

The Militarization of the Police. Are We Living in A Police State?

By [Global Research News](#)

Global Research, October 21, 2013

[Top Criminal Justice Degrees](#)

Region: [USA](#)

Theme: [Police State & Civil Rights](#)

by **Amiya Fernando**

Are we living in a police state?

- There has been a 4000% increase in "no knock," militarily-armed swat team raids over the past thirty years.

- Mid 80's: 2,000-3,000 raids per year

- Present day: 80,000 raid estimate



Image source: www.topcriminaljusticedegrees.org

The editors at [Top Criminal Justice Degrees](#) decided to research the topic of:

The Militarization of the Police

Are we living in a police state?

- There has been a 4000% increase in "no knock," militarily-armed swat team raids over the past thirty years.

- Mid 80's: 2,000-3,000 raids per year[1]

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- Pros:

- -Element of Surprise

- -Suspect can't destroy evidence

- Cons:

- -Invasion of privacy

- -Seconds for suspect to decide if these or cops or break in.

- -Faulty intelligence

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Case Study

- Basics:[4]

- Ogden, Utah. 1/4/12 8:40 pm.

- Local swat team battered down Matthew David Stewart's door with no warning. Thinking his home was being invaded, Stewart readied his pistol.

- Stewart: 31 rounds fired
- Swat: 250 rounds fired
- Tip: Stewart's girlfriend saying he might be growing weed.
- Previous record: Clean, veteran.
- Result: 6 wounded swat. 1 killed. Stewart shot twice.
- Findings: 16 small pot plants. No intent to sell.
- Outcome: Upon losing hearing about search warrent legality. Stewart hangs himself in jail cell.

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And that's just one of potentially hundreds of similar tragedies.

- Spotlight: NY
- 1994: 1,447 swat style drug raids
- 2002: 5,117
- "I have my own army in the NYPD-the seventh largest army in the world." Michael Bloomberg

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- Swat Armament:[3]
- Submachine Guns
- Automatic Weapons
- Breaching Shotguns
- Sniper Rifles
- Stun Grenades
- Heavy Body Armor
- Motion Detectors
- Advanced Night Vision Wear
- Armored Personal Carriers
- "From the Gulf war to the drug war-Battle proven" Heckler and Koch's slogan for the M5[6]

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These "criminals" are heavily armed too, right?

- WRONG:
- [Weapon used in violent crime: %]
- Gun: 12.7%
- Knife: 10.1%
- Other: 12.1%
- Unknown weapon: 1.8%
- None: 55.8%
- Don't Know: 5.8%

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- **So how can we allow this? The fact is, we don't.**
- 1970: The "no-knock" law is passed with the beginning of the war on drugs.
- 1974: The law was repealed.
- Today: "No knock" happens ALL THE TIME.

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- **Leading to more and more unnecessary, intrusive, illegal, and deadly SWAT**

raids.

- Raids leading to civilian injuries, death, or intrusion of the privacy of innocents.
- While injuries from “no knock” raids have been around since the inception of the swat team. Paramilitary like brutality has become a feature of the increasing armed SWAT of the last 10 years.
- Using the military in civic life is like using a hammer when you need a butter knife. There’s bound to be collateral damage. It could happen to you, your neighbors, your friends, or your family.

Speak out against the militarization of the police.

Citations

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