



From Eugene E Ruyle, President
Veterans for Peace, East Bay Chapter #162

March 26, 2015

Mayor Tom Butt <tom.butt@intres.com>
Vice Mayor Jovanka Beckles <jovanka_beckles@ci.richmond.ca.us>
Councilmember Nathaniel Bates <natbates@comcast.net>
Councilmember Eduardo Martinez <eduardo_martinez@ci.richmond.ca.us>
Councilmember Gayle McLaughlin <gayle@definingourdestiny.net>
Councilmember Jael Myrick <jael_myrick@ci.richmond.ca.us>
Councilmember Vinay Pimple <vinay_pimple@ci.richmond.ca.us>

RE: Justice for Richard “Pedie” Perez

To: Mayor Butt and Members of the Richmond City Council

Veterans for Peace, East Bay Chapter #162, endorsed the recent (March 14) “Justice for Pedie” demonstration organized by the Oscar Grant Committee Against Police Brutality and State Repression on behalf of the Perez family.

Veterans for Peace is an international organization committed to work non-violently for the abolishment of war. While our central focus is foreign wars, we have increasingly become concerned about what seems to be a war inside our borders, against working class, poor, and minority Americans. Our National Office is in St Louis, MO, and is deeply involved in the social and political ferment arising out of the shooting of Michael Brown in Ferguson.

We are concerned not only because so many veterans have been killed at the hands of police, but also by the increasing use of police violence and the militarization of police forces around the country. About one thousand people have been killed by police in the past two years. It doesn’t have to be this way. In Great Britain, British police only fired their guns four times in the last two years, and no one was killed. Police killings are overwhelmingly an American problem, and it has to stop.

Richmond is not Ferguson. The Richmond Police Department has become a national model for reducing violence in American cities. That is why it is particularly important

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that the people of Richmond are assured that the Pedie Perez shooting is handled properly and that there be no cover-up in this case.

We look to the Richmond City Council to provide the public with a full accounting of the investigations of the Pedie Perez case by the Richmond Police Department, the Contra Costa County District Attorney, and the County Coroner's Office. We understand from news reports that these agencies have finished their investigations and that the officer involved, Wallace Jensen, is not facing any criminal charges or disciplinary action at this time.

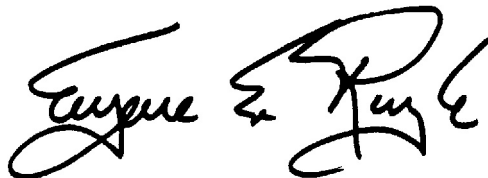
Yet questions remain. We understand, from news reports and our own work within the community, that eyewitnesses do not corroborate the police version. We also know that there are videos that have not been released. Although Police Chief Chris Magnus has promised "transparency and openness" in this case, this standard has not been met.

We ask that the Richmond City Council look more deeply into this issue and make public, not only whatever official reports have been provided, but also the evidence which these investigations considered, including the following:

1. the surveillance videos provided by Uncle Sam's Liquor,
2. the cell phone video taken by a witness,
3. the police interviews of eyewitnesses, including but not limited to Mohammad Delik and Steve Clark,
4. the reports of the officers involved, including that of Officer Wallace Jensen,
5. any departmental regulations on Officer Involved Shootings and related use of weapons and their legal basis.

We understand that some City Council members, and some Richmond residents, may be reluctant to question the police handling of this case. Yet the truth will emerge only through asking these kinds of tough questions. Chief Magnus has promised a full and fair investigation, and that is what we are requesting.

For peace and justice,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Eugene E. Ruyle". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "E" and "R".

Eugene E Ruyle, President
East Bay Chapter #162
Veterans for Peace

NOTE: This is essentially what I wanted to say when I addressed the Richmond City Council during the Public Comment period on March 14, 2015. I apologize for not being fully prepared for the brief time allotted.