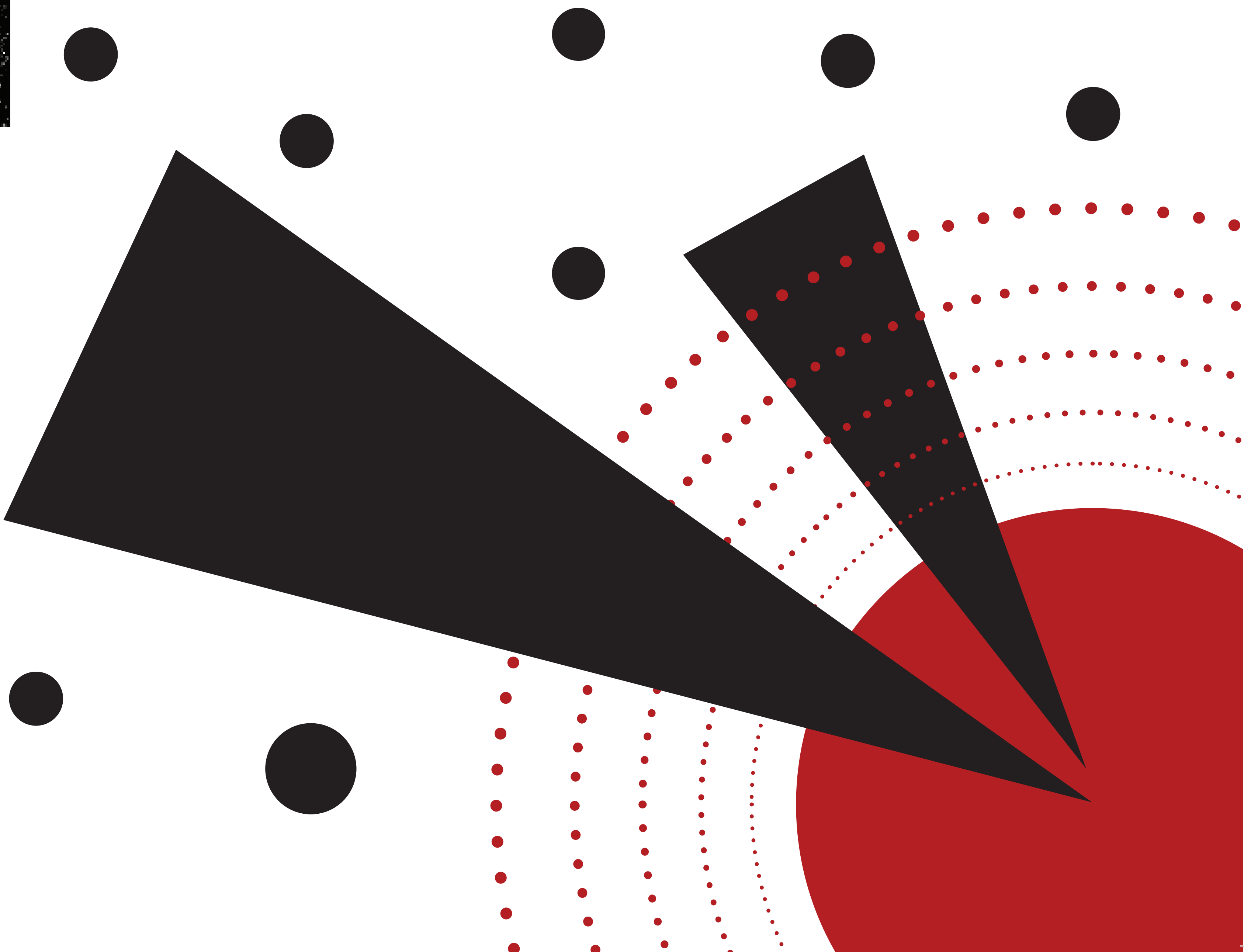
Francisco de Jesús, Director del Centro Comunitario, discute los problemas que afectan a la comunidad puertorriqueña en Dover durante los años setenta.

LOS PUERTORRIQUEÑOS SE UNEN EN BÚSQUEDA DE CAMBIOS

En septiembre de 1971, la policía de Dover arresta a 16 miembros de la comunidad puertorriqueña por alteración a la paz. Aunque el gobierno municipal alegó no entender los motivos detrás del motín, una reunión con los líderes comunitarios arrojó luz sobre muchos de los problemas existentes. Carl Erickson, un intermediario entre estos grupos, explicó que el factor principal era la diferencia de idiomas, lo cual causaba conflicto entre la policía y los ciudadanos, al igual que la falta de recursos en los casos de vivienda.

“Condiciones pésimas de vivienda y educación, el desempleo y las drogas”

**—New York Times,
Junio 13, 1970**



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Surabhi Singh
Luisa Gómez Bustamante
Instructor: Jason Cortés
Teaching Assistant: Jennifer Caroccio

GRAPHIC DESIGNER:

Eric Ng