



# Marine Is Suspect In Ceres Police Officer Killing

## *Second Officer Critically Wounded; Suspect Killed*

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**CERES, Calif.** -- A veteran police sergeant has been killed in an ambush shooting at a Northern California liquor store, according to authorities. They say the suspect is a Marine who may not have wanted to return to the front lines in Iraq.



The incident began about 8 p.m. when, according to authorities, the gunman told a store clerk at George's Liquors in Ceres that he was shot at, and that the clerk should call police.

Authorities said when the officers arrived, they were confronted by a man armed with an assault rifle who opened fire. Sgt. Howard Stevenson was killed. Officer Sam Ryno was hit several times and taken to an area hospital, where he was reported in critical condition.



"By all appearances, the shooting of these officers was premeditated, planned. It was an ambush," said Ceres Police Chief Art DeWerk. It shows extreme violence, and it shows just how aggressive this shooter was in attacking these selfless officers."

Police said the suspect, 19-year-old Andres Raya (pictured, right) fled into a nearby neighborhood and was holed up in a home for a short time before coming out and opening fire on officers again. Police returned fire, killing Raya.

Raya was a U.S. Marine who had completed a seven-month tour in Iraq. On leave from Camp Pendleton, Raya spent the holidays with his family and returned to the camp on Saturday, according to authorities. By Sunday, police say, he had returned to the Ceres area, where he ambushed the police officers. He was expected to head back to Iraq soon.

"In speaking with the family, they conveyed to us that their son did not desire to return to Iraq," said Stanislaus County Sheriff's Department spokesman Lt. Bill Heyne.