

Demolishing lying police claims

Video shows Uvalde, Texas, police were armed and on scene within 9 minutes of gunman entering school

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The first image that has been begrudgingly publicly released from inside Robb Elementary School, the site of last month's horrific massacre in Uvalde, Texas, which left 19 children and two teachers dead, has obliterated police claims that they were unable to respond faster to the mass killing in progress because they lacked the proper equipment.

The image, taken from school security camera, revealed that not only were multiple police officers inside the school within 10 minutes of the gunman entering; they were equipped with semi-automatic rifles and a ballistic shield.

Even the lowest rated ballistic shields provide some protection against small arms fire, such as from a 9 mm pistol. However, many police departments opt for shields which are rated to stop 5.56 mm rounds, the ammunition used by the shooter and by all AR-15 style rifles, the civilian version of the US military's M-16 rifle.

The image, which was first made public by the *Austin Statesman* Monday night, shows that police were inside the elementary school at 11:52 a.m, which is 9 minutes after police said the shooter entered either Classroom 111 or 112, and 19 minutes after he entered the school. It would be another 58 minutes until cops claimed they entered the classroom and killed Ramos. It is still not known at this time how many children and teachers died because police refused to enter the classroom and confront the shooter sooner.

In the still image, two police are seen wielding semi-

automatic rifles with 30-round magazines, the same weapon configuration as the shooter, 18-year-old Salvador Ramos. The photo shows that at least five cops are in the hallway, meaning the cops had at least a 5-to-1 advantage on the shooter and more than enough manpower to "stack up" outside the door and "clear" the room, a basic close quarters combat tactic taught in every police and prison training academy in the United States.

That the police did not do this further exposes their class role. Their purpose is not to "serve and protect" the entire population but rather to defend the interests of the wealthy and the power of the capitalist state. President Joe Biden, Congress and the Democratic and Republican parties, when they speak of "law and order," do not seek to protect ordinary people from violence but to enforce the private property rights of the ruling class.

The fact that police had, in the words of one investigator quoted by the *Texas Tribune*, "more than enough firepower" to take on the gunman is just the latest development in a series of slow-drip revelations to emerge in the past week. There is no doubt that this footage has been in possession of the police from the outset of the "investigation."

That it was released now, after all the funerals had been held in Uvalde over the last 21 days, is part of police and government attempts to conceal the full extent of their complicity in the massacre until, they hope, massive social anger has subsided. There is no doubt that the ongoing "investigation" into the police response is in fact a massive cover-up that extends throughout the entire

Texas police apparatus, and the state and federal governments.

In another stunning revelation exposing police deceptions, this past Saturday multiple news agencies, citing unnamed sources close to the ongoing “investigation,” revealed that once Ramos entered the school at approximately 11:33 a.m., not a single cop tried to open the door to the joined classrooms where he was conducting his killings until an ad hoc Border Patrol team shot and killed Ramos at, allegedly, 12:50 p.m.

This is in contrast to claims made by the “incident commander,” Chief Pete Arredondo of the Uvalde Consolidated Independent School District Police, who said in an interview with the *Texas Tribune* on June 9 that he and another cop had tried to enter Classrooms 111 and 112. In the interview Arredondo, who has shunned nearly all interviews and questions since the massacre, said that both doors were locked, which prevented them from entering sooner.

This was part of the false narrative put forward by police that they were unable to get inside the classroom sooner because Ramos had “barricaded” himself inside.

ABC News reported on Sunday that “surveillance footage showed that neither Arredondo nor any other officers taking cover in the hallway outside the classrooms ever attempted to open the door before receiving the keys to the two connecting classrooms.” Furthermore, once Arredondo received the keys, he apparently did not try them on either of the two classroom doors where Ramos was, instead opting for a “safer” location farther away. This was done, apparently, in the hopes of finding a “master key” that would open the likely already unlocked door.

Arredondo, in what is now known to be a lie, said in the interview with the *Texas Tribune* that the classroom door was “reinforced with a hefty steel jamb,” which allegedly prevented police from kicking the door down. Of course, one cannot kick a door down without first lifting one’s foot.

The same source confirmed with ABC that “investigators” now believe that Ramos could *not* have locked the door from inside the classroom, as has been repeated for nearly a month by police officials, including

Arredondo, and Texas Department of Safety Director Steve McCraw. In a previous interview with ABC News, Robb Elementary School teacher Arnulfo Reyes, who was severely wounded in the massacre and witnessed all of his students murdered by Ramos, said that prior to the shooting he made the school principal aware that the lock to his door to Room 111 did not latch properly.

“When that would happen, I would tell my principal, ‘Hey, I’m going to get in trouble again, they’re going to come and tell you that I left my door unlocked, which I didn’t,’” Reyes said in the June 9 interview with Amy Robach. “But the latch was stuck. So, it was just an easy fix.”

Furthermore, the *Houston Chronicle*, citing another “source” close to the investigation, said that in addition to police having access to a ballistic shield, and high-powered rifles, they also had a Halligan bar, commonly used by firefighters to open locked doors, which could have easily breached the classroom door without a key.

In an effort to keep further images from emerging which would no doubt expose more police lies and cowardice, the City of Uvalde, in conjunction with the Texas Department of Public Safety, the U.S. Marshals Service and Governor Greg Abbott’s office, have asked state Attorney General Ken Paxton to block the public release of police body camera footage from the school.

In a letter to Paxton requesting the footage not be released, the Texas Department of Safety said that releasing the footage could expose “weaknesses” in the police response. Similarly, a private lawyer for the city of Uvalde, Cynthia Trevino, wrote in another letter to Paxton that some of the footage contains “highly embarrassing information” that may cause “emotional/mental distress,” according to *Vice*.



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