

The Corner of Nelson and Main

—Marcus Manselle

4 cops are standing at the intersection, 3 totin' shotguns, 1 with tear gas gun . . . all carrying usual pistol and billy club . . . all wearing riot helmets with protective visor except Black cop who keeps his shotgun rested on his waist belt with barrel pointed upward for all to see . . . broad daylight . . . time, about 3:00. More cops milling around; lost in a sea of crowd (all of which are potential rioters since they are Black and Puerto Rican). Near the corner, on Main St., is a burnt-out furniture store all black and sooty.

Dennis Jones was shot by a West Hartford cop Friday Aug. 16. He and two friends stole a car probably not the first, time, but so what. The law doesn't always give murderers the maximum penalty. (But the law at times can be fickle, it just depends on who is involved.) The cop had chased the three boys from Simsbury Rd., down through the University of Hartford and out the back. The stolen car crashed somewhere by Mark Twain Drive, and Dennis and his friends got out and ran. The cop drew his gun and fired a single shot. Dennis dropped, dead. Three days later the Sunday paper's read something like this "Hartford Police Investigate: Officer cleared in shooting." The next day a cop was shot in his leg during Hartford's best citizen disturbance.

Question: Did the officer have to shoot 16 year old Dennis Jones in the back,

Question: Could the officer have radioed ahead for more help in order to surround the three boys and arrest them.

Question: Is a car worth more than a human life?

You know what I'm driving at. You know that a cop would think twice before even arresting a white boy from

West Hartford. You want to know something else? People in Hartford's North End know too!

But why is one shooting reason to riot? One shooting is not reason to riot but police harassment (and there is police harassment), slums, jobs, education (they take the good teachers away from us), tension (people have been digging on the situation at Weaver) and after all this and MUCH MORE, a West Hartford cop got the nerve to follow a stolen car (with three North End youths in it) into the outskirts of the North End (already out of his authority) and, then shoot one of them. What the Hell for? 'Cause he was black? Because it's his duty to shoot to kill anyone that flees from a stolen car? Or is it because the cop said "Stop" (if he did) and the boys didn't (you wouldn't either) the almighty, omnipotent, good, clean, law enforcing American cop had to bring them to those hallowed Halls of Justice in his own perverted, sadistic, and plain old mean way.

Dennis's Murder was the ultimate catalyst, the last straw, the "We ain't takin' no more of this shit!" Now, I'd rather the people had just simply eliminated the police force in one way or another. Or taken control over it. But that's wishful thinking because politicians, the Mafia, and big corporations like Aetna and Travelers would put a stop to anything as logical, safe, sane, and humane as community control of the police. And the people will laugh at me for even mentioning it to you. They know the "Man" and they know the man don't care about them and furthermore stifles them. I believe very strongly that these are the basic reasons for a serious out-break. Keeping this in mind, ask yourself how these people felt when in three days five hundred brothers and sisters were arrested by the police.



Revolution Child

I.

tying together the cords of morning--

headstrong & heavy, gentle & beautiful
tripping crazy-sane on soft white stones
over the market-place
& into the streets

sprinkling soul laughter
childish

with grace/message
on wail
of grey night moan

siren stone-city no electricity
strung-out broke bustend cold flat sober wide-awake
sweet-life electric

blues...

II.

revolution child.
molder of magic.

spread his dreams on soft pillows,
wisdoms in notebooks,

who fell weeping on paper-trains
& fixed in women's arms...

destruction/construction
maker of moments
melting dreams
in the heat
of the hottest
day...

found flame
on the hearth
of the warmest
fire...

as strength
in the dawn
of the final
day...

commanding the city to fall to dust...

III.

i love you i love you in beauty we walk.
as tigers. as gods. when you move with
my rythem. my magic. we come together.
skin scent intermingled. grace of pale
dawn. the beast with in me. walks in
quiet laughter. goddess. mistress of
motion. rising with flame. proud above
the drunken city. see the faces. frozen
faces. sadness. sadness. give us the gifts.
the tools. be we as children. children of
fire. children of revolution. sprawling
lustily on sheets. immaculate. scent of
children coming. is motion. is grace. is
everything. right.

on.

angelo