

Los Angeles police kill second man in two days

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5 October 2016

Los Angeles police fatally shot a young man near the intersection of 48th Street and Ascot Avenue late Sunday afternoon, around 4:40 p.m. Officers claimed that the man pointed a fake pistol at them, prompting them to open fire. The young man, unidentified at the time of writing, was the second killed by Los Angeles police in a 28-hour period last weekend.

The officers were responding to calls about a man with a handgun and encountered two men in the area, between the ages of 18 and 22, one of whom supposedly matched the description. Chief of Police Charlie Beck said that body-camera video “clearly supports” police accounts that the officers attempted to communicate with the youths and that the victim pointed a fake pistol at the officers.

According to police accounts, the victim was hit by one bullet and died at a local hospital. The second youth was taken into police custody and has since been released. The Los Angeles Police Department has neither released any video nor identified the officers involved. At the time of writing, the victim has been described by police only as Latino.

Tiffany Peterson, a resident of the area, told the *Los Angeles Times* that police had opened fire without warning and denied that the young man had pointed anything at the officers. “He had his arms to the side when they jumped out,” she said. “They jumped out of the car and they didn’t tell him to freeze or nothing. They just shot him. The police officer in front of him shot him one time. He fell on the ground and then the officer that was in front of him took two steps and shot him three more times.” Peterson said that she hadn’t given her account to the police because she feared police retaliation. Some of the bullets struck a nearby elementary school.

The victim was killed just a day after 18-year-old

Carnell Snell, Jr. was fatally shot by Los Angeles police about eight miles away, near 108th Street and Western Avenue. To quell popular anger over his death, the LAPD released surveillance video Monday from a strip mall, taken of Snell shortly before the shooting. The video shows Snell dashing to the storefront parking spaces, cautiously glancing from behind a parked station wagon, and tucking what police claim is a pistol into his trousers. Snell then ran off, and shoppers calmly resumed their business. A police officer can be seen chasing after Snell.

Explaining the department’s decision to release the video, Beck claimed “dueling narratives further divide the community” and blamed the breakdown of the public’s trust in the LAPD on the widespread knowledge of police killings across the country. “We have all seen police-involved shootings that defy justification in other municipalities ... I think that affects what happens on the streets of Los Angeles.”

The video does not include the actual shooting of Snell, but it does show that he put his gun—if that’s what the object was—into his pocket, rather than brandishing it or taking aim at the police who were pursuing him. Beck said that a pistol found near the young man’s body was fully loaded, meaning that it had not been fired.

The LAPD claims that none of the officers involved in Snell’s death was equipped with a body camera. Witnesses told the local television station KCAL that Snell had his hands up and was asking police not to shoot him when they opened fire. The two killings have sparked protests throughout the city, with police making arrests on Sunday evening near the site of Snell’s death and Monday morning at a Police Commission hearing and press conference at the LAPD’s downtown headquarters.

The LAPD's release of the surveillance video of Snell follows a similar release of videos by the Sacramento Police Department (SPD) of the killing of 51-year-old Joseph Mann. On the morning of July 11, Mann, homeless and mentally ill, was shot 14 times while fleeing from police. The SPD released the videos after the *Sacramento Bee* published cellphone video that exposed the official police lie that Mann had charged at police officers with a blade. According to police reports, the "weapon" was four inches long.

The dashboard videos show the police officers in one car attempting to ram Mann with their vehicle. The conversation between the two officers, John Tennis and Randy Loyozza, was recorded. "Fuck this guy. I'm gonna hit him," declares the driver. "OK go for it, go for it," responds his partner. After nearly hitting him, the driver assures his partner that "We'll get him" and both officers leave the car to pursue Mann on foot. Mann can be heard screaming as he is shot outside of a store front. In the aftermath of the shooting, Tennis and Loyozza were placed on desk duty.

Mann's family is calling for murder charges against Tennis and Loyozza. The two have over 25 years combined experience as police officers. Mann's brother Robert, speaking to the press on Monday, wondered aloud in how many cases "they've gotten away with this because there was no video camera. There was no proof. But we have proof."



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