

# LAPD Murders Again — Basta Ya! No More! Justice for Manuel Jamines



Los Angeles, September 7, 2010.



Manuel Jamines

It's one o'clock on a warm September 5 afternoon in the immigrant neighborhood of Pico Union. In this area's Westlake district, at the corner of 6th and Union streets, the sidewalks are bustling with vendors, shoppers and children playing in this very densely populated part of Los Angeles. Among them is Manuel Jamines, a 37-year-old day laborer from Guatemala. Today, his footing is a bit wobbly, his reaction time a bit slowed by a few beers earlier that morning. Afterwards, some said they had seen Manuel holding on to a fence to steady himself as three menacing LAPD bicycle cops approached him.

Just forty seconds later, he was dead. LAPD cop Frank Hernandez had shot Manuel twice in the head. It was at such close range that one witness recounted how his blood splashed all the way across the street to where she stood. The cops handcuff his lifeless corpse and threw a white sheet over it. And for four more hours, his blood-soaked body lay in the hot sun. Like a dead animal.

It was just too much of a provocation for the people of Pico Union to stomach, causing people to rebel in the streets for the next three days and nights.

After the shooting of Manuel, an outraged crowd pressed up against the yellow crime scene tape, some shouting "Asesinos!" "Murderers!" "We are not animals! We are human beings." "Justicia!" One newspaper reported someone yelling, "You guys don't have the right to come into our neighborhood and assassinate people."

From the morning into late night of Monday, September 6, people's anger against this outrage boiled over in the streets with shouts of "justice for Manuel Jamines." Repeatedly, hundreds would gather at the spot of his murder; it became the site of an ongoing vigil. Men and women took turns speaking bitterly about how the cops treat the people of Pico Union, how routinely and constantly the cops terrorize residents, macing vendors in their face, confiscating and throwing their food products in the trash, issuing tickets they cannot pay. People repeatedly marched from the vigil site to the nearby Rampart police station and back. This whole scene lasted for two more days.

People took to the streets. Over the course of three days, the whole neighborhood was alive with defiance and resistance against this injustice. There were moments of exhilaration where people who yesterday had been fearful of simply being noticed by cops demanding documents now stood up proudly with dignity and humanity. They marched fearlessly up to the hated Rampart station and pressed signs and banners of "We are all Manuel Jamines" onto the glass front doors. Local TV and newspapers reported that police were pelted with eggs, trash dumpsters rolled down the streets, and garbage was thrown from rooftops and upstairs windows onto streets below. By midweek, Google news showed about 600 news items of the uprising in Pico Union from the U.S. and around the world, from China to Mexico, Canada to Lebanon, from Kentucky to Minnesota, New York to Nevada.

Stunned by the intensity and sustained nature of this mass resistance, the authorities reacted with even more LAPD pouring into the streets and occupying Pico Union. Riot police massed in the hundreds and shot tear gas and rubber bullets as helicopters hovered, with their loudspeakers blaring "by police code, this is an illegal gathering and you are ordered to disperse." Someone yelled back in Spanish: "By what police code do you shoot down an innocent man?" One woman shouted at the cops, "Violadores! Rapists! You rape undocumented women!" Another, holding a picture of Manuel, stuck it in each cop's face, demanding they look at whom they had murdered. "We are human beings!" Mothers laughed together with their adolescent daughters as people taunted the police.

Nearly 30 people were arrested, many charged with refusing to disperse, inciting to riot, or assaulting police. The *L.A. Times* wrote on September 14 that over a dozen may be charged as city officials review police reports, news video footage, and "witness accounts" to build cases against protesters. There are stories that some of the arrested had been turned over to ICE and face deportation.

A community meeting was called by LAPD Chief Charlie Beck four days after the police shot Jamines. Over 400 people attended. As soon as Beck took the microphone, shouts of "Justice!" "Justicia!" and booing arose loudly in the room, drowning him out more than once. Hundreds marched again in the streets after the meeting.

People angrily demanded Beck explain why the police killed Jamines. Some challenged the police story as "made up in Hollywood" with its exaggerated photos of a six-inch knife that Manuel supposedly had. A witness said she had immediately told

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It is up to us: to wake up...to shake off the ways they put on us, the ways they have us thinking so they can keep us down and trapped in the same old rat-race...to rise up, as conscious Emancipators of Humanity. **The days when this system can just keep on doing what it does to people, here and all over the world...when people are not inspired and organized to stand up against these outrages and to build up the strength to put an end to this madness...those days must be GONE. And they CAN be.**

**From: "The Revolution We Need... The Leadership We Have"  
A Message, And A Call, From The Revolutionary Communist Party, USA**