

# TopCops NewsMagazine

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## 68 cops suspended on torture charges:

### World: 68 Brazilian cops suspended over torture allegations

<http://www.nandotimes.com/global/>  
The Associated Press  
RIO DE JANEIRO, Brazil  
(April 8, 2001)

A midwestern Brazilian governor has suspended 68 police officers accused of torture, a local news agency reported.

The officers are being investigated by Goias state prosecutors in connection with a series of crimes that involved excessive force in Goiania, 580 miles northwest of Rio, Estado news agency reported Saturday.

Goias state Gov. Marconi Perillo barred the officers from returning to work until a ruling on the cases has been issued, Estado said. Authorities in Goiania said they had no information on the suspensions.

A report released late last year by Global Justice, an umbrella group of Brazilian human rights organizations, said torture is tolerated at "both a structural and institutional level" in Brazil and that in prisons "torture has been institutionalized as a means of disciplining detainees."

The report listed 13 cases of torture carried out by police and prison guards



that were documented and presented to the United Nations. It also said the number of summary executions by police seemed to be rising again after leveling off in the mid-1990s.

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**Volume 4, Issue 1**  
**April 30, 2001**

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## Read Editors Pick by Tim Johnson of TopCops

### Precise tool in police armoury BY NIGEL HAWKES

DNA profiling is an extremely precise technique for matching samples from the scene of crime with the DNA of suspects. It depends on the fact that no two people - unless they are identical twins - possess exactly the same DNA sequences. The profiles are created from the samples of semen, blood, saliva or other tissue by first extracting the DNA, usually in tiny amounts of billionths of a gram.

The DNA is then cut into fragments using enzymes, and the fragments are separated by size. They are attached to a sheet of nylon which locks them in place.

The actual profile is created by using short lengths of DNA called probes, which bind to matching lengths in the DNA of the sample. The probes are radioactively labelled, so the places to which they bind can be seen by allowing their radiocativity to darken a sheet of X-ray film laid over them.

What emerges is a series of lines, like a bar chart, which is unique – or very nearly so - to the individual.

While all forensic science services use basically the same methods, there are small differences in protocol - the use of different probes, for example - from country to country.

For a perfect match, and to generate evidence which will stand up in court, the scene of crime sample and the sample from the suspect must be examined using the same protocol. The French intend to do this in the hope of confirming the preliminary match.

When a perfect match is achieved, it is possible to argue in court that the chances of a person other than the accused being guilty of the crime are millions to one against. But the tests must be carried out with scrupulous care.

<http://www.cincypost.com/2001/apr/14/union041401.html>

### Police union defends deaths By Jennifer Edwards, Post staff reporter

Most of the 15 black men slain by Cincinnati police in recent years were killed only after they threatened officers with weapons, the head of the police union said Friday.

"Our police officers are not some band of rogue Nazis roaming Cincinnati hunting down and killing black men," Officer Keith Fangman said. "That is inflammatory. It is racist and it is wrong."

He also pointed out that in at least 10 of the 15 deaths, both black and white officers were involved. In two recent cases, black officers fired the fatal bullets to defend other officers at risk of being shot.

"We're angrier than the criminals on the streets," said Sgt. Harry Roberts, a 22-year veteran who works in District 4, which covers several predominantly black areas in the city. '

"We didn't kill 15 black men. We killed 15 criminals who resisted arrest. They didn't die because they were black. They died because they were criminals," Roberts said.

The city erupted in riots this week after police shot and killed a 19-year-old black man wanted on outstanding warrants. The unrest is a national embarrassment, as is having to call on other agencies such as the Ohio State Highway Patrol and Hamilton County Sheriff's Office for assistance, Fangman said.

He said Mayor Charlie Luken and City Council helped incite the riots by publicly saying too many black men have been killed by police. He also criticized them for not supporting the division, which he maintains is 230 officers short. With Police Chief Thomas Streicher's approval, the city put aside plans for a 38-member police recruit class last year for financial reasons.

Fangman said he remains optimistic that a settlement can be reached with mediators in a racial profiling lawsuit recently filed against the city by the American Civil Liberties Union, Cincinnati Black United Front and a black businessman who alleges he was mistreated by the police.

However, Officer Scotty Johnson, president of The Sentinels, an organization for black officers, said blacks are being targeted by police and insisted it is a problem that must be addressed if the city hopes to avoid going to court.

"The face of crime has been painted black. I see it as a problem and so do a lot of other black citizens," Johnson said. "We've got an excellent agency and the best training in the world, but we've got a way to go in . . . how the police treat the black community."

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## **4 cops admit killing Dacer**

By Dave Veridiano

Inquirer News Service

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"THEY told us to kill them both . . . We learned that it was Dacer only the next day from news reports."

In a stunning development in the murder case of publicist Salvador "Bubby" Dacer, four policemen, who are among a long "wanted list" of agents from the Presidential Anti-Organized Crime Task Force, have surrendered to Philippine National Police chief Leandro Mendoza, the INQUIRER learned last night.

The four claimed that other agents, accompanied by a PAOCTF officer, turned over Dacer and his driver, Manuel Corbito, to them last Nov. 24 with an instruction "to waste" the two, whom they were made to believe were notorious criminals.

One of the agents with a rank of SPO3 told his interrogators that he was instructed: "Tumbahin na pareho 'yan. Bahala na kayo (Kill them both. How you do it is up to you)."

The suspects said that they did not know initially that it was Dacer and his driver whom they were about to kill, since the victims were blindfolded and the rest of their faces covered with masking tape.

"Nalaman na lamang namin na bigtime pala, si Dacer pala, kinabukasan ng ma-dyaryo na (We learned that he was 'big-time,' that it was Dacer, only when it was reported in the newspapers the next day)," one of the PAOCTF agents told investigators.

A source privy to the interrogation said that the four decided to surrender for fear that they would be "silenced"--just like their other colleagues, who they said have been disappearing one after the other.

The four agents gave themselves up to Mendoza Tuesday and were immediately turned over to the Criminal Investigation and Detection Group (CIDG) for interrogation.

The INQUIRER is withholding the names of the four and of their superior, whom they implicated in Dacer's abduction and killing, pending the results of the investigation being conducted by the CIDG

## **4 cops admit killing Dacer**

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Two suspect-witnesses from Indang, Cavite, Alex Diloy and Jimmy Lopez, earlier implicated five members of the PAOCTF in the case.

They were identified as SPO4 Marino Soberano, SPO3 Mauro Torres, SPO2 Jose Escalante and SPO1 Crisostomo Purificacion. Former PAOCTF Visayas chief Supt. Teofilo Viña was named as the officer who allegedly gave the final order by phone to kill the victims. Other agents are also considered suspects in the case.

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<http://www.cnn.com/2001/WORLD/africa/04/15/safrica.police.ap/index.html>

## **South African police face slaughter on and off the job**

[SOWETO, South Africa](#) (AP) -- The fervent melodies of the pre-Easter prayer service fill the hall behind a police station in Soweto with a desperate appeal to God: Stop the slaughter of our police.

South Africa's police are being killed at a startling rate. Since 1994, 1,597 cops have been killed out of a national force of about 130,000, and although the rate went down last year, it still averaged a death every two days. New York City, by contrast, lost only three officers out of a force of 41,000 last year, all in car accidents.



A Soweto policewoman attends an early pre Easter prayer service at the Protea Police Station in Soweta, South Africa

"We need prayers," the Soweto area commissioner, Martin Maphanga, told the more than 100 officers and churchgoers gathered for a service that went on for hours with marches, speeches, songs and prayer in a mixture of South Africa's languages.

Criminals' increasing boldness, police corruption and the lingering hatred South Africans have for the security forces that enforced apartheid have contributed to the attacks, experts say.

Visiting the families of two slain police officers last month, Safety and Security Minister Steve Tshwete said it appeared police were "just being shot for no apparent reason." The mere sight of a police officer seemed to incite criminals to kill them, he said.

The killings are so pervasive that every morning Inspector Maurice Pikwa straps on his bulletproof vest, picks up his gun and then pauses to offer a silent prayer.

"You never know when you are going to be killed," he said. Pikwa, 38, has already been shot once. During the dying days of apartheid, in 1993, he was caught in the cross fire in riots in Soweto.

At that time, many officers of the mainly black force were targeted as lackeys of the oppressive white-led government. Though blacks now occupy many of the senior management positions previously held by whites, police are still viewed by many blacks as the enemy.

Police officials say they are not sure why the killings are happening, but that there is no political motive.

Many of the officers killed on duty would have survived had they been wearing their bulletproof vests, said Riaan van Staden, head of the police service's directorate of police safety, which was established in 1999 to reduce the killings.

"Police officers are not that adamant about their own safety," he said.



Since 1994, 1,597 cops have been killed out of a national force of about 130,000

But two-thirds of the victims were killed off-duty.

In some instances, officers, who may still be in uniform and carrying guns, have been killed when they stumbled upon crimes, van Staden said.

In some instances, corrupt officers are killed committing crimes themselves, he said.

Many have been killed near bars, leading police to conclude they were drunk and brawling, van Staden said. The police department is working to curb alcohol abuse in the ranks.

Police union officials say a more serious problem is low pay. Rookies earn less than 37,000 rand (about \$4,500 U.S. currency) a year. They must commute in crowded taxi vans, where they are under constant threat of being killed for their guns or simply for being cops.

And few citizens come to their defense, said Moses Mokomane of the Police and Prisons Civil Rights Union. "The police are still viewed as if they were still defending the ideology of the past," he said.

Under that ideology, police could shoot at suspects with little fear of repercussions, police spokesman Superintendent Leon Engelbrecht said.

"There was a respect for the police. There was a fear of police that does not exist today," Engelbrecht said. "Criminals today are more brutal, they have no more fear and they would do anything to get away."

As startling as the numbers are, they have improved dramatically. In 1994, 265 police were killed. Last year, only 185 were killed. In Gauteng, the province that includes the cities of Johannesburg, Pretoria and Soweto, 62 officers were killed out of a force of 22,000, down from 96 in 1998.

The killings have badly damaged the confidence of a public still wary of their security force, said Sibusiso Masuku, a researcher at the Institute for Security Studies. "If they are unable to defend themselves, how can they defend us?" he said.

## **6 cops booked for threatening people** <http://www.tribuneindia.com/20010414/punjab1.htm#30>

Our Correspondent - Tarn Taran,

A case has been registered at police station Goindwal Sahib against six policemen working in different police districts for cheating people and collecting huge amounts from them by threatening to register cases against them under the Excise Act. The gang was active in the border belt for the past several years.

The matter was brought to light on a complaint by Mr Baldev Singh of Dhunda village. In his complaint to the officials of the local district police, he said six persons wearing police uniform came to his house on February 27 and threatened him to register a case under the Excise Act as he had stored liquor at his house for his son's marriage. They demanded Rs 6,000 to let him off.

The complainant said he gave them Rs 5,000 and later, he got the matter to the notice of higher police authorities here. The matter was investigated on the order of Mr Jagdish Kumar Mittal, SSP, and the facts were found to be correct.

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## Suit Filed for Oakland Cop's Death

OAKLAND (California) Oakland's chief of police remained tight-lipped Wednesday about a federal civil rights lawsuit filed seeking damages for the January death of Oakland police Officer William "Willy" Wilkins.

The suit, filed yesterday in U.S. District Court on behalf of Wilkins' family, claims Oakland put undertrained officers on the streets, leading to the officer's death. The suit was filed by a Los Angeles law firm owned by former O.J. Simpson defender Johnnie Cochran.

On Jan. 11, the 29-year-old Wilkins, who normally served on the Alameda County Narcotics Task Force, took up pursuit of a suspected car thief, 18-year-old Demetrius Phillips. While he was apprehending the suspect near 90th Avenue in East Oakland, two uniformed officers arrived.

The officers saw that Wilkins was armed and, not realizing he was an officer, they fired. Wilkins was taken to Highland Hospital, where he died from his wounds.

The suit names as defendants the two rookie officers who shot Wilkins, Tim Scarrott and Andrew Koponen, and the City of Oakland. It seeks punitive damages and money for funeral expenses.

At the fallen officer's funeral, held in Hayward one week after his death, Wilkins' father had stressed that the family in no way blamed the Oakland Police Department or any of its officers for the tragedy.

"Whether the Wilkins family stays here in California, or returns to Panama, you (Oakland police) will always be in our hearts," William Wilkins Sr. said during his son's eulogy.

Today, Oakland Police Chief Richard Word had no comment about the claim, expressing only sorrow at the loss of a fellow officer.

"We're still mourning the loss of Willy," he said. "We all wish we could bring him back."

## PARAMILITARY COPS CHARGED IN KILLINGS

Items compiled from Tribune news services - West Africa

ABIDJAN, IVORY COAST -- Six paramilitary police officers have been charged in the killing of 57 men whose bodies were found piled together following election violence in this West African country, the ruling party newspaper reported Friday.

The six officers were charged Wednesday with murder and assassination, but were allowed to return to their posts until their trial, state prosecutor Yua Koffi told Notre Voie, the newspaper of President Laurent Gbagbo's Ivorian Popular Front party.

Investigations are continuing, and more people could be charged, said Koffi. The charges were announced as Gbagbo's government tries to end more than a year of ethnic, religious and political turbulence that have rocked the country, once regarded as an oasis of peace in troubled West Africa.

The 57 bodies were found in a field on the edge of the financial capital, Abidjan, after clashes broke out during the Oct. 22 vote that brought Gbagbo to power. Many had been shot in the head.

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## Policeman shoots suspected car thief while being dragged

The Associated Press

AURORA, Colo. (AP) -- A police officer being dragged by a car shot the driver, who died after the car crashed into a building Saturday morning, police said.

An autopsy will be performed to determine the cause of death, said police spokesman Sgt. Dan Mark. The officer was one of two officers who were responding to a report that a man was breaking into a car.

The officer tried to grab the suspect, who then jumped into another car and drove off, dragging the officer 200 feet. The car had been reported stolen.

The officer fell from the car and was treated for cuts and bruises. The identities of the officers and the driver were not immediately available.

### EDITORS PICK

Subject: COP KILLER who was sentenced to death, paroled in New Jersey, By Timothy Johnson of TopCops on the Internet (I'm Tim Johnson, the owner / webmaster for <http://www.more4yourmoney.com>)

In August of 1963, two Police Officers, Peter Voto & Gary Tedesco, were brutally murdered during an incident that occurred in a bar in Lodi New Jersey. Tedesco, at the time a 21-year-old rookie had his gun removed, was pistol whipped, then shot dead.

The assailant, Thomas Trantino was to be executed for the murders, but the sentence was commuted to life in prison after the state's death penalty was ruled unconstitutional in '72, unbelievably making him eligible for parole in 1979.

The families of the two Officers who include Andrew Voto, ex-Police Chief of Lodi ( A Lt. at the time of the murders. ) are outraged at the possibility of Trantino's parole. Voto is quoted as stating," This guy should have died 30 years ago but that doesn't matter now..." the courts just never seemed to care."

Trantino's attorney argued before the court in Sept. that Thomas has had a clean prison record and has not received a fair shake compared to other inmates. The 4-1 decisions by the court is the first step in Trantino's release.

Ex-Police Chief Andrew Voto ( Now 74 yoa ) whose health has been failing in recent months wonders if he will be able to survive the release of his brother's murderer. "I never wanted it to end this way," he said. "I'm just too tired now to put up a fight." Sadie Tedesco, mother of Gary Tedesco told reporters that her life "has never been the same since that night."

Thankfully, New Jersey laws have since been toughened to mandate a minimum of 30 years before being eligible for parole. "At least their lives were not lost in vain," said state Policemen's Benevolent Association attorney Anthony Fusco Jr. END....

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## NEW YORK COPS LEAVING IN FORCE By MURRAY WEISS

April 24, 2001 -- A record-setting exodus of about 3,000 city cops this year - coupled with an inability to attract recruits - is shrinking the size of the NYPD for the first time in more than two decades. And union leaders and several top cops are reluctantly raising the specter of lowering standards as the only way to replenish the police ranks, which topped out around 41,000 earlier this year.

Police Commissioner Bernard Kerik insisted the NYPD will not be forced to diminish standards.

"The department historically has waves of retirements and hirings and it always comes back," he said. But union presidents say so many cops – faced with low salary, poor morale, but a solid pension - are flocking to the retirement office that there is an eight-month backlog to get an exit interview.

The 3,000 cops expected to leave this year is about 30 percent more than last year's 2,314, which was 50 percent higher than the 1,569 cops who quit in 1998. "It is clear the recruitment aspect has failed, so has retention, " said Tony Garvey, president of the Lieutenants Benevolent Association. "There is a direct link between low wages and low recruitment," said Bernie Pound, president of the sergeants union.

The NYPD dropped its \$35 application fee for the first time since the 1960s for the upcoming June exam. And police officials are taking the test on the road to military bases and college campuses, with, at best, minimal results.

Only 1,800 people have applied for the test, which used to attract 30,000 during its heights, although that was a time when the economy was not as strong. "They've eliminated the \$35 fee, the next stop is lowering standards," said Garvey. "You have to pay people. "

Patrolmen's Benevolent Association president Patrick Lynch described the situation as a "crisis." The NYPD was unable to fill the last graduating class at the Police Academy in September, falling 361 short of the 1,589 slots allocated. The lack of recruits also cost the city \$55 million in possible federal grants because the NYPD was unable to reach a 41,440 head count.

Since then, the ranks of the NYPD has continued to fall - to 39,773. The figure is guaranteed to plunge because of the thousands of retirement-eligible cops who joined the force 20 years ago. For example, there are 1,446 officers from the NYPD 1981 class still on the force. And another 2,948 from 1982.

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