

Meet the Mod Squad

anon.

1970

Look closely at the faces of the men on this page. Some of them look like average citizens; some have the look of black revolutionaries. They are all cops. These police officers work out of the First Precinct Larceny Squad and generally patrol the downtown department stores looking for shoplifters and pickpockets. That, however, is not the main problem.

Since these particular pigs are so adept at disguising themselves as human beings, they are assigned to take part in demonstrations, ostensibly to watch for law violations. Instead, they have provoked violence, encouraged trashing and attacked citizens.

Forrest Harvey and Marshall Emerson are the only names we have to match the pictures. Buck Davis, who heads the Detroit office of the National Lawyers Guild, told us he feels that other “mod squad” undercover agents who work out of other bureaus bring the total police involved to “between one and three hundred.”

Emerson and Harvey were involved in the arrest of men who were selling the Black Panther paper downtown for resisting and obstructing an officer. Victor Grayson and Lamar Ballinger, of the National Committee to Combat Fascism, said that they were aware that the two mod squaders were cops because they had been previously harassed by them while they were selling papers at their regular spot in front of Kresge’s. They say Harvey and Emerson provoked a fight with them and then arrested them. A Recorder’s Court agreed, taking one hour to find the two not guilty.

Buck Davis, who defended the two NCCF members, said Harvey is particularly antagonistic toward blacks in the movement. “He would go over to my two clients and tell them he was going to get them and at one point gave me the finger,” he said.

Fifth Estate staffer Jim Kennedy was arrested by Harvey at the April 15 anti-war demonstration for Malicious Destruction of Property. Kennedy, the whole mod squad and about 20 others were running down Woodward in a set where several windows had been smashed, some by the mod squaders themselves. Harvey kicked over a Detroit News stand and found two bricks underneath it. He gave one to Kennedy and said, “Hey, why don’t we get this jewelery store?” Although Kennedy denies throwing the brick, Harvey lied up and down in court and Kennedy got ten days in the Detroit House of Correction in an incredible railroad job where the Judge refused to allow a lawyer or witnesses for the defense because they were not present in court at the time.

The strange thing about mod squad cops is that they must find crimes to be considered successful. If regular officers are patrolling an area and are able to stop crimes from taking place, they are congratulated for doing good police work. The opposite is true with all undercover agents—they must find the crimes they were sent in to discover or they are thought not to be doing their jobs. This has traditionally led to agents provoking criminal activity or simply fabricating testimony to provide a reason for continuing in their roles.

The one thing an agent fears is exposure. He knows that if his cover is blown, it is back to pounding a beat. The blurred picture on this page is a mod squader trying to stop a Fifth Estate photographer from taking his picture at a recent demonstration. Later, he and several other mod squaders forcibly took the camera from a woman, thinking

it still contained the film. The man in the picture is about 6 feet 4 inches, dark-skinned, wears an Afro and a Van Dyke beard and is often seen at Wayne State University. He may attend police administration school there.

This article is not meant to make people paranoid—just careful. Don't let your racism obscure the fact that a man with an Afro and a "Free Huey" pin may not be immediately trustworthy. If you are going to run in the streets, run with brothers and sisters you know.

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