STILL I RISE’ BY MAYA ANGELO

You may write me down in history
With your bitter, twisted lies,
You may trod me in the very dirt
But still, like dust, I’ll rise.

Does my sassiness upset you?
Why are you beset with gloom?
’Cause I walk like I’ve got oil wells
Pumping in my living room.

Just like moons and like suns,
With the certainty of tides,
Just like hopes springing high,
Still I’ll rise.

Did you want to see me broken?
Bowed head and lowered eyes?
Shoulders falling down like teardrops.
Weakened by my soulful cries.

Does my haughtiness offend you?
Don’t you take it awful hard
’Cause I laugh like I’ve got gold mines
Diggin’ in my own back yard.

You may shoot me with your words,
You may cut me with your eyes,
You may kill me with your hatefulness,
But still, like air, I’ll rise.

Does my sexiness upset you?
Does it come as a surprise
That I dance like I’ve got diamonds
At the meeting of my thighs?

Out of the huts of history’s shame
I rise
Up from a past that’s rooted in pain
I rise
I’m a black ocean, leaping and wide,
Welling and swelling I bear in the tide.
Leaving behind nights of terror and fear
I rise
Into a daybreak that’s wondrously clear
I rise
Bringing the gifts that my ancestors gave,
I am the dream and the hope of the slave.
I rise
I rise
I rise.

Black Lives Matter is an ideological and political intervention in a world where Black lives are systematically and intentionally targeted for demise. It is an affirmation of Black folks’ contributions to this society, our humanity, and our resilience in the face of deadly oppression. — Guiding Principles, #BLACKLIVESMATTER
"The FBI is using the actions of a lone gunman as a pretext to attack the Black Lives Matter movement," writes Mara Verheyden-Hilliard, constitutional rights litigator and executive director of the Partnership For Civil Justice Fund. The following content has been excerpted from Crackdown on Black Lives Matter Protesters, www.alternet.org/

"Last weekend, Baton Rouge’s African-American community was repeatedly assaulted by the police as people attempted to peacefully protest the killing of [Alton] Sterling. The Baton Rouge police were given the green light by President Obama’s FBI to approach this peaceful protest as they would an enemy force. This has been the dangerous pattern of the FBI and other federal law enforcement efforts in the past few years: to suppress social movements in coordination with local police departments…

"More than 100 peaceful protesters were arrested by police on Saturday. Police repeatedly swept into the crowd like a paramilitary force dressed as robots, giving no audible instructions and snatching people for arrest. More were arrested on Sunday by police who moved in wearing riot gear and plastic face masks, and banged their batons against riot shields in threatening unison.

"By 12am on Sunday, July 10, the city was under a virtual lockdown. Businesses closed down early in response to the police actions in the streets. Local law enforcement had clearly received the go-ahead to suppress those in the community who were demanding justice.

"The police treated Baton Rouge’s black community like an enemy rather than Americans exercising the cherished rights. President Obama spoke about the right to assemble and redress grievances, but the message that the protestors were the enemy was broadcast by the FBI [in a baseless document titled ‘Violence Against Law Enforcement Officers and Riots Planned for 8-10 July 2016’].

"The message of repression is clear: If you rise up and protest against police abuse in Baton Rouge, be prepared to go to jail, be assaulted, have to come up with hundreds of dollars in bail money, find a competent attorney, and then to go through the system and endure the consequences of having a record marked by arrest and possible conviction. Many individuals who don’t have the resources end up having to plead out and accept some fine, probation or even jail time…

"While the Justice Department and President Obama have repeatedly spoken of building unity between local police and the black community, and claim to be in favor of the right to dissent and protest, in practice the FBI, which is under their control, is ratcheting up tensions and laying the groundwork for repression.

"The pattern is clear: Federal and local law enforcement target the First Amendment protected activities of social justice movements because they pose a political threat, not a violent one. Regardless of the fact that the activities of these movements are constitutionally protected, U.S. domestic and federal law enforcement and intelligence agencies operate with a methodology that helps justify repression and a false media presentation. It also contributes to the right-wing and racist smear against the BLM movement amplified by talk radio and politicians.

"The people of this country should not allow the Dallas shootings, which local and federal law enforcement all agree were carried out by a deranged lone gunman, to be manipulated into an attack on the Black Lives Matter movement…

"No one should believe for a second that this vital tradition of protest is going to stop. On the contrary, it is growing. The question is whether the FBI and other federal government law enforcement agencies are going to use their vast authority and power to set up pretexts justifying one confrontation after another with grassroots movements seeking change... Such tactics will not succeed in extinguishing social movements, whose existence is caused by unmet needs, racial and economic disparities, and the absence of justice for so many.”

Today’s PEACE vigil sponsored by codepink4peace.org, sfbaycantwait.net and occupySF.net. Join us most Wednesdays, 5:30-6:30pm, McKesson (BART) Plaza, Montgomery & Market Street, San Francisco.