

CAPA sees the necessity not only of organizing against police abuse, but also for educating our communities about the link between increases in police abuse and the growing economic crisis taking place globally and in the United States. If workers strike for higher wages and representation, who is called out? The police. If you can't pay the rent and refuse to leave your home and move into the streets, who is called out? The police. And if you organize demonstrations against a corrupt and unjust system, government complicity in drug dealing, or mass imprisonment and welfare cuts, who is called out? **THE POLICE** -- whether with armed force or as disruptive undercover spies! CAPA understands that the police and their abusive methods are necessary elements in maintaining a system controlled by a few billionaires and politicians who put profits before people.

Some notorious examples of police crime include the murder of Eula Love, the beating of Rodney King, the torture of Abner Louima, the police killings of Johnny Gammage in Pittsburgh and Malice Green in Detroit. These are a few among thousands of less notorious but no less criminal cases -- beating deaths, choke-hold deaths, pepper spray deaths, hog-tie deaths, and deaths in custody that require the standard cover-up by cops, jailers and prison guards: "We didn't kill him, he committed suicide." It is these types of crimes CAPA is committed to organizing against until justice is achieved.

We've won some interim victories, like the prosecution and conviction of a handful of the officers who have carried out these crimes. We have exposed organized gangs of vigilantes and white racists inside the LAPD and Sheriff's Department. We won the requirement that all LAPD officers must carry business cards and give them to everybody they stop. The cards, adopted after pressure by CAPA and other community groups, carries the officer's name, division, and commander's phone number. If you

don't get one in an encounter with the police, get their car number and note the location and time, call us at 323-733-2107, and we'll follow up.

Unity and vigilance are critical in resisting police abuse. When you're on the streets and witness police abuse, note the date, time, and location, get the car number and ask for their business cards. If they refuse, inform them that you will call CAPA. This is important, because the police will often cover their abuse with charges of assault on an officer against the victim of their brutality. Our strength is in our unity. Victims of police abuse need independent witnesses to corroborate their experience, so don't hesitate to do what has to be done, and call CAPA.

### IS A CITIZEN'S OR CIVILIAN REVIEW BOARD THE ANSWER?

In response to police abuse, CAPA began to investigate the successes and failures of "citizen complaint review" boards set up in several cities. Our research covered more than 18 cities where such boards existed. What we found was failure by the boards to deal with the problem.

Even in cities with "civilian review", there's an atmosphere of distrust on the part of the people. Why was this so? In most cases, the boards lacked real power, or failed to confront the police on their controversial policies and structure, even while they were being hyped as the solution to the community's problems with the police. Many of the boards were only advisory, and acted as rubber stamps for internal police whitewashes and cover-ups.

This research led CAPA to identify several key characteristics of effective community control of the police, through a change in the city charter:

The board members should be elected independently, salaried, and full-time. The board will not only judge complaints such as excessive force, evidence tampering, spying, and civil rights violations, but have the power to review and alter police procedures and policies in those areas. The Board should have the power to discipline or even fire officers who abuse their authority, and must have its own staff of investigators with subpoena powers and immediate unrestricted access to shooting and beating sites. Finally, the Board must be supplemented by an elected Special Prosecutor (independent of the DA or City Attorney's office) to handle criminal charges against police officers.

### YOU CAN SUE THE POLICE!

But remember, even though such an elected Board and Special Prosecutor don't exist yet, you already have the right to file criminal charges against abusive police officers, and to file claims for civil damages (a cash penalty) against the city of Los Angeles or other jurisdictions. While even the most successful suits are no substitute for an organized community mobilization to end police crimes, imagine the impact on the City Council and the residents of having thousands of cases go to court and millions of dollars being paid out to victims of police abuse.

You have exactly 180 days from the date of the incident to file such a claim or you will lose your right to sue.

The forms you need to file a claim for damages because of police abuse can be picked up at the City Clerk's office and/or the Hall of Administration for Los Angeles County.

If you receive a negative reply from the city or county to your claim, then you can officially file suit in a court of law -- but you must file the claim first, and have it denied, before you can sue.

In addition, don't forget to file a report with the CAPA Police Complaint Bureau. Many complaints made directly to the police are simply ignored. Often, we are even harassed while making a complaint at a police station.

## CAPA COMPLAINT BUREAU

To help you overcome such problems, CAPA formed its own complaint bureau. We have files on thousands of officers who have had various complaints and charges leveled at them by community people. We can help make formal complaints to the appropriate agencies. Again, such a program cannot take the place of an organized mass movement to hold the police accountable for their crimes against the people. But it can help unite our forces and build such a movement.

According to Michael Zinzun, co-founder and research coordinator of CAPA:

*"[I]t has been the unwritten policy and practice of the LAPD to stop, detain and harass Black and Latino males in the inner city without cause or provocation. I base this judgment on the many complaints filed daily with the CAPA office, on the citizen complaints received by the Police Watch Lawyer Referral Service, on the LAPD's own internal affairs records which show more than 11,000 complaints against over 13,000 sworn and civilian police personnel, as well as on reports by Amnesty International, the ACLU, the Christopher Commission and Judge Kolts, and on testimony taken by the Congressional Black Caucus."*

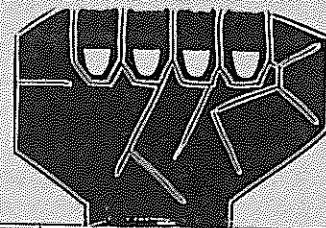
Only a mass mobilization and movement can put an end to this pattern of abuse.

Coalition Against Police Abuse (CAPA)  
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*"We Wont Struggle For Ya,  
But We Will Struggle Witcha."*

**COALITION  
AGAINST  
POLICE  
ABUSE**



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ABUSE**

All Power  
To The People

The Coalition Against Police Abuse (CAPA) was formed in 1976 in response to a wave of police shootings, beatings and harassment. CAPA's membership is drawn from the Black and Latino communities, workers' organizations, churches, the gay community, the women's movement, and concerned individuals. CAPA believes that the reign of terror by the LAPD, and by police and sheriff's departments across the country -- including the FBI, CIA, and INS -- must be opposed. This means mobilizing and uniting a wide base of forces into a mass movement against police abuse.

### Mobilizing a Mass Movement

CAPA is committed to calling attention to the many instances of police abuse, and bringing public pressure to bear in obtaining justice. We want to educate people about our human and constitutional rights, train new leadership so that people can unite to defend themselves and their democratic rights from further attack, and unite as many people and organizations as possible from all races and nationalities so that in our numbers we will have the unity and strength to defend our homes, families and human rights. We intend to mobilize, rely on, and give concrete direction to the people in our communities to stand up for their rights against police harassment, beatings, racist insults and murders.