

# Stop Police Terror!

## A.N.S.W.E.R. Condemns the LAPD Killing of Suzie Marie Peña

The A.N.S.W.E.R. Coalition (Act Now to Stop War & End Racism), Los Angeles, condemns unconditionally the LAPD for the brutal murder of Suzie Marie Peña, and all acts of racist brutality against the people of Los Angeles. We mourn her tragic death and send our condolences to her family. We demand that Mayor Villaraigosa and all city officials take immediate action to bring the officers involved in the murder of Suzie Marie Peña to justice.

The LAPD's trigger-happy conduct is an outrage. It seems that their official policy is "shoot to kill."

### Racist police violence is part of the system

The murder of Suzie Marie Peña comes on the heels of a long series of violent police attacks on the African American and Latino communities.

In May, 13 sheriff's deputies unleashed 120 bullets in a Compton neighborhood as they pursued **Winston Hayes**, an innocent Black man they claimed was involved in a crime. Last February, an LAPD officer shot 10 bullets into the back of 13-year-old **Devin Brown** in South Los Angeles, killing him instantly.

From these incidents, and countless others like them, it is clear that police brutality in the Los Angeles oppressed communities is the norm, and not the exception. This is the case not only in LA, but in poor communities across the nation. Such a widespread and consistent problem isn't caused by a handful of "bad cops."

Mayor Villaraigosa tries to excuse the officers who murdered Suzie Marie Peña by saying, "not a one of them went into that situation with the intent to hurt anyone." But cops are not in communities to "serve and protect" or to solve problems like drugs or crime. They exist to enforce the exploitation of oppressed communities in a deeply unequal system. They inflict violence and terrorize men, women and children. Police brutality is institutionalized and deeply entrenched in this society.

LAPD Chief William Bratton has promised an investigation into the murder, indicating it will take months or longer to find out what really happened. Meanwhile, he's busy blaming Suzie's murder on her father--calling him a "cold-blooded killer"--instead of pointing the finger at the cops who pulled the trigger. Neither Bratton nor any investigation can solve the problem that led to Suzie's death. Bratton is a racist apologist for police violence. The LAPD has a history of the most virulent racism among its ranks.

With the exoneration of the police in the long string of attacks and murders targeting the African American and Latino communities, the police have become emboldened. Whether it was the total acquittal of those who almost killed **Rodney King** or the unpunished murder of Devin Brown, there is every reason for oppressed communities to believe that the police have a license to kill.

### Stand with the African American and Latino communities

Residents in the Watts community are justifiably angry. Many are coming out to denounce police brutality and Suzie Marie Peña's murder. After the shooting, Suzie's mother said, "I don't want an apology. I want justice."

Each night this week, starting on Tuesday, an increasingly large group of protestors has gathered at the corner of 104th St. and Avalon Blvd. On Thursday night, more than 200 people, mostly African American and Latino youth, demonstrated in a united, militant show of force against the police. Many have pledged to come back.

It is so important that the people stay united to demand justice. We in the A.N.S.W.E.R. Coalition-LA stand with you. We join with you to demand justice and an end to racist police violence.

Fighting against racism and police brutality must be a top priority for the anti-war movement and all progressive organizations. At the upcoming September 24 march and rally in LA against the racist war and occupation of Iraq, A.N.S.W.E.R. will march with tens of thousands of people to also say "stop racist violence and police terror!"

**Write an e-mail or contact Mayor Villaraigosa and LAPD Chief Bratton to express your outrage at the murder of Suzie Marie Peña and to demand justice.**

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