



**The Most Reverend Filipe C. Teixeira, OFSJC**  
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Massachusetts, February, 24, 2008

To: City Attorney David R. Fine –  
Office of the City Attorney  
1437 Bannock, St., Room 353  
Denver, CO 80202

I am a Diocesan Bishop of the Diocese of Saint Francis of Assisi, Catholic Church of the Americas and a Pastor with two churches in the Dorchester section of Boston and Brockton Massachusetts. I am writing concerning the case of Larry Hales, a case being prosecuted through your office. I believe this case represents a most grave miscarriage of justice. In fact, Mr. Hales, a well-known social justice activist leader who I have known for years, was the victim of violent police brutality. The police and official misconduct of November 30, 2007 constituted a flagrant violation of the fundamental legal rights of Mr. Hales and Ms. Melissa Kleinman, his domestic partner. Under the guise of a routine parole visit, the police engaged in a coordinated, calculated, unlawful and brutal attack on Mr. Hales and Ms. Kleinman. I am adding my voice to those who are calling upon you to immediately drop all charges against Mr. Hales.

The continued prosecution of Mr. Hales is the worst example of “blaming the victim” and will cast your office in the role of participating in a most immoral and unjust travesty, which began when police and parole officials illegally invaded the Hales home on November 30<sup>th</sup>. Continued prosecution in the face of the facts can only be seen as a ploy to cover up for gross governmental misconduct and will represent an illegal and politically motivated “abuse of process”. In the interest of true justice, your office should bring charges against those police and parole officials responsible for police brutality and illegal misconduct.

On Nov. 30, African-American police brutality and anti-war activist Larry Hales was arrested after 10 police illegally broke into his home, physically attacked him and handcuffed his partner to a chair.

At the time of the police attack, Mr. Hales and his partner Ms. Kleinman were housing a survivor of police brutality who was on parole. The man had been shot in the back by police and had filed a civil case against the Aurora police department. Mr. Hales had previously agreed to house visits by the man's parole officer, but only when the man was home.

At 10:30 pm on November 30<sup>th</sup>, a “joint operation” of Denver police, loudly banged on the Hales home door in a most threatening manner. When Mr. Hales opened

the door the police claimed to be conducting a routine parole visit. Their actions proved otherwise. Mr. Hales told the officers that the parolee wasn't home. As was his right pursuant to Denver city ordinance, he requested the police identify themselves by producing their business cards. The police flatly refused. Mr. Hales told them that they didn't have permission to come in, and reiterated that the parolee was not home and that he wanted their cards. The police then violently forced their way in, pushing Mr. Hales out of the way.

The police proceeded to ransack the house. Mr. Hales and Ms. Klienman repeatedly objected to this violation of their rights. At one point when Mr. Hales expressed concern that his cats would escape, he was shoved and told to shut up in response to verbally asserting his rights. The police violently attacked him, twisting his arm, grabbing him by the back of the neck, ripping out several of his dreadlocks, throwing him against the wall, and tearing off his shirt. He was pushed down the stairs of his apartment building, against the wall and railings and out into the cold night with a half-ripped shirt, socks and thin sweat pants in the freezing night. In a violent show of illegal and unnecessary force, one officer squeezed his cuffs in a manner to inflict pain; while another threatened that more could be done stating that Mr. Hales could end up face down on the ground. Mr. Hales was then hit in the stomach and thrown into the car. The officers rolled the front windows down, left Mr. Hales in the car, telling him that he looked like he might hurt himself and that he would be booked as a "John Doe" and have to spend 72 hours in jail before anyone could find him. Several officers refused repeated request to loosen or remove his handcuffs or allow him to obtain clothing and shoes. He spent the night in a freezing jail cell.

I strongly believe that the attacks on Mr. Hales are politically motivated. They represent a serious attack against Denver's Communities of Color and an unjust effort to stifle political dissent. Police brutality is rampant in Denver, and this attack is part of the ongoing attacks on Black youth, from the Jena 6 to Sean Bell and countless cases of police brutality and repression throughout the country. Mr. Hales is a well-known and highly respected activist in the Denver area, and a leader against police brutality and for people's rights. He is also a principal organizer in the "Recreate 68 Committee", which is planning protests to counter the Democratic National Convention to be held in Denver in August.

The last Democratic National Convention was held in our city, Boston. As was the case with the Boston DNC, the eyes of the nation will be focused on Denver. The spotlight will be on actions both inside and outside the convention center. Denver's record regarding the denial of civil liberties, police and government misconduct and police brutality, the chilling of dissent will be issues of grave national concern.

Finally, in the interest of moral and legal justice I call upon you to drop the charges against Mr. Hales immediately and bring charges against those police and parole officials responsible for illegal and criminal misconduct on November 30, 2007.

Sincerely yours,

  
The Most Rev. Filipe C Teixeira, OFSJC

Cc: Judge Larry Bohning  
Mayor John Hickenlooper