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I dedicate this dissertation in memory of my sister Debby.
WILLIAM H. PARKER AND THE THIN BLUE LINE: POLITICS, PUBLIC RELATIONS AND POLICING IN POSTWAR LOS ANGELES

By

Alisa Sarah Kramer

ABSTRACT

This dissertation is an analysis of the power of the chief of police in postwar Los Angeles, his use of politics and public relations, and the consequences of police reforms he instituted in the Los Angeles Police Department. The political dimensions of the tenure of Chief William H. Parker, who served from 1950 to 1966, are part of a much larger story about the chief's career — his local and national reputations, and how he influenced the city's race relations with the police department. Parker exerted extraordinary influence on the LAPD and the city of Los Angeles because he took advantage of decentralized city government and life tenure to wield uncontested power over elected and appointed officials. At the same time he used public relations brilliantly to draw attention to himself as a pioneer in postwar police reform and to his department as a model of professional policing. An analysis of Parker's tenure provides an understanding of the LAPD's turbulent history, its contentious relations with minorities, its extensive coverage by the media and its popularity with the entertainment industry. Such an analysis can also provide an understanding of Los Angeles municipal government, the city's politics and the local press at mid-century.

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Because no biography of Parker exists, an analysis of his tenure as chief is woven into a narrative of his life. Parker came to Los Angeles as a young man in the early 1920s from Lead, South Dakota, where he was raised a Catholic and embraced a strict code of ethics. As a police officer advancing through the ranks, Parker maintained his distance from a corrupt police culture where officers routinely beat suspects and engaged in graft in alcohol, prostitution and vice.

During the first two years as chief, Parker transformed the LAPD into a modern organization with professional officers, weakened the Police Commission as an oversight board and cultivated the city's business leaders to form a strong base of support which lasted throughout his sixteen years in office. He used his bully pulpit to praise his officers, and warn the public of the communist menace and lax morality which would hasten the downfall of western civilization. Only the police, he argued, could maintain democracy and the social order. Despite his political skills, however, he could not suppress racial tensions that dogged him throughout his tenure. As civil rights leaders and their supporters challenged Parker on the conduct of his officers, he demonized his opponents and accused them of communism, undermining police morale and threatening American democracy.

When race riots exploded in August, 1965, they doomed his career and his reputation. He died in office at sixty-four the following year. He left a legacy of increasing tensions and abuse of the chief's power. When the city again exploded in violence in 1992, his legacy ended when voters abolished life tenure, and forced the retirement of the current chief who had modeled his own career after Parker's.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Many people helped me to complete this dissertation. During my research phase, Jeff Rankin and Octavio Olvera in Special Collections at UCLA's Young Research Library, Dace Taube at USC's Special Collections, David Kessler at University of California, Berkeley's Bancroft Library and Jay Jones at the Los Angeles City Archives made available oral histories, files of newspaper articles and manuscript collections. John Donovan shared with me his FBI file on Parker and his article on the feud between the chief and J. Edgar Hoover.

Many elected officials, civic leaders and legal experts added to my research. David Cunningham, Jr., Rosalind Wyman and Zev Yaroslavsky contributed their observations on communications between the LAPD and city council members. The late Otis Chandler shared with me his experience as publisher of the Los Angeles Times during the 1960s. Warren Christopher explained the differences between the responsibilities and findings of the McCone Commission and the Christopher Commission. Professor Erwin Chereminsky, Judge Stephen Reinhardt and attorney Michael Narvid discussed the limits of police reform, the power of the department in manipulating local politics, and Parker's own professional limits.

My understanding of the LAPD during the Parker years was enhanced by conversations with retired police chief Bernard Parks and retired Deputy Chief David Gascon. Retired Deputy Chief David Dotson spent hours with me on details of Parker's
tenure including the consequences of his legacy. An interview with retired Chief Patrick Murphy gave me insight into the national reputation Parker earned as a postwar police reformer.

Professors in political science and social policy provided useful background. Raphael Sonenshein and the late Eric Monkkonen spoke with me about local politics, the mystique of Dragnet and the limits of Hoover's campaign against organized crime.

Reporters, editors and political managers added their expertise. Bill Boyarsky, Joe Domanick, Jack Langguth, and Bill Thomas shared with me their knowledge of police politics and the political climate of the 1950s. Frank Mankiewicz provided a history of grass roots politics in Los Angeles and facilitated my interview with Mr. Chandler.

Professors on my dissertation committee were generous with advice. Michael Kazin suggested pursuing the connection between the LAPD and the conservative movement, and Brian Forst suggested useful readings on policing and a theoretical framework for Parker's police reforms. Kimberly Sims read my revisions carefully and directed me to deepen my analysis. My advisor, Robert Griffith, defined the standards for academic scholarship and helped me shape the dissertation.

Jerry and Ruby Bubis opened their home to me for two summers, and Vanessa Schwartz and Rebecca Isaacs opened theirs to me for a third. I am grateful to Stanley Sheinbaum for facilitating contact with David Dotson and David Gascon, and to Professor Pamela Nadell and Ed Farber for suggesting that I write about the LAPD. My family gave me all the support I could ask for, especially my parents. My sister Debby died as I pursued my PhD and it is in her memory that I dedicate this dissertation.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT ........................................................................................................................................ ii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS ................................................................................................................ iv

Chapter

1. INTRODUCTION ....................................................................................................................... 1
2. PARKER’S EARLY CAREER ........................................................................................................... 12
3. PARKER PROFESSIONALIZES THE LAPD ................................................................................ 44
4. PARKER CONFRONTS HIS CHALLENGERS .................................................................................. 105
5. A CONSERVATIVE IN A CHANGING CITY ................................................................................ 160
6. THE CHIEF CONFRONTS THE CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT ...................................................... 219
7. THE CITY EXPLODES ............................................................................................................... 269
8. EPILOGUE .................................................................................................................................. 324

BIBLIOGRAPHY ............................................................................................................................. 340
CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

In the spring of 1991, videotapes of Los Angeles Police Department officers beating motorist Rodney King horrified the city and the nation. A year later, rioting broke out after a jury acquitted the officers, resulting in fifty-four deaths and destruction of over $900 million in property. Twenty-seven years after the Watts riots, Angelenos again grappled with violence in South Central Los Angeles. Chief Daryl F. Gates had ample time to prepare for civil unrest, but ignored the advice of his subordinates to coordinate plans throughout the department.¹ For the second time since 1965 a Los Angeles police chief failed tragically to respond to the anger of residents towards police abuse.

The conduct of police officers in Los Angeles has been riddled with controversy in the postwar era, especially since the appointment of William H. Parker as chief in 1950. That year Parker initiated a program to train recruits to enforce the law equally yet act aggressively to prevent crimes. He defended his new method of pro-active policing in the service of crime prevention, but critics and victims complained that the methods abused minority residents and fomented racial tensions.² He fought critics of his methods throughout his career and vigorously opposed any effort to change his policies.


The LAPD occupies a special place in the history of modern urban policing, not only for its tragic history of riots but also for its profound impact on postwar police reform. Within the first two years of his tenure as chief, Parker transformed the LAPD by professionalizing his department and modernizing police administration. He was the first chief of a big city police department in the postwar years to establish rigorous standards for hiring, training and promotion, and to significantly reduce corruption and incompetence. To promote his new department Parker waged an ambitious public relations campaign, calling attention to himself as well as his officers. By the mid-1950s, Parker's LAPD became a model of successful postwar police reform, motivating police chiefs across the country to adopt his reforms.

When Parker planned his agenda as chief, he drew on over fifty years of police reform, during which members of commissions and civic organizations had called for higher standards in law enforcement to combat corruption from graft, vice and political influence. As early as the mid-nineteenth century, residents became increasingly

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4 O. W. Wilson was one of several chiefs to follow Parker's model when he became Commissioner of the Chicago Police Department in 1960. See George L. Mosse, ed., Police Forces in History (Beverly Hills, CA: Sage Publications, 1977), 301-02. Though I concentrate on Parker in this dissertation, he was one of several postwar police reformers, including

5 The first official body to investigate police corruption and incompetence was the Lexow Committee in New York, which issued a report in 1895 and influenced subsequent investigations into police malpractice. See Fogelson, Big City Police, 1-6. In his book, Fogelson divides police reform into roughly two periods: 1890-1930 and 1950-1960. In Critical History of Police Reform, Samuel Walker divides police reform into periods of approximately twenty years distinguished by professionalism, crime commissions and waging war on crime.
intolerant of riots and disorder that accompanied the rise in population of large urban areas, and demanded that uniformed police patrol cities to keep them safe and orderly.6

From the late 1890s to the early twentieth century, civic leaders and elected officials in other cities came to see that police reform was necessary to maintain order. They formed civic organizations and crime commissions to identify problems in policing and recommend solutions.7 Police executives such as August Vollmer, chief of the Berkeley, California, police department; New York Police Commissioner Major Arthur Woods; and Raymond Fosdick, an authority on American and European policing, developed new ideas for effective law enforcement in modern American cities.8 The most serious problem at the time was the corrosive influence of political machines on law enforcement. Many commissioners, civic leaders and police professionals concluded that separating politics from policing would strengthen law enforcement and restore urban order.9

In 1916, Vollmer pioneered a professional model of policing based on the idea of crime prevention.10 Vollmer wanted to raise the stature of police to equal that of such

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7Fogelson, Big City Police, 44-49.

8Ibid., 51, 74.

9Ibid., 74-75.

10The idea of crime prevention in policing was evident as early as the 1890s. See Monkkonen, "History of Urban Police," 554. Vollmer served as police chief in Berkeley from 1909 to 1932, and as a lecturer at the University of California, Berkeley. During 1923 to 1924 he served as chief in the LAPD. See Gene E. Carte and Elaine H. Carte, Police Reform in the United States: The Era of August Vollmer (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1975), 2, 28, 125-26.
new professions as engineers, librarians, nurses and social workers.\textsuperscript{11} He sought to increase effectiveness by creating rigorous standards for selecting and training police officers independent of politicians, formalizing training in an academy and in affiliation with nearby colleges and universities, centralizing authority for a police department by creating a position of chief, and using available technology and science to prevent and solve crimes.\textsuperscript{12} If police were effective professionals, Vollmer argued, they would earn public support and respect. They could suppress corruption which in most cities meant prostitution, drugs, gambling and graft.\textsuperscript{13}

Vollmer advocated organizing police departments with modern structures, civil service and the latest technology and scientific methods to increase effectiveness.\textsuperscript{14} He recommended the creation of specialty squads to investigate crimes for homicide, auto theft, robbery, narcotics.\textsuperscript{15} He argued for broad use of vehicles, telephones and radio to improve communications between patrol officers and headquarters. And he recommended the creation of a crime laboratory to collect and evaluate evidence scientifically for solving crimes.\textsuperscript{16} To insure integrity and separate politics from policing,

\begin{footnotes}
\item[16]Carte and Carte, \textit{Police Reform}, 56.
\end{footnotes}
Vollmer advocated civil service positions for officers and especially the chief.\textsuperscript{17}

Vollmer developed a broad theory of policing which encompassed a range of social services at a time when such services had not yet become distinct public agencies.\textsuperscript{18} Like other Progressives during the early part of the twentieth century, Vollmer saw the police officer as part of a joint effort of schools, health and welfare agencies, and recreation and civic organizations that built individual character and thriving communities.\textsuperscript{19} He encouraged police officers to report conditions to public officials that adversely affected public health, convenience or safety.\textsuperscript{20} Vollmer advocated bringing social workers, most of them women, into police departments to work with juveniles to prevent delinquency, and argued for police to


\textsuperscript{18} Monkkonen, "History of Urban Police," 554-55.


\textsuperscript{20} Ibid., 221.
counsel the mentally ill and other troubled individuals.  

In 1931, despite efforts to reform police departments and officers, corruption and brutality were common in many departments. Vollmer directed a section on police reform for a report prepared by members of the Wickersham Commission which documented physical intimidation of suspects, also known as the "third degree," and the vulnerability of police chiefs to political interference. Members of the Commission recommended protections against removing a police chief without cause, to counter the influence of "cutthroats, murders and bootleggers." The Wickersham report exposed the failures of civic leaders to organize and manage police departments effectively, and to hire and train capable officers.

One of the most difficult problems that reform minded chiefs and commissioners failed to address was race. After violence erupted in Los Angeles, Detroit and New York in 1943, Milwaukee Police chief Joseph Kluchesky responded to police inaction by

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21 Carte and Carte, *Police Reform*, 48, 56. Monkkonen argues that Vollmer's sympathy for the mentally ill was in part guided by his concern for preventing them from criminal behavior. See Monkkonen, "History of Urban Police," 566.

22 Fogelson argues that early reformers were active during the Progressive era, at the turn of the twentieth century, when they joined middle class organizations and sought to modernize public agencies and local governments, and separate politics from public service. In policing Fogelson argues that throughout the twentieth century reformers encouraged selective law enforcement, and determined which laws to enforce, which peace to keep and which public to serve. See *Big City Police*, 12, 140, 150-51, 182. Municipal reform, including policing generally benefited business and professional groups at the expense of working and immigrant classes. See Walker, "Urban Police," 431.

23 Wickersham commissioners reinforced the commitment of reformers in the early 1900s to separate police from politics through civil service. See Skolnick, *Above the Law*, 45-48.

initiating training in race relations the following year.\textsuperscript{25} Though chiefs acknowledged racial problems they agreed that the economic and social causes of racial conflict were beyond the power of the police.\textsuperscript{26} The International City Management Association, which published pamphlets and books on law enforcement, nevertheless included police-community relations among its recommendations for effective policing.\textsuperscript{27} From 1943 to 1950 chiefs and civic organizations sponsored police-community relations programs in twenty-two cities but Los Angeles was not among them.\textsuperscript{28} Mexican-Americans who suffered from the rioting in 1943 advocated improved race relations with the LAPD but Chief C. B. Horrall and Mayor Fletcher Bowron dismissed race relations as an important element in policing.\textsuperscript{29}

After World War II, a new generation of police reformers further professionalized and modernized their departments to address the perennial problems of officer
incompetence and ineffectiveness. Many chiefs came to power after scandals and brought with them a commitment to large scale change. Many of them had earned college degrees, favored a paramilitary structure, and sought to overhaul departments by imposing standards for recruiting and promoting, gathering reliable information for arrests and investigations, and creating divisions for planning and research to use resources efficiently in preventing crime. In addition, they lobbied for increasing salaries and pensions to compensate officers respectably and discourage graft.

Parker's own career with the LAPD spans almost forty years of police reform. He joined the LAPD in 1927, four years after Vollmer, who had temporarily headed the department for twelve months, and failed to rid the department of vice and graft. As Parker advanced through the ranks, he worked for autonomy in discipline and civil service protections amidst periodic eruptions of scandals in the LAPD and in Los Angeles city government. When he became chief in 1950, he pioneered postwar police reform and fulfilled many of the goals Vollmer had set decades earlier for professionalizing police officers in a well-managed department. For his achievements, Parker earned national stature as one of the country's foremost police chiefs.

The chief carved out a unique position for himself in Los Angeles not only because of his success in reforming the LAPD, but also because of his extraordinary political acumen, his deft use of power and his brilliance in public relations. Parker took

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30 By the late 1940s, almost every police department had a training academy, but they varied widely in quality. See Fogelson, *Big City Police*, 182.

31 Ibid., 174.

32 Ibid., 142, 150-51.

33 Ibid., 160.
advantage of three opportunities: the decentralized structure of Los Angeles city
government, life tenure for the chief, and proximity to Hollywood. Parker became the
most powerful public official in Los Angeles because of an absence of machine politics
in the city and a municipal government structured around a weak mayor, stronger council
members and even stronger department heads. He used the protection of life tenure early
in his career to implement reforms and expand his powers to control Police
Commissioners and intimidate council members. He remained in office for sixteen years
in spite of changes in three mayoral administrations, declining health, and, in 1965, the
worst rioting the country had witnessed since World War II. He learned the value of
radio and television from actor Jack Webb and the value of self-promotion from public
relations agents for the movie industry and from J. Edgar Hoover.

Parker was a rigid, contentious man who did not tolerate challengers or critics, did
not seek middle ground or willingly admit error. He often seized headlines and gave
reporters rich material with sharp-tongued attacks on his opponents. As civil rights
leaders in Los Angeles confronted him on physical abuse of minority residents in the
1960s, he accused them of undermining the police, and exacerbated racial tensions which
had simmered for years. His clashes with opponents over race relations accentuated his
refusal to accommodate change, and hastened the city's descent into violence in his
fifteenth year as chief.

In this dissertation, I will argue that early in his career as chief, Parker seized
power and faced down challengers as he modernized and professionalized his
department, but retained a narrow view of policing that escalated racial tensions and left a
legacy of conflict with residents and elected officials, uncontested power and potential
I will also argue that he succeeded in becoming the most powerful public official in Los Angeles through his political acumen and his skill with public relations that enabled him to survive despite his failure to prevent race riots. Chapter 2 traces Parker's career from 1927 until his appointment as chief. In a department riddled with corruption, Parker remained clean as he advanced from police officer to assistant chief in twenty-three years, earning a reputation as a harsh law enforcement officer and shrewd politician in preparing for a career as chief unlike his predecessors. Chapter 3 examines Parker's reforms and his early years in power. As Parker upgraded his department, he weakened the Police Commission and faced off challenges to his authority by defending his operations and attacking critics for demoralizing the police. Chapter 4 analyzes Parker's reaction to a new wave of judicial decisions that articulated rights of suspects and curtailed police powers. As the chief became the most powerful figure in Los Angeles, he publicly criticized judges and justices when they handed down decisions he opposed, and warned that an unrestrained court system weakened the police and the social order.

In the 1960s, Parker confronted rapid changes in the city's demography, culture and race relations. Chapter 5 examines some of the changes and Parker's response. As Los Angeles became a cosmopolitan city Parker found himself at odds with the new Los Angeles, aligned himself with the emerging conservative movement in southern California, and increased his warnings of an unrestrained judiciary and moral laxity that would undermine American democracy and demoralize the police. Chapter 6 analyzes

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34 Other journalists and scholars have written at length about Parker in books and articles but none have written about him exclusively with the exception of James A. Gazell, "William H. Parker, Police Professionalization and the Public: An Assessment," in Journal of Police Science and Administration 4, no. 1 (1976).
the chief's response to the civil rights movement in Los Angeles. He fought with civil
inghtened racial tensions between poor minority residents and the police. When rioting
began in Watts in August, 1965, Parker's officers were unprepared, understaffed and ill
equipped to quell the violence, forcing the chief to rely on outside agencies to help
restore order before he faced the national press and a state commission to explain his
department's failure. Chapter 8 looks at Parker's controversial legacy of abuse of the
chief's power, tension between police and elected and appointed officials and racial
tensions that threw the city into chaos, death and destruction again in 1992.
CHAPTER 2
PARKER’S EARLY CAREER

At an early age, Parker developed a rigorous adherence and respect for the law which guided him throughout his career in the LAPD and set him apart from his peers. As he carefully charted his law enforcement career by studying for promotional exams and advancing to higher rank, he avoided any actions that had led to many scandals that plagued the LAPD. He adhered to strict enforcement of the law and attributed his keen sense of ethical conduct to his Catholic upbringing and his conservative views.

Born in Lead, South Dakota in 1902, Parker was the descendant of men who pursued professions in law and geology. His grandfather, William H. Parker, was a United States Attorney for Colorado, a State Attorney in Deadwood, three miles from Lead, and later a member of the U. S. House of Representatives. Parker’s father was a geologist who worked for the local mining company in Deadwood. As a teen, Parker attended high school there, excelled in debate and earned his diploma. Working his way through school, he held a job in a ladies’ ready-to-wear store and displayed lingerie each

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1Woods, "Progressives and Police," 419.

2Parker’s critics cast him in the mold of conservative Cardinal McIntyre. Ibid., 421. Decades later, a retired Deputy Chief who had worked for Parker in the 1950s attributed his conservatism, ethos of independence and a rigid Victorian morality to his family and his childhood jobs. For Parker, breaking the law contributed to the breakdown of society. See Dotson, interview.


4Jennings, “Portrait of Chief,” 87.
week in the town's seven brothels. At night he earned money as a bellhop and house detective at the Franklin Hotel, frightening away prostitutes who frequented the hotel's upper floors for business. For his efforts, he received a badge as a deputy of the Deadwood police chief.

In 1922, Parker migrated with his family to Los Angeles and took odd jobs before becoming a police officer. He started out as an usher for a silent movie theater downtown. Three years later, he drove a taxi during the day to support his law studies at night at the Los Angeles College of Law. On August 8, 1927, while still a law student, Parker joined the Los Angeles Police Department, receiving badge number 2203, worked the night shift and continued his law studies during the day. He married a policewoman, Amalia Helen, completed law school in 1930 and passed the California State Bar.

Parker joined the LAPD at a time when corruption and graft were common, and quickly earned a reputation as an honest police officer. He began his career as a patrol officer enforcing laws against gambling, prostitution and alcohol, and carefully charted

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7Jennings, "Portrait of Chief," 89.
8Cannon, Official Negligence, 58.
his advances to higher rank. As a lieutenant in the late 1930s, he honed his political skills as a member of the Police and Fire Protective League, successfully lobbying for departmental autonomy in officer discipline and lifetime tenure for the chief. His dour, no-nonsense temperament did not earn him popularity, but enabled him to assume greater positions of responsibility in rooting out corruption when scandals made headlines in the local newspapers.

As Parker made his way up the ranks, LAPD officers, like many in other big city departments during these years, physically abused suspects and spied on real and imagined suspects as well as police critics. He arrived three years after the departure of Chief August Vollmer, one of the nation's pre-eminent police reformers, who had failed to win support from City Council members for his reforms because of council members' relationships with corrupt businessmen. During Parker's twenty-three years before his appointment as chief, some of his fellow officers beat up Mexican-American youths in Chavez Ravine, a Mexican-American enclave, and closed down integrated jazz clubs in the black neighborhood of South Central. Other officers conducted raids against leftist political activists and police reformers, and gathered thousands of files on union members. Illegal spying and physical abuse plagued the department for decades, both during and after Parker's tenure as chief.

In some ways, Los Angeles in the 1920s was similar to the frontier town Parker left in South Dakota. There were large open spaces and low-density housing. A majority of the city's residents were white, many were transplanted Midwesterners and some of

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12 Fogelson, _Big City Police_, 78-79.

13 Ibid, 76.
them became the city's conservative business and civic leaders. These men formed a cohort that exerted considerable influence on the city's politics and to a certain degree, the LAPD. But Los Angeles also differed dramatically from Lead, South Dakota in the diversity of its population. Its temperate climate attracted a wide range of residents, including German émigrés, blacks, Hispanics and Jews, all of whom contributed to the city's growth and eventually its cosmopolitan and multi-racial culture. Germans Jews fleeing Hitler began to arrive in the 1930s and waves of other domestic migrants arrived during 1940s, finding a pleasant city, reasonably-priced homes and jobs in the region's diverse economy. In the mid-1940s, union members and civic leaders among the Hispanic, black and Jewish minorities formed alliances to improve race relations and to elect local candidates. Though they did not succeed initially, they laid the foundation for greater political participation and their demands for police accountability in the early 1960s changed the course of police politics in Los Angeles.

In the late 1940s, as Los Angeles absorbed thousands of new residents, LAPD officers could not patrol the city effectively because of rampant corruption in the department. A major scandal over police protection of prostitution forced Chief Horrall out of office and Arthur W. Worton, a retired U.S. Marine Corps general, replaced him for one year. During that year, Inspector Parker headed the Internal Affairs Division and augmented his stature as an effective police manager who disciplined officers and began to improve the department's reputation. In the process he increased his competitive standing to succeed General Worton as chief.
Parker's Early Years in the LAPD

In 1927, when Parker joined the LAPD, the department, under the direction of Chief James E. Davis, had abandoned many of the reforms that August Vollmer proposed during his sixteen months as chief in 1923 and 1924. Vollmer, who was considered at the time to be one of the most respected police chiefs in the country, was chief of the Berkeley, California police department and a lecturer at the University of California there when he came to the attention of Harry Chandler, publisher of the Los Angeles Times, who dominated much of the city's politics and businesses. Asked by Chandler to consider taking the position of chief of the LAPD after a rash of scandals forced the resignation of Chief Louis D. Oaks, Vollmer accepted the Police Commissioners' offer of a twelve-month post. After obtaining a leave of absence, he traveled south to Los Angeles and brought to the job a belief in the positive influence of social and cultural forces on human behavior: humane treatment of the mentally ill, rehabilitation for criminals, reforms for corrupt police, and a scientific approach to management that appealed to Chandler. He also brought a commitment to a professional police force based on efficient administration and a well-informed and supportive citizenry.

As chief in Los Angeles, Vollmer's most significant contributions were increasing

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15 Chandler was a member of the Los Angeles Crime Commission, underwritten by local businessmen. See Fogelson, Big City Police, 45, 62; Carte and Carte, Police Reform, 58.


efficiency and raising personnel standards.\textsuperscript{18} Vollmer introduced car radios, telephones in call boxes and other technologies for investigations and patrol, and quantified police productivity. He established a laboratory for analysis of evidence and installed telephone, teletype and signal systems in stations.\textsuperscript{19} He created a new method for arresting suspects, the sweep, more commonly known as the dragnet.\textsuperscript{20} He developed categories for a \textit{modus operandi} file for repeat offenders, and created statistical reports on crime to track effectiveness in investigations.\textsuperscript{21}

Vollmer upgraded requirements for hiring candidates and training recruits. He implemented a ninety-day training program with courses in law, criminal procedure, psychology, police methods, first aid and marksmanship. He invited judges, physicians and attorneys to lecture to the new recruits.\textsuperscript{22} He introduced psychological and intelligence tests to eliminate unfit candidates, and hired psychiatrists and psychologists to monitor the mental health of cadets and eliminate those who did not appear to be stable.\textsuperscript{23} Vollmer advocated higher education for policing and forged ties with the University of Southern California to provide courses in police administration.\textsuperscript{24}

\textsuperscript{18}Vollmer's recommendations were ignored until a new police chief assumed office in 1949, after another spate of scandals. See Carte and Carte, \textit{Police Reform}, 60.

\textsuperscript{19}Woods, "Progressives and Police," 213.

\textsuperscript{20}McDougal, \textit{Privileged Son}, 106.

\textsuperscript{21}Starr, \textit{Material Dreams}, 172-83; Carte and Carte, \textit{Police Reform}, 60.

\textsuperscript{22}Woods, "Progressives and Police," 199.

\textsuperscript{23}Ibid., 199-200; Cannon, \textit{Official Negligence}, 55.

\textsuperscript{24}As chief of the Berkeley Police Department, Vollmer began recruiting students at the University of California who became known as "college cops." One of his recruits was O. W. Wilson. See Carte and Carte, \textit{Police Reform}, 43, 42, 60. One of Vollmer's most important innovations was establishing the first university-based police training program. See Walker, "Urban Police," 431.
He was also the first chief in Los Angeles to propose a functional organization with divisions for increasing operational efficiency. He suggested divisions for property, detective, patrol, jail and communications; and for crime prevention, parole and probation, traffic, vice, records, and transportation.\textsuperscript{25} He assigned an honest captain to the vice division, and created an intelligence network that enabled officers to raid gambling and liquor operations. He also set up a bank surveillance squad to decrease the number of bank robberies.\textsuperscript{26}

During his short tenure, Vollmer experienced both substantial success and failure. He did more to professionalize the police and establish its independence from politics than any of his predecessors, and was one of the few chiefs prior to 1950 who won approval from the city's residents.\textsuperscript{27} Vollmer led an honest and efficient police department, but lacked the political skills needed to garner support from the city's Police Commissioners who had no knowledge of law, policing or criminology, and fell under the influence of politicians with ties to the underworld.\textsuperscript{28} He left in 1924 as he had originally planned because the Commissioners would not grant him sole authority for running the department and he refused to tolerate corrupt vice operations.\textsuperscript{29}

Vollmer realized that implementing his theories in the LAPD was a complex undertaking. Without support from elected and appointed officials, his officers could not

\textsuperscript{25}Woods, "Progressives and Police," 174-75; Fogelson, \textit{Big City Police}, 178.

\textsuperscript{26}Starr, \textit{Material Dreams}, 172-73.

\textsuperscript{27}Cannon, \textit{Official Negligence}, 55-56.

\textsuperscript{28}Woods, "Progressives and Police," 206, 219; Carte and Carte, \textit{Police Reform}, 60. In Los Angeles, later reformers could not remove politics from policing but instead relocated it from city hall to the police department. See Brown, \textit{Working the Street}, 45.

\textsuperscript{29}Woods, "Progressives and Police, 202-05.
enforce vice laws or eliminate gambling, prostitution and bootlegging.\textsuperscript{30} Though his opponents eliminated the training program, he established a strong foundation for an effective and professional department and set a precedent for the next chief.\textsuperscript{31} He proved that with an honest and reform-minded chief, the LAPD could be an efficient and professional force.\textsuperscript{32} His failure made it clear that whoever planned to modernize the department had to master the city’s politics thoroughly and quickly to earn the support of Police Commissioners, City Council members and the mayor.

Vollmer was most concerned about corruption among officers and did not address the common practice of gathering intelligence on political activists and police critics. During Parker’s early years, officers worked closely with business to spy on labor activists and their sympathizers who might threaten enterprises with strikes or union organization.\textsuperscript{33} In 1927, William F. "Red" Hynes, appointed by Chief James Davis,

\textsuperscript{30}Carte and Carte, \textit{Police Reform}, 61, 100. After Vollmer’s departure, a coalition of business, labor and good government leaders successfully campaigned in 1924 for a city charter that protected city employees from political interference and diffused power among elected officials. See Robert M. Fogelson, \textit{The Fragmented Metropolis: Los Angeles: 1850-1930} (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1967), 220, 222. The charter provided for a strong City Council and a weak mayor and established civil service protection for city employees but did not abolish politics from city government. Instead, the charter changed the form in which elected officials used their power and influence and did not prevent those outside the government from wielding influence. See Martin J. Schiesl, “Politicians in Disguise, the Changing Role of Public Administrations in Los Angeles, 1900-1920” in Michael H. Ebner and Eugene M. Tobin, editors, \textit{The Age of Urban Reform} (Port Washington, New York: Kennikat Press, 1977), 102-16.


\textsuperscript{32}Ibid. Vollmer had limited success with techniques for increasing efficiency and engaging the community for support in a large, decentralized city. See Carte and Carte, \textit{Police Reform}, 61 62, 97.

\textsuperscript{33}Membership in the Ku Klux Klan was not uncommon among police officers. In the 1920s and 1930s about ten percent of police in almost every California city belonged to the Ku Klux Klan, including the chiefs of Bakersfield and Los Angeles police departments. See William W. Turner, \textit{Power on the Right} (Berkeley: Ramparts Press, 1971), 222. Klan members were also in the New York Police Department; police in the department in Pontiac, Michigan belonged to the Black Legion, a right-wing organization, and police from other departments belonged to the Anti-Catholic American Protective Association. The Los Angeles County Sheriff was a member of the Klan. See William W. Turner, \textit{Police Establishment} (New York: G. B. Putnam, 1968), 77.
commanded a unit of officers who harassed and intimidated labor activists. Hynes' division, which became known as the Red Squad, worked with the American Legion to prevent the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU), the John Reed Club, Communist party and other left wing groups from meeting in Los Angeles. Hynes and his squad also raided homes of activists, arrested them on false charges and occasionally beat them and the attorneys who represented them.

After Hynes took command of the Red Squad, Captain Earl Kynette, also appointed by Chief Davis, headed a separate squad, the Special Intelligence Section, and assigned his officers to collect information not only on labor activists but also foes of the police department and the mayor. In 1938, Kynette and his officers planted a car bomb in an attempt to kill an investigator for a police reform group. Kynette was suspended but continued to command his unit until a jury convicted him and he was forced to


During the early twentieth century, the Times publisher often called on the LAPD to assist him with suppressing union activity at his newspaper and in private industry after anarchists bombed the Times building in 1910. The LAPD also harassed left wing activists. See McDougal, Privileged Son, 48, 107; Domanick, To Protect and To Serve, 38-39, 67; Carey McWilliams, Southern California: An Island on the Land (Santa Barbara, CA: Peregrine, 1946), 280, 290-91; Fogelson, Big City Police, 34; Monkkonen, "History of Urban Police," 562; Walker, Critical History of Police Reform, 147.

34Fogelson, Big City Police, 78; Domanick To Protect and To Serve, 76; McDougal, Privileged Son, 107.

35Fogelson, Big City Police, 246.


37McDougal, Privileged Son, 143-44; Woods, "Progressives and Police," 358.
Chief Davis also assigned officers to harass migrant workers who came to California in search of jobs. At the height of the Depression in 1936, prompted by warnings in the *Los Angeles Times* that 50,000 migrants had entered the state in the past six months, Davis dispatched one hundred twenty-six officers to guard sixteen highway and railroad entry points throughout California and turn back transient laborers who could not prove state residency. The “bum blockade” lasted two and a half months. Under pressure from the ACLU and the Sheriffs Association, Chief Davis discontinued the LAPD's border patrol after exhausting funds and bowing to protests.39

As Parker prepared for his promotional exams, other officers bought answers to the same exams to increase their chances for advancement. They also engaged in graft with the mayor's office, prompting Superior Court Judge Fletcher Bowron to call for a grand jury investigation in 1937 which triggered an upheaval in municipal government.40 Exposure of mayoral corruption so enraged the public that in September, 1937, the *Los Angeles Times* publisher banded together with radio station managers and a well organized reformer to recall Mayor Frank Shaw.41 Voters approved the recall, elected

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38 Domanick, *To Protect and To Serve*, 66, 76-78; Woods, “Progressives and the Police,” 357-62; Fogelson, *Big City Police*, 149. Red Squad officers also spied on writer Carey McWilliams, who had criticized the department for harassment of blacks, Mexican-Americans and labor activists, California State Assembly Member Sam Yorty, Los Angeles County Supervisor John Anson Ford, Clifford Clinton, a prominent advocate for police reform and Judge Fletcher Bowron. See Woods, "Progressives and Police," 361.


Judge Bowron as mayor, and forced the retirement of Chief Davis, soon after Mayor Bowron took office.42

In 1939, Chief A. C. Hohmann took command and restored some of Vollmer's reforms. He reorganized the department on a military model with line and staff functions, and divided the city into four zones with supervisory personnel responsible for patrol, investigation and vice suppression.43 He abolished a few hundred temporary positions as well as the practice of council members using patrol cars for official business.44 In 1940, he directed subordinates to carefully select recruits who, like Parker, had not bought their jobs.45

In addition to periodic scandals that upended the department, officers physically abused poor residents and provoked violence or looked on as whites assaulted blacks or Mexicans. In June, 1943, police stood by as soldiers and sailors on leave beat up several young Mexican-American males, provoking riots that lasted for three days.46 The lack of police response to the beatings and rioting, which became known as the Zoot Suit riots,

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42Ibid., 367. In addition to the chief, twenty-two captains were forced to leave. By 1965, one hundred men were in the LAPD who had survived the Shaw-corruption scandal including Parker, five deputy chiefs, six inspectors, and seven captains. All were deeply scarred by the scandal. See Robert E. Conot, Rivers of Blood, Years of Darkness, (New York: William Morrow, 1967), 32.

43Woods, "Progressives and Police," 373. Woods also notes that after the trial, Chief Hohmann reassigned officers from the Red Squad and Special Intelligence Squads but did not abolish them. The LAPD was not the only department to use a military model. Jerome Skolnick and James Fyfe note that in the 1930s, police chiefs in many American cities adopted the military model that Robert Peel originated in nineteenth-century Britain. See Above the Law, 130.

44Ibid., 373-74.

45The class had one hundred recruits out of 6,000 applicants and produced more chiefs than any other class. It was also the first class with recruits. See "Era of Parker."

prompted civic leaders to press for a race relations training program within the LAPD.\textsuperscript{47} The LAPD initiated classes at the academy on race relations, attempted to hire more Spanish-speaking Mexican males, and created the Deputy Auxiliary Police (DAPS) to work with Mexican-American youth to prevent juvenile delinquency.\textsuperscript{48} The Los Angeles Human Relations Commission, established after the riots, recommended that officers meet regularly with community leaders to defuse tensions and increase their understanding of the diverse religious and ethnic groups whose populations were growing rapidly.\textsuperscript{49}

In addition to harassing migrants and labor activists, officers maintained de facto segregation in public places.\textsuperscript{50} They separated whites from blacks, Mexicans and Filipinos to prevent interracial dancing and attendance at jazz clubs.\textsuperscript{51} In 1940, police


\textsuperscript{48}Escobar, \textit{Race, Police}, 261-63.

\textsuperscript{49}ADL booklet, 7; "Memo on formation of community committees for law enforcement..." Police Relations Committee of LA County Conference on Community Relations, n.d. probably early 1950s, Box 29, Folder Police Dept, Roybal Papers, Special Collections, UCLA. In 1946, the California Department of Justice published a pamphlet for police officers recommending training recruits, contacting leaders in the black community and hiring black officers, and suggesting techniques for handling civil disorders. See Walker, "Origins of Police Community Relations," 234. See Davis McEntire and Robert B. Powers, \textit{A Guide to Race Relations for Police Officers} California Department of Justice, 1946, 8; Joseph T. Kluchesky, \textit{Police Action in Minority Problems}, speech given at the annual conference of the International Chiefs of Police in 1945, Box 24, Folder 13, ACLU papers. In 1947 the LAPD sent some of their officers to the University of Southern California's Delinquency Control Institute to learn about race relations; Letter from Esther M. Sharpe, Acting Secretary, Los Angeles Police Commission to Edwin P. Ryland and A. A. Heist, Southern California Branch, 3 October 1946, Box 24, Folder 1, ACLU papers.

\textsuperscript{50}In 1948, LAPD officers shot and killed Herman Burns as he tried to protect his brother from police beatings, generating outcry in the black press. See Josh Sides, \textit{L. A. City Limits, African-American Los Angeles from the Great Depression to the Present} (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2003), 137-39.

\textsuperscript{51}Police officers also harassed blacks who ventured outside their segregated neighborhoods in South Central. At the time, restricted covenants prevented black homebuyers from purchasing property in white neighborhoods. LAPD officers enforced the unwritten rule that blacks could not be in a white home unless they were employed as domestics. David Cunningham, former Los Angeles City Council member representing the 10th district from 1973 to 1986, telephone interview, 7 August 2003. 1986. See Clora

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refused to issue a permit to a Mexican-American organization hosting a Benny Goodman concert because a mixed audience would attend.\textsuperscript{52} During the 1940s, police patrolled Central Avenue, the city's jazz center in the black sector of the city called South Central. At the entrance to clubs, they attempted to curb the sale and consumption of drugs by harassing whites and blacks and searched new cars for black drivers.\textsuperscript{53} They may have been angry seeing Lana Turner and Ava Gardner patronizing black owned businesses and listening to black musicians.\textsuperscript{54}

Inside the department, segregation was an accepted practice. Black officers were few in numbers and patrolled the streets only with each other. Promotions above sergeant were rare, and assignments were limited to stations that served almost exclusively black residents.\textsuperscript{55} In 1940, two black officers, Earl Broady and Roscoe

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\textsuperscript{52} Anthony Macias, "Bringing Music to the People: Race, Urban Culture and Municipal Politics in Postwar Los Angeles," \textit{American Quarterly}, 56, no. 3 (2004), 693.

\textsuperscript{53} In the 1940s, Central Avenue was a vibrant locus of commerce and music in South-Central with hotels and jazz clubs serving African-American men and women who could not stay in hotels, eat in restaurants, or go to night clubs downtown and on the Westside. Police also broke up integrated jazz clubs in other locales in southern California including San Pedro, Culver City, and Glendale. See Bryant, \textit{Central Avenue Sounds}, 101, 132.

\textsuperscript{54} Ibid., 299, 365. Mayor Bowron also enforced segregation by prohibiting establishments from serving alcohol after 2 am to prevent whites from entering clubs on Central Avenue. See Anthony Macias, "Bringing Music to the People," 693. In the late 1940s, the clubs that had thrived on Central Avenue started to close because, many musicians believed, police opposed integration. By that time, the musicians' union accepted black members and enabled them to find jobs elsewhere. See Bryant, \textit{Central Avenue Sounds}, 102, 132, 148, 177, 272-73, 299.

\textsuperscript{55} Gerald Horne, \textit{Fire This Time, The Watts Uprising and the 1960s} (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 1995), 134-35; James Lee Robinson, Jr. "Tom Bradley: Los Angeles' First Black Mayor," (Ph.D. Dissertation, University of California, 1976), 57; Bernard Galm, "The Impossible Dream: Tom Bradley" (oral history, University of California, Los Angeles, 1974), 65, hereinafter cited as Bradley oral history. Personnel officers from the LAPD had hired blacks earlier than other departments. In 1886, City of Los Angeles personnel officials were the first in the country to hire a black officer, then a black firefighter, and in 1919, the nation's first black policewoman. In 1924 Vollmer promoted a black man to
(Rocky) Washington, advanced to lieutenant but were assigned to a "Black Watch" to avoid supervising white officers.\textsuperscript{56} Broady was demoted because there were not enough black officers for two lieutenants.\textsuperscript{57} He took the exam again, placed high enough for promotion but was passed over eighteen times before he retired in 1945 after a sixteen-year career.\textsuperscript{58}

During the twenty-three years before his appointment as chief, Parker distanced himself from the scandals, beatings and daily practice of graft.\textsuperscript{59} He quickly rose to the rank of sergeant, the youngest in the department in 1930. He planned to leave the department for a career practicing law but after the stock market crashed in 1929, and unemployed attorneys looked for work, he pursued a career as a police officer because it offered two hundred twenty-five dollars a month, job security and promotional opportunities.\textsuperscript{60}

Parker encountered resistance from fellow officers when he enforced the law rigorously and indiscriminately. He did not drink on the job or engage in graft, and despite a lack of support from his superiors, insisted on arresting bootleggers and

\textsuperscript{56} Parker's first assignment was to collect information on leftist activists who congregated near Pershing Square in the city center. See Domanick, \textit{To Protect and to Serve}, 102; Cannon, \textit{Official Negligence}, 64.

\textsuperscript{57} Cannon, \textit{Official Negligence}, 64.

\textsuperscript{58} Broady went to law school, became an attorney and later a Superior Court Judge. See Cannon, \textit{Official Negligence}, 64.

\textsuperscript{59} Ibid., 19-20.

prostitutes. In the early 1930s, while working at the desk of the Central Booking Office in the main jail, he noticed that other officers drank and, he later recalled, his supervisors did not seem to care.\textsuperscript{61} Once he observed officers beating a prisoner who had objected to his treatment. He publicly upbraided the officers and told them to go somewhere else to book him; they were not to hit the prisoner in his presence.\textsuperscript{62}

When he transferred to Boyle Heights, a mixed neighborhood of Jewish immigrants and Mexican Americans, he enforced laws that outlawed alcohol during the last few months of Prohibition. He patrolled the streets alone, contrary to the LAPD custom of two-man patrols, seizing vehicles containing hundreds of gallons of alcohol and raiding wine cellars and warehouses. When he confronted alcohol smugglers, they asked him what he wanted but he refused to take their bribes. Angered by their offers, he ticketed their cars if they were parked more than a foot from the curb, as required by law. His superiors, in response to the bootleggers who bribed them, transferred him to Hollywood, a beat he had requested.\textsuperscript{63}

In an incident that shed light on Parker's character and the environment in which he found himself, he insisted on parking his patrol car outside a building on Santa Monica Boulevard where a prostitute openly conducted her business. By his presence, he intimidated many men who patronized her, and they usually decided against going into the building. When the prostitute realized that Sergeant Parker had damaged her business, she came outside and confronted him, whereupon he told her he would put her in jail.

\textsuperscript{61}Jennings, "Portrait of Chief," 89.

\textsuperscript{62}Domanick, \textit{To Protect and to Serve}, 85.

\textsuperscript{63}Jennings, "Portrait of Chief," 89.
When he returned to the station and learned that the vice squad showed little interest in arresting her, he told them he would go undercover himself and apprehend her. Parker did not act on his threat because the vice officers made the arrest themselves and let the prostitute free after she put up bail an hour later. Parker learned a tough lesson. He had attempted to enforce the law but encountered public disinterest and rampant departmental corruption. Yet he never knew when public anger would translate into demands for reform. Believing that the public opposed the police in general, he realized that police "must stick together at any cost." Parker had seen officers fired without any pension or recourse for appeal. If he could develop a department policy that required investigations and punishment for officers while protecting their rights, then the chief could preempt public critics who accused his officers of misconduct. In addition, Parker sought to increase civil service protections for officers at a time when they could exercise only a right to their rank and a trial board for hearing complaints against them.

Parker would later incorporate his commitment to internal discipline into his concept of professional policing. If the department disciplined officers when they did not enforce the law properly, officers would not become targets of public scorn. Parker built a structure for professional review that would protect the officer's position and strengthen the department against accusations of lax discipline and loose management.

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64Jennings, "Portrait of Chief," 89.
65Ibid.
66Voters approved the benefits in 1925 and 1931 but the trial board was subject to dissolution by members of the civilian Police Commission who gave the chief final say in firing an officer. See Domanick, To Protect and To Serve, 93.
In 1934, Parker earned a promotion to acting lieutenant and campaigned for officers' rights through active participation in the Fire and Police Protective League.\(^{67}\) As a League member, officer and attorney, he co-wrote a revision to Section 202 of the city charter with Earl Cooke, another officer-attorney.\(^{68}\) Their revision established that a Board of Rights, composed of police officers, had exclusive authority to try and discipline an officer within one year of an accused officer's misconduct. Their fellow officers in the League successfully campaigned for the measure.\(^{69}\)

In the next three years, Parker's revision of Section 202 prompted new protections for the chief. In 1936 members of the League successfully lobbied for a city ordinance that established life tenure.\(^{70}\) The following year, Parker and Cooke wrote an amendment to Section 202, which voters approved, that guaranteed civil service benefits for the chief.\(^{71}\) The amendment defined a three-step process. First, the chief received a full hearing by the Board of Police Commissioners. Second, he could request a hearing by the Board of Civil Service Commissioners, where he had the right to cross-examine witnesses and take the case to Superior Court if he believed the commissioners violated

\(^{67}\) Parker earned permanent status in the rank in 1937. See Woods, "Progressives and Police," 419.

\(^{68}\) Domanick, To Protect and To Serve, 93-95. Parker told McCone Commission members that he and two lawyers had written disciplinary procedures. See Testimony Before the Commission on the Los Angeles Riots, hereinafter cited as McCone Commission transcript, 11: 116.

\(^{69}\) Dotson, interview; neither the chief nor Police Commissioners could overrule the Board of Rights. The chief could decrease but not increase penalties approved by the Board. See Domanick, To Protect and To Serve, 93-94.

\(^{70}\) Life tenure came thirteen years after the chief became a civil service position in 1923 in an amendment to the city charter. See Lou Cannon, Official Negligence, 55.

\(^{71}\) Immunizing the chief from corrupt politicians through civil service originated with August Vollmer. Providing the chief with life tenure may have been inspired by J. Edgar Hoover's success as FBI director and his independence from Congressional and presidential interference. See Skolnick and Fyfe, Above the Law, 142, 175; Domanick, To Protect and To Serve, 93-94.
the charter in conducting the hearing. Third, if Civil Service Commissioners fired him, the deposed chief could sue in state or federal court over violations of his constitutional rights, and return to Superior Court to sue if he wished to challenge the verdict.72

The new rules reflected Parker's political and legal skills which would become a critical asset during his tenure as chief.73 The civil service provisions he wrote into the charter would make it possible for him to retain his position for years and defend the department's internal procedures for discipline. As a lieutenant, he earned recognition for his legal acumen and developed his skills as a prosecuting attorney by representing the department at Board of Rights hearings.74

For approximately three years, Lieutenant Parker took assignments that gave him insight into the power of the chief. He served as administrative assistant to Chief James E. Davis and learned how to use the office to manage the department and intimidate colleagues and critics. He gathered information on the professional and personal lives of elected and appointed officials and prominent citizens, a tactic he would use later in his own career as chief.75 In 1940, with the prestige of his assignment with the chief, his success with Section 202 and his status as an attorney, Parker taught law to recruits at the police academy and lectured them on the importance of honest and rigorous enforcement.76 "If you get off this proper steady line," he told them, "you will

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72Domanick, To Protect and To Serve, 95.
74Ibid., 419.
75Domanick, To Protect and To Serve, 93.
76Ibid., 85.
end up behind bars in the State prison.\(^{77}\)

Parker continued his upward climb through the ranks. In 1939, he finished first on the promotional exam for Captain but appeared tenth on the list out of eleven.\(^ {78}\) Angry with placement at the bottom, Parker protested his low rating and prompted a grand jury to launch an investigation into the process for evaluating promotional examinations.\(^ {79}\) He was aware that selling exams was a common practice among officers in the department and was not affected when a grand jury and newspapers exposed the scandal. Instead, Parker earned a promotion to captain.\(^ {80}\)

In his new assignment, he headed the Accident Investigation Bureau and the following year, earned certificates in Police and Traffic Administration from Northwestern University.\(^ {81}\) His academic training convinced him to develop programs for training officers in harsh enforcement of laws on speed limits to promote safety on Los Angeles roadways.\(^ {82}\)

In the early 1940s Parker took exams simultaneously for deputy chief and inspector (a rank which later became assistant chief) but did not place at the top for either

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\(^{77}\) Recollection of Ed Davis, one of the recruits in the 1940 class, who later became chief of the LAPD in 1969. See "Era of Parker." Parker used roughly the same warning at the academy's graduation class in 1960, as Joseph Wambaugh recalled, "Era of Parker."


\(^{79}\) Jennings, "Portrait of Chief," 89.

\(^{80}\) Conot, Rivers of Blood, 31-32.


\(^{82}\) LAPD Annual Report, 1951, 5, Box C-2003, LACA.
position. He confronted the chief who told him that scholastic achievement alone did not qualify a candidate for promotion. Nevertheless, he protested the answers to each of the questions he missed, bypassed staff of the commission which received complaints and insisted on a hearing by the Civil Service Commission where he disputed every mistake.

Frustrated with his inability to advance to a higher rank, Parker enlisted in the army at the rank of captain in 1943, and on his first assignment studied Overseas Administration and Italian at Harvard University. After completing his training, he went to Europe where, under the direction of General Dwight D. Eisenhower, he developed a Police and Prisons Plan for the European Invasion. During the Normandy invasion, he followed General George Patton's army through France, sustained wounds and was awarded a Purple Heart. A few months later, he assisted in the liberation of Paris and was awarded the Croix de Guerre with Silver Star by the Free French Government.

After combat ended, Captain Parker helped to restore civil government in Sardinia for which the Italian government awarded him the Star of Solidarity. He served with Colonel Orlando W. Wilson in Germany in the Public Safety Branch of the Internal

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83 Woods, "Progressives and Police" 420; Domanick To Protect and To Serve, 92.


85 Domanick, To Protect and To Serve, 92.

86 Wilson, Introduction, Parker on Police, x; Jennings, "Portrait of Chief," 89; Resolution 29 July 1957, CF 80482, Box A 1425, LACA.

87 "Era of Parker;" Jennings, "Portrait of Chief," 89.

88 Wilson, Introduction, x, Parker on Police.
Affairs and Communications Division. During Parker's final assignment in Germany, he helped to create democratic police systems in Munich and Frankfurt. In November, 1945, he earned an honorable discharge from the Army after twenty-two months of service.

After the war, Parker returned to the LAPD, earned a promotion to Inspector in 1947 and resumed his position as head of the Traffic Division. He continued his participation in the Fire and Police Protective League, serving as vice-chairman in 1948 and chairman of the board in 1949.

Parker's career changed dramatically when reporters exposed a pair of scandals on the front pages of daily newspapers and a grand jury convened to investigate vice and corruption in the LAPD. Jurors examined allegations of police collusion with Brenda Allen, who operated a highly profitable prostitution ring, and with Mickey Cohen, a local gangster and heir to Bugsy Siegel's organized crime ring. They heard testimony that

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89 Parker neared respect and admiration from Wilson, who had served as chief of the Wichita, Kansas, police chief from 1929 to 1939, and had taken leave from his faculty position at the University of California, Berkeley School of Criminology. The two men became colleagues and friends for the rest of their lives. See Bopp, O. W., 65, 68; Wilson, Forward, vii, Parker on Police.

90 Special Orders, Headquarters, U. S. Group Control Council (Germany) 10 July 1945, Box 1, O. W. Wilson Papers, Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley.


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both Cohen and Allen had colluded with the police, and a deputy chief admitted knowledge of police involvement. Despite a denial by Chief Clemence Horrall, the grand jury indicted him along with an assistant chief, a captain who headed the gangster squad, a lieutenant who headed the Red Squad, and a sergeant, all on perjury and extortion. The indictment forced the officers to retire, although they were later exonerated.\(^9^4\)

After Chief Horrall's retirement in 1949, Mayor Fletcher Bowron appointed an outsider, retired U.S. Marine Corps General Arthur W. Worton, to tighten supervision and discipline officers. Bowron believed that only someone from outside the department could withstand the pressure from officers who resisted reform. He persuaded Police Commissioners to appoint Worton to serve in a temporary, non-civil service position as provided in the city charter.\(^9^5\)

In his brief tenure, Worton began to reform the LAPD. He consulted Vollmer's plan of 1924 and re-established a ninety-day training academy.\(^9^6\) He restructured Hohmann's military organization using his branch of service, the United States Marine Corps, as his model.\(^9^7\) Recognizing an increase in organized crime, he restored the Intelligence Squad to gather information on the Mafia.\(^9^8\) Worton found new ways to

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\(^9^7\) Cannon, *Official Negligence*, 57; Janis Appier, *Policing Women, The Sexual Politics of Law Enforcement and the LAPD* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1998), 165; Dotson, interview. Dotson noted that the LAPD used Navy jargon such as "watch" for shift because the U.S. Marine Corps was then a part of the U.S. Navy.

\(^9^8\) Domanick, *To Protect and To Serve*, 99; Jack Dragna was the Los Angeles mafia boss in the 1940s. Bugsy Siegel and Mickey Cohen were his assistants. In 1947 Siegel was murdered but the Dragna
improve race relations with residents and helped to create the Committee of 21, a joint police-community group in the Mexican-American barrio of East Los Angeles, which worked with officers at the Hollenbeck station. He appointed Sergeant Bob Green as the first African-American member to act as liaison between the black press and the LAPD. He appointed Rocky Washington as the first Watch Commander to oversee white officers, but lacked the support to enforce integrated supervision department-wide.

As part of Worton's reform agenda, Parker became head of the Bureau of Internal


Edward J. Escobar, "Bloody Christmas and the Irony of Police Professionalization: The Los Angeles Police Department, Mexican Americans and Police Reform in the 1950s," *Pacific Historical Review* 72 (no. 2), 2003, 193. Hollenbeck served black and Jewish residents, some of whom lived in Boyle Heights, in East Los Angeles. The group recommended Spanish-speaking police, establishing a channel for complaints of police abuse, and for bringing problems involving police to community organizations. Anti-Defamation League of B’Nai B’Rith, Southern California Regional Office for the Police Relations Committee of the Los Angeles County Conference of Community Relations "A Study of Police Training Programs in Minority Relations" August, 1950, 7, Box 24, Folder 13, ACLU papers.

Green served in the three-year old press relations detail. “No introduction needed to Sgt. Green, new police public relations officer; he’s Bob Green, an old friend,” *Los Angeles Tribune*, 21 January 1950. In February that same year, staff at the Police Academy invited professionals from the Urban League, Community Service Organization, a Hispanic organization, and the Jewish Community Relations Committee to speak with recruits. See McEntire and Powers, *Guide to Race Relations*, 8; "Police Study Race Relations," *Los Angeles Sentinel*, 23 February 1950. These efforts were the beginnings of a community relations program. At the time, the only two police departments which had community relations programs in California were in Richmond and Oakland, both three hundred miles north of Los Angeles. See Walker, "Origins of Police-Community Relations," Table 1, 236.

Affairs, an important stepping stone to becoming chief. Parker's clean record, his legal training and his rise through the ranks made him the logical choice for this prestigious position, where he could champion internal discipline and police reform. He implemented Worton's plan to improve the LAPD's credibility for officer discipline. Under Parker, Internal Affairs staff conducted investigations of officers accused of misconduct and appointed other officers to serve on a Board of Rights, an internal panel of judges that determined discipline based on presentations by the prosecution and defense of each individual officer.

The City Parker Patrolled

In the 1920s, Los Angeles was primarily a city of while middle-class residents. The city's civic leaders encouraged residents in the Midwest like themselves to move to Los Angeles to enjoy good weather year round, buy land and build homes. The most influential civic leader was Harry Chandler, publisher of the Los Angeles Times, who had purchased thousands of acres in the city and county of Los Angeles and was eager to develop his property. He worked closely with the All Year Club, a private company, to promote tourism and real estate in the region they called the "White Spot of America."

To accommodate these new residents, Los Angeles city planners designed a new

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kind of city, with decentralized business districts and outlying residential communities to take advantage of wide open spaces. Their work expanded as council members purchased large tracts, and by 1930 Los Angeles had grown to 442 square miles, from the southern boundary of San Pedro to the northern boundary in the San Fernando Valley. Council members approved plans for neighborhoods with single family homes, adjoining garages and front and back yards which fanned out across the city's vast expanse of land. They worked with developers and the city's public works department to pave wide streets for cars, which became the city's main form of transportation. Their plans became the blueprint for much of Southern California, spawning the construction of a network of freeways to connect communities across the region.

By 1940 Los Angeles had undergone rapid economic and demographic change. An increase in manufacturing attracted large numbers of migrants looking for work. Auto companies including Ford, General Motors, Chrysler and Studebaker built manufacturing plants in the area south of Los Angeles, taking advantage of a regional antipathy to labor

106 Fogelson, *Fragmented Metropolis*, 250.

107 This extraordinary growth was possible because of a massive water supply system that Chandler and his wife's family had helped to finance, which brought water down from the Owens Valley east of the Sierra Nevada Mountains directly to Los Angeles in 1913. See McDougal, *Privileged Son*, 43; Fogelson, *Fragmented Metropolis*, 226-27.

108 Nearly two-thirds of the homes in Los Angeles were detached, retaining the city’s low density. See Kenneth T. Jackson, *Crabgrass Frontier, Suburbanization of the United States* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985), 250.

109 From South Central, south of the city center, to Woodland Hills in the San Fernando Valley, houses with no front porches abutted skinny sidewalks and wide streets. See Domanick, *To Protect and To Serve*, 100.

110 In December, 1940, the first freeway, the Arroyo Seco, connected Los Angeles with Pasadena. The Southern California freeway system became the most extensive in the world. See Jackson, *Crabgrass Frontier*, 167.
Lockheed Martin and Douglas Aircraft, aircraft assembly plants, sprang up during World War II in Burbank, Santa Monica and Inglewood, suburbs to the north, west and southwest of the city. Kaiser Industries employed men and women to build Liberty Ships in Long Beach, just south of the city, employing mostly white males and some white and African-American women. By the late 1940s Los Angeles County was first in the nation in the production of aircraft, motion pictures, oil-well equipment and the manufacture of sportswear, and second in automobile assembly and tire production.

The city had grown exponentially and absorbed several hundred thousand new residents, but many were not the people Chandler and his business associates had in mind. Many were descendants of earlier immigrants, Southeastern Europeans, Mexicans, Chinese, Japanese, African-Americans, East European Jews and northern Italians.

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113 After President Roosevelt issued Executive Order 8802 in 1940 prohibiting discrimination in defense industries and the government, black workers obtained fourteen percent of jobs in the shipyards. See Waldinger and Bozorgmehr, *Ethnic Los Angeles*, 53, 56; McWilliams, *Island on the Land*, 371-72. But blacks found few employment opportunities elsewhere. Unions closed their doors to blacks except for packing house workers, and the auto industry in Van Nuys in the San Fernando Valley did not admit blacks. Very few black men or women worked for the film studios. After the war, as companies which contracted with the government began to downsize, many black men lost their jobs. See Horne, *Fire This Time*, 28, 35-36.


115 Fogelson, *Fragmented Metropolis*, 198. By 1930, they were only 15 percent, or 200,000 out of a total of 1.3 million residents.
others were lost souls and visionaries who embraced unconventional religions and cults; others came with dreams of becoming filmmakers, actors and artists.\textsuperscript{116}

German and Austrian immigrants who came in the 1930s were not only filmmakers who joined young American directors, actors and screenwriters, but also painters, novelists and composers. They brought with them a commitment to the arts and breathed into the region a sophistication it had never had before.\textsuperscript{117} The émigrés, many of whom were Jewish, lived on the west side near the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA), and the cities of Beverly Hills and Santa Monica.

Of all the non-Protestant white racial and ethnic groups, Jews enjoyed greater mobility than others, although private clubs, law firms, boards of trustees of corporations and private universities that exerted influence in Los Angeles did not yet admit them.\textsuperscript{118} At the end of World War II, most Jews lived on the west side, leaving Boyle Heights where their parents first arrived for the middle class neighborhoods of Fairfax, Pico-Robertson and newer developments near UCLA.\textsuperscript{119} Some Jews became successful

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{116} McWilliams, Island on the Land, 292-93; Horne, Fire This Time, 29. Horne notes that writers (he does not specify whom) commented on migrants who moved west to reinvent themselves on the edge of the continent, the last frontier.
\item \textsuperscript{118} Mike Davis, City of Quartz (New York: Vintage Books, 1992), 146 n25; McDougal, Privileged Son, 477 n2.
\item \textsuperscript{119} McWilliams, Island on the Land, 322; Waldinger and Bozorgmehr, Ethnic Los Angeles, 52; George J. Sanchez dates the western migration of Jews from Boyle Heights to the Fairfax beginning in 1940, "What's Good for Boyle Heights is Good for the Jews": Creating Multiracialism on the Eastside during the 1950s," American Quarterly, Special Issue, 56, no. 3 (2004), 637.
\end{itemize}
attorneys in Westside firms and others became judges. Still others who came from the east coast after the war bypassed Boyle Heights and Fairfax and settled in newly built homes in the San Fernando Valley.

Southeast of the Fairfax neighborhood, black residents lived in Watts, a community in South Central Los Angeles. Though their numbers grew, they could not expand into its outer tracts because of restrictive covenants. As blacks entered the middle class during the middle and late 1940s they moved to the West Jefferson or more affluent West Adams neighborhoods, which whites had vacated. Blacks who lacked the resources to move into comfortable neighborhoods continued to move to Watts from other regions of the country, prompting the whites who remained there to leave. In the late 1940s, Watts began to deteriorate due to unemployment and an absence of public

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121 Sanchez notes that by 1950, there were 22,000 Jewish families in the Valley. See "What's Good for Boyle Heights," 637.

122 Horne, Fire This Time, 26. Restrictive covenants enabled Los Angeles realtors to manipulate lenders to prevent blacks and Mexican-Americans from buying homes in white dominated neighborhoods and the county's new industrial zones. In 1948, the Supreme Court ruled in Shelley v. Kraemer that states could not enforce restrictive covenants but private arrangements kept many sectors of the city segregated. The restrictions were not outlawed until the Open Housing act of 1968. See Waldinger and Bozorgmehr, Ethnic Los Angeles, 55-56. For text of the Supreme Court decision, see http://www.lmba.net/aboutus/aboutus.htm, accessed 5 July 2005. A local black attorney, Loren Miller, argued the case before the Supreme Court and in the early 1960s became a municipal court judge, http://www.metnews.com/articles/judg032403.htm, accessed 5 July 2005. In 1926, Los Angeles annexed Watts to dilute its political influence as it became a growing community for blacks. See Fogelson, Fragmented Metropolis, 227; Horne, Fire This Time, 27; Sonenshein, Politics in Black and White, 27.

transportation but still absorbed new residents. By 1950, the mostly black population in that sector of the city numbered 92,000; the total black population of the city was 171,200, or nine percent of the total residents in Los Angeles.

Of all the different populations in Los Angeles, Mexican-Americans had lived in the region the longest but were among the least influential. By 1945, they numbered approximately 300,000 in Los Angeles County, the largest permanent urban Mexican population of any community in the world except Mexico City. They lived in Boyle Heights alongside Jews who had not yet moved to the west side and other communities nearby.

As the city grew exponentially Los Angeles retained a white majority despite the populations of blacks, Mexicans and the return of Japanese residents from internment camps. In 1940, the population in Los Angeles was 1.5 million; five years later it had become the nation's third largest city and by 1950 the population was 1.9 million.127

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124 Buses which had recently replaced the citywide network of streetcars did not serve South Central. Few residents could afford cars, making it difficult for them to get to jobs outside their neighborhood. See Horne, Fire This Time, 26, 28, 249.

125 In *New York, Chicago, Los Angeles, America's Global Cities*, (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1999), Janet L. Abu-Lughod uses the figure of 191,000 for the total number of blacks living in Los Angeles, citing 1950 census figures, 506n; Waldinger and Bozorgmehr cite the population of Watts alone. See *Ethnic Los Angeles*, 58. To the east of Watts was the white working class community of South Gate which began as a rural haven for Midwestern migrants and became a conservative enclave in the 1960s. For a discussion of this community, see Becky M. Nicolaides, *My Blue Heaven, Life and Politics in the Working Class Suburbs of Los Angeles 1920-1965*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002). To the south of Watts was the city of Compton, a white suburb of Los Angeles but became a largely black community in the post war years. See Horne, Fire This Time, 27.


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Eighty-nine percent of the residents were white. White male Republicans controlled the city's politics and major businesses but on the west side, in new middle-class black neighborhoods around Crenshaw Boulevard and West Jefferson Boulevard, the older black sector in South Central and the mixed neighborhood in Boyle Heights, those out of power enjoyed a rich cultural and civic life.

In the mid-1940s, blacks, Jews and Mexican-Americans formed coalitions on civil rights, combating anti-Semitism and working in local election campaigns. Jews and Mexican-Americans learned about grass-roots organizing and in 1947 campaigned to elect a Boyle Heights resident, Edward Roybal, to the City Council but were not successful. Despite the migration of most Jews to the Westside, leaders of a confederation of Jewish civic organizations supported civil rights work with Mexican-Americans for several years. In 1949, they banded together with black residents and elected Roybal to the City Council on his second try.

1948, Mayor Bowron worried about accommodating 10,00 new residents each month. See "Bowron's Boom Town," National Affairs, Time Magazine, 11 October 1948, 27.

Skolnick and Fyfe, Above the Law, 143. The Japanese American population numbered approximately 40,000 in Los Angeles County before the war. The U. S. government forcibly relocated them to internment camps in remote areas of the west and towards the end of the war allowed them to return to southern California. Many of them lost most of their property and savings and had to start anew, settling in rural areas of the Westside and in nearby communities. See Waldinger and Bosorgmehr, Ethnic Los Angeles, 58.


At the same time that Jews worked with Mexicans in Boyle Heights, Jewish and black civic, religious and labor leaders formed a coalition to pressure Gerald L. K. Smith, an anti-Semite and white supremacist, into locating his newly established headquarters outside Los Angeles. They did not succeed but learned much about mobilizing around an issue that threatened their lives in Los Angeles. Their skills in organizing laid the foundation for a middle-class coalition fifteen years later to elect a retired black police lieutenant to the City Council. They would also work with a Jewish Council member to demand greater accountability from the chief for police misconduct and racially motivated abuse.

These campaigns contrasted sharply with the white, conservative business and political interests in an era when many officials used the imagined threat of communism to restructure commitment to public and private employment. In California throughout the 1940s, the State Legislature conducted investigations into communist influence. In 1947, Los Angeles County adopted a loyalty oath for its employees and the City of Los Angeles adopted one the following year. Private employers acted on their own to root

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2^Ibid., 102. For additional material on Hispanic and Jewish political activism see also Sanchez, "What's Good for Boyle Heights"; Shana Bernstein, "Building Bridges at Home in a Time of Global Conflict: Interracial Cooperation and the Fight for Civil Rights in Los Angeles, 1933-1954," (Ph.D dissertation, Stanford, 2003). Charles Navarro was elected in 1951 representing the tenth district and left in 1961 when he was elected city controller. List of Los Angeles Mayors and Council Members from 1960 to 2002 compiled by Jay Jones, LACA, in author's possession.

out communist sympathizers. Executives in the film industry initiated a blacklist in 1947 that prevented large numbers of writers and actors from working in movies in television.134 Many lived in Los Angeles and their inability to obtain jobs in their profession sent a chill through the entertainment industry which employed tens of thousands of men and women in southern California.

By 1950, Los Angeles struggled with dramatic growth, a fear of communist influence in American life and a scandal-plagued police department. Parker would use all the skills he had garnered during his career in the LAPD to assert himself as the most effective leader in Los Angeles to keep the city safe from communists and criminals. He would transform the police department of the third largest city in the nation into the model of a modern force and make Angelenos proud of their police officers.

134 Fried, Nightmare in Red, 77-78. The Southern California branch of the ACLU later challenged the blacklist in court, but did not succeed. See Walker, In Defense of American Liberties, 181.
CHAPTER 3

PARKER PROFESSIONALIZES THE LAPD

Shortly after Parker became chief, he transformed the LAPD into an efficiently managed police force with professionally trained and well-paid officers. He ushered in a new era of postwar police reform by melding a narrow view of policing with a broad-based public relations campaign. He drew on the successes and noted the failures of his predecessors, August Vollmer and General Worton, and his army colleague and mentor, O. W. Wilson. He initiated a system to monitor officers for corruption and graft which had plagued the department for decades. He abandoned youth programs because he maintained that officers were not social workers, and channeled resources and personnel into crime prevention, patrol, and investigations. He retained General Worton's uniformed, paramilitary structure to impose discipline and strict lines of supervision. To fulfill his commitment to rid Los Angeles of corruption, he created a Special Division to eradicate organized crime.

To burnish the image of the police and garner support from the city's residents for his reforms, he embarked on a broad-based public relations campaign in public speaking and print and broadcast media. The chief delivered hundreds of speeches during his career on topics including crime and communism, the perils of driving on the freeway, and reverence for church and family. For newspapers and magazines, he spoke with local and national reporters for regular stories, features and interviews, and authorized
coverage of policewomen and male officers. He recognized the potential of television and worked closely with the actor and director Jack Webb to bring *Dragnet* to the small screen. Within a few years he achieved national recognition as a pre-eminent police reformer and his department became a model for professional policing throughout the country.

Early in his tenure, he enjoyed strong support from elected officials, Police Commissioners and businessmen but his reforms and his emphasis on crime prevention, or proactive policing, came at a cost. The system he created to catch internal corruption missed a burglary ring involving several officers, forcing him to acknowledge the lapse after reporters ran stories in the city's newspapers. While the majority of residents hailed his officers for their incorruptibility, many black and Hispanic residents and some whites criticized his officers' harsh treatment of suspects. Parker's insistence that police use their own discretion in making arrests, conducting investigations and disciplining their officers generated debates that continued for years. Yet even some of his harshest critics admitted that he had succeeded in transforming the department into a modern police force with professional officers who increased public safety on streets and in neighborhoods and seriously weakened organized crime.

**Parker's Appointment and Early Reforms**

Parker's appointment as Chief of Police in 1950 was not a foregone conclusion. After General Worton stepped down in March of that year, Parker, whom Worton had promoted to Inspector (later changed to Deputy Chief), emerged with the highest score of two dozen candidates. He was not the first choice of the five Police Commissioners,
three of whom favored Thad Brown, Chief of Detectives. For several months he waited as Commissioners debated the appointment.¹

Towards the end of July, Parker learned that the Commissioners planned to discuss the appointment at the home of a dying Commissioner, Agnes Albro, the wife of Security Pacific Bank manager Curtis Albro.² Parker informed the Commissioners that the proposed meeting was tasteless and illegal because it was not in a venue open to the public.³ When Mrs. Albro died on July 30 and Mayor Bowron appointed General Worton to replace her, Parker won a unanimous vote on August 2 despite previous opposition.⁴ On August 9, 1950, he assumed command of the LAPD as its fortieth chief and the first Catholic in the history of the department.⁵

Parker had a well-earned reputation for integrity and a total commitment to law enforcement. He spared no one and would have "put his own mother in jail if he had to."⁶ With the new chief, "no one was going to try to get away with anything crooked."⁷ In his

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² McDougal Privileged Son, 194; Security Pacific Bank was one of the major banks in Los Angeles in 1950.

³ Jennings, “Portrait of Chief” 89.

⁴ Norman Chandler, publisher of the Los Angeles Times, had recommended to Mayor Bowron that General Worton replace Mrs. Albro who had supported Brown, not Parker. See Woods, "Progressives and Police," 418.

⁵ McDougal, Privileged Son, 194-95; Gazell, "Parker, Police Professionalization," 29; Jennings, "Portrait of Chief," 89; Cannon, Official Negligence, 58.

⁶ Ed Davis, retired chief of LAPD, "Era of Parker."

⁷ Ibid.
first month of office, he told residents, "I will strive to make this department the most respected police force in the United States."8

Parker continued Worton's efforts to modernize the department, and executed an ambitious plan that reflected an aggressive approach to enforcing the law in Los Angeles. He upgraded the department's functional organization, and established modern business methods to increase efficiency in analyzing arrest and crime data and measuring productivity. He professionalized his department by establishing high standards for recruitment and training, and instituted a rigid command structure for effective supervision and new divisions to root out internal corruption. He initiated proactive policing by training his officers to seek out suspects who might commit crimes and aggressively apprehend drivers who violated traffic laws.9 And he insisted on retaining LAPD autonomy in disciplinary proceedings for his officers, for which he had successfully fought as a lieutenant in the 1930s.

Parker initiated these reforms to insulate police from politics in city hall.10 To raise the stature of his officers, he imposed strict internal discipline by increasing rules for police conduct, and assigning investigations and prosecutions of officer misconduct to

8"Era of Parker."

9Vollmer had vaguely defined crime prevention but Parker applied specific techniques to reduce the crime rate. See Brown, Working the Street, 43. The concept of crime control caught on in the 1940s, Tonry, Modern Policing, 558; Proactive policing was one of three measures Parker and O. W. Wilson adopted for effective crime prevention. The other two were abolishing recreation programs for youth and educating citizens to take safety precautions and report suspicious activity to the police. See Foigelson, Big City Police, 187.

10Two other benefits of postwar police reform were to attract middle class recruits and middle class support. See Fogelson, Big City Police, 157-59.
personnel in the Internal Affairs Division (IAD). To insulate his officers from politics and to maintain high professional standards, he insisted on autonomy. He would make sure his officers were not engaged in graft or bribes and would discipline them if they were; in exchange, all elected and appointed officials were not to meddle in the department's affairs.

In transforming the department, Parker's genius lay in both adaptation and innovation. He adapted theories and methods from Chiefs Vollmer and Wilson, FBI Director Hoover, and General Worton, and initiated some of his own. He created an "honest, ethical competent police service, completely free of political manipulation and control" and applied one standard of law enforcement to all residents. Parker influenced every dimension of the department's operations. He trumpeted its successes and endured its failures. "He really was the heart and soul of that organization." Using modern business methods and upgrading his organizational structure, Parker initiated mechanisms for effective supervision, greater accountability, efficiency in operations and higher productivity. He centralized power in his office and increased control over all department operations. Parker's overhaul of the department resulted in a more efficiently

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11 Brown, *Working the Street*, 60. During the author's years in the LAPD, sworn personnel commented on their pride in the comprehensive police manual, which described every aspect of policing and administration.

12 Ibid., 43, 60.


14 Gates, "Era of Parker."
run organization that became a model for policing in postwar America. The chief's stature increased exponentially in Los Angeles, and with a well-oiled public relations machine, he became a nationally recognized pioneer in police reform.

Parker drew on many of Vollmer's original plans for the LAPD but sharply differed with him on youth guidance and police politics. Like his mentor, O. W. Wilson, Parker rejected police-sponsored programs for juveniles and argued that his officers were policemen, not social workers. His officers were "neither equipped nor authorized" to deal with social and economic problems. "Our job is to apply emergency treatment to society's surface wounds. We deal with effect, not causes." He devoted a small number of officers to the Juvenile Division to work with teachers, community leaders and youth, but directed most of the department's resources to patrol and investigative operations.

Contrary to Vollmer and Wilson, the new chief understood that politics was vital to ensure stability and longevity in office. He also understood that political engagement as necessary for establishing his stature in the city as well as control over his department.

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15 Respect for the department increased after Parker's reforms. See Bradley oral history, 63; Fogelson, *Big City Police*, chapter 7, *passim*. In the 1950s when O. W. Wilson updated his text on policing, he used the LAPD as his model. See Murphy, interview. The Milwaukee police department also granted long tenure to its police chiefs, trained its officers at a police academy, published a daily bulletin on wanted persons and stolen property, and kept extensive records on productivity and conduct for each officer. See Walker, *Critical History of Police Reform*, 165.


18 LAPD Annual Report 1952, 22, Box C-2003, LACA.

In the twenty-three years prior to his appointment as chief, he had become a shrewd observer of city politics and took note of the strengths and weaknesses in both municipal government and its elected officials. His deep knowledge of Los Angeles politics and his own skills as a politician enabled him to command the LAPD with little or no interference from the City Council, mayor or Police Commission whose sole purpose was to oversee the department's operations and the performance of the chief himself.  

One of Chief Parker's first decisions was to retain the paramilitary structure initiated by Chief Wilson in Wichita, established by Chief Hohmann in Los Angeles and refined by General Worton. He believed that maximizing efficiency and incorruptibility was best achieved by using the United States Marine Corps as the department's model. Parker also added a week to the ninety day training at the academy that General Worton had revived.

To maximize efficiency in management and productivity among his officers and to centralize his power, Parker reorganized the department based on the functional lines that Vollmer had proposed for his reorganization in 1923 and Wilson had refined in Wichita. He retained the existing bureaus of Technical Services, Corrections, Detectives, Traffic, Patrol, Juveniles and Personnel and Training. He moved

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20 Reformers did not remove politics from policing; they only moved it from city hall to the police department. See Brown, Working the Street, 45.


23 Fogelson, *Big City Police* 178.

responsibility for the twelve police stations in Los Angeles to the Bureau of Patrol. He reduced the number of deputy chiefs who reported directly to him from fourteen to eight, and created a Bureau of Administration which consolidated the divisions of Business, Public Information, Internal Affairs, Intelligence and Administrative Vice (Ad Vice). Parker consolidated the most sensitive functions under one Deputy Chief who reported directly to him.

Parker developed a system for patrol based on Vollmer's earlier use of radios and telephones by linking stations with headquarters through upgraded communications equipment and Wilson's and Horrall's daily roll call. He faced serious challenges in policing a city that was four hundred fifty-three square miles, the fourth largest in population but with the largest number of registered drivers. He devised a system for assigning patrol cars based on officer seniority and shifts, and upgraded technology and communications between patrol cars and headquarters. He tried to adapt Wilson's one-man patrol car strategy with an experiment in West Los Angeles in 1951 to test the best way for utilizing his limited number of patrol officers, but acknowledged that inherent dangers prevented him from using one-man cars throughout the city. He applied

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25 LAPD Annual Report 1951, 21. Part of the postwar reform's crime prevention strategy was organizing a police department with special squads. See Big City Police, 241.


Wilson's theory of crime prevention by car – if residents saw officers drive conspicuously through neighborhoods and commercial districts, they would appreciate and support the heavy presence of police. Parker moved officers from foot patrols to cars to create an "omnipresence," enabling officers to apprehend criminals or suspects more quickly and to reassure law abiding residents of his commitment to crime prevention.\textsuperscript{31} To increase efficiency in crime detection he developed a formula based on when and where crime occurred, and created a colored pin system for mapping out locations where crimes occurred.\textsuperscript{32}

In addition to patrolling the city's streets, Parker's officers patrolled the fledgling freeway system which he frequently complained about to reporters and audiences.\textsuperscript{33} To increase safety, his motor officers enforced traffic laws vigorously on all roadways within the city's boundaries.\textsuperscript{34} Exponential postwar growth in the city's population forced his officers to contend with heavy traffic and serious and often fatal accidents.\textsuperscript{35} Parker constantly battled the increase in autos and carelessness of drivers. He initiated a campaign to reduce the number of accidents through a "three-e traffic program of


\textsuperscript{32}Bernard C. Parks, retired Chief of Police and Los Angeles City Council member representing the 8th district, telephone interview by author, 8 August 2003.


\textsuperscript{34}Cannon, Official Negligence, 59.

\textsuperscript{35}Gates, Chief, 21.
engineering, enforcement and education. He sent officers to Northwestern University’s Traffic Institute and applied its techniques in patrol and in the Accident Investigation section of the Traffic Bureau. His aggressive pursuit of traffic safety earned him and his department “every traffic award that was ever invented” as he reduced vehicular deaths by half, promoted auto safety and assigned officers to patrol the ever-increasing maze of traffic networks in Los Angeles.

Parker upgraded requirements for hiring and raised standards of training. He revived Vollmer’s intelligence examinations and imposed standards for age, weight and height for all recruits. He accepted only high school graduates. He tightened the requirements for hiring in search of “the perfect man.” He introduced a medical and dental exam to assess a candidate’s health, and written and oral exams to evaluate

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36 "Traffic Bureau Head Knows Answers to All Accidents,” Los Angeles Times, 20 September 1950. The article was one of several columns that month on traffic.

37 Franklin Kreml, who headed the program at Northwestern, trained Parker in the 1940s and strongly supported his traffic program in Los Angeles in the 1950s. See Gascon, interview.

38 Quote from Thomas Reddin, Chief, LAPC, 1967-69, "Era of Parker." By the end of 1953, vehicular deaths were lowest in the nation among cities with a population of over one million. See Domanick, To Serve and to Protect, 106; Cannon, Official Negligence, 59. Cannon does not give a year when the death rate was reduced. In 1953, Commissioners required police officers to complete citations within ten minutes and “maintain the highest level of courteous and professional conduct in the application of traffic law enforcement.” See Police Commission Minutes, 5 August 1953. In October, 1966, Deputy Chief Tom Reddin expressed interest in the CHP’s offer to take command for patrolling freeways. Reddin told a reporter he was prepared to lose revenue from traffic fines as a result of the takeover. See "A Shifting Relationship," Los Angeles Magazine, 11, no. 10, 64 (October 1966). In the mid 1960s, City Council members agreed to hand over responsibility for patrol to the California Highway Patrol (CHP) after Parker’s death in 1966. See Woods, "Progressives and Police," 433.


40 LAPD Annual Report 1952, 8.

41 Brown, “Working the Street,” 44. The height requirement was five feet nine inches, lowered one inch in 1953. The Police Task force of the Commission for Reorganization of the City Government recommended in their report of March, 1953 that the height requirement be lowered to five feet eight inches to increase eligibility. See CF 59071 Box A1193, LACA; “5-foot 8-inch Police Okd,” Los Angeles Examiner, 24 December 1953.
literacy, writing skills and intelligence. At Wilson's urging, he introduced a psychiatric examination to determine mental stability.\textsuperscript{42} He also initiated background checks to ensure that officers were financially stable and not tempted by graft or bribery.\textsuperscript{43} According to Daryl F. Gates, Parker's driver and later a chief of police himself, Parker "stamped honesty and integrity into the minds of every young recruit in that department."\textsuperscript{44}

Once recruits passed the background checks and physical and behavioral tests, they entered the academy for thirteen weeks of training, twelve hours a day.\textsuperscript{45} They trained with Marine drill instructors who subjected them to severe intimidation.\textsuperscript{46} They took courses in a multidisciplinary curriculum that Wilson pioneered in Wichita which included patrol tactics, juvenile delinquency control, criminal investigation,


\textsuperscript{44}Era of Parker."

\textsuperscript{45}Parker added a week to the ninety-day training at the academy that General Worton had revived. See Cannon, \textit{Official Negligence}, 59; Woods, "Progressives and Police," 199; Fogelson \textit{Big City Police} 160. In the early 1960s, an IACP survey noted that one-third of over two hundred departments in the country offered only two weeks of training, and a quarter of the departments did not require a high school diploma. See Ed Cray, \textit{The Big Blue Line, Police Power vs. Human Rights} (New York: Coward-McCann, 1967), 204-05.

\textsuperscript{46}Celeste Fremon, "Rewriting the Book," \textit{LA Weekly}, 8-12 September 2002.
communications, finger-printing and traffic control. They also took courses that Parker introduced—ethics, human relations, racial and religious prejudice, law, public relations, sociology and psychology. They learned methods for the restrained use of weapons and combat techniques if gunfire became necessary. Throughout their training, they took a battery of tests for agility and physical endurance.

After the recruits passed these exams and graduated from the academy, they endured an eleven week probation period with a training officer before becoming rookies, "the pick of the field." During their careers, they earned among the highest salaries for police in the country, and with Parker's encouragement, obtained college degrees, postgraduate and law degrees, all of which would increase their chances for promotion. His emphasis on officers completing college classes during their service earned them the appellation of "college cops."

Though Parker adapted other ideas and practices to the LAPD, he made four distinct contributions to modernizing and professionalizing the department. He created mechanisms to root out corruption, established a Planning and Research Division to map

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47 LAPD Annual Report 1952, 10; Bopp, O.W., 46.

48 LAPD Annual Report 1952, 10.

49 LAPD Annual Report 1950, 16, 40, and LAPD Annual Report 1951, 5. The 1950 percentage of rookies to applicants was 3.8% in 1950 and 2.8% in 1951. Parker was so strict with admission standards that his department had one of the highest rejection rates in the country, nineteen out of twenty. See Fogelson, Big City Police, 181.

50 Domanick To Protect and To Serve, 108; LAPD Annual Report 1950, 42.

51 Murphy, interview. The typical police officer was a married man and father of young children, a veteran who has a "college education or is working to obtain a degree." See LAPD Annual Report 1952, 8. In 1954 the New York Police Department (NYPD) looked at the LAPD's affiliation with colleges and universities in Los Angeles and adapted it to a program in New York. The NYPD worked with the City University of New York to develop formal coursework for officers to minimize the eruption of scandals within the department. See http://ijay.cuny.edu/~law-pol/lpcj_history.html, accessed 17 May 2004.
out strategies for operations, pursued organized crime and greatly expanded the public relations apparatus to champion the new and improved LAPD and its chief. Within a few years, his department was no longer "the best department money could buy."\(^\text{52}\)

To establish integrity among his officers, Parker announced major changes. He would not tolerate graft, acceptance of gratuities or fixing tickets which could result in severe punishment or termination.\(^\text{53}\) He revamped the Administrative Vice Division (Ad Vice) to prevent scandals such as those involving prostitution rings that had roiled the department in the late 1940s.\(^\text{54}\)

Parker developed a unique system of checks and balances to keep his officers honest. He required that the commanders of the Administrative Vice, Intelligence and Internal Affairs Divisions report directly to him.\(^\text{55}\) Officers in Ad Vice monitored officers in each of the regional vice units and in the Intelligence Division; officers in the Intelligence Division gathered information on organized crime and checked on officers in Ad Vice. Officers in Internal Affairs conducted investigations on all officers in the department. If Intelligence Division officers discovered a prostitution ring when monitoring organized crime and did not inform the captain in Ad Vice, the division

\(^{52}\)Parks, interview.


\(^{54}\)Webb, *Badge*, 159; Gates, *Chief*, 34. Vice gradually faded from public consciousness because society became more tolerant of small time operations, vice remained covert and infrequent, and there was no evidence of systematic vice protection. See Woods, "Progressives and Police," 439-43. Ad Vice remained active through the 1990s. During the author's years in the LAPD as a civilian, from 1989-1998, Ad Vice had a full complement of sworn and civilian staff.

\(^{55}\)Gates, *Chief*, 34.
responsible for investigating that activity, Parker would initiate action.\footnote{Gates, Chief, 34. Early in the career of Rosalind Weiner Wyman as a City Council member, Parker learned that she ran a baseball pool in her office. When the chief called to warn her that she was conducting an illegal business operation, she told him that if he arrested her, she’d be the most popular City Council member. Parker knew he had lost, but warned that he was putting her on record for gambling. Rosalind Weiner Wyman, former Los Angeles City Council member representing the 5th district, telephone interview by author, 11 June 2002.} Parker's system was not foolproof but it was the “most sophisticated” of any police department in the country.\footnote{Gates, Chief, 85. Other departments failed because of loose supervision and corruption, but Parker sustained general effectiveness with his internal checks on corruption and by setting high standards without compromise. See Fogelson, Big City Police, 225, 227.}

Parker also developed a more informal system to root out corruption. He assigned Inspectors Eddie Walker and John Kinsling, LAPD veterans familiar with scandals in the 1940s, to report any wrongdoing from the field directly to him, bypassing the captain in charge. When Parker learned of graft or similar misconduct, he called the Deputy Chief who supervised the captain and demanded change.\footnote{Dotson, interview.}

To allocate resources efficiently in crime prevention, Parker created the Planning and Research Division (PRD), his most significant contribution to modern police management.\footnote{In contrast, Vollmer believed that institutions, not the police department, should research the cause of crime and work with police organizations to coordinate community resources to prevent crime. See Police and Modern Society, 235-36. Parker believed that responsibility for crime prevention lay exclusively with the police. He was less concerned than Vollmer in the causes of crime and more concerned with using available resources to prevent crime.} He appointed Deputy Chief Richard Simon to head the Bureau of Administration and oversee PRD. Simon championed PRD's statistical and methodological analysis to eliminate redundancy, inefficiency and cost overruns, and to
provide "increased service with less men." He carefully selected his staff, based on examinations for reading and writing comprehension, general intelligence and temperament. He directed them to coordinate and assemble the department's manual and orders from Chief Parker, collect statistics on arrests, traffic and personnel, analyze crime data by geographic locations for command staff, and evaluate forms to improve efficiency in collecting information.

By 1952, Simon boasted that as a result of PRD analysis, the LAPD substantially increased efficiency in operations. In an article discussing the merits of the new division, he noted that officers responded to nineteen percent more patrol calls in the San Fernando Valley, handled twenty-four percent more juvenile cases and thirty-one percent more field interrogations, and recovered thirty-two percent more stolen automobiles. In addition, Simon noted that these gains in productivity occurred in spite of a nine percent

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62 Simon, "Planning and Research," 370. Much of PRD's research was useful to Mayor Bowron's efforts to improve efficiency in city government. Several months after the creation of PRD, Leask credited its staff with close cooperation with the Los Angeles Commission for the Reorganization of the City Government and their input in evaluating the department's operations that were not related specifically to crime prevention, apprehension and investigation. See letter to Mayor Bowron from Samuel Leask, Jr., 7 May 1951, cover letter to Progress Report Police Department Activities Survey, Bowron Papers.
shortage of the authorized number of officers. Simon compared PRD favorably with management consultants in private industry, and suggested that similar divisions in other police departments work closely with all divisions and bureaus to achieve satisfactory results. One reason for PRD’s success, he noted, was that staff gave the chief full credit when it completed a project he assigned to them.

Parker's PRD became a model for similar divisions in other police departments throughout the country. He influenced the New York City Police Department to create one. Parker’s colleague, O. W. Wilson, then dean of the School of Criminology at the University of California at Berkeley, urged Wyman Vernon, chief of the nearby Oakland, California, police department to establish one. In an address at the Sixty-First Annual Conference of the International Association of Chiefs of Police in 1954, Parker promoted the value of PRD as a necessary tool in effective management, defying conservative

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63 Simon, "Planning and Research Division," 370. Simon does not compare these statistics to previous years nor does he explain how his staff compiled them. The annual reports are full of such statistics, some of which are clearly explained as crimes reported and some are not. The department relied heavily on use of statistics to boast of LAPD efficiency but when staff campaigned to increase the number of sworn positions, they argued that the current number of authorized positions was inadequate, undermining their own claims for efficient policing. One example is in the LAPD Annual Report 1952, 12; Woods, “Progressives and Police,” 431; “Parker Bases Police Losses,” Los Angeles Examiner, 10 December 1953; “Police Force 143 Short of Full Strength Here,” Los Angeles Examiner, 13 February 1956; “Chief Says Police Strengthen Falling Behind,” Los Angeles Examiner, 20 August 1958.

64 Simon, "Planning and Research Division," 372-73.


66 Murphy, interview.

67 Wilson himself started one when he became chief of the Chicago police department and by the 1960s, almost every big-city department used their planning and research divisions to analyze operations. See Fogelson Big City Police, 178. William Bratton, the current chief of the LAPD, who began his career with the Boston Police Department, notes that the Boston PD did not create a PRD until the early 1970s. See William Bratton and Peter Knobler, Turnaround (New York: Random House, 1998), 81.
economists and the received wisdom of police administration of the day.68 Within the next few years, following Parker's success in Los Angeles, staff of Planning and Research Divisions in police departments of cities with more than 500,000 residents formed a network and visited participating divisions to exchange information on new methodologies.69

Parker expanded his mandate by distinguishing himself from many of his predecessors and from J. Edgar Hoover by conducting vigorous investigations of organized crime. He expanded the Intelligence Squad into a Division whose officers gathered intelligence against key figures in the Mafia.70 During the first few months of his tenure, Parker was approached four times by individuals who wanted to "work things out."71 In November, 1950, the day before he was to testify before a committee chaired by Senator Estes Kefauver (D-Tennessee) in a hearing in Los Angeles, his department received a tip that the Mafia planned to bomb Parker's home and kill him.72 On his way

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68William H. Parker, “Practical Aspects of Police Planning,” in Wilson, Parker on Police 73-96. Parker also relied heavily on texts issued by the International City Managers’ Association such as O.W. Wilson’s, Municipal Police Administration; Dotson, interview. See “Practical Aspects of Police Planning, Lecture 1,” 74.

69 Murphy, interview.

70Davidson, "Mafia Can't Crack Los Angeles," 27.

71 Quote from Joseph Gerald Woods, "Era of Parker."

72 The same day he received the tip, Samuel Rummel, Mickey Cohen's attorney, was murdered at his home in Laurel Canyon, inside the city's boundaries. Cohen was suspected of operating an illegal operation on a stretch of Sunset Boulevard that was just outside the city boundary. LAPD officers wanted to set up an operation to arrest Cohen but a captain of the Los Angeles County Sheriff's office (LASD), Al Guasti, warned them in a letter not to venture outside their jurisdiction. In a hearing before the Kefauver Committee, Los Angeles County Sheriff Eugene Biscailuz testified that he had not seen the letter and Guasti denied warning the LAPD but later admitted that he failed to notify the LAPD of his meeting with Rummel before his death. Parker told the committee he believed that Rummel acted as Cohen's brain. See Estes Kefauver, Crime in America (New York: Greenwood, 1968), 77, 240-41. Guasti was convicted of perjury before the Los Angeles County Grand Jury in 1950. See “Sheriff Says Mistake Made in Bookie Case Got Reports of 'No Evidence' From Audit Over 3 Year Period," Los Angeles Examiner, 18 June 1952. The murder and investigation highlighted the jurisdictional disputes between the LAPD and the...
home from work, Parker directed his officers to provide him extra security and survived without any damage to himself or his home.\textsuperscript{72}

The following day in his testimony before Senator Kefauver's committee, Parker emphasized the necessity of federal assistance to local law enforcement in battling organized crime.\textsuperscript{74} His years of arresting bootleggers and prostitutes convinced him that with enough resources and officers assigned to investigation and apprehension, he could battle larger organizations of crime and decrease their presence in Los Angeles. After his own experience as a target, he instructed his Intelligence Division to use whatever legal means was necessary to rid California of the Mafia.\textsuperscript{75} Within a few years, his officers reduced the Mafia's presence in Los Angeles and their danger to residents of the city. He earned praise from both reporters and Senator Kefauver for his achievement.\textsuperscript{76}

\textsuperscript{72} "Era of Parker."

\textsuperscript{74} Parker, "Invasion From Within," in Wilson, \textit{Parker on Police}, 63. Bowron reiterated Parker's recommendation in a speech to the American Bar Association's Committee on Organized Crime. In 1951, after Cohen went to federal prison for five years on income tax evasion, City Council members issued a resolution congratulating the federal and local officers who arrested him and investigated his crimes leading to his incarceration. The resolution also cited the Kefauver Senate Crime Committee for praising Mayor Bowron. See CF 49227, Box A1099, LAC A.

\textsuperscript{75} "Era of Parker."

\textsuperscript{76} Turner, a former FBI agent who wrote for the liberal journal \textit{Ramparts} in the 1960s notes that organized crime never functioned with the power and breadth in Los Angeles as it had in other large cities. See Turner, \textit{Police Establishment}, 106, 74. The author has not found the report that praised Parker, but the chief referred to it in "Invasion From Within" and O. W. Wilson also referred to it in his introduction to the collected speeches for \textit{Parker on Police}. Wilson offered no statistics to support his statement, \textit{Parker on Police}, ix. Parker boasted that the Kefauver Committee had singled him out for making Los Angeles the "white spot," the one city where the police were effective in suppressing organized crime, in a "black national picture of corruption." William H. Parker, "The Businessman and the Police," in Wilson, \textit{Parker on Police}, 37. The "white spot" was a common metaphor for clean, professionally managed government. See also Parker's Radio Address in Wilson, \textit{Parker on Police}, 8; "Parker Declares City is White Spot of
Parker advocated federal support for combating organized crime but did not succeed. He could not convince Hoover to collect information on organized crime nor could he gain access to the FBI's files.\textsuperscript{77} Determined to use a network of law enforcement agencies, Parker sanctioned the creation of the Law Enforcement Intelligence Unit (LEIU) in 1956 by Captain James Hamilton, who headed the LAPD's Criminal Intelligence Unit. The LEIU was not a public agency and published no records, but acted as a clearinghouse and distributed unofficial files to its membership, which grew to two hundred-thirty local law enforcement agencies.\textsuperscript{78} The purpose of the clearinghouse was to gather, record, investigate and exchange confidential information not available through regular police channels.\textsuperscript{79}

The Public Relations Campaign

One of the most innovative reforms Parker introduced was a multi-media public relations campaign for promoting the LAPD as a modern organization and for explaining

\textsuperscript{77}Donner, \textit{Protectors of Privilege}, 79-80; John T. Donovan, "I Have No Use for this Fellow Parker: William H. Parker of the LAPD and his Feud with J. Edgar Hoover and the FBI," \textit{Southern California Quarterly} 87 (Fall, 2005), 178.

\textsuperscript{78}Donner, \textit{Protectors of Privilege}, 79-80. Parker had worked closely with James Hamilton, who collected information on Police Commissioners during an assignment in 1950 before Parker's appointment as chief. See also McDougal, \textit{Privileged Son}, 194-95.

\textsuperscript{79}LEIU also served as a clearinghouse for information on people involved in gambling, loan-sharking and narcotics. There was strong evidence that members gathered information on political dissidents. See Donner, \textit{Protectors of Privilege}, 76, 81.
his philosophy of policing to his audiences.\textsuperscript{80} He made the Public Information section a full-fledged Division, appointed officers as media consultants, and assigned others to write speeches which he delivered to a few hundred audiences each year. As his campaigned increased its scope and effectiveness, the chief rose in popularity and stature and became a highly respected state and national figure in police reform by the mid-1950s.

In speaking to business and civic audiences, Parker invoked themes that reflected his upbringing in Lead, South Dakota, and his belief that the police were the bulwark against anti-democratic forces.\textsuperscript{81} He spoke of family, church, democracy and anti-communism. He borrowed two ideas from Vollmer: without the police, who embodied order and respect for government, Western civilization would perish; and police can succeed only if they have the wholehearted support of the public.\textsuperscript{82}

The chief divided the world into forces of evil and defenders of freedom. For chiefs of police, America faced a “simultaneous assault in three dimensions: the armed might of Soviet Russia, the Communist Fifth Column within our borders, and organized

\textsuperscript{80}Public relations were essential for both public and private organizations by 1950. See Richard S. Tedlow, \textit{Keeping the Corporate Image: Public Relations and Business, 1900-1950} (Greenwich, CN: JAI Press, 1979), 156, 197. Los Angeles’ decentralized government enabled LAPD to use the media to persuade the public to support its policies. See Edward C. Banfield and James Q. Wilson, \textit{City Politics} (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1965), 111.

\textsuperscript{81}According to Judge Stephen Reinhardt, Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals, Parker did not deviate from values he acquired in the early 20\textsuperscript{th} century in South Dakota: Judge Reinhardt and Bill Thomas, retired city editor, \textit{Los Angeles Times}, both noted that chief was from another era, raised with nineteenth-century values in South Dakota and remained committed to them his entire life. Judge Reinhardt served as a Los Angeles Police Commissioner prior to his appointment to the Ninth Circuit Court. Stephen Reinhardt, telephone interview by author, 25 July 2002; Bill Thomas, telephone interview by author, 3 November 2002.

\textsuperscript{82}Vollmer, \textit{Police and Modern Society}, 216, 185.
crime."\(^8^3\) In 1952, Parker told his audience that internal decay hastened the fall of the Babylonian, Egyptian, Greek and Roman empires whose "walls crumbled into rubble and the enemy poured through when barbarianism within rotted the moral supporting timbers."\(^8^4\) The police were the last bastion of democracy and would save society from its more self-destructive tendencies.\(^8^5\) They would resist the "evil efforts of a handful of parasites" who would turn Los Angeles, the city of angels, into Los Diabolos, the city of devils.\(^8^6\)

Parker's moral fervor came in part from deeply held religious beliefs.\(^8^7\) The chief adhered to an anti-communist, conservative Catholicism, championed by Catholic

\(^8^3\) Parker, "Invasion From Within," in Wilson, *Parker on Police*, 49.

\(^8^4\) Ibid.

\(^8^5\) Parker, "Police Philosophy," 32, in Wilson, *Parker on Police*.

\(^8^6\) Ibid. In the late 1940s and early 1950s, the political climate in Los Angeles was ripe with communist fears. At the local and state levels City Council members, county supervisors and state legislators enacted loyalty oaths. Los Angeles County first enacted a loyalty oath in August 1947. In 1948, at the urging of Council member Ed. J. Davenport, Los Angeles was among the first cities in California to adopt a loyalty oath followed by the University of California Regents in 1949. In 1950, California state employees were required to take a loyalty oath. In 1952, the Los Angeles school board and Los Angeles Housing Authority fired those who refused to sign oaths. That same year, the US Supreme Court upheld the loyalty oath for the city of Los Angeles. By the mid-1950s, zeal for the oaths died down but the California Supreme Court did not overturn the oath until December 1967. See Michael Heale, *McCarthy's Americans: Red Scare Politics in State and Nation 1935-1965* (Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 1998), 32, 35, 37, 292-93, 52, 46, 299. Anticommunism was the "religion of the society." See Oral History of Eason Monroe, "Safeguarding Civil Liberties," (Los Angeles, 1972), 13, Special Collections, UCLA. Monroe was the executive director of the Southern California branch of the ACLU in the 1950s and 1960s.

On August 22, 1950, the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors adopted three emergency ordinances requiring communists and persons belonging to suspect organizations to register with the Los Angeles County Sheriff. The Board of Supervisors urged the City Council of Los Angeles to follow a similar ordinance for full effectiveness. The LAPD did not enforce the ordinance due to court challenges to Los Angeles County's communist registration ordinances and cites CF 46540. Council member Ed Davenport lobbied for a communist registration ordinance on July 6, 1950. See Katherine Underwood, "Process and Politics: Multiracial Electoral Coalition Building and Representation in Los Angeles' Ninth District, 1949-1962" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of California, San Diego, 1992), 184, 179.

\(^8^7\) Dotson, interview.
intellectuals who saw the Soviet Union as the political and military center of a conspiracy aimed at world conquest. Fearing that the United States faced imminent disaster, Catholic intellectuals joined other conservatives to advocate a more militant posture in the Cold War and oppose American liberalism. They saw themselves as champions of both Western civilization and the heritage of Christianity, and drew from their religious faith and tradition principles they believed could rescue civilization from catastrophe. For them, communism was a Christian heresy and the final struggle for world domination was imminent. For Catholics like Parker, conservative anti-communism represented a way to demonstrate their place in the mainstream of American thought, particularly against non-Catholics who were political leftists.

In addition to invoking themes of conservatism and defense of democracy, Parker solidified his relationship by promoting the department as an ethical, modern and well-managed law enforcement agency. In January, 1951 Parked described the department’s

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90 Ibid., 81. Two other Catholics who made names for themselves in the 1950s as committed anti-communists were Joseph McCarthy and John F. Kennedy. See George N. Nash, *The Conservative Intellectual Movement in America* (Wilmington, DE: Intercollegiate Studies Institute, 1996), 71. There are no specific speeches Parker made defending or opposing McCarthy but he did not hesitate to label many of his opponents communists, regardless of the criticism.


new standards in meeting public expectations of effective public service.93 Parker defined police as employees of the public and told his listeners that each citizen "had a right to judge the police" and determine its ethics.94 Policing was a social contract linking "man's government by man...since human beings first sought collective security."95

The chief continually reminded his audiences that public support was necessary for his officers to reach their goals of efficiency and crime reduction. He warned them to be alert for criminal activity, report it immediately, and be willing to serve as both witnesses and members of a jury in investigations and trials.96 "Law enforcement is totally dependent upon the public for its life, its strength and its effectiveness."97 Only if the public recognized the need for an ethical and well-managed department could he effect change using technology and modern business methods.98 In exchange for granting police the power to enforce the law, the police must accept the public's demand for accountability if they abused that power. The public shaped and controlled the police, Parker argued, and

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95 Parker, “Police Challenge in Our Great Cities,” 7.
96 Parker “Crime Prevention” in Wilson, Parker on Police, 69-70.
97 Parker “Police Challenge,” Annals article, 13, Roybal papers.
98 Ibid., 7.
the checks and balances in urban democracy were crucial. "Any other arrangement, any other philosophy, cannot be tolerated under our political system."100

Parker elicited support from businesses by stressing his conservative credentials and modern business methods, and warning audiences of the perils of crime and corruption. He emphasized management principles of administration, supervision and human resources that were equally important in police departments.101 He used the public forum to court the city's conservative establishment and forge strong ties with the American Legion.102 As a result of embedding his conservative philosophy in speeches on good business practices and successful reform, he enjoyed favorable coverage from Norman Chandler, publisher of the Los Angeles Times, and support for himself and his campaign for order, crime prevention and strict enforcement of the law.103

99 The Police Administrator and Public Relations" An Address delivered at the annual meeting of the Police Chief's Section of the League of California Cities, San Francisco, September, 1955 in Parker on Police, 146.

100 Parker, "Police Administrator and Public Relations," 135.

101 Parker, "Businessman and Police," 38 in Wilson, Parker on Police.

102 Parker's conservative views were similar to downtown businessmen, particularly Norman Chandler, who supported the police, fiscal stringency and opposed federal social programs such as public housing. See Sonenshein, Politics in Black and White, 31. See also Mike Davis, City of Quartz (New York: Vintage Books, 1992), Chapter 2, "Power Lines," passim. Parker cultivated a relationship at the local, state and national level with the American Legion, attending conferences and accepting reimbursement for his travel expenses and permitted captains to recruit new officers for Post 381, which sponsored the LAPD's Motorcycle Drill Team. See Police Commission Minutes, 15 July 1959; "War against Evils Pledged by Parker; Police Chief Tells Legion Group City Must Have Honest Regime," Los Angeles Times, 24 January 1951; Dotson, interview. Parker was Commander of the 17th District of California and President of the American Legion Luncheon Club. See Los Angeles Equalizer Vol XXXIII, no 8, CF 130570 Box A1989, LACA. In return for Legion sponsorship of the LAPD band and the Motorcycle Drill Team, his officers provided extra protection for delegates to the American Legion convention in Los Angeles. See "Special LA Police Unit Protects Visitors," Los Angeles Examiner, 1 September 1956.

103 Both Parker and Norman Chandler, publisher of the Los Angeles Times in the 1950s, were anti-communist and politically conservative. See McDougal, Privileged Son, 192-96. In the absence of a political machine, Los Angeles businessmen, under Chandler's influence, paid some but not all expenses for Norris Poulson's mayoral campaign and worked with him on city budgets. See Banfield and Wilson, City
Parker balanced praise for his department with cautionary tales of crime and moral depravity. He warned that anti-police forces in America threatened the social order of democracy. "The voice of the criminal, the communist, and the self-appointed defender of civil liberties constantly cries out for more and more restriction upon police authority." Those who sympathized with the underdog, a coded phrase Parker used for liberals and civil libertarians, were ignorant of the underdog's misdeeds. Hidden enemies lay in wait for America and its law-abiding citizens. American institutions were at risk of decay due to increasing permissiveness, and unless the police preserved civic order, godless communism would seep in, jeopardizing freedom and liberty. The role of the police in America was to defend and uphold the foundations of democracy.

Parker saw the police as the "thin blue line," defending the social order against the forces of crime, communism and moral corruption, a phrase that embodied the essence of his

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Politics, 162. In the 1950s a Committee of 25 consisting of Norman Chandler and several men who later became associated with Ronald Reagan lobbied the City Council. See Domanick, To Protect and To Serve 151; Davis, City of Quartz, 126; Cunningham, interview. Los Angeles Times editor Carlton Williams, who maintained an office at City Hall and wielded influence on Poulson, most likely represented the Committee of 25. See Robert Gottlieb and Irene Wolt, Thinking Big: The Story of the Los Angeles Times, Its Publishers and Their Influence on Southern California (New York: Putnam, 1977), 304.

104 Parker "Invasion from Within," 49-65, in Wilson, Parker on Police, passim.

105 Ibid., 64. Parker's warnings of liberalism and moral degradation as agents of social destruction positioned the police as the agents of rescue and American defenders of freedom. See Donner, Protectors of Privilege, 247.

106 Parker "Police Philosophy," 25. Red baiting was an effective tactic for discrediting political rivals. See Heale, McCarthy's Americans, 4. Public figures often lambasted each other with accusations of communism in the 1950s. See Jack Langguth, interview by author, Los Angeles, 1 August 2003.


108 Parker developed an "ideology of Americanism that melded Catholicism with anti-communism and the view that criminals and dissenters hastened the disintegration of democratic society. See Woods, "Progressives and the Police," 422; Parker "Police Philosophy" in Wilson, Parker on Police, 223-32.
policing philosophy and conservatism.\textsuperscript{109} The LAPD and police officers in America were all that stood between civilization and anarchy.\textsuperscript{110} He pledged his officers to enforce the law without prejudice and to adhere to western civilization and moral values.\textsuperscript{111}

Parker's PID was based on his and other's public relations success in law enforcement. He drew on his experience in public speaking before professional and civic groups, and his participation in the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP) by replicating the work of the IACP's public relations committee that had succeeded in polishing the image of police with print, broadcast media and motion pictures.\textsuperscript{112} He studied the success of J. Edgar Hoover in promoting the FBI as a highly regarded law enforcement agency. He also consulted with media advisers to develop a public relations enterprise within the LAPD that became the most successful in an American police

\textsuperscript{109}Parker, "Invasion From Within," 62.

\textsuperscript{110}The thin blue line was Parker's way of describing the police function as holding the line "between civilization and barbarism." See Fogelson, \textit{Big City Police}, 240.


\textsuperscript{112}Cannon, \textit{Official Negligence}, 60-61, 186. The IACP committee was established in the 1930s. See Patrick V. Murphy and Thomas Plate, \textit{Commissioner, A View from the Top of American Law Enforcement} (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1977), 83; Skolnick and Fyfe, \textit{Above the Law}, 186; Kelling and Moore, "Evolving Strategy," 1; Fogelson, \textit{Big City Police}, 147; Walker, \textit{Critical History of Police Reform}, 153. Delegates to the IACP convention in 1910 and 1914 were so angered by the Keystone Kops who portrayed police as bumbling fools in silent films that they passed resolutions condemning motion pictures that falsely represented police, and films that exhibited immorality, because they encouraged crime. See Walker, \textit{Critical History of Police Reform}, 58; Fogelson, \textit{Big City Police}, 65. One of the hallmarks of August Vollmer's tenure as police chief in 1923 was to portray the police as serious and committed law enforcement professionals. Vollmer had particular disdain for the Keystone Kops, whom he thought would persuade children to view the police as buffoons. See Woods, "Progressives and Police," 165, 342. Participants at the annual conference of Interpol in Washington, D.C. in 1960 concluded that motion pictures were responsible for the growing disrespect for law and for an increase in juvenile crime. See "'U.S. World's Crime Leader,'" \textit{Los Angeles Examiner}, 30 November 1960.

Under J. Edgar Hoover's direction, the FBI's public relations department launched a campaign from 1934 to 1936 that magnified the threat of a crime wave and portrayed the FBI as agents who stood for law and order. In 1934, when FBI agents killed John Dillinger and later Pretty Boy Floyd, Baby Face Nelson and Ma Barker, the FBI publicized the heroism of its agents. See Walker, \textit{Critical History of Police Reform}, 153.
department at the time. Within a few years the chief boasted that good relations between police and the public increased the public's understanding of the police department's role in a democracy.

During his first year as chief, Parker used a small-scale approach to introduce his new department to the public. He authorized "Crime Week," a lavish annual event that was part of a national campaign. The opening evening featured the Los Angeles police band and color guard, and speeches by law enforcement officers. During the week, the officers and Boy Scouts distributed pamphlets to the press, radio and schools, and businesses ran public service ads on billboards urging cooperation with local police departments. To educate the public on law enforcement, he continued the practice of using young movie actors in photographs with police officers to teach crime prevention techniques and demonstrate how to secure homes and cars. His PID officers fed the

113 In the 1930s, Hoover earned support for reshaping the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) through public relations campaigns and by persuading local and state law enforcement agencies and President Roosevelt that an autonomous and strong FBI was essential for the nation's well-being. See Skolnick and Fyfe, Above the Law, 186.

In 1933, a reporter named Courtney Ryley Cooper ghost-wrote three books and four movies for Hoover. He organized all the FBI's activities into a coherent story and linked one episode to the next in twenty-two stories he wrote for American Magazine. He used his prior experience as a pulp writer to ground his stories with a heroic character; in the series on the FBI, the natural hero was Hoover. See Richard God Powers, "The FBI in American Popular Culture, in Theoharis, editor, The FBI: A Comprehensive Reference Guide, (Phoenix, AZ: Oryx Press, 1999), 270; Kelling and Moore, "Evolving Strategy," 11-12; Cannon, Official Negligence, 60. The FBI tracked Parker's public relations campaign and noted his comments on its success in his remarks at a regional meeting of police chiefs in Richmond, California. See Director, FBI, Re William H Parker, 18 July 1952, FBI 62-94062.


116 Watts Citizens Can Help Make Crime Prevention Week a Success by Cooperation with Police Department," Spotlight, 16 February 1950. Parker gained far more success in using broadcast media to promote the LAPD than in planning and staging Crime Week. By the mid 1950s, the event lost its cache.

117 Early in his career, Kirk Douglas posed for the camera as he learned crime prevention tips from a policewoman. Features Section, Los Angeles Police, Westwood Hills Press, 26 January 1946; "Milk
same photos and captions to several neighborhood weeklies.

In 1951, Parker expanded the Public Information Division into five sections: press, radio, television, police magazines and research.\footnote{LAPD Annual Report 1952, 23.} He appointed Captain Stanley Sheldon, with whom he had worked for many years, to head the division.\footnote{David Alexander, Star Trek, the Authorized Biography of Gene Roddenberry (New York, Roc, imprint of Dutton Signet, division of Penguin Books, 1994), 107.} Sheldon appointed a sergeant to serve as liaison to minorities through civic and religious institutions and community newspapers.\footnote{LAPD Annual Report 1952, 23; One local paper announced the promotion of the first LAPD Japanese-American to the rank of sergeant. "First Nisei Named Police Sergeant Here by Parker," Los Angeles Examiner, 1 July 1959. Two African-American weeklies noted the promotions and achievements of African-American police officers. The California Eagle announced the promotion of Officer Marie Thomas to sergeant in 1957 and the Los Angeles Tribune announced that same year that Sgt. Tom Bradley had passed the bar, a significant achievement for a police officer at that time regardless of race. California Eagle, 7 November 1957 “Promotion” caption underneath photograph of Marie Thomas; “Sgt. Bradley,” Los Angeles Tribune, 2 May 1957, caption underneath photograph, LAPD Scrapbook, LACA.} His eleven officers went into schools, distributed pamphlets warning students of the dangers of narcotics and presented exhibits. They fed stories to the city's dailies and neighborhood weeklies and worked with editors and reporters from domestic and international newspapers and magazines.\footnote{In 1955 he added eight more officers. See Domanick, To Protect and To Serve, 131; LAPD Annual Report 1954, 25, 46, Box C-2003, LACA. In the 1950s, there were five daily newspapers, the Los Angeles Times and the Los Angeles Mirror, published by the Times-Mirror Company and owned by the Chandler family; the Examiner and the Herald-Express, owned by William Randolph Hearst; and the Daily News, published in the San Fernando Valley by a Democrat, Manchester Boddy. See Gottlieb and Wolt, Thinking Big, 286. The Hearst papers and the Los Angeles Times were conservative but the Daily Mirror was geared to appeal to blue collar readers with entertaining and racy news. See McDougal, Privileged Son, 181-82. For coverage in papers in other cities and countries, see “La Policia Angelina Es Uno de Los Cuerpos Mas Capacitados Para Veler Por El Bienestar Publico (translation: “the LAPD is one of the most capable bodies to oversee the public welfare”) Magazine de Novedades, Mexico D.F. 12 January 1958; A promotional spread in a Dutch newspaper, no name, 23 August 1956, LACA. An example of a feature in a} (Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.)
with the American Legion and booked the LAPD band for performances and in conjunction with the U. S. State Department they consulted with representatives of police departments in foreign countries.122

PID sponsored tours of LAPD headquarters for city residents and police officers from other American cities and foreign countries. PID staff showed visitors a fully equipped motion picture studio for training films and photo labs for processing photographs taken at crime scenes. They also showed off the network of pneumatic tubes which transported reports and records throughout the building, and computers which processed data on suspects and crime trends. And they concluded their tour in the Communications Division where operators spoke by radio with officers in the field and took calls from residents reporting crimes.123

One of the earliest self-promotion efforts by PID staff was to revise the department's annual report for 1950. In a dramatic departure from previous reports that contained dry lists of statistics, Parker's writers introduced a modern police department to residents of Los Angeles. They created a visually pleasing mix of text, photographs and graphics to dissect crime statistics, promote a new, professionally trained officer and

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123 LAPD Annual Report 1955, 4-10, Box C-2003, LACA.
delineate the department’s responsibility to the public.\footnote{Woods, "Progressives and Police," 426; LAPD Annual Report 1950.} For the next several years, PID staff reduced the statistical portion to two pages with graphics and crime descriptions, devoted a few pages each year to one or two divisions with pictures and text, and stressed training, preparedness, efficiency and commitment to the community. They also emphasized inadequate budgets and staff for a growing city, but struck a balance between warning of an impending breakdown in the social order and the high productivity of its force.\footnote{Woods, "Progressives and Police," 430.}

Writers described current problems and how the LAPD addressed them.\footnote{Cannon, Official Negligence, 60-61.} In 1955, PID staff writers announced the establishment of the Intelligence Division in their annual report to highlight their success in minimizing the presence of organized crime:

> Effective action against the disciplined regulars of organized crime requires specialized methods. As with any subversive element, it can be combated best by highly-trained intelligence agents who operate through information, infiltration and surveillance. Los Angeles has been kept consistently free of organized crime. This is largely due to the Los Angeles Police Department’s nationally famous Intelligence Division.\footnote{LAPD Annual Report 1955, 11.}

One of the most successful public relations campaigns was in print media. PID staff encouraged articles about professional officers who worked hard to prevent crime in Los Angeles and to maintain an image of the city as safe and promising for economic growth. Unofficially, officers cultivated relationships with white reporters for favorable coverage by offering them rides in patrol cars, and drinking with them after completing
their shifts. They knew that by providing reporters with easy access, their editors would either kill unfavorable articles on police brutality or consign them to the back pages.

Parker also benefited from the PID’s print division in publicizing an encounter with the actor Clark Gable that symbolized his commitment to a uniform standard of law enforcement. When Gable asked the Police Commission for an exception to the ban on firearms so he could shoot animals on his estate in Encino, Parker persuaded the Commissioners to uphold his own decision to deny the request.

In the mid 1950s, PID staff used a photo essay in Look magazine and local coverage of fashion shows to promote the image of policewomen who were well-trained and tough but also maternal and feminine. They worked with local reporters for an article on policewomen wearing ball gowns to celebrate their pay increases and raise funds at an event sponsored by the Los Angeles Policewomen’s Association. In 1957,

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131 In the 1950s, the few policewomen in the LAPD worked with juveniles and in the women’s section of the local jails. Originally a prestigious career for women, promoted by Alice Stebbins Wells, the first LAPD policewoman who was appointed in 1910, policing for women lost its stature by the 1930s as social welfare was institutionalized in local and state public agencies. See Walker, *Critical History of Police Reform*, 93-94; “The Lady is a Cop,” *Look Magazine*, 6 March 1956. The *Look Magazine* photo essay showed policewoman Frances Summer (in private life Mrs. Jack Summer) as an excellent markswoman who loved to knit socks for her husband and “toss a fine green salad.” See also “7 Policewoman Grads Say It’s Rugged Course,” *Los Angeles Examiner*, 2 May 1955.

132 “Girls in Blue” Celebrate Pay Hike at Ball,” *Los Angeles Examiner*, 21 June 1954. The article noted that sixty-eight were married and nineteen were single, and the position of City Mother, which was
when a dozen women graduated from the academy, PID staff allowed reporters to print details about their uniform and encouraged them to describe policing as a "highly respected vocation" for women.\textsuperscript{133}

PID staff enlisted reporters to write features using the rhetoric of combat to promote its officers as aggressive crime fighters. Portraying police as fighting a war on crime was neither original nor new; Parker was one of several police chiefs in the 1950s who tied the language of belligerence to the military model for law enforcement.\textsuperscript{134} Articles with headlines such as “Police Lab Wages Deadly Crime War” and “New Laboratory Aids War on Crime” appeared in 1955 and 1956.\textsuperscript{135} By enlisting newspapers to incorporate his war rhetoric, Parker persuaded the public of the LAPD’s need for more officers and resources and for continued support in defeating criminals who threatened the American way of life.\textsuperscript{136}

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not defined, was equivalent to a lieutenant. See also “L.A.’s Police Gals Wow ‘Em as Models,” Los Angeles Herald, 4 April 1957.
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\textsuperscript{133} Policewomen wore skirts rather than pants, carried a regulation purse and a snub-nosed 38-caliber pistol, “a more feminine accouterment.” See “12 Policewomen Graduated at Academy Rites,” Los Angeles Times, 15 June 1957. The LAPD recruited “average girls” and dismissed the idea that “a policewomen must be a husky Amazon is antiquated. See “‘Average Girls’ Sought by L.A. as Policewomen,” Los Angeles Examiner, 19 August 1955.
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\textsuperscript{134} Earl Warren, Chief Justice of the United States Supreme Court, who began his public service career as District Attorney for Alameda County in California and police chiefs in Cincinnati and Boston in the early 1950s, all embraced the military analogy as a way to enforce internal discipline and professionalism. See Fogelson, Big City Police, 154. Use of the phrase “war on crime” first appeared in the 1920s in reports for crime commissions and crime surveys. See Monkkonen, “History of Urban Policing,” in Tonry, Modern Policing, 557.
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\textsuperscript{135} “Police Lab Wages Deadly Crime War,” Los Angeles Times, 17 April 1955; “New Laboratory Aids War on Crime,” Los Angeles Times, 12 March 1956.
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\textsuperscript{136} The Los Angeles County Sheriff’s Department (LASD) employs more personnel and covers a wider area, but has not enjoyed the same amount of press coverage as the LAPD. The LASD lacked media sophistication, as well as television programs to promote its image at the time, and endured a succession of bland leaders. See David Shaw, “Chief Parker Molded LAPD Image – Then Came the ‘60s; Police: Press Treated Officers as Heroes Until Social Upheaval Prompted Skepticism and Confrontation,” The Los
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One of the more enduring projects in local print media was a series of annual supplements during the month of September from 1954 through 1959 in the *Los Angeles Examiner*. The supplements reinforced the image presented in the LAPD annual reports of a professional department with above-average white male officers. The supplements included photos of officers patrolling the streets on foot and on motorcycles, training at the academy and participating in graduation ceremonies for new recruits. Reporters wrote articles that boasted of officers finding lost children, returning stolen property, arresting large numbers of suspects and writing larger numbers of traffic citations. Writers praised the department’s worldwide reputation for excellence in public safety and crime prevention.\(^{137}\) In 1959, *Examiner* writers focused on the average white police officer with several years’ experience, a wife and young children, service in the military, who off duty worked on an advanced degree. They told readers he was more productive than in 1950, thanks to improved technology, management and funding, and served as a symbol of American civic duty, honor and integrity, the “backbone of our society.”\(^{138}\)

In one instance, press coverage of a training film yielded additional benefits. In 1958, PID writers worked closely with the *Los Angeles Examiner* on an article about a training film that prepared officers to develop good aim by focusing on targets before releasing bullets and to maintain accuracy when shooting at night.\(^{139}\) PID staff worked

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\(^{137}\)“Los Angeles Reports to Its Citizens,” *Los Angeles Examiner*, 4 September 1956, Section V; 4 September 1957, Part V; 4 September 1958, Section 5; 4 September 1959 Part 5.

\(^{138}\)“Police Officer is a man who has made good,” *Los Angeles Examiner*, 4 September 1959.

\(^{139}\)“Target Film So Real It Chills ‘Em,” *Los Angeles Examiner*, 24 February 1958.
with the Training Division to market the films, prompting the Police Commission to agree to sell or lease prints to cover the costs of reproduction and handling.\textsuperscript{140}

PID writers worked with the \textit{National Civic Review} to run a piece on the LAPD depicting the chief as uncompromising, ethical and the ultimate professional. The article noted the daily challenges the LAPD faced with “large undigested racial and foreign colonies of 250,000 Mexicans, 57,000 Orientals and 300,000 Negroes” and praised Parker’s officers who were said to be polite “even to the drifters and ‘winos’ on Skid Row.” Parker was a chief who “fights the good fight for public decency and public safety.” He admitted that narcotics and traffic were constant problems but hoodlums waged a losing battle in Los Angeles as long as a majority of residents supported him.\textsuperscript{141}

PID writers composed many of his speeches, enabling him to address numerous business and civic groups, and deliver thirty-minute radio speeches each week on the local radio station KFI.\textsuperscript{142} One writer was Gene Roddenberry, the son of an LAPD officer who had met Parker as a young boy when he visited the Roddenberry home.\textsuperscript{143} Roddenberry joined the LAPD in 1949 and the following year transferred to the Newspaper Unit in the Traffic Services Division, where he wrote news releases and lectured on traffic safety.\textsuperscript{144} In 1951, he joined the PID and composed speeches for the

\textsuperscript{140}Police Commission Minutes, 16 September 1959.

\textsuperscript{141}“Dragnet in Real Life,” \textit{National Civil Review}, September 1959 48:8, 403-07.

\textsuperscript{142}Gates claims that Parker wrote all his own speeches. See \textit{Chief}, 31. PID staffers wrote Parker’s speeches. See Domanick, \textit{To Protect and To Serve} 131.

\textsuperscript{143}Alexander, \textit{Star Trek Creator}, 107-08; Roddenberry wrote many of Parker’s speeches. See Dotson, interview. Parker’s brilliance is due to Roddenberry’s writing. See McDougal, \textit{Privileged Son} 475, n.10.

\textsuperscript{144}Alexander, \textit{Star Trek Creator}, 107-08.
chief in order to avoid a return to patrol. While continuing his duties as a public information officer, he began writing scripts for television on the side. Within a few years, he became such a successful screenwriter that he could not maintain two full-time jobs and in 1958 left the department to write exclusively for television. Roddenberry and Parker remained good friends despite political differences. In creating the series *Star Trek*, Roddenberry based the character of Mr. Spock, the half-alien, half-human science officer, on his chief.

In 1953, after one set of discussions between Parker and Roddenberry on community relations, Parker delivered a speech Roddenberry had written to the National Conference of Christians and Jews and received a standing ovation. Parker used the ideas it contained to create the Community Relations Detail within PID. Though leaders of other organizations had recommended such a unit, including members of the Los Angeles County Human Relations Commission's Police Relations Committee, his writers did not mention them when they announced the new detail in the annual report in 1954. Instead, they praised its work in maintaining "active and spontaneous public relations."
cooperation” with the police, and announced the new unit as “perhaps the most enlightened approach toward police and minority group understanding:151

Los Angeles’ excellent record of freedom from internal strife is largely due to the preventive work of these officers... At the first sign of dangerous tensions, the Community Relations Detail flashes the word to community groups organized to deal with such occurrences [sic]. The success of this unusual police unit is measured by the number of occurrences [sic] which do not become police problems.152

By 1956, Parker’s PID staff had sharpened their skills in public relations but they did not always respond efficiently or effectively to disaster. On Sunday evening, January 22, a two-car Santa Fe commuter train overturned on a curve as it headed south from Union Station in downtown Los Angeles towards San Diego, killing twenty-nine and injuring dozens. Parker's officers were officially in charge of evacuating the injured and restoring order but no one in the department coordinated the response of medical personnel and the public. The three commanding officers who arrived on the scene did not communicate with each other. After LAPD personnel failed to handle the disaster, reporters rushed to the scene, exacerbating the danger for those injured and forcing Santa Fe personnel to manage the crisis. They organized servicemen who were passengers on the train as well as clergy and medical staff from nearby hospitals to provide medical care and transportation.153
Coverage of the accident highlighted serious weaknesses in the LAPD response to tragedy. Editors used photos of death and chaos and reporters included descriptions of the accident as well as the LAPD's treatment of victims, prompting an editorial writer from the *Los Angeles Times* to upbraid Parker for responding without a disaster plan.¹⁵⁴ A few days later, *Times* writers editorialized on the tragic consequences for everyone involved, and castigated Parker for interpreting its criticism of the department as a political attack. Editorial writers reminded readers that Parker was a public servant who had abrogated his responsibility for coordinating disaster relief. The writers also chastised the chief for "bad-tempered outbursts" and "oversensitive reaction to constructive criticism" concluding that reform of disaster preparedness was necessary for the department to fulfill its duties.¹⁵⁵

Parker responded with a public relations solution. He appointed Inspector Eddie Walker to the new position of Press Relations Officer to mediate between the public and the police at the scene of a disaster. Parker had worked with Walker and trusted him to perform his duties to the chief's satisfaction.¹⁵⁶ As Parker's representative, Walker worked closely with reporters assigned to cover crime or accident scenes without interfering with rescue operations.¹⁵⁷ To separate rescue personnel from the public,

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¹⁵⁴ "How Not to Handle a Disaster" editorial, *The Los Angeles Times*, 25 January 1956; Dotson, interview.


¹⁵⁶ Dotson, interview.

¹⁵⁷ Analyses of the reporters' accounts and Parker's appointment from Dotson, interview. See also Police Commission Minutes, 8 March 1956 and 12 March 1956; "Police Name Press Aide," *Los Angeles Examiner*, 13 March 1956.
Walker assigned officers to create yellow police tape which restricted the public and journalists' access to dangerous and potentially chaotic scenes.\textsuperscript{158}

As part of his new public relations campaign, Parker used the new medium of television to project the modern, professional image of LAPD officers to a national audience.\textsuperscript{159} He could correct the image that Los Angeles writers and Hollywood directors had portrayed in novels and films of police as the enemy and their adversaries as sympathetic characters.\textsuperscript{160} He authorized \textit{Suspects Wanted}, a television program which featured photographs of felony suspects whose announcer encouraged viewers to contact the LAPD with information about them and, in some instances, fugitives to voluntarily turn themselves in.\textsuperscript{161} In another venture, he authorized television producers to show photographs with information on missing persons provided by the department which resulted in locating approximately nine percent of those shown.\textsuperscript{162} For local television spots the chief assigned PID staff to replicate his office to use as a set.\textsuperscript{163}

Shortly after he became chief, Parker appeared with Groucho Marx on his television show, \textit{You Bet Your Life}, and managed to upstage him.

\textsuperscript{158}Dotson, interview.

\textsuperscript{159}Ibid. Parker understood the function of the media and did not try to manage it.


\textsuperscript{161}LAPD Annual Report 1952, 14

\textsuperscript{162}Ibid.

\textsuperscript{163}Domanick, To Protect and To Serve, 132.
Groucho: You don't mind that I kidded you up here tonight, did you?
Parker: Happens to me all the time...I get letters from crackpots (laughter).

Parker used his remaining few minutes to emphasize the importance of police work and the need for qualified men to serve their country.164

The crown jewel of the department’s public relations campaign for television began as a request from an obscure movie actor in 1949. Jack Webb had just completed a movie role in *He Walked By Night*, and approached a technical advisor on the film, Sergeant Marty Wynn, about developing scripts for a radio program. The two men requested actual LAPD cases for the scripts from Deputy Chief Joseph Reid, who agreed on the condition that all information be accurate. Webb had to comply with three guidelines required by Chief Clemence Horrall: neither glorify nor defame the police; portray officers as average human beings; and faithfully adhere to the facts in each case.165 Webb called the program *Dragnet*, a method invented by August Vollmer to round up suspects.166

The radio show debuted on June 4, 1949 and signaled a new kind of program. It contained no violence, used real LAPD cases, pioneered the dramatization of sex crimes without excess, and ended with the police arresting the suspect.167 To highlight the reality and protect against libel suits, Webb created the following introduction:

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164”Era of Parker."


166McDougal, *Privileged Son*, 106.


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Ladies and Gentlemen: The story you are about to hear is true. The names have been changed to protect the innocent. For the next thirty minutes, in cooperation with the Los Angeles Police Department, you will travel step by step on the side of the law, through an actual case, transcribed from official police cases. From beginning to end, from crime to punishment, Dragnet is the story of your police force in action.¹６⁸

When Webb approached the LAPD about transferring Dragnet to television in 1951, he received approval from Chief Parker, who required him to work with a different set of technical advisers for each new episode.¹６⁹

The television program premiered on December 16, 1951, in a special edition of Chesterfield Sound Off Time. The show was billed as a "real life thriller," titled "The Human Bomb," and lasted twenty-six minutes. Jack Webb was Sergeant Joe Friday and introduced himself: "This is the city, Los Angeles, California. I work here. I carry a badge."¹７⁰ Sergeant Friday and his sidekick Sergeant Ben Romero (Barton Yarborough) reported to Chief Detective Thad Brown, named after the actual person, played by Raymond Burr.¹７¹ The screen went black, the image of badge number 714 appeared and then came the first four notes of the sound track.¹７² Webb appeared in each program and with his partner investigated a crime using Parker’s new LAPD procedures. Webb featured a different LAPD detective division over several weeks including

¹６⁸ Moyer and Alvarez, Just the Facts, 64.

¹６⁹ The original team of technical advisers included Sergeants Wynn, Vance Brasher, Dan Cooke and Captain Jack Donohoe. See Tregaskis, "The Cops' Favorite" 27; Moyer and Alvarez, Just the Facts, 89.

¹７０ Moyer and Alvarez, Just the Facts, 89. Other shows opened with "My name's Friday. I'm a cop." Dragnet was the first television show whose stories, as noted at the beginning of Law and Order, were "ripped from the headlines," and anticipated other reality shows such as Hill Street Blues, Cops, and others that showed the underbelly of American life. See Hal Himmelstein, Television Myth and the American Mind (Westport, CN: Praeger, 1994), 213.

¹７¹ Moyer and Alvarez, Just the Facts, 83.

¹７２ Walter Shumann composed the music. See Alexander, Star Trek Creator, 121.
Robbery/Homicide; Burglary, Forgery, Bunco/Fraud and Auto Theft. He submitted scripts to LAPD officers who checked them carefully to ensure accuracy and a positive portrayal of the police. At the end of each program an image of LAPD badge 714 reappeared and on top of the image was the following: “Technical assistance for the filming of DRAGNET comes from the Office of Chief W.H. Parker, Los Angeles Police Department.” Though others in PID worked on the script and gave advice on the set, Webb gave television credit only to Parker.

Parker made sure that LAPD officers and technical advisors were present on the set to ensure that all aspects of policing, such as making phone calls and handcuffing suspects, were authentic, and that the show did not depict blood or violence. The advisors closely examined the script to guarantee that the LAPD officers on Dragnet were ethical, efficient, terse and white. They worked with set designers for a precise replication of police headquarters for internal shots at the television studio and with camera operators for external shots of the Los Angeles City Hall that housed the LAPD headquarters at the time. Before each day’s shooting, the LAPD technical advisor went to Captain Stanley Sheldon, the head of PID, who kept Badge 714 in a felt-lined

173 Alexander, Star Trek Creator, 122.
175 Moyer and Alvarez, Just the Facts 89.
177 Domanick, To Protect and To Serve 126.
178 Ibid., 124; Moyer, Just the Facts 89.
box in his desk. The advisor took the badge out of the box and personally brought it to and from the studio.179

The show became an instant hit.180 Dragnet was one of the most successful programs to make the transition from radio to television, and attracted as many as seventeen million viewers each week.181 The show quickly advanced in ratings to the top ten, just behind I Love Lucy and The Arthur Godfrey Hour.182 In addition, it earned citations from public interest groups, and generated thousands of letters to Sergeant Joe Friday, Jack Webb's character, at Disney Studios where it was filmed, and to LAPD headquarters.183 The show earned Emmy awards in 1952 and 1953 and was in the Nielson Ratings Top Twenty-Five Shows for 1952 through 1956.184 Dragnet earned a citation from Sylvania Television for the outstanding law enforcement documentary series in 1953, and a commendation for portraying honest officers without “phony heroics.”185

Within a year, PID writers devoted a page in the LAPD annual report to the

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179 Domanick, To Protect and to Serve, 130.
180 Moyer and Alvarez, Just the Facts 83; Woods, “Progressives and Police” 418-19; Dotson, interview.
181 Alexander, Star Trek Creator, 121.
183 Presenting Dragnet’ Prudential Western Scene 26 September 1953.
184 In 1952 and 1953, Dragnet received an Emmy for the Best Mystery, Action or Adventure Program and in 1954, Webb received an Emmy as the Best Actor Starring in a Regular Series and Best Director for “The Christmas Story” an episode of Dragnet. See Moyer and Alvarez, Just The Facts, 92-93; Alexander, Star Trek Creator, 121.
185 From the program for Sylvania Television Awards, Dragnet Scrapbook, LACA. As executive producer, Webb also received an award from Sylvania as did Parker, NBC and Liggett & Myers Tobacco Co., the show’s sponsor.
importance of technical advice on television portrayals of the LAPD. Such consultations gave

...a true picture of crime problems and police methods. The theory behind such aid is that professional agencies, with proper guidance, can perform this vital public service with greater skill and with wider coverage than is available to a police department.\textsuperscript{186}

Parker used the success of television to demand greater control over the image of his department and police in general. By 1953 the chief authorized a play or movie about the LAPD only after he was satisfied his department would be “accurately and realistically depicted.”\textsuperscript{187} Parker and PID staff became so influential within the entertainment industry through their control of \textit{Dragnet} that they succeeded in excising “cop” from all scripts and substituting “police officer.” In addition, Parker’s officers successfully represented the IACP in a dispute with the movie industry over a spate of films that portrayed police unfavorably.\textsuperscript{188}

The creators of \textit{Dragnet} continued their close association with the chief. Buoyed by their success in television, they expanded the program into other media, writing copy for a comic strip that debuted on June 20, 1952 in the \textit{Los Angeles Mirror}, and writing a screenplay for the movie \textit{Dragnet}, in September, 1954 which received favorable reviews.\textsuperscript{189}

\textsuperscript{186}LAPD Annual Report 1952, 23.

\textsuperscript{187}Police Commission Minutes, 7 January 1953.

\textsuperscript{188}Domanick, \textit{To Protect and To Serve}, 129. In the mid-1950s, the IACP formed a Radio and Television Committee to monitor programs, review scripts and lobby producers to portray police officers as honest, ethical men who enforced the law without discrimination. See Fogelson, \textit{Big City Police}, 237.


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To Parker's surprise, one of the unanticipated consequences of *Dragnet* was its success as a recruiting tool, inspiring men from all over the country to apply for employment as police officers.\(^{190}\) The chief "turned *Dragnet* into the greatest propaganda mechanism that any police department had ever had."\(^{191}\) As a consequence, for viewers in postwar America, the police officer was a white middle class male who attended college and lived in a suburban home.\(^ {192}\)

In 1957 Webb received authorization from the Police Commissioners to create seventy-eight additional episodes and agreed to work with the head of PID, who was now a Commander, exclusively for all matters relating to the show.\(^ {193}\) The first series

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\(^{190}\) Gascon, interview. In 1955 Webb pledged to donate six percent of his profits from each new episode of *Dragnet* and later from *Adam-12*, to the Police Academy Trust Fund. The LAPD used these monies to build the Jack Webb Recruit Building in 1970 at the LAPD Academy in Elysian Park near Dodger Stadium. Academy staff used episodes from the programs to train new recruits. See Moyer and Alvarez, *Just the Facts*, 115; Gates, *Chief*, 282. At the entrance to the restaurant at the Academy, Webb's personal mementos are in a glass display case. See Alexander, *Star Trek Creator*, 122.

*Dragnet* yielded generous dividends for the LAPD for years, and officers publicly acknowledged its debt to Webb. In 1967 Chief Thomas Reddin rewarded him with Badge 714 encased in lucite, which a sergeant extracted from a capsule in the academy building cornerstone, and the ceremony commended him for making *Dragnet* "one of the greatest assets to the reputation of the Los Angeles Police Department." At Webb's funeral on December 28, 1982, he received full department honors, the only civilian with that distinction. That day, all LAPD flags flew at half-staff. Moyer and Alvarez, *Just the Facts*, 160-61, 209.

\(^{191}\) Quote from Joseph Gerald Woods, "Era of Parker."

\(^{192}\) Fogelson, *Big City Police*, 225.

\(^{193}\) Police Commission Minutes, 28 August 1957. PID staff strengthened their relationship with the broadcast media by expanding the number of technical advisors for LAPD-authorized television shows. The success of *Dragnet* in promoting the LAPD's professional image spawned "Traffic Court," a local program broadcast on KABC-TV whose technical advisor was from the Traffic Bureau. See Police Commission Minutes, 2 April 1958.

Webb capitalized on his role as LAPD promoter in one other venture. In 1957 he worked closely with PID staff on *The Badge*, written in the tough laconic style of *Dragnet*, which praised the men and women of the LAPD and the Police Commissioners who oversaw their operations. With Commissioners' approval, he displayed Badge 714 on the book's cover. Police Commission Minutes, 26 March 1958.
continued throughout the 1950s, running until September 6, 1959 when Webb retired
Sergeant Joe Friday’s badge because the show began to decline in the ratings.194

A vigorous public relations campaign that promoted a professional department
headed by a new kind of chief in Los Angeles earned Parker awards from many civic
associations. In August, 1951, the Los Angeles Chamber of Commerce honored him in
an elaborate ceremony at the Police Academy marking the completion of his first year as
chief.195 In 1953 the Los Angeles Junior Chamber of Commerce awarded Parker its
Citizen of the Year Award. The International Association of City Managers noted that
Los Angeles “probably has the most soundly organized large police department in the
country.”196 The B’Nai B’rith gave him an award for Distinguished Citizenship and the
Boy Scouts elected him to their executive board.197

194 Moyer and Alvarez, Just the Facts, 139; Webb, Badge, 139. After the success of Dragnet, both
the FBI and U.S. Army used television for self-promotion. In 1959, Jimmy Stewart starred in the movie
The F.B.I. Story, released by Warner Brothers, and under strict control by Hoover. He played a character
who was virtuous, faithful and anti-communist. In the early 1960s, ABC broadcast The F.B.I. and featured
Hoover opening each new season’s episode. The show opened and closed with a shot of the FBI seal and
credited J. Edgar Hoover and his associates for their cooperation. Like Dragnet, there was neither violence
nor sex. Hoover’s staff exerted complete control over scripts, personnel and sponsors and made sure ABC
showed it during prime time. See Stephen Whitfield, The Culture of the Cold War, (Baltimore: Johns
Hopkins Press, 1996), 66-69. In 1956, Roddenberry wrote teleplays for West Point. Staff at the Pentagon,
like Parker, understood the power of television and its influence on young men to join the military. See
Alexander, Star Trek Creator, 149.

According to Gascon, after PID staff realized that television could be a useful recruiting tool, they
worked closely with writers and producers in the 1960s to create Adam-12. Among the shows inspired by
both Dragnet after its second run in the 1960s and Adam-12 were Mod Squad, Blue Thunder, The Blue
Knight, S.W.A.T., Hunter, and T. J. Hooker. See Domanick, To Protect and To Serve, 133.

195 Printed program “Honoring the Los Angeles Police Department and their Chief, William H.
Parker For a Year of Outstanding Accomplishments” Box 36, Folder: Addresses by the Mayor 1951,
Bowron papers.

196 Jennings, "Portrait of Chief,” 87.

197 Ibid.
Within a few years, Parker commanded respect not only in Los Angeles but throughout California. He increased his influence on other police agencies in California by demonstrating his commitment to professionalizing his officers and his insistence on paying them more than departments in other states.\footnote{Murphy, interview.} In 1953, his training program earned recognition by the Los Angeles Commission for Reorganization of the City Government because it was “considered by national experts to be the best in America today.”\footnote{Police Task Force Report, 4, CF 59071, Box A1193, LACA.} In 1954, his department's training bulletins were published for national distribution.\footnote{Charles C. Thomas, a publisher of police materials, published the LAPD Training Bulletins 1-173, an indication of Parker's national reputation for professionalism and high quality training. See David J. Bordua, editor, \textit{The Police: Six Sociological Essays} (New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1967), 253, Selected Bibliography.} By the mid-1950s, chiefs in police departments in California were transforming their training programs using Parker's as their model.\footnote{Murphy, interview.} His training films were so successful that the Police Commission partnered with the School of Cinematography at the University of Southern California to produce films and sell them to other law enforcement agencies.\footnote{Profits from the sale of the films went towards improving facilities at the Police Academy, Police Commission Minutes, 25 September 1957.}

By the mid 1950s, Parker was riding a wave of popularity. In November, 1956, he disclosed that “more than one” person had urged him to consider running for the office of Los Angeles County District Attorney and he indicated he might be willing to be drafted.\footnote{"Chief Parker May Enter District Attorney Race," \textit{Los Angeles Times}, 21 November 1956.} Parker had passed the California bar in 1931, and in 1956 was admitted to the
bar of the United States Supreme Court. Though he had never practiced law in California, he had received word from the Los Angeles County counsel that maintaining his license to practice law in state courts was all that was required. The chief, however, would forfeit his current position and chose not to run.

Parker's thirtieth year with the LAPD on August 7, 1957, marked a milestone in police history in Los Angeles. He heard tributes on local radio station KMPC which declared a "Bill Parker Day" from California Attorney General Edmund G. "Pat" Brown, Governor Goodwin Knight, Vice President Richard Nixon and local officials. Parker received resolutions from the City Council, the Police Commission, and commendations from the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors and its chairman, John Anson Ford. At noon that day he attended a lunch in his honor sponsored by local civic organizations; over eight hundred-fifty attended. He was the subject of a five-part profile in the Mirror-News.

Colleagues from across the nation conferred national stature on Parker as a chief who managed one of the most efficient and effective police departments in the country.

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204 Gazell, "Parker, Police Professionalization, 30.


207 Ibid. Those in attendance included thirteen corporate sponsors. See Domanick, To Protect and to Serve, 144.

Patrick Murphy, chief of the Syracuse Police Department and later New York Police Commissioner, recalled that he was "the outstanding police chief of his time."\(^{209}\) Joseph Wambaugh, a former LAPD officer and successful author, remembered that "he was a man to respect and fear, after J. Edgar Hoover. Chief Parker was probably the most famous lawman in the United States."\(^{210}\) In 1957, O. W. Wilson collected Parker's speeches for a police publishing house and titled the book, *Parker on Police*.\(^{211}\) In his glowing introduction, Wilson described Parker's "great qualities of leadership implemented by patience, diplomacy, sound judgment, unusual moral courage, and great physical and emotional strength."\(^{212}\)

Parker's national stature became a matter of contention, however, when Mike Wallace interviewed Mickey Cohen on ABC in 1957. On May 19 Cohen, whom Parker had pursued in his suppression of organized crime, implied that "someone higher" than

\(^{209}\) Murphy and Plate, *Commissioner*, 90. Though he rarely mentioned other police chiefs, Parker was one of the top two police reformers in the country, along with Michael Murphy, Police Commissioner in the 1950s and O. W. Wilson. These men were considered by their peers to be the top police administrators who knew how to diagnose problems and solve them. See Murphy and Plate, *Commissioner*, 153; Murphy, interview. Parker also was on a short list of unelected men who held public office with uncontested power for over ten years. The other two were Robert Moses, who oversaw public works in New York City for forty-four years (Robert Caro, *The Power Broker*, New York: Vintage Books, 1975, Random House, 1974), 1144, and J. Edgar Hoover, who headed the FBI for forty-nine years. Fogelson notes that Moses enjoyed freedom from legislative, judiciary and executive authority that Parker "might have envied." See *Big City Police*, 262.

\(^{210}\) Joseph Wambaugh, "Era of Parker."

\(^{211}\) Dotson, interview.

the city administration had protected his earlier rackets, suggesting Parker, and called him a sadistic degenerate, a reformed thief and a known alcoholic.\textsuperscript{213}

The Police Commissioners complained in a letter to ABC executives that they had not made their television facilities available for Cohen to abuse the City of Los Angeles, the LAPD and Parker, and passed a resolution condemning Cohen's charges as "false and without any foundation in fact whatsoever." They expressed confidence in Parker and demanded that the network prepare a joint statement with the LAPD denouncing the remarks for a later broadcast.\textsuperscript{214} ABC agreed but attorneys for the network engaged in further negotiations to reach a settlement with Parker and James Hamilton, head of the LAPD Intelligence Division, whom Cohen had also slandered. On a scheduled program two weeks later, a spokesman for ABC retracted all statements regarding Parker, Hamilton, and former Mayor Bowron.\textsuperscript{215} Immediately after the network apology, attorneys for Parker and Hamilton rejected the retraction because they believed it was insufficient, and sued the network for $4,000,000 and $1,000,000 respectively.\textsuperscript{216} Attorneys for ABC settled out of court and paid Parker $45,000 and Hamilton $22,000. The amount of these settlements appeared in \textit{The New York Times} but the story did not diminish Parker's national reputation.\textsuperscript{217}

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\textsuperscript{213}Marx, "Cop as Crusader," 47; Woods, "Progressives and the Police" 602 n64.
\textsuperscript{214}Police Commission Minutes, 22 May 1957.
\textsuperscript{215}Police Commission Minutes, 29 May 1957.
Successes and Failures of Parker's Reforms

Parker succeeded in modernizing the LAPD, raising the stature of the department and earning national recognition for his achievements through managerial skills, serious police reforms, and multimedia promotion. His system of internal controls for disciplining officers was, for the most part, effective, and scandals involving graft and corruption largely disappeared. He garnered support from Mayor Bowron and the Police Commissioners, and expanded his base of support with hundreds of speeches to business and civic groups. His public relations apparatus, operated by a business-like department with well-trained professional officers, was a brilliantly executed strategy for making the LAPD and its chief one of the best known police departments in the country. The police officer in Los Angeles was a law enforcement professional as well as a popular hero.

There were, however, limits to the reforms Parker initiated. Some generated debate, provoked the opposition and actually contributed to racial conflict. On one hand, as Parker insisted on autonomy for internal discipline and policing, he expanded police discretion in defining threats and criminal problems.\textsuperscript{218} He and his officers, not the public or elected officials, took responsibility for deciding which crimes were serious, whom they should arrest and when.\textsuperscript{219} When the police exercised discretion in arrests, they did

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Early in 2006, Wallace told Katie Couric in an MSNBC interview that after Parker's lawsuit, an attorney sat next to him behind the camera. When Wallace was about to ask potentially libelous questions the attorney would post signs to him to stop, back off or change the subject. Neither Wallace nor Couric mentioned Parker by name but discussed a police chief and briefly showed the \textit{New York Times} article about the lawsuit. See Mike Wallace, interview by Katie Couric, "Man of the Hour," MSNBC, 9-10pm, 26 February 2006.

\textsuperscript{218} Brown, \textit{Working the Street}, 39.

\textsuperscript{219} Parker, "Police Profession," in \textit{Parker on Police}, 21; Brown, \textit{Working the Street}, 60-61, 64. Samuel Walker argues that one of the consequences of autonomy was that police defined their mandate as

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not always comply with the law and their conduct provoked debate between critics and supporters over public accountability, internal discipline and respect for civil rights.220

Parker succeeded in delivering professional police service to Los Angeles businesses and middle class neighborhoods but his proactive policing alienated his officers from many residents and occasionally triggered racial conflicts. Parker had understood the necessity of replacing foot patrols with officers in patrol cars, but with minimal contact with the public, his officers engaged in what the Syracuse police chief called "stranger policing," and provided a not a community service but an "occupation of conquered territory by an alien army."221 His officers became known for being "swift, mobile and brutal," according to journalist Bill Boyarsky.222 The tensions between minorities and the police festered for years. Parker did little to defuse them and instead vigorously defended his officers and castigated his opponents.

Though he enjoyed a reputation as police reformer, Parker made no further changes to the department after the first few years of his tenure. He did not take suggestions from his college-educated officers, who were in close touch with patrol

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220 Parker fought to limit both criticism and external controls and that the public expected officers to control crime but not at the expense of curtailing the civil liberties of suspects. See Brown, Working the Street, 33, 60. The argument intensified when citizen groups such as the ACLU agitated for citizen-led police review boards in the early 1960s. Jerome Skolnick argues that the dilemma in proactive policing was whether police maintained order in compliance with the law including rights for suspects or whether they enforced the law as they saw it to corrode democratic values. Skolnick articulated this dilemma in the mid-1960s, about ten years after the Warren court began handing down decisions that protected the rights of suspects. See Jerome H. Skolnick, Justice Without Trial (New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1966), 1.

221 Murphy and Plate, Commissioner, 39, 225. The LAPD exemplified an "impersonal style of professionalism" that often aggravated minorities who complained about aggressive, preventive patrols used to suppress crime. See Walker, Critical History of Police Reform, 173.

222 Boyarsky, interview.
officers and could devise new approaches to policing the city. By the late 1950s, his administration had lost much of its imagination, even though many of his staff had obtained advanced degrees in public administration. His budgets included requests for additional men and equipment but none for new programs for youth, crime prevention or safety.\(^{223}\) His training programs at the police academy were self-contained and despite his encouragement of college courses for his officers, he provided little or no training in human relations.\(^{224}\) Unlike Vollmer or Wilson, Parker did not work closely with local universities to develop criminology curricula.\(^{225}\)

The chief's insistence on high standards for officers meant chronic trouble in finding recruits who could successfully complete the training and rigorous screening to become officers.\(^{226}\) To hire a significant number of qualified officers, his personnel staff needed to recruit a few thousand candidates because approximately only three percent completed the grueling selection process and training program.\(^{227}\) In 1950, when the

\(^{223}\) Dotson, interview.

\(^{224}\) Celeste Fremon, "Rewriting the Book," *LA Weekly* 8-12 September 2002.

\(^{225}\) Bopp, *O.W.*, 133. Fogelson notes that not everyone had unconditional praise for the program. The training was narrow. Recruits learned little or no theory of policing. See *Big City Police*, 228. Retired assistant chief Dotson noted that courses in sociology, psychology, law enforcement and physical endurance were specifically designed for policing and not for a wide range of critical thinking. See also Dotson, interview.

\(^{226}\) Woods, "Progressives and Police" 434.

\(^{227}\) *LAPD Annual Report 1952*, 8; "Requirements Called Too High," *Los Angeles Examiner*, 21 September 1957. Other police departments had difficulty recruiting qualified officers. In New York and Portland, Oregon police department recruiters could not attract enough candidates in part because of mediocre salaries and police officers' minimal prestige. Recruiters from the Oakland, California, police department visited campuses at Michigan State, Florida State, Washington State and universities with schools of criminology to speak with potential candidates. The Washington D.C. Police Department recruited candidates from the eastern part of the country and the Chicago Police Department recruited from white suburbs of Chicago. No recruiters from departments in these cities reached out to their minority populations until the 1960s and 1970s when court orders and urban unrest compelled them to do so. See Fogelson, *Big City Police*, 227-28, 249.
LAPD lost two hundred officers temporarily to the military for service in the Korean War, Parker refused to lower his standards as his predecessors had during World War II.

As a result, the percentage of successful recruits remained low throughout the 1950s.\textsuperscript{228}

Parker complained that the LAPD could not compete with equally attractive positions in Los Angeles' expanding labor market, although he had "employed every eligible male who sought entrance to the police service."\textsuperscript{229} After Commissioners did not succeed in signing up an adequate number of applicants who lived in and around the city, his staff in the Personnel Division expanded its recruiting campaigns to college campuses in eleven western states, the Midwest, military bases and naval posts.\textsuperscript{230}

Parker's officers faced challenges that were unanticipated and beyond the chief's control. They were a small force relative to the growing population of Los Angeles and their chief often complained that the ratio of residents to officers was lower than in any

\textsuperscript{228}Dotson, interview. \textit{LAPD Annual Report 1950}, 14; \textit{LAPD Annual Report 1958}, 11, Box C-2003, LACA. In 1958 officers wrote in the annual report complaining of only a modest rise in the number of sworn personnel since 1950. The City Administrative Officer and the mayor, on the other hand, agitated for increased civilian takeover of office jobs performed by policemen. Parker accommodated their demands and listed a growing number of civilians in the annual reports, but did not mention in the report's narratives that more officers were assigned to patrol, in effect increasing the number of officers who practiced crime prevention by approximately 500 in seven years; "Parker Bases Police Losses, Men Quit Faster than Rookies Can Be Trained, Employed," \textit{Los Angeles Examiner}, 10 December 1953.


\textsuperscript{230}Police Commission Minutes, 22 April 1959; "L.A. Plans to Recruit Police Afar," \textit{Los Angeles Herald}, 9 April 1959; \textit{LAPD Annual Report 1958}, 11; "L.A. Police Tests Given in Chicago," \textit{Los Angeles Examiner}, 26 October 1954 (year not specified). Like other big city police departments at the time, the LAPD was overwhelmingly white. Despite the number of minority applicants in the city who had completed high school and met the physical requirements, LAPD recruiters went to county fairs and Boy Scout jamborees. See Fogelson, \textit{Big City Police}, 148, 249. Many critics of the department including some former officers believed that the department hired white southerners, but the record is not clear on this point. Dotson, interview; Cunningham, interview; Langguth, interview. Recruiting began in Chicago in 1954. See "Parker Base Police Losses Men Quit Faster than Rookies Can Be Trained, Employed" \textit{Los Angeles Examiner} 10 December 1953.
other major American city. These officers, sometimes driving alone on patrol, faced conflicts between departmental and public demands, and between official procedures and survival on the street. They knew that manuals described in fine detail what they must do in a specific set of circumstances, but they had to make individual decisions when they questioned suspects and arrested them. They had to balance expectations from superiors with their autonomy on patrol and loyalty to their partners, while the public demanded that they enforce the law without abrogating constitutionally guaranteed liberties.

Though Parker oversaw a relatively small number of officers in Los Angeles, he did not use assign policewomen the same duties as men. Like many other chiefs in the 1950s, Parker confined policewomen to the role of social workers, not crime fighters. Policewomen trained at the academy for only ten days, learned to use weapons and restrain suspects but after they graduated they learned mostly on the job. They could not advance beyond sergeant, seldom wore their uniform in favor of traditional women's clothing, and worked with professionals in social service more than their male counterparts.

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231 Parker Asks for More Police,” Los Angeles Examiner, 7 April 1955; “5000 More Police Needed,” Los Angeles Examiner, 8 August 1958; LAPD Annual Report 1957, Box C-2003, LACA, 5; Dotson quoted results of a study he did on the ratio of police to population in other cities and used 1.87 per 1000 for Los Angeles compared with 4 per 1000 for Detroit, New York, Cleveland, Chicago, Houston and New Orleans. See Dotson, interview.

232 Brown, Working the Street, 9-10.

233 Ibid., 9, 11, 29, 33. Jerome Skolnick defines the problem of police in a democratic legal organization as the tension between executing policies on efficiency and order with legality. See Justice Without Trial, 6; J. Edgar Hoover, "Civil Liberties and Law Enforcement: The Role of the FBI," Iowa Law Review 37 (Winter, 1952), 176.

234 Appier, Policing Women, 168.

235 In 1973, women achieved equity in salary and responsibility with men when they became full fledged police officers and endured the same rigors in training at the academy. See "Era of Parker."
counterparts, spending the majority of their time with women prisoners and juveniles.\textsuperscript{236}

In addition, their limited responsibilities prevented them from arresting teenage boys or men.\textsuperscript{237}

There were other limits to Parker's reforms. He taught his officers to employ one standard of law enforcement for all residents but they did not always follow this rule. They often stopped anyone who fit the description of a suspect, "even if it meant angering dozens of innocent citizens."\textsuperscript{238} Their conduct convinced blacks and Mexican-Americans that LAPD officers applied one standard to whites and another to them.\textsuperscript{239}

Black and Hispanic youth spent more time on the streets than white youth, and thus

\textsuperscript{236}Parks, interview; Appier, \textit{Policing Women}, 167-68.

\textsuperscript{237}Appier, \textit{Policing Women}, 167-68; "Soft Arms of the Law," 15 December 1946 \textit{Sunday News}, (New York City); "The Lady is a Cop," \textit{Look} Magazine, 6 March 1956; Max Pollard, "...Were Not Wanted in Beginning," \textit{Los Angeles Herald}, 28 May 1952. Civilian women worked in the statistical division examining coded cards for clues to pass on to detectives. See "36 LA Women Help Solve 78 Slayings in 26 Years," \textit{LA City Policewomen}, 27 December 1951. As office workers and law enforcement officers, women practiced crime prevention with constraints that did not apply to men. See Appier, \textit{Policing Women}, 168. Policewomen had less authority than men but were required to be more educated. In April, 1953, the Los Angeles Commission for Reorganization of the City Government recommended that female recruits complete two years of college or have equivalent experience. At the time, the education requirement for males was a high school degree or its equivalent, a G.E.D. "Report of the Police Task Force," 4, CF 59071, Box A1193, LACA.


\textsuperscript{239}"LA Council rejects Negro's injury suit," \textit{People's World}, 11 December 1950. Reporters from smaller black newspapers wrote about the LAPD's discrimination in hiring officers and on crimes against black residents. See Wagner, \textit{Red Ink, White Lies}, 182. Socialist papers such as \textit{The Daily Worker} and \textit{People's World} regularly ran articles on police abuse but also occasionally mainstream, centrist or liberal papers such as \textit{The Daily News} and \textit{The Mirror} ran stories. See "LA council rejects Negro's injury suit," \textit{People's World}, 11 December 1950; "Parley will push demand for police brutality probe," \textit{People's World}, 12 October 1950.

Fogelson argues that police departments in almost all big cities in postwar America delivered effective police service until questions arose about minority hires and cultural pluralism, which became volatile issues in the 1960s. See \textit{Big City Police}, 268; Gazell, "Parker, Police Professionalization," 35.
became targets for police intimidation. Officers assigned to poor minority neighborhoods were frequently not the dispassionate civil servants who enforced the law equally and impersonally but those who decided “which laws to enforce, whose peace to keep and which public to serve.”

Officers abused suspects throughout the 1950s, despite Parker's denials of such misconduct. In January, 1951, police used a stomach pump to force a confession from a suspect whom police arrested on drug charges. Two police officers stopped the blues singer Jimmy Witherspoon in 1952 for drunk driving and refused his request for a sobriety test. They handcuffed him, threw him into their patrol car and pounded him in the stomach and knees. In April, 1956 when two officers inquired about a boarder at a rooming house and the manager left her desk to check her records, one officer jumped over and beat her. After they brought her to the station, she claimed that officers verbally abused her. An IAD officer photographed her bruises and arranged for medical treatment.

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241 Brown, Working the Street, 43; Fogelson, Big City Police, 12, 267.

242 Parker boasted in a speech in 1955 that residents filed very few complaints. See "Police Role in Community Relations," 17.


244 Witherspoon filed a $100,000 damage suit against the LAPD, charging excessive use of force. See Schiesl, "Behind the Badge," 156. In 1953, Parker announced that his officers investigated several hundred complaints a year, resulting in approximately two hundred fifty-three penalties but most of them were for violations of department regulations rather than actual violations of law. See "Parker Tells of 'Progress,' " Los Angeles Examiner, 8 January 1953.

Other abuses occurred. In May, 1956, Officer Jack Tugwell shot twenty-one year-old Patrick Baner, claiming Baner had fought him off. In an investigation, officers heard from witnesses who said Tugwell shot Baner when he was stretched face down on the car hood with his arms overhead; their testimony led to Tugwell's suspension. In 1957, after LAPD officers had issued a traffic citation, one of them arrested a man who made a critical comment, and after his wife protested, the other officer knocked her to the ground, pressing a knee into her abdomen causing a miscarriage. In 1959 officers arrived at the scene of a minor traffic accident involving Don Whitman and his wife. They handcuffed Whitman, placed him in a squad car and beat him repeatedly en route to the station. When they arrived at the station they forced him out of the car, punched and kicked him while he was handcuffed and caused severe bruising, a torn ear, a gash in his shoulder and a cut eyelid requiring three stitches.

Officers enforced de facto segregation, although it was illegal in California.

Often officers would target white and black youth who flocked to hear rhythm and blues

246 "Police Victim Story Waited," Los Angeles Examiner, 6 May 1956; Police Commission Minutes, 9 July 1956. Commissioners upheld the decision and concluded that the disciplinary system was effective and would recommend termination only in "some sensational case involving human failure on the part of a police officer that attracts widespread public attention."

247 At a meeting to protest the assault, Eason Monroe shared with his audience details from his files on police-minority relations that exposed other instances of abuse. See Schiesl, "Behind the Badge," 157, citing Los Angeles Sentinel, 20 June 1957. When Officer Glenn Souza worked undercover once, an officer hit him with a police baton and he understood the sharp pain experienced by many suspects. See Glenn Souza, "Perspective on LAPD, A Simple Time in Black and White; In the '50s Racism was an Enforcement Tool Passed Down From a Chief Who was a God to a Legion of Fuhrmans" Los Angeles Times 12 October 1995.

In 1957, editorial writers for the black weekly, California Eagle, noted Parker's opposition to the Civil Rights bill and observed that his officers were a law unto themselves. n.d. In Bradley's oral history taken in 1967, he acknowledged the same potential for self-appointed power among officers unless a strong supervisor exerted disciplinary control over his subordinates. See Tom Bradley, interview by R. Donald Brown, 18 April 1967, 13, Center for Oral and Public History, California State University, Fullerton, CSUF no. 178.

248 Sides, L.A. City Limits, 146.
music at a record store on Central Avenue. Officers from the Newton Street station escorted whites away or denied them entry claiming that the area was too dangerous for whites, while undercover agents searched blacks whom they suspected of selling drugs.\(^{249}\) Officers disrupted young whites, blacks, Hispanics and Asians at dances and rock and roll concerts, and forced promoters such as Johnny Otis to move the concerts east to El Monte, a small town in the San Gabriel Valley and far from the jurisdiction of the LAPD.\(^{250}\)

Parker's system for preventing internal corruption occasionally failed, and those weaknesses appeared in two incidents covered by local papers. In late October, 1955, officers from a six-man LAPD burglary ring operating out of the West Los Angeles police station stole merchandise worth $2,000 to $3,000 and arresting officers found a "truckful of loot."\(^{251}\) The following day, Parker defended LAPD integrity when he claimed that his department was "more than 99 percent pure" despite the arrest of the officers and his disclosure of an Internal Affairs investigation of others.\(^{252}\)

In November, 1955 two officers on the Westside stole a railroad car containing furniture valued at thousands of dollars. Both men broke into the railroad car on a side

\(^{249}\)Macias, "Bringing Music to the People," 708.


\(^{251}\)"Parker Says 3 Confess Burglaries," Los Angeles Examiner, 28 October 1955.

street, parked their police radio car nearby, moved the goods to a station wagon that one officer had driven to the scene and drove the vehicle to the home of the other. They drew suspicion because the radio car was unoccupied and they did not respond to calls from the police dispatch center. When Internal Affairs officers initiated the investigation, other officers involved in the burglary ring smashed and burned some of the furniture, tossing the rest into Ballona Creek. The officers' burglary brought in the FBI, whose agents investigated the railroad theft because it had jurisdiction across state lines.253

Parker responded to news of the burglary ring by pledging immediate cooperation with the District Attorney. Several days later when a grand jury indicted five officers, Parker complimented the jury for its "thorough and swift action."254 He conducted conferences with the District Attorney on presenting evidence, and announced he would submit everything the department had collected to the grand jury.255 In May, 1956 when Superior Court Judge Stanley Mosk sentenced three police officers to a year in the county jail concurrent with five years' probation, Parker issued no statements and remained silent when two other officers resigned.256 In December of that year one of Parker's press officers announced that two officers already imprisoned had committed thirty additional burglaries, some from relief and charitable organizations.257


255"5 Los Angeles Policemen Indicted," Los Angeles Examiner, 3 November 1955.


In 1957, after the chief learned that two officers had shot suspects and had not followed proper reporting procedures, he told the press that he had signed charges against them. One officer who had been wounded by the suspect and returned fire did not file a report on an officer-involved shooting as required, and the other falsely reported an incident by concealing the facts. Parker's announcement forced the wounded officer to resign. 258

Parker did not tolerate officer misconduct for burglaries or some violations of police procedures but he sanctioned illegal spying. The chief expanded his intelligence gathering mechanism beyond organized crime figures to include individuals who were political dissidents and critics of the LAPD. His officers recorded conversations where one party agreed to the taping without the other's knowledge. They installed listening devices in the city jail and monitored telephone calls at headquarters. 259 Parker always defended the need for information and covert investigations but exposure of his operations generated bitter debates, accusations of spying on members of the City Council, and lawsuits against him. 260

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258 "Chief Signs Charges 2 Officers held in 'Gun Fumble,' " Los Angeles Examiner, 23 August 1957. Footnote: Some police officers engaged in small-time rackets with landlords and gamblers. These incidents did not make headlines but occurred in downtown areas where the likelihood of exposure and peer discipline was low. One officer recalled that in 1958 when he and his partner walked a beat in downtown Los Angeles, they caught a suspect gambling on a craps game. The young officer pursued the suspect alone and apprehended him. When he returned to his partner, he found that the partner and an old time patrol officer had divided up the money between them. Who was going to report lost earnings on an illegal game? Downtown was also home to cheap hotels owned by landlords who had trouble evicting drunken residents. The landlords frequently contacted the police who evicted the residents and later falsely wrote in their reports that they had arrested suspects in public rather than in a private building. The landlords paid officers $5 or $10 per eviction. Former police officer, interview by author, July 2002.


260 Collecting information was based on a "Soviet model of intelligence – to collect as much as possible about any number of suspicious individuals because commanders never knew when the information could be useful." See Dotson, interview.
Despite contentious debates on harassment and intimidation of minority suspects and autonomy in officer discipline, Parker generated profound respect for his reforms from both supporters and critics. Tom Bradley, an African-American officer who could not advance beyond lieutenant because of his race, and left the department to enter city politics, nevertheless remembered the chief as a brilliant intellect, an eloquent spokesman, tough disciplinarian, a man who, perhaps more than any in my memory, helped to set a pattern of professional standards for the police department in this city as well as across the nation that had a lasting effect and impact...He established new training techniques and new innovations as far as the assignment of personnel. He was very tough on productivity: he believed in getting the maximum effort for every dollar that was expended. 

In a few years after his appointment as chief, Parker upgraded the LAPD and enjoyed national recognition as one of America's most successful police reformers. In addition to his significant achievements as chief, he quickly mastered the use of public relations to promote his department and himself as indispensable to the safety of residents and businesses in Los Angeles.

261 Bradley oral history, 93.
CHAPTER 4
PARKER CONFRONTS HIS CHALLENGERS

Early in his tenure, Parker summoned his political skills to maintain control of his department and consolidate his power. Though he enjoyed civil service protections of life tenure and removal only for cause, he learned from his predecessors that political skills were essential for his autonomy. He mastered the city's politics by exploiting its power vacuums and structural weaknesses so he could survive new mayors and outlast incumbents.  

His insistence on control and shrewd use of political skills shaped his strategy for handling crises. When Parker faced challenges to his authority, he vigorously defended his operations and warned against the dangers of demoralizing the police and increasing crime. In 1951, after police beat several suspects and a grand jury indicted several officers, forcing him to discipline many of them, he accused his opponents of weakening the police, defended his officers' conduct and succeeded in fending off his critics. For each subsequent challenge to his authority or criticism of his officers, he employed the same tactic with varying degrees of intensity and frequency. Time and again he affirmed the integrity of his department and warned against the consequences of criticizing uniformed officers who kept neighborhoods safe and democracy alive.

1Separating political influence from policing was often difficult. As party machines declined, police increased their “involvement in electoral politics, city hall intrigue and legislative lobbying.” See James Q. Wilson, “What Makes a Better Policeman,” The Atlantic, 223, no. 3 (March, 1969), 133-34.
The chief exacerbated tensions with his adversaries because he refused to compromise with them. Volatile and contentious, he provoked confrontations over budgets, court decisions and race relations. He feuded with Governor Edmund G. Brown and J. Edgar Hoover over crime statistics and organized crime. He engaged in shouting matches with mayors and council members, wiretapped council debates without their knowledge, and attempted to influence mayoral elections. He countered accusations of police abuse with warnings of crime increases and the demise of democracy. He complained that his officers were victims of unwarranted attacks rather than perpetrators of abuse.

For the chief, race relations with the police were the most contentious issue of all. Parker boasted of racial harmony in Los Angeles one moment and announced that blacks had a high crime rate the next.\(^2\) He defended meritocratic promotions in civil service when challengers questioned why so few blacks entered the police department or advanced beyond sergeant. He insisted that critics who charged his officers with prejudicial policing and physically abusing minorities were undermining the police and threatening the safety of all Angelenos. His commitment to a narrow view of policing and a refusal to explore the sources of racial tensions fueled anger among his critics that never abated.

Parker's personality did not endear him to others. In public he was tough and uncompromising; among his colleagues he was dour, rigid and short-tempered. He considered himself the only one who knew how to enforce the law and manage the

department, and undermined any attempts to oppose him. Subordinates who reported directly to him understood the importance of meeting with community leaders to defuse tensions, particularly on race, but Parker did not take suggestions from his staff. He spoke with no more than one or two of his subordinates at a time, and marginalized his seven deputy chiefs. He had no close friends. Parker had supreme authority, brooked no opposition and did not tolerate anyone who contradicted him. To those who offended him, he assigned them to “Siberia,” stations far from police headquarters.

Two officers who spoke with the chief more easily than others were Deputy Chief Richard Simon and Officer Gene Roddenberry. Deputy Chief Simon engaged in some discussions about budgets but exchanged no ideas with him. Roddenberry was one of the few who was unafraid to speak with him and engaged in conversations with the chief about philosophy but he found him taciturn and emotionally distant.

The chief was a Catholic in a predominantly Protestant department and did not belong to any social organizations that were popular with other officers. He could not join the Masons, a popular LAPD social organization, because of his religious affiliation. He expressed no interest in social clubs in which he was not invited to join, and slighted

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3 Domanick, *To Protect and To Serve* 99. Despite his power, Parker's office was a modest room that reflected a well-respected chief who supported the Boy Scouts, honored the military and displayed plaques, awards and photographs, including one of himself with General Douglas MacArthur. He shunned fancy furniture and used a thirty-year-old wooden desk flanked by the American flag and the flag of the State of California. Turner, *Police Establishment*, 72.

4 Dotson, interview.

5 Ibid.

6 Ibid.

7 Ibid. Parker publicly criticized the comments of Ed Davis, then a captain, at a seminar attended by officers from all over the country. See Domanick, *To Protect and To Serve*, 147.

some subordinates by refusing to recognize the importance of Jobs' Daughters to which some of the wives and daughters of officers belonged.  

Some chiefs of police departments found him supercilious and others found his abrasive remarks inappropriate. Over the years, some of his colleagues thought Parker had become too reactionary and had lost credibility. Despite his credentials as a nationally recognized police reformer, he never reached two of his goals, president of the IACP, or state commander of the California American Legion.

Some of the fear and alienation Parker generated was due to stress from the job. To shake off some of the pressure, the chief smoked two packs of cigarettes a day and consumed copious amounts of alcohol, earning the nickname "Whiskey Bill." During the 1950s, on his way home from police headquarters each day, he soothed himself with drinks at the Thistle Inn, down the hill from his home in Silver Lake, a hilly neighborhood not too far from police headquarters. Others knew of his alcoholism but did not publicize it. Daryl F. Gates, who was Parker's driver at the time, remembered that he drank until his words slurred and stairs became a hazard. Some nights he would attend a function and not touch a drop. Other nights he drank heavily and smelled embarrassing to me as he stumbled getting into the car, and stumbled getting out.

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9 Dotson, interview. Woods notes that Parker worked to promote Catholics in the department. See "Progressives and Police," 421.

10 Turner, Police Establishment, 77.

11 Gates, Chief, 32; McDougal, Privileged Son, 195.

12 Dotson, interview.

13 Gates, Chief, 32.
Reporters knew that he drank and some of them showed contempt for his addiction, but none wrote about it because they, too, consumed alcohol, and did not scrutinize the private lives of public figures. Some noticed that at the Santa Fe train wreck in 1955 two of Parker’s aides propped him up because he was too drunk to supervise his officers.

By the late 1950s, his drunken behavior veered out of control. His adjutants had to remove him from public view when he drank excessively. No longer the good-time drunk who engaged in silly dances at police conventions, he consumed more than his daily double shots of bourbon, and became nasty. Once, after he openly discussed a murder case under investigation while intoxicated and disclosed confidential information, he had to endure a reproach from Mayor Poulson. Parker recognized that alcohol and tobacco were ruining his health and now the alcohol endangered his career. Angry and probably ashamed, after meeting with his doctor, he abruptly quit both his addictions.

Despite his difficult personality, Parker increased his influence over the city’s politics and law enforcement agenda. The chief created a sturdy base of support to minimize any chance for termination and suppressed challenges to his authority.

14 Boyarsky, interview; Wagner, Red Ink, White Lies, 239.
16 Alexander, Star Trek Creator, 142.
17 Domanick, To Serve and to Protect, 146-47.
18 Ibid. There is some dispute on when Parker quit consumption of alcohol and tobacco. Parker quit smoking after suffering an aneurysm. See Dotson, interview. Sometime in the late 1950s, Gates and some of his colleagues recruited a doctor who saw the chief and warned him of heart disease. See Gates, Chief, 37.
19 Without a strong base of support, Parker told his driver, Daryl F. Gates, who would become chief twenty-seven years later, Commissioners could dismiss him at any time. See Gates, Chief, 30-31.
Though Parker's position was officially apolitical, he campaigned for his law enforcement policies among members of the Police Commission, elected officials, prominent businessmen, editors and reporters of the city's dailies, actors and executives in the entertainment industry and residents. Under the protection of his civil service position, Parker secured his department's autonomy from civilian control. Within the first few years of his tenure, the chief successfully managed crises on police brutality and surveillance, weakened the oversight powers of Police Commissioners, navigated his way through a change in city administration and deflected occasional criticism of police practices by City Council members. He fought hard for increases in the police department's budget by warning of crime increases if council members did not approve his requests.

**Bloody Christmas**

Sixteen months after Parker's appointment, he confronted a crisis involving police abuse of Mexican-American youths which turned into a fight for his control of the department. In retaining his position as chief, he accomplished three goals -- weakening his opponents, asserting his power and successfully defending LAPD autonomy. On Christmas Eve in 1951, several officers responded to a call that seven underage Mexican males were drinking at a bar. They removed the young men, followed them to their homes where they arrested them and brought the young men to the central city jail. There, about fifty officers who had been drinking in violation of department rules, reacted to a false rumor that a hospitalized officer might lose an eye. They removed the

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suspects from their cells and severely beat them with wet towels and gloved fists until the room was covered with blood.\textsuperscript{21} The incident became known to both officers and reporters who covered them as "Bloody Christmas."\textsuperscript{22}

In late February 1952, on the eve of a trial of officers for a separate beating, Council member Edward Roybal, whose constituents were victims in both incidents, raised the issue of physical abuse. He tried to obtain a meeting with Parker and failed. In council chambers when Roybal announced that he had received fifty complaints of police brutality the chief denied their existence and warned that such complaints would undermine the department.\textsuperscript{23}

At the March 17 meeting of the Police Commission, Parker ignored several recommendations made by a consortium of civic groups for improving race relations. He insisted that outside examiners could not investigate complaints of brutality from the beatings because City Attorney Ray Cheeseboro concluded that the city charter did not allow external investigations of police conduct.\textsuperscript{24} Instead he instructed IAD officers to


\textsuperscript{22}Escobar, "Bloody Christmas," 172.

\textsuperscript{23}Escobar, "Bloody Christmas," 185. Escobar argues that LAPD officers criminalized Mexicans and that Mexican-American officers were often as brutal as white officers, if not more so. See Race, Politics, 3.

\textsuperscript{24}Escobar, "Bloody Christmas," 190. Representatives of the Los Angeles County Conference on Community Relations (LACCCR), consisting of forty-seven organizations in labor, race, religion and social betterment, charged that IAD officers thwarted investigations by dismissal or aggressively interviewing the complainant. "Bloody Christmas," 189; "Sixth Annual Report," Los Angeles County Conference on Community Relations, 1952, Box 41, Folder 11, ACLU papers. Representatives of the LACCCR's Police

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conduct an internal investigation whose staff interviewed three hundred officers, and submitted a report to the grand jury denying abuse.\(^{25}\)

Five days earlier, on March 12, jurors had acquitted two officers of abuse in a separate beating but Municipal Court Judge Joseph Call requested a grand jury investigation of the "Bloody Christmas" beatings, forcing Parker and Los Angeles County District Attorney Ernest Roll to comply.\(^{26}\) Grand jurors heard testimony from officers who had previously given specific information to IAD investigators but claimed vague memories when they appeared on the stand.\(^{27}\) Grand jurors rejected IAD’s report of its investigation and indicted eight officers for assault. On April 29th they issued an interim report pointing to the department’s poor supervision and control of subordinates, and of the failure of sergeants and lieutenants to report violations of policy.\(^{28}\)

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Relations Committee suggested that Police Commissioners study how IAD officers processed complaints, prepare a policy on treatment of persons in custody, endorse a program on minority relations for recruits and consider administering social attitude tests to determine the existence of prejudice. See "Report to the Los Angeles Police Commission by the Police Relations Committee of the Los Angeles County Conference on Community Relations," 3-4, Box 29, Roybal Papers; a copy is also in Box 44, Folder LA County Conference on Community Relations, Folder 1 Oct-Nov, 1950, NAACP West Coast Region papers. Members of the Police Relations Committee also recommended a Human Relations detail to improve relations with minorities by working with their leaders, organizations and reporters to reduce tensions among juveniles and adults. See "Report to the Los Angeles Police Commission," 5. This recommendation reflected an approach to policing that Parker soundly rejected; in 1954.

\(^{25}\) Gazell, "Parker, Police Professionalization," 35.


\(^{28}\) Interim Report Re Police Brutality April 29, 1952," Box 29, Roybal Papers. The beatings on Christmas Eve occurred not in spite of police professionalism but because of it since officers were trained to enforce the law with a war-on-crime mentality and because they believed Mexican Americans were a criminal element and had to be subdued. In addition, as chief of an autonomous agency with internal disciplinary procedures guaranteed in the city charter, Parker encouraged an extreme sense of loyalty towards fellow officers and vengeance towards residents who litigated against the police. See Escobar, "Bloody Christmas," 180.
These conditions would not have occurred if all lieutenants and sergeants assigned to the Central station and the Lincoln Heights jail had properly performed the duties of their office. As revealed by the record of investigation, there is extreme doubt as to qualifications of officers in charge at Central Station and the City Jail.29

The grand jury's report also noted that the LAPD was a public agency and not a private men's organization.30

Three days later, Parker attacked the report as "nebulous" but initiated disciplinary proceedings against more than forty officers resulting in reprimands to thirty-six of them and eight resignations.31 His punishments were less severe, however, than the verdict of the trial jury that convicted five out of eight officers and sentenced one to more than a year in prison.32 Though an editorial writer in the Daily News demanded repeal of City Charter Section 202 which granted the chief and his officers peer discipline without public scrutiny, Parker defended the internal investigation as justification of its legitimacy.33

To counter calls for public review of internal discipline, he embarked on a public relations campaign to defend his officers and attack his opponents. He met with

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29 "Interim Report."


31 "Parker Slaps At Critics," Los Angeles Examiner, 1 May 1952; Woods, "Progressives and Police," 438; Gazell, "Parker, Police Professionalization," 35. The same day he attacked the report, he also defended his department as "outstanding in its field," noting that Los Angeles experienced only a three and seven-tenths percent increase in crime, half that of cities of similar size. "Certainly," he said, "it is difficult to criticize an organization that has established such an enviable record." See "Parker Lauds L.A Police; Organization 'Outstanding in Its Field' Declares Chief," Los Angeles Examiner, 1 May 1952.


newspaper editors to modulate coverage in late March, a few weeks after the first trial.\textsuperscript{34} In a speech on the Westside, Parker told his audience that the police were "all that stood between the public and anarchy" and in a violent society, "sometimes the police have to use violence to protect the public."\textsuperscript{35} In other public statements he warned that criticism of the police weakened their effectiveness, rendering Los Angeles vulnerable to invasions of gangsters and criminals.\textsuperscript{36} In April, 1952, Parker assigned officers in PID's newly created section on television to inaugurate a weekly television program to communicate police information to the public. He named his program \textit{The Thin Blue Line} to shore up confidence in the department.\textsuperscript{37} The day before Grand Jurors handed down their indictments, Parker appeared on television to announce that criminals were celebrating and reporters were forcing him to take a defensive position which affected the entire city.\textsuperscript{38} His commanders told the \textit{Los Angeles Mirror} that criticism contributed to low morale and an increase in crime and because officers were reluctant to arrest suspects and endure accusations of brutality.\textsuperscript{39} Parker echoed his subordinates by warning that low police morale endangered the city and could provoke criminals to act with impunity.\textsuperscript{40}

By cooperating with the Grand Jury and disciplining his officers, Parker skillfully

\textsuperscript{34}Escobar, "Bloody Christmas," 194.

\textsuperscript{35}Ibid., 190, citing \textit{Westwood Hills Press}, 27 March 1952.

\textsuperscript{36}Escobar, "Bloody Christmas," 194.

\textsuperscript{37}Ibid., 195. His thirty-minute weekly program appeared on a local affiliate, focused on a different phase of police work and often featured the chief who took questions from the audience. See Domanick, \textit{To Protect and To Serve} 131; LAPD Annual Report 1952, 23.

\textsuperscript{38}Escobar, "Bloody Christmas," 194.

\textsuperscript{39}Ibid.

\textsuperscript{40}Ibid., 194-95.
handled the Bloody Christmas beatings, asserted his authority as chief and his department’s autonomy, and saved his career.\(^{41}\) He solidified his position with elected officials and civic leaders, and crushed any chance to modify or repeal Section 202. Henceforth, both Parker and the department would be invulnerable to the intervention of elected officials.\(^{42}\) He also understood that when newspapers published incidents of police misconduct, he had to respond quickly to maintain credibility with the public. When his officers were later involved in burglaries or beatings, Parker immediately spoke to reporters and pledged full cooperation with the District Attorney.\(^{43}\)

After surviving his first crisis, Parker molded the Police Commission into a compliant body and weakened opposition to his autonomous management.\(^{44}\) The chief

\(^{41}\)During the months of trial and investigation Parker benefited from strong support of Mayor Fletcher Bowron, who accused LAPD critics of communist influence and attempting to destroy police authority. See Escobar, "Bloody Christmas," 190.

\(^{42}\)Woods, "Progressives and the Police," 439. Officially the chief could be removed for cause after written charges and a hearing before the Board of Civil Service Commissioners. See Cannon, Official Negligence, 66; Fogelson, Big City Police, 223. After "Bloody Christmas," Parker added a precautionary measure against internal corruption. He ran a sting on jailers who failed to book all the money they took from suspects. Dotson, interview.


\(^{44}\)Brown, Working the Street, 62, 64; Domanick, To Protect and to Serve, 152; Fogelson, Big City Police, 176. Webb pointed out the multi-ethnicity of Police Commissioners who did not challenge Parker
consolidated his power by exploiting his position as a strong department manager in city
government, and developing an independent political force.\textsuperscript{45} On one hand, he used
the Commission to insulate both himself and the department from the influence of public
officials, and on the other reduced the Commission's authority over the department itself.

John Ferraro, who served on the Commission from 1953 to 1966, later recalled:

\begin{quote}
We relied on Parker an awful lot, and maybe that's why we got the rubber stamp
image. But, you know, Parker was usually right – he wasn't wrong very often.\textsuperscript{46}
\end{quote}

Despite occasional protests from Commissioners that they were “an impotent
rubber_stamp,” and that Parker “rules the force with an iron hand,” the chief established
himself as “the most powerful official in the city.”\textsuperscript{47} In the 1950s, the Police

\begin{quote}
45 Voters approved civil service in 1902 to immunize city government including the police
department from corruption. By 1920, voters approved a structure for Los Angeles city government with a
weak mayor, strong council and even stronger heads of city departments. Career administrators became a
power bloc in Los Angeles politics as in other cities that had undergone reform. In revamping the system,
reformers modernized public employment by replacing machine patronage and establishing new forms of
leadership. See Schiesl, "Politicians in Disguise," 103, 111, 116; Sonenshein, \textit{Politics in Black and White},
31-32; Banfield and Wilson, \textit{City Politics}, 80, 110-11. Highly bureaucratized municipal government
replaced crude and chaotic local politics. See Brown, \textit{Working the Street}, xiii-xiv. Woods, "Progressives
and Police," 6. Politics in policing was not new. In “Police, Mandate, Strategies and Appearances” Peter
K. Manning observes that police have generally sympathized with conservative views, worked with local
oversight boards and elected officials in a legal system that was not always blind. See Manning in
Kappeler, \textit{Police and Society}, 105-06; and Fogelson, \textit{Big City Police}, 12, 147.

46 Jerry Belcher and David Rosenzweig, "Politics and the Police Department," \textit{Los Angeles Times},

47 Woods, "Progressives and Police," 466, citing \textit{Los Angeles Times}, 11 April 1952 and 17 April
1952; Brown, \textit{Working the Street}, 62. Commissioners met one afternoon a week to review police
operations; much Commission business involved granting or rescinding permits for businesses and hearing
complaints from residents. See Domanick, \textit{To Protect and To Serve}, 151-52. A review by the author of
Police Commission minutes from the mid-1940s through the mid-1960s supports this observation.

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Commissioners, appointed by the mayor, voted unanimously on almost every issue that came before them and always supported the chief.48 By July 1953, they offered unconditional praise and noted that the city had "one of the best, if not the best, Police Departments of the major cities in the United States."

In 1954 they congratulated him

...on the singleness of purpose and high motives which have characterized his administration as Chief, has commanded the respect of the citizens of Los Angeles and this Board, and which has resulted in the Los Angeles Police Department being recognized nationally and locally for its competency, its excellence and its integrity...50

Occasionally when Commissioners faced criticism as weak overseers of the department, they affirmed their position as the official authority of the LAPD that bore exclusive responsibility for Parker's conduct. But they never upstaged or contradicted him. They tacitly acknowledged, as the chief once told an interviewer that "the Police Commissioners do not run the police department...I run the police department."51

Parker strengthened his grip on power by conducting surveillance on City Council members.52 Discoveries of taped conversations provoked heated exchanges between council members and Parker and Commissioners. When City Council member Ed Davenport charged in 1952 that Chief Parker had ordered the department to conduct

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48Based on author's review of Police Commission Minutes, 1945 to 1966.

49Police Commission Minutes, 8 July 1953, citing findings of the Los Angeles Commission for the Reorganization of City Government.

50Police Commission Minutes, 18 August 1954.

51Belcher and Rosenzweig, "Politics and Police Department" Los Angeles Times, 18 December 1977, Section 8.

52Parker and Hoover were considered the "giants of the police intelligence community." See Donner, Protections of Privilege, 249 citing Donald O. Schultz and Loren Norton Police Operational Intelligence (Springfield, IL: Charles E Thomas, 1968), dedication and vii.
"indiscriminate wiretapping" and that individuals were selling the tapes, he told his colleagues, "Obviously the potentialities here for blackmail are tremendous."\(^{53}\) Two days later, Police Commission president Herman Selvin denied that officers engaged in wiretapping, had violated state laws or that they had hooked up dictographs and other listening devices to telephone lines.\(^{54}\) "I have no fear," Selvin told reporters, "that any of the tons and tons of confidential material- not just tapes- in the department are being sold or used for improper or illegal purposes."\(^{55}\) Despite Police Commissioners' denials, Parker had dispatched detectives to record meetings between Davenport and some of his constituents.\(^{56}\)

A few years later, the chief attempted to dissuade liberal council member James Corman from hiring Ethel Narvid because Parker suspected she was a communist. Parker called the City Council president claiming he had evidence of her communist past.\(^{57}\) He became suspicious because Narvid had been a passionate socialist in her youth and channeled her political zeal into working for the Democratic Party a few years after she and her husband migrated to the San Fernando Valley from New York in the late 1940s.\(^{58}\)


\(^{56}\)Woods, "Progressives and Police," 450.

\(^{57}\)Corman was elected to the City Council in 1956 to represent constituents in the San Fernando Valley. See Domanick, *To Protect and to Serve*, 157; Michael Narvid, son of Ethel Narvid, interview by author, Los Angeles, 18 June 2002; Langguth, interview.

\(^{58}\)Narvid, interview; Langguth, interview.
The chief provoked Corman to defend her vigorously and lost when the council member appointed her to his staff.\textsuperscript{59}

Parker influenced the city's electoral politics but never endorsed a candidate. In October, 1950, a few months after Parker's appointment, when Mayor Bowron became the subject of a recall vote, Parker joined the mayor in accusing communists and Mickey Cohen of supporting the recall.\textsuperscript{60} The following month the recall vote failed, the mayor continued his term and Parker retained a strong supporter in city hall.\textsuperscript{61}

In 1952, Parker injected himself into the debate over federally funded public housing. At a meeting with the mayor he showed Bowron the contents of a file he had collected on the communist activities of Frank Wilkinson, the public relations officer for the city's Housing Authority. Parker's exposure of Wilkinson's file violated his own

\textsuperscript{59}J. Gregory Payne and Scott C. Ratzan, \textit{Tom Bradley: The Impossible Dream} (Santa Monica, CA: Roundtable, 1986), 118; Narvid, interview. See Domanick, \textit{To Protect and To Serve} 157. Journalist Jack Langguth, who covered southern California beginning in the early 1960s, believes that Parker's accusations of communism were not unusual and noted that several public figures at the time accused their opponents and critics of communism. Narvid was a woman, a liberal and an active Stevenson Democrat, which may have been all Parker needed in his attempt to intimidate her. See Langguth, interview.


In December, 1951 Parker's name appeared as a prominent supporter of Eisenhower in a mailer soliciting funds for his presidential campaign. He denied any impropriety in volunteering to raise funds and Police Commissioners made no mention of the incident. See "No 'Tawdry Tamborine' "Eisenhower-for-President Unit Denies Soliciting Funds," \textit{New York Times}, 15 December 1951.

\textsuperscript{61}Recall Move Fails, Bowron Stays on Job," \textit{Los Angeles Times}, 8 November 1950. Parker's support for him may have influenced Bowron's reciprocal support during the Bloody Christmas crisis in the spring of 1952.
directive that files were the property of the chief and not subject to subpoena or review by anyone else. When Mayor Bowron refused to examine the file, claiming that he was a friend of the family and had confidence in Wilkinson's loyalty, Parker retaliated by incorporating the contents of the file into his testimony at a Congressional committee hearing in Los Angeles in mid-May, 1953. He also testified at a state legislative committee when Bowron was locked in a bitter campaign for reelection. As television cameras recorded his remarks, Parker read Wilkinson's dossier and told the committee that the mayor had dismissed his efforts to prove Wilkinson's communist ties.

Parker used covert operations in the mayoral election of 1953 to squelch opposition to his department. Congressmen Norris Poulson, a moderate Republican recruited by Los Angeles Times publisher Norman Chandler and his business associates to run against Mayor Bowron, praised the LAPD for its “remarkable record in some phases

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62 Domanick, To Protect and To Serve, 154; Donner, Protectors of Privilege, 249.


64 Donner, Protectors of Privilege, 250-51. Parker's argument that the police were non-political was moot when he exposed Wilkinson's file to the mayor and state and congressional committees. Michael Brown observed that Parker had not separated politics from policing but submerged it under the rhetoric of professionalization. See Working the Street, 11. After Wilkinson's home and the office of an organization he headed were bombed, as were the homes of liberal clergy and other organizations, LAPD officers did not identify the suspects; instead they questioned Wilkinson to determine if he had bombed his own home and office. See Donner, Protectors of Privilege, 250-51. Los Angeles Times editors supported his removal. See Gottlieb and Wolt, Thinking Big, 261. Thirty-eight years after spying on him, FBI agents concluded in a report that he had not shown a willingness to engage in any act that would threaten the survival of the American government. See Harold Meyerson “Outliving the Bastards,” LA Weekly 13-19 January 2006. After Bowron's defeat, support for public housing evaporated. City Council members did not accept federal funds until 1966. See Paul Jacobs, Prelude to a Riot: A View of Urban America from the Bottom (New York: Random House, 1966), 142-43.
of its work" but acknowledged room for improvement, and pledged to "back the
department to the full so that it can do its job well."65

Parker assigned his officers to bug a hotel room where Poulson held discussions.
Many years later Poulson recalled that when he invited a colleague to his hotel room, he
did not realize police officers were recording his conversations. He learned that Parker
suspected he was working with groups advocating to overhaul the department and
remove the chief from office, and used the excuse that Poulson's comments might be
connected with communist activities.66 On another occasion Poulson did find a trace of
the LAPD:

I was once approached in the Hotel Mayflower by an active police detective in
Plainclothes to ask me what I would do about the Police Department if elected. I
just casually reached over and touched a microphone which I detected pushing out
from his shirt. That ended that conversation.67

Poulson won the election but endured a prickly relationship with the chief when
the mayor confronted him on budget requests and police abuse.68 Poulson's victory was

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65See letter from Norman Chandler to Norris Poulson 26 December 1952, Box 14 Book 1 Dec 26,
1952-Mar 15, 1953 Norris Poulson papers, Special Collections, UCLA. In the letter Chandler invited
Poulson to a lunch on January 5, 1952, and assured him of support from himself and from his friends;
"Today's Question: Are You Satisfied with the Police Department? What Improvements or Changes Do
You Plan?" Los Angeles Examiner, 6 May 1953.

66Norris Poulson, "Who Would Ever Have Dreamed?" Oral History, Los Angeles, 1966, 174, Box
39, Poulson papers. A copy is also in Special Collections, UCLA. In early May, 1953, three weeks before
the election, a rumor floated that Poulson wanted to relieve Parker of his duties as chief. Florabel Muir of
the Los Angeles Mirror exposed the rumor in her column and praised Parker for his success in ridding the
city of gambling, graft and corruption. See Donovan, "I Have No Use," 176. Parker perceived each
challenger for mayor as a threat. See Sonenshein, Politics in Black and White, 32.

67Poulson oral history, 190.

attempt to intimidate Bowron, the mayor continued to praise him. In an announcement before the Greater
Los Angeles Press Club in March, 1953, Mayor Bowron noted that a report of the American Bar
Association Commission on Organized Crime singled out the chief for keeping the city free from crime;
Bowron personally commended him for successfully battling organized crime. See Address by Fletcher
Bowron at Greater Los Angeles Press Club 12 March 1953, 16, Box 36, Folder Campaign Speeches 1953,
also one for Parker in that the chief of police survived a change in city administration for the first time since 1913.69 The new mayor came to admire the chief for his intense commitment to law enforcement but saw him as a "cold-blooded, self-centered individual" who tried to sow distrust between his top assistant and himself. Shortly after assuming office, he learned from the chief that he had collected information on his predecessor, Mayor Bowron, ostensibly to "praise his abilities." Poulson understood that Parker collected information on him as well, especially when one of his first police drivers warned him that someone in an unmarked car was following him.70

Every year, Parker fought aggressively with the mayor and City Administrative Officer (CAO) for budget increases that included capital expenditures, positions for additional officers and generous salaries and benefits. He earned loyalty from his officers for his efforts.71 In 1951 City Council members voted unanimously to give fire and police officers a five per cent raise and the following year a five and a half per cent raise. In 1953 Parker, Mayor Poulson and CAO Samuel Leask began an annual series of bitter debates on the police budget and on replacing officers with civilians. The chief disputed Mayor Poulson's contention that a salary increase was for current officers only.72 In spite

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70Poulson oral history, 198.
71Cannon, Official Negligence, 60.

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of the arguments, Parker often got technology upgrades including boats and helicopters, but not as many additional positions for officers as he requested.\textsuperscript{73}

One of the more contentious battles Parker waged with Poulson and Leask was over "civilianization." The mayor and CAO grilled the chief on using officers for many tasks that did not require specialized training and they often succeeded in reducing the number of officers at desk assignments.\textsuperscript{74} At a meeting in 1954 to replace officers with civilians, Poulson and Leask forced Parker to defend assigning his officers to compile statistics. Poulson argued that civilians would save the city money because their pensions were considerably lower than those of police officers. When Leask explained why he needed to cut costs in all departments, Parker interrupted him, prompting Poulson to reply:

\textsuperscript{73}McDermott, "Behind the Bunker Mentality," \textit{Los Angeles Times}, 11 June 2000.

\textsuperscript{74}They based their questions on recommendations made in 1953 by the Commission for the Reorganization of City Government, in cooperation with a Police Task Force, for civilianizing many positions held by sworn officers Los Angeles Commission for the Reorganization of City Government. See CF 59071, Box A1193, 6,8, LACA; "Reports and Recommendations, Investigation of Possible Reassignment of Police Officers to Field Duty in the Los Angeles Police Department," February, 1955, SRLF, UCLA. Parker's reforms occurred at the same time Mayor Bowron modernized other departments. In 1949 he created the Los Angeles Commission for the Reorganization of City Government with labor and business leaders to recommend ways to increase efficiency and cost effectiveness. See "'Little Hoover' Board Will Have Its Headaches," \textit{Los Angeles Times}, 30 June 1950. The Commission was named after the Commission on Organization of the Executive Branch established by Truman in 1947 and popularly known as the Hoover Commission after its chairman, former President Herbert Hoover. In the years that followed, "Little Hoover" commissions proliferated throughout the country, as cities and states modernized the administration of local and state governments. For a discussion on such commissions, see William E. Pemberton, \textit{Bureaucratic Politics: Executive Reorganization During the Truman Administration} (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1979). Leask headed the city's Bureau of Budget and Efficiency when he was appointed by Mayor Bowron to the position of CAO. Letter from Mayor Bowron to A. L. Weil, 29 August 1951, Box 3, Folder: Extra Copies of Letters Jan-Dec 1951, Bowron papers; "Progress Report, Police Department Activities Survey" Bureau of Budget and Efficiency, May, 1951, SRLF, UCLA. Parker tried to preempt Bowron and Leask by inserting into the 1951 LAPD annual report the number of civilians employed by the department which reached twenty-four percent of total LAPD employees. See \textit{LAPD Annual Report 1951}, 11.
You talk like you’re offended... You immediately get angry. You talk like we were sticking our nose into something that wasn’t our business. It is our business and there’s no use in your getting red in the face.\footnote{Carlton E. Williams, “Mayor and Parker in Sharp Clashes,” \textit{Los Angeles Times}, 6 May 1954.}

Parker protested Leask’s demand that ninety-six civilians replace eighty officers assigned to maintain vehicles and process paper at their desks. He needed to retain desk jobs for officers who could no longer handle stressful assignments.\footnote{As he later told a subordinate, if those positions disappeared, “where would we put the drunks?” See Dotson, interview.} In Parker’s defense, Michael Kohn, president of the Police Commission, criticized Leask for not consulting with them beforehand, but Parker lost the battle when Poulson and council members overruled his objections and voted for the civilian positions.\footnote{Plan to Shift ‘desk’ Police,” \textit{Los Angeles Examiner}, 10 March 1955; \textit{Los Angeles Herald}, 10 March 1955.} Parker refused to comment to reporters about Leask’s victory and in his place Kohn made the announcement.\footnote{Put 80 Officers on Police Duty” \textit{Los Angeles Herald}, 10 March 1955.}

Parker’s staff hired civilians as parking attendants, garage mechanics, office clerks and radio dispatchers, but used the replacements to boast of efficiency in the LAPD’s Annual Reports for 1955 and 1956.\footnote{Plan to Shift ‘desk’ Police,” \textit{Los Angeles Herald}, 10 March 1955; \textit{LAPD Annual Report 1955}, 33; \textit{LAPD Annual Report 1956}, 33 Box C-2003, LACA.} In 1957 Parker reignited the battle when he complained that personnel officers could not recruit capable civilians to replace his officers at desk jobs.\footnote{Double L.A. Police Force, Parker Plea. Says 5,000 More Men Needed to Check Vice,” \textit{Citizen-News}, 13 September, 1957. Civilianization was common in other police departments. During Parker’s tenure, the LAPD had one of the highest ratios of civilians to sworn police officers. See Fogelson, \textit{Big City Police}, 185-86. The ratio from 1953 to 1957 was roughly twenty-five percent, based on author’s review of LAPD Annual Reports for those four years.}

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Civilianizing the department was one battle; adding officers was another. In February 1956, at the beginning of the tenth annual Crime Prevention Week, Parker announced that he needed an additional one hundred forty-three officers to bring the department up to full strength.\footnote{\textit{Police Force 143 Short of Full Strength Here,” Los Angeles Times,} 13 February 1956.} He had to settle for ninety new positions and increase the monthly base salary from $440 to $489 that Leask offered. Parker also had to contend with Leask’s insistence on replacing sworn officers with sixty-seven additional civilians.\footnote{\textit{Leask Asks More Police,” Los Angeles Examiner,} 4 May 1956.}

Parker used the threat of crime increases to lobby for more officers.\footnote{\textit{Hoover also used crime increases to persuade Congress to increase the number of agents. See Janis Appier, “Juvenile Crime Control: Los Angeles Law Enforcement and the Zoot-Suit Riots,” \textit{Criminal Justice History} 11 (1990), 157. O. W. Wilson used crime increases to lobby for additional positions as Commissioner of Police in Chicago in the 1960s. In doing so neither Wilson nor Parker presented evidence that crime prevention was effective. See Fogelson, \textit{Big City Police,} 231-32.}} He praised his department’s efficiency while demanding greater resources and warned that crime rates were rising in spite of more officers patrolling the streets.\footnote{\textit{Woods, “Progressives and Police,”} 430. As Parker enhanced his reputation for efficient policing, he gave council members the opportunity to reject his requests for additional officers and authorize more patrol cars and a helicopter instead. See Cannon, \textit{Official Negligence,} 71.} He cited increases in bad checks, auto thefts, burglaries, robberies, traffic citations and a ten percent increase in murders.\footnote{\textit{Highest Record Hit: Crime on Increase in L.A. Says Chief,” L.A. Reporter,} 9 January 1957.} In the annual report for 1951, Parker reminded residents of the high degree of professionalism he developed through efficient use of existing staff but argued for 5,000 new officers because crime increased as investigations and patrol decreased.\footnote{\textit{The LAPD annual reports during the 1950s emphasized increasing efficiency with current staffing by reporting an increase in the number of crimes solved and accidents inspected. The 1957 annual report boasted that in spite of an increased workload, police officers were sixty-eight percent more efficient.}}
He demanded more police stations and more officers to fight increases in crime. In September 1957, he asked council members to place a bond issue before the voters to build bigger police stations to handle more arrestees, but council members raised objections. When the mayor joined them in asking if increases in prostitution, gambling, bookmaking and narcotics were due to inadequate law enforcement, Parker countered that if he had five hundred additional men, he could "clean up the vice situation in a hurry."87 When council members countered that the LAPD's entrance requirements were more stringent than those for the U.S. Marine Corps, Parker threatened to quit if City Council members forced him to lower his standards.88

The following year Parker applied the same tactic of using increased crime to demand additional officers and more funds.89 "Los Angeles today is overrun with criminals," Parker wrote in a report he submitted to the city council. "This is the most crime-ridden nation and we are not dealing with a purely local problem."90 His warning was echoed by Emmett McGaughey, president of the Police Commission, who argued

productive based on measurable work units per man/day from 1950 through 1957. See LAPD Annual Report 1957, 3, 6.


88Several Marines had failed the entrance exam. "Requirements Called Too High," Los Angeles Examiner, 21 September 1957; "Needs 500 More Police, Parker Says He'll Quit if Standards are Cut," Los Angeles Examiner, n.d. found in envelope for 1957, Special Collections, University of Southern California.


90Parker may have used national increases to avoid blame for increases in Los Angeles. "Parker Says Criminals Overrun City" Los Angeles Examiner 21 August 1958. Crime increases may or may not have occurred at the rates Parker quoted but the Los Angeles County Sheriff and Deputy District Attorney both reported that conviction rates reached upwards of ninety percent in 1959. Los Angeles County received funding from the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors to increase the number of prosecutors and support staff and double the number of criminal trial courts. See "L.A. Felon Convictions Now 91%," Los Angeles Examiner, 15 June 1959; "Crime Drop Reported by Sheriff," Los Angeles Examiner, 4 December 1959.
that there were fewer officers per 1000 residents than in 1950, and that crime in Los Angeles was increasing at six times the rate of population growth.\textsuperscript{91} Although hard to prove, they claimed that crime statistics were "appalling" and did not even reflect arrests for drunkenness or traffic violations.\textsuperscript{92} Parker lobbied for an increase of 5,000 additional officers, because "crimes are increasing four times as fast as the population, and six times as fast as arrests."\textsuperscript{93} He coupled his argument about crime increases with rapid urban growth, and cited a departmental study that gauged the population increase in Los Angeles at twenty percent per year. The only way to address the problem was to increase the ratio of police officers to residents.\textsuperscript{94}

While Parker lost some budget battles, he won generous salaries and benefits, yielding to the Police and Fire Protective League to negotiate pension increases.\textsuperscript{95} His earlier successes as a League activist in the 1930s when he campaigned successfully for exclusive departmental rights to disciplinary hearings and civil service tenure for the chief, laid the foundation for later successes. Through state legislation in 1958, officials of the League earned the right to collective bargaining along with other civil servants,


\textsuperscript{92}Ibid.


\textsuperscript{94}\textit{LAPD Annual Report 1958}, 10; Police Commission Minutes, 27 August, 1958. Historically, council members did not respond to large requests for funding or sworn personnel. Determining standards for the appropriate ratio of police to residents is difficult because officers in each police department use different functions to determine what is best for their city. In the late 1950s the ratio was 1.87 per 1000 residents in Los Angeles compared to 4 officers per 1000 in New Orleans, Detroit, Chicago, Houston and New York. Dotson, interview. Parker lobbied Police Commissioners to request one hundred-twenty additional officers each month for the next fiscal year but ran into opposition from council members. See Police Commission Minutes, 17 September 1958.

\textsuperscript{95}Woods, "Progressives and Police," 434.
and aggressively demanded salary and pension increases.\textsuperscript{96} League officials persuaded the City Council to place an initiative on the city ballot guaranteeing salary increases based on the prevailing wages in the region and cost-of-living increases for pensions.\textsuperscript{97} They used a formula for increases called the Jacobs Plan, named after the consulting company whose staff proposed it, and succeeded in garnering majority support for the measure.\textsuperscript{98}

Parker turned occasional losses into victories by outmaneuvering council members or taking credit for changes he did not initiate. In 1957, Council member Rosalind Wyman introduced a motion calling for a summer uniform with short sleeves and no tie but Commissioners supported Parker, who argued that a summer uniform was costly. When Wyman argued for comfort, the chief “went berserk” and was “domineering, difficult and immovable.”\textsuperscript{99} A year later when Wyman won unanimous

\textsuperscript{96}The Meyer Milius Bowman Act, passed in 1958, gave public employees in California the right to bargain collectively. See Dotson, interview; Fogelson, \textit{Big City Police}, 254; Woods, “Progressives and Police,” 434.

\textsuperscript{97}Dotson, interview; Woods, “Progressives and Police” 434.

\textsuperscript{98}Dotson, interview. Los Angeles voters approved the initiative and set the city on a course that paid its police generously but at the cost of incurring serious debt. See Woods, “Progressives and Police,” 435. Voters required a stable system and forced council members to allocate $169 million to keep the pension fund solvent. See Woods, “Progressives and Police,” 435. In June, 1958, League officials received further confirmation of their power to negotiate when the California Supreme Court ruled that widows and disabled officers must receive a fluctuating pension in \textit{Abbot v. City of Los Angeles} 50 Cal.2d 438. In March, 1959, supporters of the League placed a charter amendment on the city ballot that provided for a cost of living increase for all officers who retired or left due to work-related injury. League members had a supporter in CAO Leask, who urged Police Commissioners to recommend passage of the measure “to place the system on a sound financial basis.” See Police Commission Minutes, 25 March 1959. League members continued to sponsor ballot initiatives and lobbied heavily for their approval, incurring considerable debt to the city but rewarding themselves with generous financial benefits. See Woods, “Progressives and Police,” 435. The benefits continued to generate considerable debts for Los Angeles by the 1970s. The League’s strategy became a model for police in northern California to use the ballot to lock in increases in police salaries and pensions. See Fogelson, \textit{Big City Police}, 255, 281-82.

\textsuperscript{99}Wyman, interview.
approval from the City Council for summer uniforms, Parker ceded no ground. The
motion was superfluous, he claimed, because Commissioners had already approved a
ruling permitting officers to wear lighter shirts if the temperature exceeded eighty-five
degrees or higher.100

One project that Parker lost was a fund-raising enterprise that supported the Police
Relief Association, a non-profit organization that distributed funds to charities for
widows and orphans of slain police officers. Beginning in 1934, LAPD officers spent
months planning for an annual celebrity-filled variety extravaganza called the Police
Show that ran for two weeks.101 Parker himself recruited Hollywood celebrities to appear
in the Police Show in the early 1950s.102 Two years after staff of the Commission for the
Reorganization of the City Government recommended canceling the shows because they
drained resources from law enforcement and used staff inefficiently, he asked Police

100 "Council vs. Parker In a Tie Game," Los Angeles Examiner, 14 August 1958. The following
month Police Commissioners unanimously approved the City Council decision. CF 80245, LACA; Police
Commission Minutes, 3 September 1958.

101 See Police Commission Minutes, 6 September, 1955, 11 June 1956, 3 July 1957. Over the
years the annual Police Show borrowed celebrities from the movie industry such as Bob Hope, Jack Benny,
Desi Arnaz, Lucille Ball and Bing Crosby and occasionally featured the annual winner of the Miss
California contest. The variety show included a Saturday afternoon matinee for children with Gene Autry.
Businesses sponsored the shows and movie companies donated sets and costumes. Police officers lent their
talent with a police band and motorcycle drill corps. See “75,000 See Police Show’s Star Armory,” Los
Angeles Examiner, 17 August 1940; “Police Show to Star Benny,” Los Angeles Examiner, 23 April 1950;
“Bob Hope Opens Police Show,” Los Angeles Examiner, 5 May 1950; Joe Domanick To Protect and To
Serve, 119. Parker also used the shows to award Medals of Honor to officers who had distinguished
themselves in the line of duty and to distribute programs with photographs and text promoting the
the early 1950s, the shows became more elaborate with Roman and Caribbean themes. See Program
Booklet “Carnival in Rome” 19th Annual L.A. Police Show, Box 16, Book 5 May 20-26, 1953, Mayor’s
Police officers sold tickets at stations throughout the city.

Commissioners to cancel them. He told reporters that he had consulted his seven deputy police chiefs and the poll showed that officers had objected to selling tickets to the public.

One program Parker did not object to canceling was a crime prevention program for youth, the Deputy Auxiliary Police (DAP). Like O. W. Wilson, Parker disdained youth programs that were intended to prevent juvenile delinquency because he believed they did not belong in a police department. In 1954, he met with the mayor, the CAO, the general manager of the Department of Recreation and Parks, and a representative from the Welfare Planning Council. When Council members recommended canceling the DAP and transferring its management to the Department of Recreation and Parks, a more likely sponsor for youth athletics, Parker did not protest.

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105For DAP origins, see chapter 2. DAP offered athletic and training programs conducted by police officers. "Report of Committee on Deputy Auxiliary Police of the Welfare Planning Council," Los Angeles Region 30 June 1954, Box 29, Folder Police Department, Roybal papers.

106Parker, “Police Challenge,” 8, and in Wilson, Parker on Police; Parker, “Surveillance by Wiretap or Dictograph: Threat or Protection?” 729. Wilson and Parker disagreed with Vollmer on the police role in preventing crime. They argued that police officers could not solve social problems nor could they reduce the behavioral motivations for crime. See Fogelson, Big City Police, 187.

107It is likely Parker persuaded his officers who worked with the CAO to move DAP from the LAPD to another agency. Council members pressured Parker to rescind the order but he did not include a request for DAP monies in his budget the following year. When Council members protested, Parker claimed there had been no appropriation in the budget. See Conot, Rivers of Blood, 114-15; “Report of Committee on Deputy Auxiliary Police.”
When faced with any challenge to his authority, he fought vigorously, relied on Police Commissioners to back him up, and usually won. In May 1956, the chief learned that Edmund G. Brown, California's Attorney General and a Democrat, planned to conduct an investigation of the department, and that Paul Ziffren, a prominent Los Angeles attorney and Democratic party official, urged Brown to expand his investigation. Parker also learned that Ziffren urged Brown to examine LAPD officers' alleged disregard for constitutional rights of suspects. Parker obtain Ziffren's letter to Brown and released it to reporters. Ziffren attacked LAPD officers for using "wanton brutality," and for intimidating those who exposed its "secret police" methods and its practice of gathering intelligence.  

Ziffren also wrote:

...I have been increasingly alarmed by the activities of the Chief of Police of the city of Los Angeles, with particular reference to the mysterious and highly secret intelligence division operated under his direction. Any American, familiar as you are with the development of a police state, must share my alarm about the activities and practices of the Chief of Police and his intelligence chief.  

Parker dismissed Ziffren's comments about the "secret intelligent division" as a rogue faction in the department, contrasting them with the majority of officers who practiced a high standard of professional ethics. He also dismissed Ziffren’s “insults and innuendoes” because they were not worthy of comment from a “biased zealot.”  

It was not Ziffren's place, Parker argued, to tell the California Attorney General how to conduct his investigation.

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109 Ibid.

110 Ibid.
The following day, Police Commissioners affirmed their role as legal overseers of the LAPD and rejected Ziffren’s charges as groundless. They assured Ziffren they had a “thorough knowledge of department activities” and would “continue to exercise its charter powers in setting the policies of the department.” “Throughout the world,” they wrote, “the Los Angeles Police Department is regarded as the first in any major metropolitan area.” They challenged Ziffren to substantiate his allegations and accused him of gross negligence by not providing evidence or filing complaints with the Commission and preparing a “curious and libelous letter.” They unanimously censured Ziffren’s letter and forced Attorney General Brown to publicly repudiate it. Pressure from Commissioners may have compelled council member Rosalind Wyman to criticize Ziffren as “entirely out of line” and shortly thereafter Brown abandoned his investigation.

Parker's Campaign against Judicial Restraints

By 1954 Parker had earned a national reputation for successfully beating back organized crime but he needed the means to continue. He argued vigorously for legal authority to listen in on conversations of organized crime figures and small-time betting operators. He also needed the authority to justify planting devices to record legal

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112 Ibid.


conversations of his critics and public officials. He advocated legalized wiretapping when he testified before the California State Assembly Judiciary Committee in late 1953 and before the Appropriations Committee of the U. S. House of Representatives in February, 1954.

In addition to testifying before the legislature, he wrote an article in the *California Law Review* defending the practice of recording conversations without warrants. To keep America safe and democratic, he argued, the police needed to conduct unfettered surveillance on criminals without violating their constitutional rights, including preserving the “sanctity of the home.” Using a dictograph to record conversations was part of the chief’s comprehensive program of crime prevention. Police officers were a “containing element,” a “thin blue line” that stood between the “law-abiding members of society and the criminals” who preyed on them. Parker acknowledged both the need

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115 Parker used information gathered from wiretaps and other means as political leverage, monitoring liberals in Hollywood, and granting requests for surveillance and data from federal and state counter-subversive committees. See Donner, *Protectors of Privilege*, 250. Parker’s liberal opponents later charged that he wiretapped their phones. In 1958, a young resident who returned to the Westside after completing law school on the East Coast noticed that his friends were convinced LAPD officers wiretapped their phones. Instead of greeting the caller with the customary “hello,” they said “Fuck you, Chief Parker.” Lawyer, telephone interview by author, 25 July 2002. That same year, Paul Ziffren heard Senator William F. Knowland, the Republican gubernatorial candidate, accuse him (Ziffren) of representing people who were “associated with the underworld.” Ziffren assumed that Knowland received his information from LAPD officers because he had vociferously opposed the department’s attempts to curtail the civil liberties of suspects through illegal searches and wiretaps. See Oral History of Paul Ziffren, 122-24, 1961, Special Collections, UCLA.

116 Turner, *Police Establishment*, 75-76. An editorial in the moderately liberal *Daily News* argued against the measure, citing the position of Pacific Telephone and Telegraph executives that they had a commitment to assure privacy in their customers’ conversations. The writer warned that legal wiretapping not only invaded privacy but could be a first step to censor mail and telegrams. “Wire-tapping pleas find little support.” See Editorial, *Daily News*, 8 December 1953. When a new session of the California State legislature began, Parker traveled to Sacramento to petition legislators for court approved wire-tapping but never got it. See Gates, *Chief*, 83.

to respect the civil rights of individuals and society's right to control police activity, but he warned that organized crime bosses would prevail unless the police could conduct their operations without constraints.\textsuperscript{118}

Parker timed his advocacy of dictographs with a case that was wending its way through the appellate courts of California, one in which he was directly involved. In 1953 he had personally authorized hidden microphones to gather evidence against bookmaker Charles Cahan.\textsuperscript{119} Evidence obtained from the microphones led to two raids that his officers conducted without warrants.\textsuperscript{120}

With evidence from the illegal bugs and raids, a Los Angeles County Superior Court judge convicted Cahan who took his case to the District Court of Appeals which sustained his conviction in November, 1954.\textsuperscript{121} He then appealed to the California Supreme Court. On April 27, 1955, in a 4-3 decision, justices reversed Cahan's technique to listen in on telephone conversations and outlawed in California, and using a dictograph, which involved planting a hidden microphone to record conversations, 730-31.

\textsuperscript{118}Parker, "Surveillance by Wiretap," 730, 733.

\textsuperscript{119}Beginning in 1922, California courts accepted evidence obtained through unauthorized searches and seizures. See David Wolcott, \textit{Cops and Kids}, 151. In the \textit{Cahan} case, one officer climbed through a window and planted a microphone in a chest of drawers in Cahan's brother's home. Two other officers posing as termite inspectors persuaded the landlord of another home to authorize entry and planted the second microphone in a room that served as an office for Cahan's bookkeeper. See Cray, \textit{Big Blue Line}, 49, 51; \textit{Report of the California Senate Judiciary Committee on the Interception of Messages by the Use of Electronic and Other Devices}, Regular Session (Sacramento, 1957), 15; District Court of Appeal, Second District Division 2 274 P.2d 724 \textit{People v. Charles H. Cahan}.

\textsuperscript{120}Cray, \textit{Big Blue Line}, 49, 51.

\textsuperscript{121}Ibid. District Court of Appeal, Second District Division 2 274 P.2d 724 \textit{People v. Charles H. Cahan}.
conviction on the grounds that the evidence LAPD officers had obtained violated constitutional guarantees against unreasonable searches and seizures. 

The decision outraged Parker, who spent the rest of his career criticizing court decisions that he believed constrained the police from fulfilling their obligation to enforce the law and thereby to prevent anarchy and chaos. In November 1955, he testified before the U.S. Senate Judiciary Committee that the Cahan decision increased crime, cited statistics that he claimed proved his point, and urged Congress to remedy the situation. 

His appearance was one of several in which he testified that Supreme Court decisions had resulted in increases in crime.

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122 People v. Cahan 44 Cal.2d 434, 282 P.2d 905. Supporters and opponents of Cahan each submitted Amici Curiae. Supporting Cahan were two attorneys from the Southern California branch of the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU), A. L. Wirin and Nathan L. Schoichet, and opposing Cahan were the city attorney for Los Angeles, district attorneys for Los Angeles and Alameda Counties, Edmund G. Brown, California’s Attorney General, and Chief Parker. See Ed Cray, “The Police and Civil Rights,” Frontier vol. 13, no. 6 (May 1962), 5-11; 1955 Cal. LEXIS 243; 50 A.L.R.2d 513.

In their decision, the Justices argued that the United States Supreme Court had ruled in Weeks v. U.S. States 232 U.S. 383, 34 S. Ct. 341, 58 L. Ed. 652 (1914) that illegally obtained evidence in federal cases was unconstitutional. Fourteen years later, in a dissenting opinion in Olmstead v. U.S. States 277 U.S. 438, 485 (1928), Justice Louis Brandeis warned that if the government broke the law, it bred contempt for the law and invited anarchy. Justifying the government’s criminal conduct to secure a conviction, he argued, would bring retribution. See Cray, Big Blue Line, 50; In 1949, Supreme Court Justices refused to apply the exclusionary rule to the states in Wolf v. Colorado, but the Supreme Court reversed a conviction based on illegally obtained evidence involving the Los Angeles county sheriffs. In Rochin v. California 342 U.S. 165 (1952). In Irvine v California 347 U.S. 128 (1954) justices upheld the conviction of Peter Irvine but strongly criticized methods used by the Long Beach Police Department to obtain the evidence. In Above the Law, Skolnick and Fyfe cite Brown v. Mississippi 294 U.S. 278 (1936), one of the first cases where the Supreme Court ruled on local police practices and excluded a coerced confession from admissible evidence, 45-48.

In advocating Congressional legislation, Parker cited Justice Hugo Black in Weeks v. United States wherein he argued that the federal exclusionary rule was not an integral part of the Fourth Amendment but a judicially created rule of evidence that Congress could negate. See U.S. Senate Committee on the Judiciary, Criticism of Cahan Decision by California Supreme Court in Hearings before Subcommittee on Improvements in the Federal Criminal Code, 1st session, November 14-18, 1955, 3572-73.

Parker testified before the House of Representatives. See U. S. House Committee on the Judiciary, Hearings before Special Subcommittee to Study Decisions of Supreme Court of the United States of the Committee on the Judiciary, 85th Congress, 2nd session, 1957, 71-91.
In January, 1956, at a California Assembly subcommittee hearing in Los Angeles, Parker affirmed his pledge to respect constitutional guarantees but argued that the Cahan decision placed “insurmountable handicaps” on the police and would enable communists to intimidate the police. He quoted FBI statistics showing a national increase in crime from 1954 to 1955 and cited “a complete breakdown” of law in November and December, 1955 across the nation. The increase in crime, he argued, was attributable to the exclusionary rule aiding and abetting the underworld but he did not provide any proof. Communists could exploit a weak police force because

...one of the aims of the Communist Party is to drive the police of America into a state of fear. And if the police are driven into a shell of fear, then God help the people of this country!\(^{125}\)

The following month, the chief used LAPD internal publications to wage his campaign against the decision. In his monthly column for The Beat, he wrote that he agreed with the three dissenting justices on the California Supreme Court. Cahan placed an unreasonable burden on the officer by requiring him to make an “on-the-spot

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In 1959 he testified at a subcommittee of the U.S. Senate that crime increased twenty-four percent after the Cahan decision, and cited other cases before the California Appellate Division that would further undermine police to make arrests, conduct investigations and present cases for prosecution by the Los Angeles District Attorney. See U. S. Senate Committee on the Judiciary, *Hearings Before the Subcommittee to Investigate Juvenile Delinquency of the Committee on the Judiciary of the US Senate, 86th Congress, 1st session*, 1959, 612. In 1962 he presented a variation on his previous argument. California had the oldest wiretapping prohibition in the world; because of the ban on intercepting telephone messages, he never had the legal authority to order his officers to listen in on phone calls. As a result, California had the second highest crime rate. See U.S. Senate Committee on the Judiciary, *Hearings before the Subcommittee to Investigate Juvenile Delinquency of the Committee on the Judiciary of the US Senate, 87th Congress, 2nd session*, 1962, 2738-39. However, Daryl F. Gates, his former driver who headed the Intelligence Division in the 1960s, acknowledged that officers continued to bug offices in spite of the Cahan decision. See Chief, 83.


decision” on “highly technical legal questions” which neither the legislature nor the judiciary had resolved. He pledged to support the philosophy of civil rights, and argued that officers in his department were among “its most aggressive exponents.” More than others, Parker wrote, the police themselves were aware of the misuse of their power but the courts had driven the police into a defensive position and they must speak out.¹²⁷

In a speech in May before the Peace Officers’ Association of California, he told his audience that his officers would enforce the law behind this deeply flawed decision but warned that criminals would benefit, and law-abiding residents would pay the price.¹²⁸ Parker complained that police officers' inability to conduct searches without sufficient cause for arrest protected the criminal.¹²⁹ He cited an increase in crime and weak law enforcement, and claimed they were part of the communist plan to destabilize

¹²⁷“Chief’s Message” The Beat X:2, (February, 1956), 2. Von KleinSmid Center Library, University of Southern California. On page 4 is a photograph of Parker standing next to a large graph of an increase in crime and attributing it to the exclusionary rule and restrictions on police investigations. According to David Dotson, the Cahan decision infuriated Parker and other police chiefs around the country. Subsequent decisions by justices at the state and federal level further curtailing police procedures and affirming the rights of defendants intensified their anger. See Dotson, interview.

¹²⁸Parker spoke before the Peace Officers’ 26th Annual Conference on 23 May 1956. See Turner, Police Establishment, 76; Parker, “California Crime Rise,” 724. Though Parker had pledged to uphold the law his officers obtained only thirty search warrants between 1953 and 1960. See Hugh R. Manes, “A Report on Law Enforcement and the Negro Citizen in Los Angeles,” citing Cray, “Police and Civil Rights,” 8, Box 23, Folder 7, UCLA 37, ACLU papers. Sergeant William Gough, a ten-year veteran, testified in 1961 that the Los Angeles District Attorney did not instruct the department’s officers to obtain search warrants if they had reasonable cause to believe invading on a citizen’s privacy was justified. Gough knew of no other officer who had obtained a warrant and he had only obtained one since 1957. See Testimony of William J. Gough, 2 November 1961, in Franklin v. Gough et al L.A. Sup. Ct No 688327, Complaint for Damages, Disposition: Judgment for defendants, in Manes, “Report on Law Enforcement,” 32-34, 42. If the District Attorney instructed LAPD officers not to apply for warrants, then it is likely his instructions applied to other police departments in Los Angeles County.

Western society, a situation “long sought by masters in the Kremlin.”

Parker argued that the decision had other, far-reaching consequences. It not only restricted the police but dissuaded qualified men and women from becoming law enforcement officers because they could not discern between actions that were legally sanctioned and actions that prevented them from responding at all. The exclusionary rule hampered police officers in suppressing the narcotics trade. He encouraged Californians to lobby their legislators in Sacramento to follow Michigan’s example by amending the state constitution to allow evidence seized outside the home that was either a weapon or narcotic.

Not all prosecutors and judges agreed with the chief’s position on Cahan. In January, at the same hearing where Chief Parker had testified in Los Angeles, Los Angeles County District Attorney Ernest Roll pointed out that the legal use of wiretaps did not yield as much evidence as did informers and individual investigators. A few

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132 Free Press, 19 January 1956. In mid-January, 1956, several months after the California Supreme Court decision in Cahan, Dragnet writers included a police search in the script but neglected to add dialogue about its restricted use. A radio columnist criticized the attack on civil liberties and Superior Court Judge Stanley Mosk, as well as attorneys for the ACLU, questioned the truth of the episode. Two weeks earlier, Jack Webb screened it for the California State Assembly’s hearing on illegal searches and seizures. After viewing the Dragnet episode, Paul Ziffren sent a telegram to NBC asking for an opportunity to respond. See “Ziffren Asks NBC to Answer Jack Webb’s Wiretap Propaganda,” Free Press, 26 January 1956; Herbert Monte Levy to Free Speech Association Committee Memorandum, 1 February 1956, Box 24, Folder 9, ACLU papers; “Judge Mosk Says No Increase in Crime Since Cahan Decision,” Free Press, 8 March 1956. There were no records in the ACLU collection that showed NBC’s response. Ziffren had confronted Parker before on Cahan. A month earlier, radio station KCOP sponsored a debate with Ziffren, A. L. Wirin, Parker and H. Allen Smith of the Assembly Judiciary Committee. See “Parker Bucks Supreme Court” Free Press, 19 January 1956.
months later Roll disputed Parker's claim that crime increased thirty-five percent from January through March in 1956 compared to the same period in 1955.133

California Supreme Court Justice Jesse W. Carter also noted Parker's opposition to the Cahan decision, but reaffirmed its constitutionality, and asked the State Legislature to declare that public officials who openly encourage violation of any constitutional provision be guilty of misconduct and removed from office.134 In April, the Justice spoke to the American Legion and warned that anyone who compromised safeguards against illegal searches and seizures after the decision would violate American constitutional justice. "The American system of ordered liberty does not lend itself to the methods employed by the Gestapo."135

When confronted by critics and reporters for his objections, Parker complained that his response to the Cahan decision was "misunderstood and misinterpreted" and that his statements were "erroneously classified as political in connotation."136 Those who supported the decision, he argued, wished to deny him and his officers freedom of speech when he tried to explain that he disagreed with the court's definition of an unreasonable

Judge Mosk attacked Parker for sanctioning a script with a plot line forcing officers to free criminals because of judicial restraints. When officials from NBC sought clearance from the Los Angeles County District Attorney's office to run the episode, they learned that no LAPD officer had ever submitted a case involving a warrantless search. See "Judge Mosk Says No Increase in Crime Since Cahan Decision," Free Press, 8 March 1956.

133 "Parker Again Blames Court for Crime Rise," Citizen-News, 5 April 1956. At a California Sheriff's Association convention in Santa Monica, he announced that he favored legislation to give law enforcement officers new weapons to wage their war on criminals provided there were protections for constitutional rights.


search.\textsuperscript{137}

Parker reserved his deepest animosity for A. L. Wirin, counsel to the Southern California branch of the ACLU, who filed a suit against him in July 1954, enjoining the chief from using public funds for unauthorized use of the dictograph.\textsuperscript{138} He resisted requests from California Attorney General Brown to provide Wirin with information in the case. As Cahan made its way through the Appellate Division and eventually to the State Supreme Court, Parker told an audience of peace officers who had gathered for their annual convention in 1956 about his adversary:

Wirin is a brilliant man from Russia who went through Harvard in three years and who has been identified with the defense of Communists in practically every action that he has been involved in...so we have been requested...to furnish Wirin, the defender of Communists, a basis upon which to declare certain acts of peace officers illegal.\textsuperscript{139}

In 1957, in spite of the California Supreme Court's ruling in Wirin's favor, the chief continued to use illegal searches and tape recordings, rail against the justices, and warn of the downfall of western civilization if the police had to operate with constraints.\textsuperscript{140} He instructed his training officers at the police academy to incorporate

\textsuperscript{137} Parker, "California Crime Rise, 724.


\textsuperscript{139} When someone derided Wirin in Parker's presence, the chief reminded him that Wirin's job was to litigate policies he opposed. See Dotson, interview; Weeks, "Many Sharpshooters Sniping at Parker." Los Angeles Mirror-News, 21 June 1957.

\textsuperscript{140} Wirin v. Parker 48 Cal.2d 890; Cray, "Police and Civil Rights," 5-11. Wirin was one of the more aggressive ACLU attorneys in Los Angeles and believed in a strict interpretation of freedom of speech. See Walker, In Defense of American Liberties, 195, 233; Reinhardt, interview. One former LAPD commander recalled that despite the number of cases of illegal searches and seizures conducted by officers, Parker did not discipline anyone for violating the restrictions in Cahan. See Domanick, To Protect and To Serve, 114. In December, 1959, Hugh Manes, a civil rights attorney, complained that Parker allowed his officers to conduct illegal searches and seizures in violation of the Cahan decision and that the chief's criticism of Supreme Court decisions deserved discussion in the council because "the Police Chief has long
criticism of court decisions into their courses. According to a retired Deputy Chief, Parker suspected that liberal judges and civil libertarians were closet communists who undermined the ability of police to enforce the law, and that Supreme Court decisions were part of a subversive plot to destroy society. At meetings of the American Legion, Parker pounded his fist when he spoke of the decisions that prevented police from apprehending criminals and in his view hastened the downfall of civilized society.

In 1958, Parker used the LAPD annual report to show how judicial decisions weakened law enforcement. His writers devoted one page exclusively to correlating crime increases with court decisions. They blamed the decisions to curtail police operations on the erosion of police efficiency and difficulties in recruiting, and conflated these decisions with council members' resistance to approve additional positions for officers. Writers divided another page into two columns: one titled "these were the tasks," (an increase for police services due to increases in crime, traffic and prisoners in the local jail) and the second, "these limited the capabilities of police" (a shortage of officers, a rapidly growing population, and the deleterious effects of court decisions on cost, protections for victims, and police operations.) As a result of forced restrictions

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141 LAPD Annual Report 1958, 18; Dotson remembered that at the academy his teachers "ranted and raved about the Cahan decision." See Dotson, interview.

142 Dotson, interview.


144 LAPD Annual Report 1958, 2.
on policing Los Angeles, LAPD personnel officers could not attract enough qualified
candidates due to

police-baiting...the frequent and vicious practice of harassing the police by
unjustified attacks for political aggrandizement, economic gain, or for academic
sport.145

Parker complained again when California Appellate Court Justice Paul Vallee
issued an opinion criticizing his officers for not complying with the United States
Supreme Court decision in Mallory v. United States and for detaining arrestees longer
than forty-eight hours to extract a confession.146 Parker told reporters Justice Vallee’s
opinion was “another serious blow to police law enforcement” and that it would
“seriously cripple our effectiveness.”147 When reporters questioned him about his
comments, he told them they had misquoted him. He had “never said any of those
things.” Instead, he told them that “the police will meticulously obey the law as we
understand it” and ordered officers to take arrestees before a magistrate “without
unnecessary delay” for arraignment except Saturday and Sunday.148


146 Mallory v. United States 354 U.S. 449 (1957). In Parker’s testimony before a Congressional
Committee on the U.S. Supreme Court decision, he criticized justices for writing a rule of evidence that
“usurped the constitutional authority of legislatures. See U.S. House Committee on the Judiciary, Hearings
Before the Subcommittee to Study Decisions of the Supreme Court of the United States, Committee on the
Judiciary, House of Representatives, Eighty-Fifth Congress, Second Session on the Decision in the Case of
Mallory v. United States, 354 U.S. 449, July 19,25, August 1, 2, 22 and October 28, 1957, 73. He now had
to order his officers to detain suspects for no more than forty-eight hours without bringing charges against
them, a procedure that California courts had allowed since the 1920s. In the 1930s, LAPD officers often
held suspects without charge up to a week. See Wolcott, Cops and Kids, 151.

147 “Police to Speed Quiz of Suspects,” Los Angeles Examiner, 25 December 1958; “Misquoted on
Court’s Opinion, Parker Says,” Los Angeles Times, 26 December 1958.

148 “Misquoted on Court’s Opinion, Parker Says,” Los Angeles Times, 26 December 1958. For the
first time since World War II, the Los Angeles Municipal Court held hearings on a Saturday to comply with
Judge Vallee’s decision. See “Within 48 hours! 1st Man Arraigned Under New Order,” Los Angeles
Examiner, 28 December 1958.
Parker campaigned against judicial constraints on police and agitated for greater powers to make arrests for obscenity violations. He criticized any limits on arrests for pornography and demanded that city ordinances give him the power to close down obscene movies in any setting. In 1957 he told Police Commissioners that a municipal ordinance was “urgently required for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health and safety” of the city’s residents. He persuaded council members to omit physical restrictions so his officers could enforce vice laws according to his own specifications.

As the chief argued for unfettered power of the police, he also argued for reducing the rights of suspects. In 1959, in testimony before a Senate subcommittee, he again criticized legal limits on pornography arrests. When the committee chairman noted that the film version of Lolita was playing in Los Angeles at the time, the chief told senators: "This Lolita, the library had reservations for the book a year and a half ahead. Those are American people that are doing that. I don’t know what their tastes or mores are anymore.” When City Council members proposed an ordinance to make arrest records public, he rejected the arguments of defense attorneys about prejudicing jurors, intimidating witnesses and abandoning the assumption of innocence until proven.

149. “Parker Raps Court Ruling,” Valley-Times, 15 December 1959. He was equally passionate in his opposition to a US Supreme Court decision in Smith v. California 361 U.S. 147 (December 1959) wherein justices ruled that a Los Angeles ordinance was unconstitutional because it outlawed possession of obscene literature. See “Parker Raps Court Ruling,” Valley-Times, 15 December 1959.

150. See W. H. Parker to Honorable Board of Police Commissioners, Los Angeles, 12 September, 1957. Ordinance No. 110,187, approved 3 October, 1957 in CF 79510, Box A1415, LACA.

151. Parker was equally critical of Justice Brennan who argued in support of the decision that material was legal unless the police could establish that it was created for arousing prurient interests, something difficult to prove. See Senate Subcommittee, Juvenile Delinquency, 1959, 612, 621.
guilty. Instead, he persuaded Mayor Poulson that arrest records, like court proceedings, might be of interest to the public, and won when Mayor Poulson approved the ordinance on November 4, 1959.

**Parker's feuds**

Parker feuded with several public officials, including California Governor Edmund G. Brown and FBI director J Edgar Hoover. In the late 1950s, he argued about organized crime with Governor Brown. The chief and James Hamilton, who headed the Intelligence Division, refused to cooperate in a study Governor Brown had commissioned because they disputed the statements by Alvin Goldstein, a Brown appointee, that “local police failed to produce a scintilla of evidence concerning the Mafia.” "The Mafia operation has been pinpointed and identified in California," Parker told reporters, "but Mr. Goldstein is a newcomer to this state – he’s got a lot to

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153. Memo from W.H. Parker to Police Commissioners adopted at meeting, 27 May 1959, CF 90861, Box A1523, LACA; Ordinance No. 114,852, CF 90861, Box A1525, LACA. Parker later took his campaign to Sacramento where legislators debated a bill to delete the records of suspects whom prosecutors did not bring to trial. A. L. Wirin argued that only convictions should be retained because otherwise the public harassed the innocent and the judge became an arresting officer. Parker disputed the hardships of persons who were falsely arrested and argued that many who were not formally charged should have been convicted. He reminded legislators that one out of every twenty-five persons in the United States had a police record, so deleting records would not erase personal histories. See “Arrest Files in Cases of Innocent Scanned,” Los Angeles Times, 13 November 1959 and “Arrest Record Law Argued at Hearing,” Los Angeles Examiner, 13 November 1959.

154. Brown, who was California Attorney General from 1950 to 1958, ran successfully for governor in 1958.

learn." He dismissed Governor Brown's comments that the Mafia was not a threat to law and order and told reporters that the Mafia did not control southern California. "We maintain they are here. Strong law enforcement has prevented a take-over."

Parker also earned the enmity of J. Edgar Hoover, who viewed anyone with a national reputation in law enforcement as a potential rival and a threat. Hoover had assigned his agents to track Parker's career long before he became chief, collecting information on his promotional exams as early as 1939. After Parker's appointment to chief, Hoover's agents reported back in numerous memos Parker's conversations with them, his comments on the Poulson-Bowron mayoral campaign, his drinking habits, his comments at police conventions, his articles and appearances on radio and television and articles written by others about him.

The feud between Parker and Hoover was in part about professional differences but was fundamentally about two men who competed for the title of premier law

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158 Hoover may well have been jealous of Parker. By 1952, Parker had a hit weekly television show and he received credit at the end of each episode. At the time there was no comparable show for the FBI. Hoover also disliked Jerry Wilson of the Washington D.C. police department, O. W. Wilson, dean of the UC Berkeley School of Criminology in the 1950s and later Commissioner of the Chicago Police Department, and August Vollmer, the nation's first 20th century police reformer. See Curt Gentry, *J. Edgar Hoover: The Man and the Secrets* (New York: Norton, 1991), 415; Hoover saw himself as the founder and patriarch of American law enforcement and denied FBI support to any police chief whom he viewed as a competitor. In 1964, Wilson confronted Hoover over their rift at a dinner but Hoover refused to make amends. See Bopp, *O.W.*, 55, 110.


160 Director, FBI from SAC (Special Agent-in-Charge), L.A. 29 June 1953, p 2, FBI 62-96042. The FBI file on Parker, 62-94062, is approximately 530 pages; Donovan, "I Have No Use," 176. 

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enforcement officer in the nation. Parker favored a federal clearinghouse for information on organized crime figures and standardizing criteria for the FBI's Unified Crime Reports (UCR). Hoover did not. Each man possessed an oversized ego, responded to slights with vindictiveness and refused to share the spotlight with anyone. Each surreptitiously collected intelligence on public and private figures for intimidation and blackmail.

A pattern developed in the early years of the feud. Parker made a critical comment and asked an agent not to report it. The agent included Parker's comment in memos he sent to Hoover who often wrote acerbic comments about the chief in margins of the memos. The feud began with a petty dispute about paying tribute to graduates of the FBI's National Academy in Quantico, Virginia, after an episode on the Dragnet radio program in 1950. Parker objected to the credit and in retaliation, Hoover instructed agents in the FBI's Los Angeles office to be circumspect in dealing with the LAPD and pledged not to accept LAPD officers at the National Academy.

Two years later, Parker tried to publicly resolve his differences with Hoover. At a regional meeting of police chiefs in July 1952, Parker complained about FBI civil rights investigations resulting from the Bloody Christmas beatings. When an FBI agent argued

161Donner, Protectors of Privilege, 248.

162Memo dated 4 October 1950, 3, in "Correlation Summary," 2 August 1963, FBI file 62-96042. After Parker's appointment in 1950, Hoover ceased vacationing in southern California. See Turner, Police Establishment, 77; Gates, Chief, 76. Murphy, Gentry, Gascon and Gates all date banning LAPD officers from the National Academy in 1957, when Parker attempted to run for sixth vice president of the IACP at its annual convention. See Murphy, interview; Murphy, Commissioner, 87, 90; Gentry, Hoover, Man and Secrets, 415; Gascon, interview. Hoover also denied officers of the Washington, D.C. and Chicago departments training at Quantico. See Gentry, Hoover, 416; As long as Parker remained in office, Hoover did not allow LAPD officers to train at the FBI National Academy. See Donovan, "I Have No Use," 184, citing Memo from C. A. Evans to Mr. Belmont, 5 November 1962, FBI 62-94062. Emmett McGAughey not only was a Police, Commissioner and former FBI agent but also an informer for the Bureau on Parker. See Donovan, "I Have No Use," 182, citing SAC Los Angeles, to the Director, 27 December 1960, FBI 62-96042-71.
that Bureau agents were doing their job, Parker sought out the agent after a session and claimed that he had not intended to disparage the Bureau but to inform the group that the Bureau's investigations were politically motivated. He told Special Agent-in-Charge (SAC) Abbaticchio that he had only the highest regard for Hoover and for Kit Carson, SAC posted in Los Angeles, and said he hoped that Abbaticchio would not report his criticism. By 1953, Parker suspected, however, that Hoover's agents were tracking him at the IACP convention. He told Madison, Wisconsin, Chief of Police Bruce Weatherly that he was the subject of an investigation by ten to fifteen agents, but FBI officials claimed there was no civil rights investigation against him.

Hoover and his agents communicated regularly about the chief. After Carson's conversation with Parker in 1952, Hoover wrote that Parker would criticize or praise the Bureau depending on what he felt he could get away with. He advised Carson to keep the Bureau fully informed about Parker so either he or his agents could rapidly respond to his comments. In 1953, FBI agents reported to Hoover that at the IACP convention, Parker traveled from one bar to another "mad as a wet hen" and condemned an award Hoover received for making the "best contribution to law enforcement of any man in history." They also reported that Parker endured ridicule from other chiefs about his obsession with Hoover. In response, Hoover wrote to the agent, "The Los Angeles

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163 Donovan, "I Have No Use," 174-75.
164 Ibid., 176.
165 Ibid., 175.
166 Ibid., 177, citing memo from H. H. Clegg to Clyde Tolson, 17 September 1953, FBI 62-96042 NR. Awards to Hoover were common at IACP conventions.
167 Donovan, "I Have No Use," 177.
Office is to have no contact with Parker in the future."  

Parker continued his efforts to maintain a relationship with the Bureau. When he phoned the local office to inquire about the status of an investigation that Mayor Poulson had requested on his drunken conduct at the September, 1953 IACP meeting, the SAC told Parker he had not heard of Poulson's request and that the Bureau did not have the authority for such an investigation. He told Parker he did not appreciate his derogatory statements regarding Hoover's award and listened while Parker denied his intention to disparage Hoover yet complained again about procedures for making the award. After reading the SAC's report on his conversation with Parker, Hoover wrote "I have no use for this fellow Parker & we should keep our guard up in all our dealings with him."  

Parker did not anticipate Hoover's control over IACP executive offices by favoring chiefs of small police departments. When Parker told SAC Carson in 1953 of his plans to run for the position of vice-president and his hope for FBI support, "if they are not too mad at me," Carson reported to Hoover that Parker was an "opportunist and had no great love for the Bureau." SAC Carson acknowledged that Parker was "something of a hero to police officers in southern California" and would probably win  

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168 Donovan, "I Have No Use," citing Director to SAC Los Angeles, 18 September 1953, FBI 62-96042 NR; Memorandum, 23 September 1953, 62-96042 NR.  
169Ibid., 177, citing Director to SAC Los Angeles, 3 June 1954, FBI 62-96042-16.  
170Murphy and Plate, Commissioner, 89-90; Eric Monkkonen, the late professor of social policy and history, interview by author, UCLA, 17 July 2002.  
171Donovan, "I Have No Use," 175-76. Donovan notes that Hoover used Quinn Tamm, an FBI agent who was influential in the IACP, to prevent Hoover's rivals including Parker from attaining office in the organization. See Gentry, Hoover, 416-17; SAC Los Angeles to the Director, 29 June 1953, FBI 62-96042NR. 

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the election. He noted Parker's self-aggrandizement when he complimented himself in one speech, and cited a judge who told him that Parker considered himself God's gift to law enforcement.\textsuperscript{172} Parker eventually discovered that Hoover had dispatched his agents to defeat his bid for office.\textsuperscript{173} In November, 1957, Parker was in Philadelphia and complained to an FBI agent that Hoover wanted the IACP to be a second rate organization. Parker planned to run for office that year and Hoover told the agent he was not surprised.\textsuperscript{174} When Parker learned that the IACP would not nominate him, he wrote a letter to the California Peace Officers' Association thanking them for their support and added that he would not be a candidate for any IACP office again.\textsuperscript{175}

Hoover perpetuated the feud. He refused to acknowledge a local celebration of Parker's thirty years in law enforcement. In August, 1957, when Los Angeles radio station KMPC planned a day long salute to Parker's seventh year as chief and thirtieth year with the LAPD, radio staffers asked Hoover if he wished to send a congratulatory message. A spokesman for the Bureau responded that Hoover was traveling and not

\textsuperscript{172}Donovan, "I Have No Use," 176. Parker boasted that the new LAPD crime lab was as good as the one used by the FBI. See FBI reference 80-606-11-9, 24, "Felons Serve Under Glass in Luxury Police Building," \textit{New York Herald Tribune}, 13 September 1955, in FBI file 62-96042. Parker's quotes were often incendiary and made good newspaper copy. When reporters had trouble finding news on a given day they enjoyed baiting him into making statements. See Donovan, "I Have No Use," 182, citing SAC, Los Angeles, to the Director, 27 December 1960, FBI 62-96042-71.

\textsuperscript{173}Murphy, interview. Murphy notes that without FBI domination of the IACP, Parker would have been elected by acclamation. He had the reputation and respect of police chiefs across the country. See \textit{Commissioner}, 90.

\textsuperscript{174}Donovan, "I Have No Use," 179.

\textsuperscript{175}On the memo from Quinn Tamm to Clyde Tolson, Hoover wrote that he didn't believe Parker. See Q. Tamm to Tolson 21 January 1959, FBI 62-96042-48, in Donovan, "I Have No Use," 179.
available. Hoover aide Clyde Tolson urged Hoover not to appear when Parker planned to give the keynote address the following month at the IACP annual meeting in Honolulu.\textsuperscript{176}

Aside from the squabbling, Parker and Hoover had fundamentally different views on how to battle organized crime. Parker had seen the core of corruption early in his LAPD career, and as chief he had mobilized LAPD resources to root out organized crime in Los Angeles.\textsuperscript{177} He garnered support among other police chiefs for his tactics of recording conversations and collecting intelligence. At the July 1952 regional meeting of police chiefs, he noted that his department had over 10,000 dossiers on major criminals, including members of the Mafia, and warned the San Diego chief that Cleveland criminal elements planned to take over the cigarette vending machine business.\textsuperscript{178} He argued for a federal agency to act as a clearinghouse for information and planned to introduce a resolution at the IACP convention that year but learned that Hoover was not interested.\textsuperscript{179}

\textsuperscript{176}Donovan, "I Have No Use," 179.

\textsuperscript{177}Parker had to balance its image of an efficient, professional force with warnings of organized crime. See Woods, "Progressives and Police," 446. Many years later, when a federal Grand Jury convened in Los Angeles in January, 1959 to coordinate crime information for federal agencies, Parker used the federal program to bolster his argument that the Mafia continued to operate in Los Angeles. See "Jury in L.A. Aids in Rackets War," \textit{Los Angeles Examiner}, 14 January 1959; "U.S. Grand Jury Here Probing Mafia Operations," \textit{Los Angeles Examiner}, 15 January 1959. In March, 1959, Parker announced that four gangsters who specialized in numbers rackets had arrived in Los Angeles to start "big-time gambling" and warned his officers to watch for signs that would force them to impose an "immediate crackdown." See "Parker Tells New Mob Threat" \textit{Los Angeles Examiner}, 14 March 1959.


\textsuperscript{178}Donovan, "I Have No Use," 173-74.

\textsuperscript{179}Telegram top line reads "Wash 7 from Chicago" 1952, FBI 62-94062; memo to Director FBI from SAC, San Francisco, 18 July 1952, FBI 62-94062; Donovan, "I Have No Use," 174-75. Parker's inability to interest the federal government may explain why he authorized James Hamilton to coordinate with other chiefs on the West Coast to establish the LEIU, discussed in chapter 3. Hoover also refused to work with O. W. Wilson on organized crime. See Bopp, \textit{O.W.}, 88.
Hoover consistently opposed cooperation with Parker. When SAC Malone learned that Parker planned to discuss a national clearinghouse again at the IACP meeting in Boston in 1955, Malone notified Hoover, who assigned staff to prepare a statement of opposition because it would establish "some Federal organization ‘to which the buck can be passed.’" As other scholars have noted, Hoover was not interested in organized crime because it was complex, and required extensive intelligence gathering on a large number of suspects. He preferred to tout his agency’s success with bank robbers, kidnappers and counterfeiters because they were easier to convict and required relatively few resources. Hoover was equally disinterested in working with Parker to restore wiretapping options for law enforcement and rebuffed him when he approached the Bureau to coordinate the opposition. "Let Parker fight his own feuds. We should make no commitments of any kind to Parker."

Parker and Hoover had equally different criteria for collecting statistics on crime for publication in the Unified Crime Reports, which the FBI initiated in 1931. Parker's officers acknowledged that disparities in policies and procedures yielded different results. Parker's criticism of the United Crime Reports was supported by police

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180 Donovan, "I Have No Use," 178, citing E.D. Mason to Tolson, 28 September 1955, FBI 62-96042 NR. In 1959, when William Turner was an FBI agent, he discovered that a national meeting of heads of organized crime in Apalachin, New York, 1957, occurred without the FBI’s knowledge. To catch up, FBI agents began to gather information on organized crime; the only substantive material came from the LAPD’s Intelligence Division. See Turner, Police Establishment, 74.

181 Monkkonen, interview. Hoover carefully selected criminal activity that was easy to tackle and would win him and the FBI plaudits for courage, integrity and success. Until Attorney Robert F. Kennedy forced Hoover to confront organized crime, Hoover denied its existence. See Murphy and Plate, Commissioner, 83, 86.

182 Donovan, "I Have No Use," 179, citing Director to SAC, Los Angeles, 9 July 1957, FBI 62-96042-32.

183 Fogelson, Big City Police, 181.
and scholars who noted the absence of a national standard for filing crime reports and clearing cases. The United Crime Reports were flawed records because the figures were not audited by an outside agency, the statistics were records of police activities rather than crime rates and because there was no national standard for filing crime reports and clearing cases.\textsuperscript{184}

They also differed on Parker's interpretations of crime increases and decreases. Parker refuted Hoover's explanations for crime increases in Los Angeles and did not relish reading about them in FBI reports.\textsuperscript{185} In January 1959, PRD staff at the LAPD released a report showing an increase in crime of thirteen per cent from the previous year, but an FBI report released three months later showed Los Angeles with the second highest crime rate following New York; another FBI report in September showed an eleven percent increase in Los Angeles from 1958.\textsuperscript{186} Parker disputed the FBI's methods for gathering statistics which showed Los Angeles with the highest crime rate in all categories in California, but neither man explained how his agency gathered its information.\textsuperscript{187} He described Hoover as a "compiler of statistics over which he does not

\textsuperscript{184} Fogelson, \textit{Big City Police}, 265; Walker, \textit{Critical History of Police Reform}, 143. Determining the crime rate is equally difficult because officers in different cities do not use the same reporting policy, the same number of officers or the same response time. See Dotson, interview.


take responsibility for accuracy," and Parker attributed the decrease in crime due "to the prodigious efforts of all departmental personnel."  

Race-Based Policing

Despite his reputation for police reform, Parker never escaped criticism of his department's relations with minorities. He assigned officers to attend seminars on race and appointed liaisons to minority communities, but did not ask for their suggestions on how to defuse racial tensions. He praised his officers for improving race relations in speeches but denigrated critics who challenged his policies and tacitly allowed Commissioners to subvert their efforts. In 1954, he boasted that Los Angeles had not

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189 In 1952, he assigned Captain Noel McQuown of Newton Station to attend a seminar on "Police and Racial Tensions" sponsored by the University of Chicago and the National Conference of Christians and Jews. A year later Parker appointed Officer Julio Gonzales to be a liaison officer between the LAPD and the Spanish-speaking community. See Senn, “Sixth Annual Report, " 2; Webb, Badge, 192-96; LAPD Annual Report 1952, 11; "Police Create Liaison Post," Los Angeles Examiner, 23 November 1953.
experienced race riots during his tenure. He did not see people of different races or segregated neighborhoods, only residents who were either law-abiding or criminal.

Yet he sent large numbers of officers to minority sections of the city because “certain racial groups” were responsible for a “disproportionate share” of the city’s crime. His officers distributed information to minority groups on reporting abusive conduct by officers, but he disciplined them only after mainstream reporters discovered the abuse and wrote about it. In 1957, Commissioners restructured complaint procedures and agreed to hold more hearings on traffic citations and physical abuse but they often denied the legitimacy of the complainant’s charge or praised officers for exemplary conduct.

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190 Parker, “Police Role in Community Relations,” 8, from copy in Roybal Papers.

191 Ibid., 25-26. A copy of this speech is also in Wilson’s Parker on Police.

192 Ibid., 16, 25-26; Woods, "Progressives and Police," 458. Parker’s denial of segregated neighborhoods is incorrect. By the mid-1960s, Los Angeles was the most segregated city in the country. The San Fernando Valley was almost all white, as was the Westside. Blacks lived in large numbers in the south-central part of the city. See William Fulton, The Reluctant Metropolis, The Politics of Urban Growth in Los Angeles (Point Arena, CA: Solano Press Books, 1997), 10; Sides, L. A. City Limits, 106, 109.


194 The Commissioners agreed to appoint a hearing officer to determine what evidence a complainant could submit, and recommend action but Commissioners were not bound to implement it. Police Commission Minutes, 13 March, 1957. For examples of complaints filed without action taken, see Police Commission Minutes, 2 September, 1953; 16 November 1953; 7 December, 1955; 9 July, 1956; 12 December, 1956, 18 September, 1957; 23 October, 1957. The Commissioners’ inaction prompted Mayor Poulson to write them expressing his disappointment based on letters from residents irritated with police investigations that ignored their complaints and exonerated the officers. In 1958, as the number of complaints increased, Commissioners doubled the number of hearing officers from ten to twenty. They included attorneys, realtors, public relations executives, military officers and former FBI agents. See Police Commission Minutes, 5 November 1958.

The LAPD was not unique in turning against residents who filed complaints against them. Cray noted this practice was common in other cities, and involved a demand by police that the arrestee sign a stipulation that the police had probable cause to arrest him. In exchange the local District Attorney agreed to drop the case. See Cray, Big Blue Line, 180-81. Police officers in Philadelphia and Washington, D.C. charged complainants with disorderly conduct and resisting arrest. See Fogelson, Big City Police, 284.
In a speech before the National Conference of Christians and Jews, he told his audience that when a reporter wrote of police brutality against minorities, a consortium of sixty social service agencies contacted the paper's publisher and explained that such articles incited the "lunatic fringe-elements into disorderly conduct and was playing directly into the hands of subversive groups."\textsuperscript{195}

City Council member Edward Roybal supported as well as criticized Parker and his officers. He favored Parker's appointment as chief and backed his requests for budget increases. He paid close attention to police matters in his district by meeting regularly with captains at Hollenbeck station.\textsuperscript{196} And in spite of Parker's disinterest in the causes of crime Roybal arranged with the chief to lecture at the police academy on sociological conditions in his ninth council district.\textsuperscript{197}

In 1959, Parker found a way to make it harder for residents to litigate against his officers. In compliance with \textit{Davis v. Kendrick}, which required that civilians file a claim against the city before filing a civil lawsuit, Parker urged Commissioners to lobby for an ordinance defining an officer as an employee with the City of Los Angeles. See \textit{Davis v. Kendrick} 52 Cal.2d 517, decided 10 July 1959. He got the support of Mayor Poulson who signed his approval on November 13, 1959. See Letter from Samuel C. McMorris to the Council, 25 August 1959, Leo Branton, Jr. 19 August 1959, and John T. McTeman, 25 August 1959; Ordinance Number 114, 957 in CF 19659, Box A1533, LACA.

\textsuperscript{195} The consortium may have been the LACCCR. See Parker, "Police Role in Community Relations," 18. Milton Senn also attended the conference and told reporters at the conference that the Deputy Police Commissioner of the New York Police Department told him no police department had a training program that equaled the "scope, depth and intensity" of the LAPD. See Los Angeles County Conference on Community Relations 8\textsuperscript{th} Annual Report, September 30, 1954, Box 41 Folder 11, ACLU papers. The following year, he praised the cooperation and support of Parker and Los Angeles County Sheriff Eugene Biscailuz. See Memo from Member Agencies to George L. Thomas, Executive Director, Los Angeles County on Community Relations, 1 October 1955, with attachments. Box 28, Folder 4, ACLU papers.

\textsuperscript{196} Underwood, "Process and Politics," 167; Woods, "Progressives and Police," 463. It was common for council members to meet regularly with LAPD captains in their district. See Dotson, interview.

\textsuperscript{197} Underwood, "Process and Politics," 167.
Roybal criticized police officers who abused minorities and at the same time requested increased patrols in his district.\footnote{Some residents protested aggressive ticketing by officers which they claimed to be racially motivated. Letter to Board of Police Commissioners from William Thomas Phillips, 9 March 1953, Box 29, Folder Police Brutality, Roybal Papers. In 1953, Roybal who represented a majority of Mexican-Americans in his 14th council district, wrote to the chief regarding racial designations on traffic citations. The Chief responded with Special order No. 50 requiring that officers leave blank the box designed for race. See Letter to Edward Roybal from William H. Parker, 13 August 1953, Box 29, Folder Police Department, Roybal papers; Police Commission Minutes, 29 July 1953; Webb, \textit{Badge}, 280.} In 1953 he wrote to Parker complaining about inadequate patrols for prostitution and gambling, and received acknowledgement of ongoing problems but the chief ignored his call for improving treatment of minority suspects.\footnote{Memo to Police Commission from Parker, 18 August 1953; Letter from Esther M Sharpe to Roybal, 28 August 1953; Letter from Roybal to Reverend John McGee, 4 February 1953; Letter to Worton from Roybal, 17 January 1950; Letter to Roybal from W.A. Worton, 16 February 1950, Box 29 File Police Department, Roybal papers; Woods, \"Progressives and Police,\" 463; Police Commission Minutes, 11 September 1957; Statement of Phillip Buito who dated his abuse 1 January 1955, Box 29, Folder Police Brutality, Roybal Papers.} Despite Roybal's attention to police concerns during his thirteen-year career as a council member, he never sat on the Police and Fire Committee.\footnote{Rosalind Weiner Wyman, who represented the 5th council district from 1953 to 1966, and also criticized officers for abuse, was also excluded from the Police and Fire Committee. See Woods, \"Progressives and Police,\" 463.} Along with council member Rosalind Wyman, Roybal argued frequently for greater police accountability but the City Council was \textquote{not the place to get things done.}\footnote{Mankiewicz, interview.}

In 1959 Parker engaged in a lengthy and volatile debate with an African-American judge over allegations of race-based arrests that hit at the core of the chief's policing philosophy. After hearing cases against twenty-five black male suspects arrested for gambling, Municipal Court Judge David W. Williams wrote to the chief asking him to explain the disproportionate number of arrests of black men. The chief responded, expressing indignation that the judge would make a prejudiced assumption without
examining the facts. He cited the racial breakdown of gambling arrests in the previous
two years:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Negroes</th>
<th>Caucasian</th>
<th>Other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1957</td>
<td>6,859</td>
<td>907</td>
<td>353</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1958</td>
<td>5,210</td>
<td>482</td>
<td>389</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The chief argued that his officers arrested "without any distinctions of a social or ethnic
nature." To infer that gambling was protected was an indictment of all LAPD officers and
an indication that Judge Williams was not familiar with the city's national reputation for
eradicating organized vice and racketeering. Judge Williams ignored Parker's protests
and dismissed the charges based on evidence that the raids targeted African-
Americans.

The argument expanded into a debate among council members and Police
Commissioners. The judge's supporters on the council, Roybal and Wyman, asked the
Police, Fire and Traffic Committees to investigate his charges, but the committee chairs
refused to act. Parker appeared before the full council and complained that the judge's
accusations hampered police work and lowered public respect for the police.

After the council debate, Herbert Greenwood, who was the only African-
American on the Police Commission, engaged the chief in a heated argument in the late

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202 Police Commission Minutes, 4 February 1959. The commission minutes note that Judge
Williams had sent reporters a copy of his letter. Parker shared his letter to Judge Williams with
Commissioners.

203 Police Commission Minutes, 4 February 1959.

204 Williams to Herb Schurter, 1 April 1959, CF 89512, Box A1512, LACA.

205 "Parker Tells New Mob Threat," Los Angeles Examiner, 14 March 1959. A month later, Judge
Williams wrote to the chief and accused him of denying that officers singled out Negroes for gambling
arrests when men all over the city engaged in illegal betting. See Williams to W. H. Parker 21 April 1959,
CF 89512, Box A1512, LACA.
spring of 1959. Under pressure by civil rights groups to demand that the chief respond to their complaints more aggressively, Greenwood asked Parker for information on black personnel and statistics for gambling arrests, and requested that Commissioners interview citizens who filed complaints against officers. When Parker refused to submit the information or allow Commissioners to interview his officers and accused Greenwood of using information against him, Greenwood reminded the chief that he had submitted similar information four years earlier. Parker shouted that Greenwood was a liar. Fed up with Parker’s refusal to give him information, Greenwood resigned, called Parker a “dictator” and pointed to the Commission’s impotence. “The commission doesn’t tell the chief what to do – he tells us.”

By 1959, Parker had molded the LAPD into an organization that resisted external demand for change and the Police Commission into a body that reflected his opposition to reform and criticism. The chief enjoyed power in the city that was unrivaled by either the Mayor or any member of the City Council. He beat back every challenge to his

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207 Ibid. Mayor Poulson appointed Dr. Reynaldo J. Carreon, a leader in the Mexican-American community and chairman of the City Civil Defense and Disaster Board. See “Carreon Long Active in L.A. Latin Affairs,” Los Angeles Examiner, 19 June 1959; “R.J. Carreon Gets OK for Police Post,” Los Angeles Examiner, 23 June 1959. The matter continued throughout the summer. See Holland to Williams 6 July 1959, CF 89512, Box A1512, LACA; Williams to Holland 9 July 1959 CF 89512, Box A1512, LACA. Police Commissioners noted that an Appellate court threw out Judge Williams’ dismissals and that the judge’s questions did not merit a lengthy inquiry based on its knowledge of the policies of the department. See Police Commission to City Council, 6 August 1959, CF 89512, Box A1512, LACA.

Officers’ assumptions of black and Hispanic criminal behavior influenced communications with merchants. During Christmas season in 1959, LAPD officers distributed bulletins to business owners describing methods used by African-American and Hispanic shoplifters but did not describe any methods used by whites. See Horne, Fire This Time, 135-36.

208 The chief worked hard to garner support from the Commission and a majority of the council regardless of his intemperate remarks. See Dotson, interview.
authority and policing strategy by praising his officers, denigrating his critics and
summoning support from the mayor, council members, Police Commissioners and
business and civic leaders. He paid lip service to officers in Community Relations and
their activities, but vociferously defended his officers' conduct when faced with
accusations of race-based arrests and harassment.

   The charge by critics of race-based arrests, however, exposed a fundamental
weakness of Parker's policing philosophy. His insistence on dealing with effect rather
than cause compromised his commitment to enforce the law equally among the city's
residents.\textsuperscript{209} As other public officials began to acknowledge race relations as a problem
requiring serious attention, Parker denied the existence of the problem.\textsuperscript{210} He became
increasingly out of touch in a city undergoing rapid change.

   In just a few years, Parker became famous for high standards of
professionalization for the LAPD as well as for refusing to publicly account for officer
misconduct and race-based arrests. He seized uncontested power as a public official and
enjoyed strong support from the mayor, most council members and white residents and
businessmen, as well as editors of the city's dailies, but his disinterest in race relations
kept tensions with minorities simmering for years.

\textsuperscript{209}Parker, "Crime and Belief," in Wilson, \textit{Parker on Police}, 12; "Police Role in Community

\textsuperscript{210}Parker, "Police Role in Community Relations," 8, 9, 16.
CHAPTER 5
A CONSERVATIVE CHIEF IN A CHANGING CITY

As Los Angeles became a cosmopolitan center with a diverse economy, new political coalitions and civic leadership, Parker remained committed to anti-communism and proactive policing. He continued to attack his opponents and vigorously defend his officers, and continued to resist demands for greater accountability for his officers' conduct. He regarded his officers as professionals, who enforced the law equally in a growing city where residents of different races lived in harmony with one another.

Los Angeles had grown exponentially in the 1950s and by 1960 was undergoing dramatic change. Children born after World War II, or "baby boomers," grew into adolescence and consumed new forms of music and fashion, and learned to drive on the city's sprawling roads and freeways. Jews joined law firms that had previously refused to admit them, and participated in the full spectrum of civic life and political leadership. The black middle class grew as more black families moved out of low income areas and poorer black migrants moved in. Otis Chandler, son of Norman Chandler, became the new publisher of the *Los Angeles Times* in 1960, reflecting a young, moderate Republican sensibility and a dedication to covering the news with investigations and analysis. Local television producers brought news into Southern California living rooms with imagery and immediacy unmatched by newspapers.
As Los Angeles residents embraced new cultures and economies, the chief became increasingly out of touch with the city but retained his grip on power and on the department. He continued to receive awards for his contribution to safety, protecting civil liberties and managing the best police department in the country. He developed a relationship with Senator Robert F. Kennedy, attempted to influence the mayoral election in 1963, perpetuated his feud with Hoover and initiated new ones with other public officials.

As Otis Chandler led business and civic leaders toward a new multi-cultural future, Parker became even more conservative, warning of the dangers of socialism, the weakening of police forces and the downfall of western civilization. He publicly aligned himself with the growing conservative anti-communist movement in Southern California. As judges and justices blurred the line between decent and obscene literature, and extended the rights of suspects, Parker sharpened his warnings of moral decline, social decay and the demise of American democracy.

Los Angeles Becomes a Modern, Cosmopolitan City

By 1960, Los Angeles had experienced extraordinary growth due to its diverse economy, extensive freeway system and abundance of new homes. The region manufactured bombers, toys and swimsuits, cars, aircraft, clothing, toys and mass entertainment. A sun culture of outdoor living beckoned families to barbeque in their backyards, relax in their private pools and enjoy the region’s many beaches. Movies and

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1For the middle class, Los Angeles embodied the American dream of home and automobile ownership, unlimited access to good-paying jobs and leisure facilities on freeways providing travel direct from home to destination. See Robert Fishman, “Re-Imagining Los Angeles” in Michael J. Dear, Eric Schockman and Greg Hise, Rethinking Los Angeles (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 1996), 255.
local television programs showcased the latest dances and songs, and swimsuit companies marketed their products to adolescent baby boomers, testing the limits of traditional restraint. Avant-garde art opened up new frontiers in sculpture and painting, forcing critics and reviewers to conceive new terms to describe the installations. Conventional and unconventional expressions competed for attention in Los Angeles as new trends in fashion, music, movies, art and theater transformed the culture of southern California.

Los Angeles was one of many cities in the Sunbelt that drew residents from the Mid-west and East Coast because of low property taxes and cheap land. The rise of industrial dispersion and suburbanization in the Sunbelt increased electoral clout, resulting in a redistribution of Congressional members towards the South and West. As tens of thousands sought warmer regions of the country, two migrations reshaped American cities. Blacks moved from the south to cities of the Midwest, Northeast and West, and whites moved to the suburbs. These dramatic changes in population influenced political, economic and social forces in urban regions.

In Los Angeles the growth rate was among the highest in the country throughout

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3 "Race and political economy are the most salient lenses through which to view the broad story of postwar urban and suburban places." See Self and Sugrue, "Power of Place," 20-21.

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the 1950s. New residents arrived in Los Angeles at the rate of 5,000 per month. Angelenos who had lived in the city for less than five years now outnumbered those who had lived in the city longer. Many newcomers settled in the San Fernando Valley where the population more than doubled from 300,000 to 700,000 during the 1950s. Whites settled in the San Fernando Valley and the Westside and blacks settled in South Central or neighborhoods nearby, raising the city's total population to 2,612,704 residents in 1960.

Jews came to Los Angeles in large numbers. By 1959, the Jewish population grew from approximately 300,000 in 1951 to 430,000. Jews moved to the San Fernando Valley, almost doubling their numbers in ten years to 75,000. They also moved to the Westside, a sector of the city that had become a Jewish center of residences and

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4 Jackson, Crabgrass Frontier, 239. Mexicans came to Los Angeles, although not yet in large numbers. See Fogelson, Big City Police, 247.

5 Police Commission Minutes, 6 November 1957.

6 Gottlieb and Wolt, Thinking Big, 542.

7 Fulton, Reluctant Metropolis, 10.

8 There were no categories for Mexican-Americans in the 1960 census. See U.S. Department of Commerce, U.S. Bureau of the Census, Census of Population: 1960, Vol 1, Characteristics of the Population, Part 6 California; Paul Weeks, “Migration Causes Big Jump in L.A.'s Population,” Los Angeles Mirror-News 30 April 1956. Approximately 20,000 of the documented Mexican and Mexican-American residents in Los Angeles County lived in East Los Angeles and many more moved to suburbs east of the city. This figure is based on Waldinger and Bozorgmehr's estimate of Mexican-Americans as less than two percent of the 7.6 million residents of Los Angeles County in 1960 and the estimate of Josh Sides that twelve percent of documented Mexican and Mexican-Americans in Los Angeles County lived on the eastern side of the city. See Waldinger and Bozorgmehr, Ethnic Los Angeles, 63; See Sides, L. A. City Limits, 110.

9 Los Angeles had the third largest Jewish population in the world behind New York and Tel Aviv. The Himmelfarb-Singer study uses the number of households for their statistical analysis. I have multiplied that number by 3.5 as the approximate number for each Jewish household. See Bruce Phillips, “Los Angeles Jewry: A Demographic Portrait” in Milton Himmelfarb and David Singer, American Jewish Yearbook 1986 (New York: American Jewish Committee and Jewish Publication Society, 1986), 134, 161; Deborah Dash Moore, To the Golden Cities, Pursuing the American Jewish Dream in Miami and L. A. (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1996), 23.
businesses at the end of World War II, increasing their numbers by twenty-five percent to approximately 96,000.\textsuperscript{10} Jews lived primarily in West Los Angeles, Brentwood, Bel Air and Pacific Palisades, neighborhoods that would become some of the most expensive in the city.\textsuperscript{11}

By 1960 the number of African-Americans in Los Angeles had grown to 336,827 or almost thirteen percent of the total population.\textsuperscript{12} The great majority of African-Americans in the city were denied entry into the world of blue-collar skilled work and lived in Watts, in South Central Los Angeles.\textsuperscript{13} Those who were not were members of the black middle class and resided in neighborhoods west of Watts including Baldwin Hills, View Park, Windsor Hills, West Adams and Crenshaw, neighborhoods that had been vacated by whites.\textsuperscript{14} The growth of the black middle class was evident in the large

\textsuperscript{10}Jews numbered approximately 400,000 in Los Angeles County at the end of the 1950s, an increase of forty-seven percent from 1950. Many Jews still lived in the urban core, including Wilshire area, Beverly-Fairfax, Hollywood and Baldwin Hills, totaling 56,700, Phillips. See “Los Angeles Jewry,” 134, 161.


\textsuperscript{12}Bureau of the Census, Census of Population: 1960, Vol 1, Part 6 California. From 1950 to 1956, the city’s black population increased by almost fifty percent to approximately 250,000 or eleven percent of the city’s total population and settled mostly within the city’s inner core. White population increased almost ten percent and settled in the suburbs. See Paul Weeks, “Migration Causes Big Jump in L.A.’s Negro Population,” Los Angeles Mirror-News, 30 April 1956.

\textsuperscript{13}Blacks who sought blue collar jobs found them in manufacturing but had trouble gaining employment in the auto industry because General Motors in South Gate, east of Watts, employed many white blue collar workers from Oklahoma, Texas and Arkansas who refused to work with them. See Sides, L. A. City Limits, 79.

\textsuperscript{14}Lonnie G. Bunche, “A Part Not Necessarily Prologue: The Afro American in Los Angeles,” in 20\textsuperscript{th} Century Los Angeles, 123-24; Horne, Fire This Time, 214; Waldinger and Bozorgmehr, Ethnic Los Angeles, 61; Wecks, “Migration Causes Big Jump,” Los Angeles Mirror-News, 30 April 1956; Sides, L. A. City Limits, 106. Of the 400,000 blacks in Los Angeles, less than 1,500 found housing outside the central district or in segregated areas of San Pedro, Venice and Pacoima. In the San Fernando Valley, the black population decreased from 1,164 to 953. See Conot, Rivers of Blood, 107.
number of black homeowners and in the number of attorneys, physicians, dentists, teachers, social workers and civil servants.\textsuperscript{15}

Democrats began to score some electoral successes in local and statewide races. By the mid-1950s, Democrats had won elections of three council members, Edward Roybal, Rosalind Weiner Wyman, and James Corman.\textsuperscript{16} In 1958 voters elected Democratic majorities to both houses of the California State Legislature and elected every Democrat who ran for statewide office. Former Attorney General Edmund G. Brown won his race for governor and Judge Stanley Mosk, a Superior Court judge in Los Angeles County, won his race for Attorney General.\textsuperscript{17} In 1960, California Democrats succeeded in bringing the Democratic National Convention to Los Angeles.

Jews gained access to civic leadership in the late 1950s through the overtures of Dorothy Chandler, the wife of \textit{Los Angeles Times} publisher Norman Chandler.\textsuperscript{18} Mrs. Chandler was the link between the old Los Angeles and the new.\textsuperscript{19} She knew that Jews could not join exclusive clubs, corporate boards, law firms or banks which continued to


\textsuperscript{18}McDougal, \textit{Privileged Son} 189.

\textsuperscript{19}Gottlieb and Wolt, \textit{Thinking Big}, 268-70, 311, 317. Until the end of the 1950s, the influence of the Chandler family was "immense." See Mankiewicz, interview; the peak of Chandler family power took place in the 1950s and early 1960s, when Norman and Dorothy Chandler controlled the dynasty, according to Franklin Guerra, director of the Center for the Study of Los Angeles at Loyola Marymount University, from Peter H. King and Mark Arax, "As Dynasty Evolved, So Did Power in L.A.," \textit{Los Angeles Times}, 26 March 2006.
be run primarily by white male Republicans. She befriended Rosalind Wyman, who represented a largely Jewish district in the city council, and who became friendly with her son, Otis. Mrs. Chandler also persuaded Wyman and her husband Gene to contribute to the Los Angeles County Music Center and convinced her husband Norman to support Wyman in her subsequent campaigns for reelection to the City Council.

Mrs. Chandler was equally committed to upgrading the stature of The Los Angeles Times and persuaded her husband to build the paper into a serious newspaper. With her encouragement, Norman Chandler hired first-rate reporters from other prominent newspapers and oversaw the transition from a provincial and deeply conservative paper to one that adhered to professional standards of journalism. Chandler now published a newspaper that weighed two sides of an issue, conducted investigative reporting and ran sophisticated articles on national and international topics. With his new editor, Nick Williams, Chandler moved the paper towards the political center, gradually receded from

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21 Gottlieb and Wolt, Thinking Big, 311. After the Chandler family invited Jews into their milieu, other Gentiles began to remove restrictions. See Davis, City of Quartz, 147, n25.

22 Following the lead of moderate Republicans on the East Coast, Mrs. Chandler recognized that anti-communist rhetoric no longer was useful as relations between the U.S. and the Soviet Union began to stabilize. She not only persuaded her husband to embrace a more centrist approach, she also advocated cultural exchanges with the Soviet Union. See Gottlieb and Wolt, Thinking Big, 302, 321-22.

23 McDougal, Privileged Son, 219-21; Halberstam, Powers That Be, 282-86; Gottlieb and Wolt, Thinking Big, 321-22.
direct intervention in the city’s politics, and reigned in Carleton Williams, the paper’s city hall correspondent and unofficial advisor to Mayor Poulson.24

In April 1960, Norman Chandler signaled another change when he announced that his thirty-two year old son, Otis, would become the paper’s fourth publisher.25 Otis Chandler was a new kind of civic leader. He was not only rich, but also athletic, cosmopolitan, curious, non-ideological and personally comfortable with people of other races and ethnicities.26 His education and interests were more cosmopolitan than his father’s and his liberal education and enlightened attitudes about race, culture and professional journalism reflected similar changes in the city itself.27 He made friends with men and women who were white, Jewish and African-American, none of whom had grown up in the privileged confines of Pasadena and San Marino.28 Neither a conservative Republican nor a liberal Democrat, Otis Chandler defined himself as a social liberal and fiscal conservative.29

Chandler continued the intensive investment his father had begun in transforming the Los Angeles Times into a professional and well-respected daily. He moved the paper away from its narrow anti-communist stance and hired additional first-rate journalists to cover the city, national and international events, upgrading the paper as Parker had

24Nick Williams and Carleton Williams were not related. See McDougal, Privileged Son, 215; Gottlieb and Wolt, Thinking Big, 270, 285, 304-05.

25McDougal, Privileged Son, 224-25.

26Ibid., 63.


28McDougal, Privileged Son, 169-70.

29Chandler, interview.
upgraded his department ten years earlier. He enlarged foreign bureaus in Europe, Asia and Latin America.30

The new publisher made significant changes in coverage that signaled his commitment to local news and issues. He introduced investigative and analytical journalism to provide background and context for stories.31 He printed positive images of blacks and Latinos in contrast to his father’s editors, who had only printed negative images of minorities. He modified the editorials and changed their perspective from right-wing to one that he defined as “militant centrist.”32 He began to cover local, state and national elections more seriously.33 Through his editors, he directed political reporters not to endorse candidates and enforced their independence from the editorial board.34

Otis Chandler first asserted his position as a moderate Republican by assigning his editor, Nick Williams, to run a five-part series in March, 1961 on the John Birch Society in southern California, describing its extreme anti-communism, ultraconservative

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30 One paper was the Los Angeles Mirror, published by the Times-Mirror Corporation and the other was the Los Angeles Examiner, published by William Randolph Hearst. See Gottlieb and Wolt, Thinking Big, 332-34, 445.

31 Gottlieb and Wolt, Thinking Big, 326-27.

32 Chandler, interview.

33 Gottlieb and Wolt, Thinking Big, 327, 330, 365.

34 Bill Boyarsky and Nancy Boyarsky, Backroom Politics, How your Local Politicians Work, Why Your Government Doesn’t and What You Can Do About It (Los Angeles: P. Tarcher, 1974), 262-63. In connection with the deeply conservative family members on the corporate board, editors of Los Angeles Times supported Goldwater in 1964 and also Proposition 14 which sought to repeal the Rumford Fair Housing Act. See Gottlieb and Wolt, Thinking Big, 372; McDougal, Privileged Son, 244-46. Los Angeles Times editors continued to endorse Republican candidates for state and national office but during the sixties paid more attention to Democratic candidates. See Gottlieb and Wolt, Thinking Big, 366, 371-72. Otis Chandler’s new and improved Los Angeles Times impressed his peers and other journalists for the high quality of its reporting and criticism, and earned several Pulitzer Prizes in the first decade of his management. One of the consistent criticisms of the paper through the early 1990s has been inadequate attention to local issues. See McDougal, Privileged Son, 228.
philosophy and leaders. In an editorial, Chandler affirmed his commitment to conservatism, expressed a strong dislike for those red-baiting American leaders who used the same conspiratorial tactics as the movement it swore to defeat, and argued that it would lose when advocates "smear as enemies and traitors those with whom we sometimes disagree. Subversion, whether of the left or the right, is still subversion."

Chandler never met Parker but his paper reflected a sharper edge in reporting on the LAPD and its chief. Gradually, as reporters covered the chief's outbursts in the City Council, the state legislature and in his Congressional testimony, they also began to cover the chief's critics and the issues they championed. Reporters wrote analytical pieces on civil rights, judicial decisions and their effect on policing. They continued to write pieces with the cooperation of PID staffers, but the articles appeared alongside those that drew attention to Parker's warnings of lawlessness, moral laxity and judicial usurpation of policing.

Parker Reacts to Change

In 1960, Parker was the most powerful man in Los Angeles. In speeches in California and across the country in the 1960s, he held forth on communism, court decisions and conservatism with impunity. As he lectured on the dangers of police constraints and self-indulgence, he earned broad coverage in print and broadcast media.


37Chandler, interview.

38Thomas, interview.
Though he made outrageous remarks, he could do so with impunity because he controlled the Police Commission and the majority of the City Council on law enforcement issues, and kept the middle class and business areas of the city safe. He gave Commissioners no reason to fire him. For his achievements, he acquired numerous awards from public and private groups in gratitude for his achievements.39

Parker celebrated his tenth year as chief as guest of honor at a gala banquet attended by several hundred supporters, including business, civic and religious leaders.40 He awarded medals of valor to officers and spoke of the “spirit of unity that must exist between the people and the community and those selected as guardians of the public peace.”41 He listened as a retired oil executive cited Los Angeles as "the best policed city in the nation."42

Editorial writers, Police Commissioners and City Council members marked the occasion. A writer for the Los Angeles Examiner praised his achievement in raising his officers to professional stature, using the latest technology to arm his troops, opposing measures for special interests and molding his officers into an “admirably trained force.”43 A writer for the Los Angeles Times acknowledged his obstinacy and

39 In 1964, the Downtown Business Men’s Association cited Parker as their Man of the Year; the Los Angeles County Bar Association presented him with a resolution for his service to his fellow men, his community, his nation and his profession; and the National Conference of Police Associations cited him “in appreciation for his support and cooperation in improving the law enforcement profession.” See Los Angeles Equalizer Vol XXXIII, No. 8, CF 130570, Box A1989, LACA.


42 Ibid.

tactlessness but praised him for his honesty, dedication, integrity, intelligence and efficiency. Police Commissioners praised him as a "model for police administrators throughout the Free World." Six months later, at the exact moment when he surpassed the previous record for tenure as chief in 1899, Parker's Deputy Chief and an Inspector presented him with a triple-framed scroll.

Parker continued to receive City Council resolutions of praise which frequently cited his reputation as leader of one of the finest police departments in the world. He continued to appear at events where organizations honored him with awards for community service, upholding the Bill of Rights and exemplifying the American way of life. He was honored with a scholarship in his name from a local branch of the

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45 Police Commission Minutes, 10 August 1960.


47 Council member Lemoine Blanchard initiated a resolution on 3 April 1961 stating that the LAPD has "consistently been ranked as one of the outstanding metropolitan police units not only in the United States but in the world" and reaffirmed its confidence in the chief and his officers who have "distinguished themselves by their integrity, professional excellence and unswerving devotion to duty." In response to attacks on the personal character of the chief, council member Karl Rundberg on 18 June 1962 initiated a resolution that the council adopted expressing "complete confidence in Chief William H. Parker" and the LAPD for "continuing outstanding service to our community." See CF 101166, Box A1629, LACA. In 1962 the Los Angeles Sertoma Club honored him with a Service to Mankind Award on Loyola University's Annual Citizenship Day; in honor of his 35th anniversary with the LAPD, civic leaders lauded him at a Law and Order Observance Testimonial for his "integrity, courage and distinguished service." In 1963, the Apartment Association named him outstanding Citizen of Los Angeles County. See *Los Angeles Equalizer* Vol. XXXIII, No. 8, CF 130570, Box A1989, LACA.

48 In 1960 Immaculate Heart College awarded him its Bill of Rights Freedom Award, for his "selfless dedication to the preservation of the principles of justice to every citizen." See "Parker Given Rights Award," *Los Angeles Times* 14 December 1960. In June 1962, the California Federation of Senior Citizens Organizations submitted a resolution to the Police Commission for "splendid and superlative leadership," Police Commission Minutes, 27 June 1962. In 1965 he received the annual award from the Junior Scholarship club of Woodrow Wilson High School for "outstanding courage"; the Freedom Award of the Wilshire Sertoma Club for exemplifying the American way of life and its freedoms; the Medallion of
American Legion and almost every year after 1960, he received a resolution from the City Council as the longest serving chief in the history of Los Angeles.49

In contrast to Otis Chandler, who symbolized the new Los Angeles and welcomed new modes of artistic and dramatic expression, a diverse population and more centrist politics, Parker symbolized the old Los Angeles, suspicious of non-whites, communists and cultural experimentation. He won requests for adding new police stations in white neighborhoods but continued to lose his battle with the CAO for adding all the new officers he wanted. He resisted loosening municipal laws for indecency, and remained steadfastly committed to enforcing the law equally by refusing to relax security measures for friend or foe.

Parker accommodated dramatic growth in the city's population by expanding the number of police stations; all but one station served the growing number of residents in the San Fernando Valley.50 In 1955, Police Commissioners expedited construction of a station in the West Valley covering the neighborhoods of Northridge, Reseda, Merit by the Society of the Friendly Sons of Saint Patrick; and the first public official to receive the Los Angeles Realty Board's Service Watch. See Los Angeles Equalizer, Vol XXXIII, No. 8, CF 130570, Box A1989, LACA.

49 In 1965 the San Fernando Valley American Legion Luncheon Club awarded a $400 William H. Parker Scholarship to a graduating senior of a high school in the Valley who was a Boy Scout, a member of an American Legion family, earned a good academic record and demonstrated good citizenship. See “First Parker Scholarship Award Nears” Citizen-News, 21 June 1965. The City Council resolution that praised Parker on his fourteenth anniversary as chief noted that his was the longest term of any chief in history of Los Angeles and marked his thirty-sixth year in the LAPD. See CF 119667, Box A1851, LACA. To celebrate Parker's fifteenth year as chief, Jack Webb presided as master of ceremonies at a lunch sponsored by the American Legion and Boy Scouts. See “Big Turnout for Parker Dinner Seen,” Valley News, 7 August 1964.

50 The number of officers in 1960 was 4,708. See Los Angeles Examiner, Special Section, 8 September 1960.
Chatsworth and Canoga Park and the chief opened it two years later. In 1957, Parker staffed the new station with a full complement of sworn personnel. The following year, Parker opened the North Hollywood station. He expanded the original Van Nuys station to include administrative offices for the entire San Fernando Valley. In 1961 he opened the Foothill station to serve residents in Pacoima, Sunland, Tujunga, Sylmar, Sun Valley and parts of Reseda and Granada Hills, seventy-nine square miles that were previously patrolled by the North Hollywood and Van Nuys stations. To accommodate growth east of Hollywood, close to downtown, he requested approval for a station at the intersection of Temple Street and Benton Way, which would later be called Rampart.

The chief continued to squabble with the CAO, Samuel Leask, over filling hundreds of police positions; he won one argument with him but lost most of the others. In 1960, Leask proposed a plan to fill some of the vacancies by creating part-time police

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53 Police Commission Minutes, 17 September 1958; *LAPD Annual Report 1958*, 4. The organization chart in the annual report shows that the Van Nuys, West Valley and North Hollywood police stations were in Area #4.


cadet positions for male high school graduates. Council members, civil service commissioners and the mayor approved the plan while Parker was out of the country on vacation. When the chief complained that city officials could not fill police vacancies, the president of the Civil Service Commission accused Parker of opposing the cadet plan merely because he had not initiated it. Parker refused to implement the program by questioning its legality and persuaded Police Commissioners to support him. When Parker requested several hundred additional positions a few years later, the new CAO, C. Erwin Piper, authorized half that number, arguing that the chief could not prove he could decrease crime with so many officers.

As Los Angeles became a center for innovation in the performing and visual arts, Parker assumed the role of moral guardian. His officers made selective arrests at modern art galleries and the chief battled with City Council members over an ordinance for nude modeling. Parker regarded these local scuffles as symptoms of a national trend towards

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60 One day in 1957, LAPD vice officers responded to complaints about some pieces shown in a modern art gallery by the artist Wallace Berman. They phoned the gallery to say they'd carry out an inspection and offered the artist the option of removing any potentially objectionable pieces before they arrived. Berman decided to confront the vice officers by not removing any of his art works but officers did not know what to take because they were unaccustomed to looking for abstract sexual images. They arrested Berman on obscenity charges for a work he did not consider a problem. Police officers prepared a case for prosecution and a local judge found the artist guilty, sentencing him to thirty days in jail or a $150
self-indulgence and indecency which threatened the social order and degraded the police. He did not always win. For example, in 1958 Parker argued for an ordinance requiring photographic studios and nude models to obtain a police permit to prevent violence to women who posed nude for photographs. In 1962, following a string of murders of young women by a man posing as a professional photographer, Parker resubmitted the ordinance but ran into opposition from art schools. After directors of the art departments at UCLA and the Otis Art Institute encouraged Parker to exempt independent artists and professional art schools, he relented.61

The chief agreed to accommodate art schools but saw the expansion of artistic expression in Los Angeles County and nullification of many vice laws by the California Supreme Court as dangerous to the social fabric of America. In 1961 his officers arrested a woman for sex with a man who was not her husband, but the court overturned the conviction because officers could not show evidence of payment for sex.62 When Parker learned that sections of the Municipal Code on indecent writing, advertising, and motion pictures would require revision because of the decision, he predicted an influx of prostitutes to California and warned that “we are going the way of the Roman Empire—more so-called freedoms in matters of morals leading to our ultimate decline and fall, and

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61The art institute was named after Harrison Grey Otis, founder of the Los Angeles Times and grandfather to Norman Chandler, publisher of the paper until April, 1960. The model for the ordinance that heads of art departments supported had been adopted by the City and County of San Francisco. See Ordinance No. 122, 063, CF 87218, Box A1490, LACA, approved 8 May 1962.

62"Invalid" Morals Laws Enforcement Halted by Parker," Los Angeles Examiner, 28 December 1961. A.L Wirin argued for plaintiff Carol Lane; California Attorney General Stanley Mosk and the District Attorneys of all California counties supported the ordinance. See In re Lane 58 Cal.2d 99 (28 June 1962).
the destruction of our civilization."63 Despite his objections, the chief instructed his officers to change their arrest criteria based on the court decision.64

The explosion of avant-garde art and drama in the early 1960s in Los Angeles pitted advocates of free speech against the police and others who believed that some actors and artists violated obscenity laws. Parker, however, did not demand that officers pursue offenders aggressively.65 In 1964 he did not dwell on the acquittal of the artist Connor Everts after officers had arrested him on obscenity charges.66 Nor did he make public statements regarding Commissioners' approval of a production of LeRoi Jones' "The Dutchman" and "The Toilet" after they concluded the plays did not violate local obscenity laws.67

Parker fulfilled his duties as chief in new ways but clung to old habits. He refused to compromise on security for the visits of public officials. In the fall of 1959, Parker prepared for the visit of Soviet Premier Nikita Khrushchev but as a dedicated anti-communist he created minor irritations for him by allowing no flexibility in his itinerary.68 Parker supervised the security detail for the visit and coordinated escorts and

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65 As wealthy arts patrons raised funds for museums in Los Angeles, some of the pieces they purchased deeply offended some city and county residents. See Smith, Utopia and Dissent, 318-19, 324.

66 Candida-Smith, Utopia and Dissent, 310-12.

67 Police Commission Minutes, 31 March 1965 and 7 April 1965. In the early 1970s, LeRoi Jones changed his name to Amiri Baraka.

68 The Chandlers used their role as Republican moderates to present the city as a paragon of American success. They confirmed the usefulness of Khrushchev's visit to the United States and chided Americans' for their nervousness, reminding them that such anxiousness did not make Americans look good. See Gottlieb and Wolt, Thinking Big, 302. An editorial writer pointed out the beauty,
motorcades with FBI agents, Secret Service agents, Los Angeles County Sheriffs and California Highway Patrol officers. Three weeks prior to the visit, Parker met with his counterpart from the Soviet Security Police. Both men agreed to eliminate a trip to Disneyland from Khrushchev’s itinerary but to plan for a visit by his wife and children. On September 19, when Parker learned that during Khrushchev’s flight to Los Angeles he expressed an interest in visiting Disneyland, the chief refused to accommodate him. He argued that it was too late to prepare adequately, because Disneyland was in Orange County, thirty miles southwest of Los Angeles, far beyond the city’s boundaries. Instead, officers reporting to Parker escorted the Khrushchev family on a tour of a public housing development in the city.

Parker remained equally rigid in providing security for presidential candidate John F. Kennedy at the Democratic National Convention in Los Angeles in the summer of 1960. Each day of the convention, the chief provided an escort for Kennedy with red lights and sirens. At one point during the convention he learned that Kennedy pushed two LAPD officers out of a crowded elevator to make room for two of his aides. The chief called Kennedy’s brother, Robert F. Kennedy, and told him “you tell your brother if he ever puts his hands on a Los Angeles police officer again, I will pull all – do you hear

industriousness and affluence of southern California suggesting that Khrushchev compare Los Angeles with the USSR’s efforts to industrialize. “Los Angeles Can be a Lesson,” Los Angeles Times, editorial, 19 September 1959.


me? *all* the security off the Democratic convention. All of it! Uniforms — everybody—will walk off the job. Now you *tell* him that!72

Parker's commitment to heavy security impressed the Kennedys and he nurtured a good relationship with Robert Kennedy, who would soon become Attorney General which added stature to his own national reputation.73 In December, 1960, after his brother had won the election and Robert Kennedy pledged to create a national crime commission, Parker allowed his name to be placed on a list as a possible director and the local press floated the rumor.74 The chief acknowledged contact with Kennedy but denied that he received any offers for federal appointments, and was certain the FBI opposed such a commission as it had since 1952.75 Parker was right. He received no offer because the President-elect did not want to challenge Hoover.76


74 "Parker Urges National Form Crime Unit," *Los Angeles Examiner*, 27 December 1960. In the FBI file 62-96042, there is a copy of "Parker Rumored as FBI Leader," *Wilshire Reporter*, 24 February 1960 on the rumor that If Nixon were elected president he would replace Hoover with Parker.


76 Donovan, "I Have No Use," 187. President Kennedy commented that he could not replace Hoover. "You can't fire God." See Donovan, 187, quoting James W. Hilty, *Robert Kennedy, Brother Protector* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1997), 243. In a confidential memo, an agent wrote that Ethel Kennedy needled Hoover by asking him if he thought Parker was a wonderful man and suggested Parker should replace him if he retired. Hoover reddened slightly and responded meekly, "Yes, Ethel." See Donovan, "I Have No Use," 194, citing Richard Gid Powers, Tony G. Poveda, Athan Theoharis, Susan
For the rest of Parker's career, he and Robert Kennedy remained in contact. The two men arranged for LAPD retirees to hold positions in the private sector and to place LAPD officers in special federal assignments.\textsuperscript{77} Parker enjoyed Kennedy's praise for his outstanding contribution to law enforcement.\textsuperscript{78} Parker's relationship with the Kennedys enhanced his national reputation, which he continued to cultivate with a sophisticated public relations apparatus.

Parker sustained his local and national reputation as an aggressive crime fighter because he waged a perpetual public relations campaign that highlighted his achievements in professional policing and his department's commitment to safeguarding the city's residents. When he interviewed with writers from the Center for the Study of Democratic Institutions in Santa Barbara, Los Angeles Magazine, or magazines with Rosenfeld, eds., "The FBI in American Population Culture," in The FBI, A Comprehensive Reference Guide, (Phoenix, AZ: Oryx Press, 1999), 391-92.

\textsuperscript{77} Kennedy recruited LAPD officers and police from other departments for training counterinsurgents in Latin America. In May 1962, the department assigned Sergeant Jesus Mejia and Officer Hector Guevara to the U.S. Department of State's Agency for International Development to instruct police in "certain Central American countries in crowd, civil disturbance and riot control." See Police Commission Minutes, 8 August 1962. The two LAPD officers were among many who trained Latin American police forces to infiltrate leftist groups and prevent additional communist revolutions in the region after Fidel Castro overthrew Juan Battista in 1959. See Robert D. Schulzinger, U.S. Diplomacy Since 1900, fourth ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), 262; A. J. Langguth, Hidden Terrors (New York: Pantheon, 1978), 124-26. Donovan, "I Have No Use," 180. Attorney General Robert Kennedy recommended James Hamilton, who headed the LAPD's Intelligence Division, for head of security for the National Football League. It is likely that Parker recommended the appointment to Kennedy. See Gates, Chief, 70.

\textsuperscript{78} "L.A. Law Enforcement – Chief Parker Praised," Los Angeles Herald-Examiner, 25 September 1963. See Donovan, "I have No Use," 180, citing James W. Hilty, Robert Kennedy, Brother Protector (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1997), 433. When Robert Kennedy visited Los Angeles in June, 1964, he told reporters "I think generally, looking at police departments across the country, the Los Angeles Police Department has done an outstanding job." Robert Kennedy also praised Parker because his 5,000 man force dealt with only a three percent increase in crime from January to March, 1964 in contrast to nineteen percent nationally. See "Chief Parker, City's Police Recognized as Among Finest," Valley-News, 27 September 1964. One of Parker's favorite photos was of himself with President Kennedy who thanked him for security during one of his visits to Los Angeles and signed it. See "Parker's Lifetime, a Series of Highlights," Los Angeles Herald-Examiner, 18 July 1966. Tom Reddin, Chief of Police from 1968 to 1969, recalled that when Robert Kennedy was Attorney General, he referred to Chief Parker as "the greatest chief in the world." See "Era of Parker."
national circulations such as the *Saturday Evening Post* and *Life Magazine*, some of them published minor items that were inaccurate but they supported the chief's image as tough, ethical and noted that he was one of the top law enforcement officers in the nation.\(^7\)

By 1960, Parker had garnered considerable experience with public relations and knew which requests to refuse, which events to sponsor and what to say depending on the reporter, the interview and the type of media. Parker refused television producers' request to film *Route 66* at police headquarters, telling them to duplicate the interiors as Jack Webb had done for *Dragnet*.\(^8\) But he visited Boys' Republic Farm School in Chino, where he posed for a photograph with actor Steve McQueen who presented the chief with an award for outstanding service.\(^8\) He told Donald McDonald, from the Center for the Study of Democratic Institutions, how proud he was of *Dragnet* because of its authenticity and portrayal of the police officer as a "hard-working, selfless man, willing to go out and brave all sorts of hazards and work long hours to protect the community."

He was equally proud of the annual awards banquets which his staff organized each year; they had broad community participation and received "magnificent coverage."\(^8\)

\(^7\)Jennings, "Portrait of Chief," 87, 89. Wesley Marx wrote that Parker had quit alcohol and tobacco consumption prior to his appointment as chief in 1950 when in fact Parker quit in the late 1950s or early 1960s. See Marx "Cop as Crusader," 47. In "There's No Easy Place To Pin the Blame," *Life Magazine*, 27 August 1965, 32, Don Moser wrote that the chief discontinued the police shows because he believed it was undignified for officers to sell tickets. Parker did not initiate the cancellation. He does not mention a CAO report recommending that police shows be cancelled.


\(^8\)When public relations staff from Hill and Knowlton, which had arranged the event, sent him the photograph, they suggested PID officers contact *Police Magazine* to print it. Letter dated 12 June 1963, LAPD scrapbooks, LACA.

\(^8\)Donald McDonald, "The Police, An interview by Donald McDonald with William H. Parker, Interviews on the American Character" (Santa Barbara, CA: Center for the Study of Democratic Institutions, Fund for the Republic, 1962), 14. Parker's PID officers continued to work with local reporters who wrote pieces on the police academy's Spanish architecture, the property room, the department's
He knew how to attract headlines to emphasize his commitment to professional policing. He had always resisted recommendations for lowering recruiting standards in spite of many vacancies for sworn personnel. Faced again with the pressure to compromise, he told a reporter "now we're going to have to start hiring inadequates. If you go below the present intelligence or moral level in hiring policemen, God help Los Angeles."\textsuperscript{83}

The chief knew when to be gracious. Parker called Bill Thomas shortly after his appointment by Chandler as the \textit{Los Angeles Times}' new city editor, and invited him to lunch at a nice restaurant where he was courteous and engaged him in pleasant conversation.\textsuperscript{84} If he was displeased with coverage of his department, he never mentioned it to either Chandler or Thomas.\textsuperscript{85}

Parker cultivated his reputation by speaking at conferences and meetings all over the country. He was the only representative from local law enforcement to attend the 29th


\textsuperscript{84}In the early 1960s Parker had a reputation as an iconic chief. See Thomas, interview.

\textsuperscript{85}Ibid.
General Assembly of the International Criminal Police Organization (Interpol) when it convened in Washington, D.C., in 1960, and he attended the President’s White House Conference on Narcotics and Drug Abuse in 1962. In 1961 and 1962 Parker attended conferences in Sacramento and at Northwestern University in Evanston, Illinois, served as a panelist at a conference on criminal courts in Chicago, delivered a lecture at the University of Maryland campuses in College Park and Baltimore, and spoke at a safety council in Omaha, Nebraska.

He garnered additional recognition for sending two officers to Latin America to train counterinsurgents, but noted the irony of his department's national reputation for professional policing juxtaposed with local accusations of abuse.

Now the U.S. Attorney General’s office wants to extend their tour. The country is threatened with disorders. How do you like that? I receive complaints about police brutality – its verbal brutality – and now the federal government wants men from my undermanned force to teach the Dominican Republic how to handle democracy.

As a law enforcement officer of national stature, he traveled to India for thirty days as an advisor on policing through an appointment by the United States Department of State. From December, 1964 until January, 1965, Parker met with officials and discussed traffic engineering, improved radio communications and IBM record keeping.

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systems in a country whose urban traffic vehicles were primarily carts and bicycles. He earned praise from Chester Bowles, United States Ambassador to India, and accolades from City Council members and the Police Commissioners.

As Parker collected awards, spoke at national conferences and represented the LAPD on national committees, Hoover became increasingly irritated with him. His agents gathered extensive information on the chief, his medical absences, speaking engagements in other cities, diplomatic missions and presidential appointments. In


90 In Bowles’ letter to Mayor Yorty, he wrote that Parker was selected because of his “outstanding character and reputation” and his successful visit was an indication of his performance as an “outstanding public official.” Letter from Chester Bowles to Mayor Yorty, 21 January 1965, read into Police Commission Minutes, 27 January 1965. Before his departure, the City Council adopted a resolution praising Parker, who brought a “new honor to his department and the entire City of Los Angeles,” 13 December 1964, CF 121666, Box A1875, LACA.

At the time Parker prepared for his trip to India, he was embroiled in conflicts with several civil rights organizations. The Ad Hoc Committee to End Police Malpractice wrote a letter to United States Department of State protesting Parker’s appointment to represent the United States as an advisor to India. See Letter from John R. Haag to United States Department of State, 8 January 1965, Folder: Civil Rights 1965, Papers of Samuel Yorty, Box C-1006, LACA.

91 The FBI file on Parker included a copy of an article on his trip to India, “Parker Hailed for Role as India Police Adviser,” Los Angeles Times, 25 January 1965. FBI 62-96042; In 1962, FBI agents noted that Parker and California Attorney General Mosk planned to attend a White House conference on narcotics in September. Hoover complained that Parker was usurping the FBI’s role in tracking the narcotics trade. See memo from D. J. Brennan to W. C. Sullivan, 3 August 1962, FBI 62-94062.

An informant in Rochester, Minnesota advised Hoover that Parker was in isolation at St. Mary’s Hospital for a skin eruption and that “Parker is reportedly in Rochester for the purpose of going through the Mayo Clinic where he registered on 5/7/64.” Telegram from SAC in Minneapolis to Director, FBI, 11 May 1964 in FBI File 62-96042. An article appeared in the May 6, 1964 edition of the Los Angeles Times announcing his week long visit to the Mayo Clinic for arthritis titled "Chief Parker to Leave for Mayo Clinic." Seventeen days later when he returned, a reporter wrote that he had gone to the Mayo Clinic for treatment for an ulcerated leg. See “Parker Home, Predicts Racial Calm in L.A.,” Los Angeles Times, 25 May 1964.

Hoover continued his policy of refusing to appear in public with Parker or to honor him. In June 1964, Hoover received a letter from Productions and Services Counsel, Inc., a public relations firm, inviting him to be the principal speaker at a testimonial dinner honoring Parker on August 27, 1964. “I am sure you are aware of the esteem which our civic leaders hold for Chief Parker, and we hope that this dinner will manifest the esteem and counteract the criticism which he has been subject to by certain segments of the local community.” At the end of the letter Hoover wrote “most certainly not.” Letter dated 5 June 1964, FBI 62-96042.
their memos to Hoover, agents assessed Parker psychologically and commented on his ego. They noted the date and nature of each of Parker's disparaging comments or slights about Hoover as well as his coy remarks to local agents that he did not intend to offend the FBI director. In one squabble between Hoover and Parker over explanations for crime increases, agent J. J. Daunt wrote of the LAPD's low ratio of officers to residents and questioned whether the LAPD was seriously understaffed, or whether Parker was trying to prove he was a "superman at the expense of the citizens of Los Angeles and, for that matter, the employees of his own department. There is a big job to be done in Los Angeles. Perhaps Chief Parker should give his full attention to it rather than criticizing other agencies." When Parker was appointed to President Johnson's Commission on Crime and Delinquency, Agent C. D. DeLoach complained that some chiefs of police "get themselves appointed, or at least one of them appointed, to the President's Commission on Crime and Delinquency." De Loach wrote Mohr that Parker was honest but a "psychopath in his desire for publicity and obviously leaked every bit of information that might curry possible favors with the papers." FBI agents went beyond noting Parker's penchant for self-promotion and questioned his ability to manage the department. After a question and answer session

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92One example is a memo from SAC, Los Angeles, to Director, FBI, 13 April 1960, FBI 62-96042-62.


94Letter from C. D. DeLoach to Mr. Mohr, 6 May 1965 in FBI file 62-9604.
ended at a conference on Fair Trials and Free Press in 1964, an FBI informant reported that Parker “ranted and raved” when the informant confronted him about comments he made about him. "Parker has been gradually becoming a neurotic and... was gradually working himself into a situation where he would be incompetent to handle his duties." The informant added that he personally felt that he was incompetent to handle his current job as Chief of Police.  

Hoover’s agents also tracked Parker’s relationship with Jack Webb, noting possible tensions between the two men. Webb had approached Warner Brothers to suggest an FBI series in 1962, unaware that Hoover decided against it because he preferred to hold onto the material for future use. When Webb learned of Hoover's decision from Warner Brothers, he contacted the FBI agent who had advised the studio to reject it, apologized and expressed his admiration for Hoover and the Bureau. Webb spoke to the agent about his bitterness over Parker’s insistence that Webb produce shows he did not like. Parker was interested in “blowing up” his own name, Webb told the agent, and there was little love lost between the two men. The agent concluded, “We will follow this matter closely."  

One of the most enduring dimensions of the feud between Parker and Hoover involved organized crime. In 1963, Parker told the IACP Convention in Houston after
Joe Valachi had testified in Congress about his participation in the Mafia, "The people laughed in 1952 but they're not laughing at Joe Valachi now." Parker was referring to his own proposal for a federal clearinghouse for collecting and distributing information on organized crime to local and state enforcement agencies. "We tried to say there was a Mafia, and the country laughed. We got a resolution through that convention but it was never implemented. Edgar Hoover was horrified. There was too much opposition in Washington so nothing was done." Parker told his colleagues that Valachi testified in Congress "what I told them 11 years ago. Everything he has said about California is true as far as I know." Parker argued that if criminals could migrate to different parts of the country, the FBI should be able to distribute information on them. Parker told IACP conference members that President Kennedy and the Attorney General agreed with him, absence of LAPD officers from the FBI training facility was based on his disagreement with Hoover over a national clearing house on organized crime which was set up under Attorney General Robert F. Kennedy because Congress refused to establish one. See McCone Commission Transcript, Vol XI, 92-93.

Bill Davidson praised Parker for aggressively pursuing organized crime in Los Angeles and mentioned that Parker was a candidate to succeed Hoover, although the chief admitted the position did not interest him. See "The Mafia Can’t Crack Los Angeles," *Saturday Evening Post*, 31 July 1965, 23-27.

99. Telegram from Assistant Director J. J. Casper to Director, FBI, 9 October 1963, FBI 62-96042, re phone call to Assistant Director De Loach, 9 October 1963, reporting that the Houston Chronicle ran an interview on the front page with Parker with the headline “Laughed At Police Chief Proven Right.”

100. Telegram from Assistant Director J. J. Casper to Director, FBI, 9 October 1963, FBI 62-96042. Parker could not say that he had obliterated organized crime in Los Angeles but he could claim that through the vigilant efforts of officers of his Intelligence Division, the Mafia did not flourish within his jurisdiction. During Parker's tenure Mickey Cohen periodically reappeared but was more of an irritant to officers than a serious threat. In 1960, after five officers searched and seized him without a warrant but did not charge him, he sued the LAPD’s Intelligence Division for $10,000 for violating his constitutional rights. A. L. Wirin filed a damage suit in federal court as attorney for Cohen. See “Cohen Sues L.A. Police Division for $10,000,” *Citizen-News*, 26 February 1960. In 1960, a federal grand jury indicted Cohen on thirteen counts of income tax evasion. He was convicted and in 1961 began serving an eleven-year prison sentence. He was released in 1972 and died four years later of stomach cancer. See Wagner, *Red Ink, White Lies*, 230.
had established an organized crime section within the Department of Justice and commended the LAPD.\textsuperscript{101}

The feud between Hoover and Parker was known to law enforcement officials including Governor Brown and California's Attorney General, Stanley Mosk, but it drew national attention in December 1963. On December 8, after kidnappers seized Frank Sinatra, Jr. near Lake Tahoe and transported him to Canoga Park, a suburb of Los Angeles, FBI agents took primary responsibility for handling the kidnapping and arranged for Sinatra's release.\textsuperscript{102} When Parker criticized Hoover for not informing him, FBI agents accused Parker of "making a play for publicity."\textsuperscript{103} The FBI became the target of an investigation initiated by Mosk to examine tensions among law enforcement agencies.\textsuperscript{104}

On December 26, after Parker appeared on NBC's Huntley-Brinkley Report accusing FBI agents of mishandling the case and failing to update his department about

\textsuperscript{101}J. J. Casper, Assistant Director for the FBI, told conferees that the FBI distributed seven thousand items on criminal intelligence each month to law enforcement agencies nationwide. Telegram from Assistant Director J. J. Casper to Director, FBI, 9 October 1963, FBI 62-96042. A month earlier, when Robert Kennedy testified at a Senate Investigations Subcommittee, he cited Parker as a notable example of local law enforcement officials assisting federal agencies pursuing racketeers. See "L.A. Law Enforcement - Chief Parker Praised," Los Angeles Herald-Examiner, 25 September 1963. In January 1964, the SAC in Los Angeles wrote to Hoover that he believed that much of Parker's claim to having information on organized crime was based mainly on LAPD officers reviewing and clipping articles from newspapers around the country. See Memo from SAC, Los Angeles, to Director, FBI, 6 January 1964, FBI 62-96042.


\textsuperscript{103}FBI Ignores Parker Protest on Kidnapping," Los Angeles Times, 13 December 1963.

\textsuperscript{104}Police Chief is Critical of FBI in Solving Sinatra Kidnap Case, New York Times, 12 December 1963; Memo from Mr. A. Jones to Mr. DeLoach, 30 December 1963, FBI 62-94062. In a conversation with an FBI agent in Los Angeles, Mosk admitted that Parker suggested that he conduct an investigation. Hoover did not trust Mosk and listed several organizations he had been involved in including the National Lawyers Guild in 1943. See Memo from Director, FBI to AG, 6 January 1964, FBI 62-96042.
it, FBI officials, Governor Brown and Mosk all responded. An FBI official phoned Huntley to suggest he also interview Governor Brown and the head of the California Highway Patrol because, he asserted, Parker and Mosk were controversial and ambitious, and Parker believed more in “personal publicity” than facts.

After the FBI official's call to Huntley, Governor Brown contacted an FBI agent in Los Angeles and acknowledged that he knew why the FBI had not discussed the case with Parker and assured the agent that he had tremendous respect for the FBI. The governor told the agent that Mosk was aware of Parker's feud with Hoover. He had reprimanded Mosk for initiating the investigation because airing these allegations “played right into the hands of the Communist Party and other subversive groups who have been attacking the FBI over twenty years.”

Governor Brown and Attorney General Stanley Mosk were not men to whom Parker deferred. The chief feud ed with them on wiretaps, crime rate increases, narcotics bills initiated in the California State Legislature, and the effect of the Cahan decision on

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105 Donovan, “I Have No Use,” 185, citing M.A. Jones to De Loach, 27 December 1963, FBI 62-96042 NR.

106 Huntley agreed. See Donovan, “I have no use,” 185; Memo from Mr. A. Jones to Mr. DeLoach, 27 December 1963, FBI 62-93062.

107 SAC William G. Simon to C.D. De Loach, 2 January 1964, FBI 62-96042 NR; FBI files belittle Parker's success and authority. See SAC, Los Angeles to Director, 6 January 1964. Agent Simon suggested not taking any action against Parker because he had been the target of considerable criticism. At the bottom of the memo, Hoover wrote “if Parker wants to make a jack-ass out of himself he has that right.” See Donovan, “I Have No Use,” 185, citing SAC to Director 20 December 1963, FBI 62-94062.

According to former FBI agent William Turner, Hoover leaked damaging information on rivals to friendly journalists. See Bopp, O. W., 109.

108 Donovan, “I Have No Use,” 185-86, quoting SAC William G. Simon to C.D. De Loach, 2 January 1964, FBI 62-96042 NR. According to Agent Simon, Governor Brown's concern was “the controversy which exists between Mr. Hoover, the head of the greatest investigative organization in America and Chief of Police Parker, the head of a large police department in the biggest city in California.” SAC William G. Simon to C.D. De Loach, 2 January 1964, FBI 62-96042 NR.
law enforcement. He also assigned officers to collect information on them for his personal use.

In June 1960, Attorney General Stanley Mosk wrote a letter to the editor of the *Los Angeles Examiner* cautioning district attorneys against advocating legislative repeal of the *Cahan* decision. If wiretaps were used without limits, he argued, blackmailers, political opponents and unscrupulous persons could listen in on private conversations. If judges approved wiretaps, however, warrants would aid law enforcement. Since 1955, the statewide conviction rate for cases involving searches and seizures was ninety-five percent and for all other cases the conviction rate was ninety percent. "This suggests to me that the much maligned Cahan rule has not been a serious impediment to law enforcement."110

In the spring of 1961, Governor Brown made two decisions that angered Parker, triggering a public exchange between the two men. The governor vetoed a bill to weaken restrictions on wiretapping and electronic surveillance, and commuted a death sentence to life without parole for a man who had killed a California Highway Patrol officer and seriously wounded an LAPD officer. Parker charged that Governor Brown used patronage to sway legislators on narcotics bills because members of the State Senate Judiciary Committee had killed a bill to relax admission of evidence.111 Governor Brown

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109FBI agents tracked Parker's feud with Governor Brown. See memo from J.J. Daunt to DeLoach, 31 December 1963, FBI 62-96042; memo from SAC, LA, to Director, FBI, 20 December 1963, FBI 62-94062. Daunt notes that Parker and Brown carried on a bitter public feud over several years regarding a case involving capital punishment and "restrictive court decisions affecting the police and the lack of corrective legislative action."


told a news conference that "political peace officers" in Los Angeles who constantly criticized the courts, the Legislature and the governor were "not doing law enforcement any good." Law enforcement was not effective in Los Angeles, he told a reporter, in contrast to law enforcement in the cities of San Francisco, Alameda, Sacramento, Santa Clara and San Diego.\(^\text{112}\) In a letter to the chief, the governor told him he did not enforce the law effectively but instead told others "how to run their business." He attached a record of arrests compared with complaints filed in Los Angeles County and the more favorable ratios of arrests to complaints in Alameda and San Francisco Counties.\(^\text{113}\)

Like his nemesis, J. Edgar Hoover, Parker collected information on his adversaries, including Governor Brown, Attorney General Mosk and other public figures with whom he feuded as well as private individuals whom he regarded as potential security risks.\(^\text{114}\) One of the more ambitious information gathering operations involved


\(^{113}\) Governor Brown also sent a letter with similar data to Los Angeles County Sheriff Pete Pitchess. "Brown Again Pans Parker," \textit{Los Angeles Examiner}, 4 April 1961. City Council members and Police Commissioners defended the chief, who continued to link crime increases with the Cahan decision but failed to show how the decision affected the increase. City Council member Lemoine Blanchard castigated the governor for maligning the chief. Council members affirmed their confidence in Parker and Police Commissioners expressed their indignation over the "deceptive, distorted and unjustified attack" and praised the chief for heading a department in "international, national and local recognition." See "Parker Uses '60 Crime Rate Statistics in Reply to Brown," \textit{Studio City Graph} 3 May 1961; "Councilman Hits Brown Law Blast," \textit{Citizen-News}, 3 April 1961; Police Commission Minutes, 5 April 1961; Woods, "Progressives and the Police," 444-45.


J. Edgar Hoover maintained files not only on Parker but also on Martin Luther King, Jr., President Kennedy and many others. See Richard M. Fried, \textit{Nightmare in Red, The McCarthy Era in Perspective} (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990), 175, 191.
Mosk. In July 1963, detectives observed that Mosk boarded a plane for Mexico City with a twenty-three year old woman who was not his wife. Either one of the department's detectives flew to Mexico or arranged with a private detective to set up a camera and focus it on the window of their hotel room. The detectives justified spying on Mosk because they claimed that they were concerned about his possible contacts with criminals. They learned that Mosk's companion had "associated with" persons involved in prostitution and drug charges, forgery, stolen property, robbery, burglary and prison escape, but that she herself had committed no crimes. Intelligence Division detectives did not wiretap Mosk's phones but kept notes on his activities.

Detectives did not inform Mosk of the young woman's associates but their superiors notified a relative of Governor Brown, and the fallout prompted an angry exchange between Brown and the chief, and forced Mosk to make an abrupt career decision. When the governor received word about Mosk, he phoned the chief and asked "why didn't you tell me about this, Bill?" Parker replied, "Because it was none of your business."

Shortly after the call, in early March 1964, Mosk announced he would

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115 Charles Rappleye and David Robb, "The Judge, the Photos, and the Senate Race," LA Weekly March 4-10, 1994, 16-18.

116 Based on reporters' interviews with detectives, they worked with their counterparts in the LASD and in the Los Angeles County District Attorney's office. See Rappleye, "The Judge," 24-26.

117 According to one detective interviewed by a reporter, he and his colleagues did not wiretap Mosk because he was a prominent public official but they wiretapped others. "We were bugging everybody in those days." Ibid., 24.

118 Ibid.

119 According to reporters, Gates informed Governor Brown's son-in-law, then an assistant director of the California Bureau of Corrections who told the governor. See Rappleye, "The Judge," 17. Regarding Mosk's investigation of the FBI's handling the Frank Sinatra, Jr. kidnapping, there was a comment in an FBI memo that "...in August, 1963, Chief Parker boasted at a cocktail party that" followed by several
not run in the Democratic primary for the United States Senate and spoke with Governor Brown, who hinted that in the future there would be a vacancy on the California Supreme Court. In August the governor nominated Mosk for Associate Justice of the California Supreme Court.

In Los Angeles, one of Parker's manifestations of power was to limit the mayor's ability to modify the LAPD. Though he and Mayor Poulson had disagreed, he could manage their differences over civilianization, budget requests and the mayor's occasional advocacy for complainants of police abuse. Parker did not interfere as Poulson campaigned for reelection in the spring of 1961 on a platform of stability and moderation and boasted that he benefited from managing a city with "the cleanest police department in the United States under Chief Parker's leadership."
The chief disliked Poulson's challenger, Samuel Yorty, whom he saw as a threat. Yorty had run a perpetual campaign for local and statewide offices for almost twenty years. He had served brief terms in the California State Legislature and had co-founded the state’s Un-American Activities committee in 1949. After serving two terms in Congress he angered the California Democratic Committee when he ran in senatorial primaries in 1954 and 1956 against their endorsed candidates. No longer welcome in the Democratic party, he refused to campaign for Edmund G. Brown in Brown's run for governor in 1958 and supported Nixon in 1960 because "communists are again active in the Democratic Party." Yorty and Poulson conducted a vicious campaign, trading unsubstantiated accusations of underworld involvement and insufficient support for the chief. Yorty accused Poulson of campaigning in 1953 on a platform to fire Parker and claimed that Parker soon discovered Poulson's plan and squelched it. Yorty denied Poulson's charge that if elected, he would fire Parker and countered that he would support whatever

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123 Sonenshein, *Politics in Black and White*, 32. Parker saw Yorty as a threat because of his potential to undermine the chief's power.


126 Sonenshein, *Politics in Black and White*, 38, 49; the quote is from a twenty-seven page pamphlet titled "I Can Not Take Kennedy" in which he accused him of taking "undue advantage of his religious affiliation." See Payne and Ratzan, *Impossible Dream*, 93.

Parker wanted. Yorty criticized the high crime rate, and blamed Poulson for neglecting police salaries and the recruiting budget.

Yorty provoked Police Commissioners by accusing Michael Kohn's law firm, Loeb and Loeb, of representing poker interests in the community of Gardena and promised to replace the entire Commission. In response, all five Commission members signed a letter praising Parker's management of the "nation's finest big city police department" and Poulson's management of "the best municipal government of any big city." They foresaw disaster in Yorty's reputed connections with gamblers and garbage operators, compared a Yorty administration to the corruption before reformer Fletcher Bowron was elected mayor in 1938 and threatened to resign en masse if Yorty became mayor.

In late May, 1961, a few days before the election, tension between the police and several black men exploded in violence in Griffith Park and overshadowed the Poulson-Yorty dispute. After two police officers arrested a seventeen-year-old black youth for riding a merry-go-round without a ticket at a picnic, two hundred black men surrounded them. When police officers refused to release the boy the crowd grew agitated. As

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129 Transcript from Radio TV Reports, Inc. Program: Sam W. Yorty, KCRA TV, 15 May 1961, Los Angeles, in Box 4, Folder 12, Poulson Papers.


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seventy-five officers responded to a police call for backup, the men attacked them with rocks, bats and bottles, and sent five officers to the hospital.\textsuperscript{132}

The incident forced the mayoral candidates to confront the toxic mix of race and policing. A few days after the violence, Yorty expressed confidence in Chief Parker but dissatisfaction with the officers' conduct, noting that "as a public relations expert he could stand a lot of schooling."\textsuperscript{133} Poulson had long been aware of racial tensions between blacks and the police. A week earlier, he had written a letter to Police Commissioners suggesting that the chief could eliminate racial tensions by using his department's public relations apparatus to emphasize officers' work with black youth and efforts to promote black officers. He expressed pride in residents who maintained a "state of civil harmony unmatched by other major American municipalities and [Parker's] belief that the public should know who is responsible for much of the good work in this field."\textsuperscript{134}

Despite the influence of several Times editorials, the work of Poulson's public relations firm, and Democratic and corporate support, Poulson lost to Yorty in late May 1961.\textsuperscript{135} Aware of Yorty's plan to replace most of the Commissioners, Poulson notified them that they could announce their resignations on his last day as mayor or the first day following his departure.


\textsuperscript{134}Police Commission Minutes, 24 May 1961.

of Yorty's administration.\textsuperscript{136} He later attributed his defeat to the melee at Griffith Park which made headlines in black districts "that would have been good campaign strategy on the part of (the) opposition as the Negroes loved to say "'police brutality.'"\textsuperscript{137}

Yorty began his tenure as mayor with controversy, and provoked both the chief and District Attorney William McKesson to respond to his charges. He announced to reporters that changing the department's racial policies was essential. "I expect Parker to enforce the law and stop making remarks about minority groups. We're not living in the South."\textsuperscript{138} He accused the chief of using "Gestapo-like methods" and intelligence files to check on individuals in his campaign but Parker denied the charge.\textsuperscript{139} District Attorney McKesson and Parker clashed in public with Yorty. McKesson vowed to continue his investigation because it involved criminal charges but changed his mind the next day.\textsuperscript{140} Parker announced that he had no plans to retire and reminded the public that he was a "career police officer and not a political appointee."\textsuperscript{141}

\textsuperscript{136}Police Commission Minutes, 7 June 1961.

\textsuperscript{137}Sonenshein, \textit{Politics in Black and White}, 39, quoting Poulson oral history, 441. Blacks who felt alienated from both the California Democratic Committee and Poulson supported Yorty. See Politics in \textit{Black and White}, 49. Despite his denials, Yorty's promise to fire Parker seemed to resonate with black voters. See Robinson, "Bradley, Los Angeles' First Black Mayor," 83.


Yorty still held a grudge against Poulson and filed a $3.3 million suit against him charging the former mayor and his publicists with slander by accusing him of supporting the underworld. To clarify Parker's possible role in Poulson's accusation, Yorty met with the chief for several hours after which they reached an "understanding" that Parker had no knowledge of underworld operations in Yorty's campaign. Yorty could not disprove Parker's statement that he "took no part in either campaign."

Parker officially remained neutral but unofficially gathered material on the new mayor and forced him to abandon his demands for police reform. Two versions of a meeting Parker held with Yorty reflect his use of intelligence. One version places the meeting at the Tail of the Cock restaurant and another places the meeting in Yorty's office in city hall. Shortly after Yorty's election, either Parker or his subordinates (it is not clear) met with Mayor Yorty and showed him a dossier on his assignations with women on Sunset Boulevard. Officers threatened to share the file's contents with reporters if Yorty criticized either the chief or the department again. From that moment

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146 Boyarsky, interview; Sonenshein, *Politics in Black and White*, 68, based on his interview with Tom Bradley.
on, Yorty became a stalwart supporter of the LAPD. He consistently defended the department, and, like Parker, accused its critics of communism. He gradually distanced himself from his black supporters because his political survival lay with the chief.

Parker Intensifies Opposition to Judicial Decisions, Communists and Moral Degeneration

As Parker reacted to changes in Los Angeles, he used his national reputation to engage audiences across the country. He sharpened his attacks against the judiciary and moral laxity, and embraced the growing conservative anti-communist movement in southern California. He rejected criticism from the mayor, council members or commissioners for his speeches or extensive travel because he maintained order and safety in most business districts and neighborhoods.

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147 Dotson, interview; Sonenshein, Politics in Black and White, 68, based on his interview with Bradley.


149 Ibid., 50. In 1963, in response to an accusation by council member Karl Rundberg that the chief had collected intelligence on the mayor, Parker argued that his relationship with Yorty was professional and he refrained from “becoming involved in affairs of a purely political nature.” See "Parker Denies Any 'Hold' on Mayor Yorty," Los Angeles Times, 19 February 1963. When Yorty ran for a second term, Parker denied participating in the campaign. After attending a meeting on the Westside, which he thought was a "civic affair," he told reporters, "I have had full support and have had less interference during the 3 ½ years Mayor Yorty has been in city hall than I had in the previous 15 years." See "Parker the 'Man in the Middle' of a Political Storm," Los Angeles Herald-Examiner, 5 April 1965.

Yorty had pledged to expand his appointments for the Police Commission beyond the "narrow downtown clique" but after his election his appointees continued to followed Parker's lead. See "Yorty Warns Chief to Change Policies," Valley-Times, 2 June 1961; Yorty appointed John Kenney, a liberal public administration professor at the University of Southern California; Everett Porter, an African-American attorney who had headed the complaints division of the local branch of the NAACP; and Dr. Francisco Bravo, a Mexican-American physician. He reappointed Michael Kohn and John Ferraro. See LAPD Annual Report 1961, 3, Box C-2003, LACA; Woods, "Progressives and Police," 468.
Parker reacted to the new Republicanism and cultural change in Los Angeles by embracing the growing conservative movement in Southern California. Crime and communism, declared Parker, were the "twin scourges of America." To the chief, the enemies of the police were communists, left-wing radicals and blacks. Parker accused peace demonstrators, liberal political activists and pastors of communist influence. In 1961, he joined Muriel Morse, general manager of the city's personnel department and head of the Women's Division of the Los Angeles Chamber of Commerce, in adopting a resolution for a strong national defense. He warned that demonstrators who had recently marched for peace were "duped into thinking they were doing something constructive.

150 Writers quote Parker telling reporters that police in America were "conservative, ultraconservative and very right wing." Parker claimed that he paraphrased his own comment which had been that police officers were conservative by their very nature. See "Hannon Hearing Erupts in Shouts," Los Angeles Times, 14 July 1965; Turner, Police Establishment, 269; Woods, "Progressives and Police," 492, 65. A minority of police officers nationwide was involved in right-wing politics and most police, though relatively conservative, were more concerned with the politics of collective bargaining than with the politics of right-wing extremism. See Seymour Martin Lipset, "Why Cops Hate Liberals," The Atlantic 223, no. 3 (1969), 78, 81. Not all police chiefs responded indignantly to their critics. O. W. Wilson, Parker's mentor and colleague, saw antipathy towards police as a breakdown of civic consciousness and apathy. See Fogelson, Big City Police, 147. Nor was he as conservative as Parker in his politics. He was displeased with the Warren court's decisions on police procedures but supported gun control and improving race relations within the department and with black residents in Chicago. See Bopp, O.W., 112.

151 Webb, Badge, 245.

152 Fogelson, Big City Police, 147. In 1961 J. Edgar Hoover warned that police were the victims of anti-American liberalism. He told the IACP that law enforcement was the target of "communists, hatemongers, pseudoliberals and others who would destroy the very foundations of this great Republic." See Fogelson, Big City Police, 239, citing 346 n32, Police Yearbook IACP 1961, 10-11, 13, 245. Like Hoover, Parker and other chiefs affirmed their commitment to conservatism by depicting moderate Republicans as liberals and liberals as radicals. See Murphy and Plate, Commissioner, 93.

153 In 1965, Parker read a sermon written by Reverend Stephen Fritchman, of the First Unitarian Church of Los Angeles. Reverend Fritchman opposed politicizing racism and warned against the authoritarian tendencies of some of his officers. Reverend Fritchman also observed that Birch Society members recruited LAPD officers and officers received inadequate training in race relations which did mitigate the problem of maltreatment and brutality. In a memo from Ethel Bryant to the Mayor, she included Parker's comments that Reverend Fritchman had been active in the Los Angeles Committee for Protection of the Foreign Born, an organization included in HUAC's Guide to Subversive Organizations and Publications. See letter to Samuel W. Yorty from W. H. Parker, 3 February 1965, Box C-1006, Folder Civil Rights 1965; Memo from Ethel C. Bryant to Mayor Yorty, 8 February, 1965, Yorty Papers.
but this type of revolution against constituted authority serves the Soviets well. I'm sure this 'demonstration for peace' has been well noticed in the Kremlin and they are happy about the whole movement.'\textsuperscript{154}

He sanctioned the creation of a conservative political infrastructure within the LAPD. Several of his officers joined the National Conference of Police Associations and accused police critics of communism with a fervor that matched the chief's.\textsuperscript{155} In 1964 at a conference, Sergeant Norman Moore told his audience that law enforcement agencies must look closely at communist infiltration in the police field. Law enforcement, in his opinion, did more to "protect civil rights than any other institution in our society."\textsuperscript{156}

Another organization, the most powerful voice for conservative police on the West Coast, was the Los Angeles Fire and Police Protective League and its subsidiary, the Fire and Police Research Association (Fi-Po).\textsuperscript{157} The objective of Fi-Po was to

\textsuperscript{154}Domanick, To Protect and To Serve, 252; "Chief Parker Commends Rap at 'Peace' Strikers," Los Angeles Herald, 11 November 1961.

\textsuperscript{155}Rank and file organizations funded the National (later International) Conference of Police Associations (ICPA) in the early 1950s. See Fogelson, Big City Police, 155. The ICPA formed a committee to track members of the Communist Party, Black Muslims and other subversive groups. See Fogelson, Big City Police, 239; "Claim Red Agitation Increasing," no date or newspaper cited, in LAPD scrapbook with articles from late fall, 1961, LACA.

\textsuperscript{156}"Claim Red Agitation Increasing." Moore took a leave of absence to be Goldwater's bodyguard in 1964. See Turner, Power on the Right, 225.

\textsuperscript{157}All members of Fi-Po belonged to the Protective League but not all members of the League belonged to Fi-Po. Sergeant Moore was active in the organization and took credit for claiming that folk music was a communist plot. See Turner, Power on the Right, 225. Police organized their own unions and did not affiliate with a larger federation such as the AFL-CIO. Through their union they fought for increased benefits, similar to other unions but showed no interest in aligning themselves with liberal causes. See Lipset, "Why Cops Hate Liberals and Vice Versa," 81. At the annual meeting of the National Conference of Police Associations in Los Angeles in 1961, Thomas Cahill, chief of the San Francisco Police Department, criticized the ACLU for their attacks on the police and cited communist influence in student demonstrations. See "Parker Tells World Revolt Against Law," Los Angeles Herald, 6 December 1961. William Becker, assistant to the governor, wrote that the Fire and Police Research Association (Fi-Po) was the "organizational base of the radical right and possibly the organization front of Birchers and people more extreme than that." See Horne, Fire This Time, 139, citing William Becker to Warren
conduct research and distribute materials to its members and the general public of the
subversive activities threatening the American way of life. Leaders of the Protective
League took an official position against Fi-Po's conservative politics but allowed it to
operate as a private group with support from some commanders in the field.

Fi-Po members participated in conservative politics with impunity. They charged
employers ten dollars to check the names of prospective employees against the LAPD's
files in the Intelligence Division and main criminal files. They sponsored the
appearance of Karl Prussion, an ex-Communist, who gave anti-communist lectures at the
Police Academy on March 19, 1962. They distributed the ultra-conservative weekly,
*Human Events*, and sent members to speak before other right-wing groups.

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158 Turner, *Police Establishment*, 266.
159 Donner, *Protectors of Privilege*, 252.
160 Turner, *Police Establishment*, 267. Memo from Mr. Casper to Mr. Mohr, 10 October 1963, FBI
62-96042, Summary of Liaison between Police and Industrial Security Officers Workshop at IACP
convention on 9 October 1963. In spite of Fi-Po activities, Parker noted at the convention that California
law specifically prohibited local police departments from furnishing arrest information to a private citizen
to carry out personal interests, and that the LAPD's legal advisers had established that criminal records
were to be "gathered exclusively in connection with the enforcement of laws relating to the apprehension,
prosecution and punishment of criminals." Parker asserted that criminal records were not available to
employers engaged in defense work and that local police departments usually did not possess the entire
criminal record of an individual; complete files, he said, were in the possession of the FBI. The IACP
President noted that the FBI was responsible for investigations involving espionage, sabotage, violation of
neutrality laws and subversive activities. The FBI also had investigative responsibility under the provisions
of the Atomic Energy Act of 1954. "If the national security is deemed to be involved," Parker told
conferees, "the FBI is competent to provide the necessary assistance."

162 *Human Events* started in 1944 by General Robert Wood and other members of the America
First Committee, an organization that advocated isolationism before Japan attacked Pearl Harbor in 1941.
See Turner, *Police Establishment*, 265; Fogelson, *Big City Police*, 239. *Human Events* is still in
Fi-Po members aligned themselves with the John Birch Society which, according to Frank Donner, had recruited approximately 2,000 officers beginning in the 1950s.\textsuperscript{163} Members occasionally provided the contents of their files to John Rousselot, a member of the John Birch Society and its national public relations director after he lost his bid for reelection to Congress.\textsuperscript{164} Fi-Po leaders advertised a speech at the North Hollywood chapter of the Birch Society by Officer Gordon M. Browning as an expose of “the subtle, well-planned attacks on our police organizations by the Communists, the Fabian Socialists and their fellow travelers on the Extreme Liberal Left.”\textsuperscript{165}

In 1961 Fi-Po members arranged with Fred Schwarz, who headed the Christian Anti-Communist Crusade, for police officers to attend a five-day School of Anti-Communism event at half price for ten dollars.\textsuperscript{166} They sent Sergeant Homer Broome

\textsuperscript{163}Donner, Protectors of Privilege, 252. The John Birch Society drew half its membership in 1961 from Catholics. See Allitt, Catholic Intellectuals, 92. Parker never publicly criticized Kennedy’s politics. Catholic conservatives reconciled themselves with conservatives from other faiths, such as Fred Schwarz of the Christian Anti-Communist Crusade. Anti-communism blended well with religious conservatism: they were the antidote to secular liberal America and embraced individual responsibility. See Nash, Conservative Intellectual Movement, 71, 115.

\textsuperscript{164}Turner, Police Establishment, 268 and footnote; Power on the Right, 24. In 1960, John Rousselot was elected to represent the 20th Congressional District, east of Los Angeles. http://bioguide.congress.gov/scripts/biodisplay.pl?index=R000469 accessed 11 July 2005. Turner notes that Fi-Po was unique only for the fee it charged; many individual police departments leaked confidential information to persons and companies. In Inside the FBI, former special agent Norman Ollstead quoted an assistant to the director of the FBI who said during a training class lecture that an unofficial service of the Bureau provided businessmen with inside information about job applicants who might prevent a company from obtaining military contracts.

Other police activists in the Birch Society outside Los Angeles were in Santa Ana, California, Selma, Alabama, Trenton, New Jersey, Philadelphia and New York. The Ku Klux Klan included members of the Chicago Police Department; police officers in Independence, Missouri were members of the Minutemen. The Chicago Klan created the slogan “Supporting Officials in all Phases of Law Enforcement” which George Wallace and the Birch Society modified in the 1960s to “Support Your Local Police.” See Turner, Police Establishment, 77, 259-64.

\textsuperscript{165}Turner, Power on the Right, 225; Turner, Police Establishment, 267.

\textsuperscript{166}Turner, Police Establishment, 266. The School of Anti-Communism was popular in Orange County. See McGirr, Suburban Warriors, 54-55, 60-62. In the early 1960s, billboards on highways and

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who worked with juveniles, and told reporters that if he knew more about communist subversion, which he suspected contributed to gang activity and inter-racial conflict, he could be a more effective police officer.167

Parker permitted officers to attend two other events sponsored by the Christian Anti-Communist Crusade. One was a lecture by Schwarz at Fi-Po's invitation to speak in the auditorium at police headquarters.168 Officers attended in uniform and heard Schwartz rail against communists who, he claimed, subverted American traditional values and threatened to take over the country unless the police stopped them.169 Another was a session of the School of Anti-Communism in December 1961, at which Parker told students that they held the answer to the question of "whether conflict between communism and democracy will culminate in a state of slavery or freedom for all mankind." After World War II, communism took hold in much of Europe and destroyed police forces in those countries. "Your failure to support valid police action will in time destroy your own security, and play into the hands of the anarchist. Our Communist enemies would certainly be pleased over such a development."170


167“People Learn About Red Dangers,” *Los Angeles Herald-Examiner*, 29 August 1961; McGirr, *Suburban Warriors*, 101; *Los Angeles Times* reporters also covered the School of Anti-Communism in print and on the Chandler family's local television station, KTTV. See Halberstam, *Powers That Be*, 297. Chandler encountered hostility from his family's more conservative members on the board of the Times-Mirror corporation for the series on the John Birch Society in March of that year and may have reported on the School to mollify them.


169Dotson, interview.

Parker participated in another Birch Society event in May, 1965, when he appeared on a nationwide radio program hosted by Clarence Manion, a member of the John Birch Society’s National Council. With three hundred stations tuned in, the chief denounced the courts for coddling criminals, deplored their disinterest in civil liberties, and complained of the “socialistic trend” that plagued American society.\(^{171}\)

Though Parker told an interviewer that he championed free speech for officers and made no attempt to muzzle them, he did not tolerate sympathy for the ACLU, whose members frequently criticized the LAPD.\(^{172}\) He instructed Sergeant Moore, who served on the American Legion’s Subversive Committee, to persuade members to pass a resolution urging Long Beach State College to dismiss A. C. Germann, a former LAPD officer and professor, who published an article in *Police* magazine that favorably viewed the ACLU from a police perspective.\(^{173}\) The chief also sanctioned officers to prepare a resolution for the Peace Officers Research Association of California opposing police membership in a "controversial pressure group," which referred specifically to the ACLU.\(^{174}\)

\(^{171}\) Donner, *Protectors of Privilege*, 248.

\(^{172}\) Parker told McDonald that there were no skeletons in the closets and no closets. He did not prevent officers from speaking to the press. See “Police,” 17.

\(^{173}\) The title of the article was "The Other Side of the Coin." Long Beach State College refused to dismiss Professor Germann. See Turner, *Police Establishment*, 105.

\(^{174}\) The resolution defined these organizations as opposed to good police practices and administration and noted that some were in daily conflict with the police. "The professional police officer can do far more in the advance of civil liberties within his own profession than in any so called civil liberties group." Germann declined to name the LAPD officers who praised his article because he was afraid of reprisal. See “Policemen Oppose ACLU Affiliation” 9 August 1962, newspaper not specified, Box 24, Folder 3, ACLU papers.
In the fall of 1964, as the presidential campaign intensified, conservative police officers encountered light punishment for participating in Republican politics while on duty. Some LAPD officers distributed *None Dare Call It Treason*, a conservative publication, to other officers from their patrol cars and from the Lincoln Heights and Harbor stations. They also sold *A Texan Looks at Lyndon* by a former political rival of President Johnson. Officers also wore campaign buttons on their uniforms, prompting Parker to conduct an investigation and suspend one officer for fifteen days.\(^\text{175}\)

When political activity by conservative officers targeted a United States Senator, however, the consequences were severe. In 1964, after Senator Thomas Kuchel, a moderate Republican from California, spoke out against extremists from both the right and the left, Fi-Po members retaliated. They forged an affidavit signed by former LAPD officer Norman Krause, alleging that Kuchel had been arrested in 1950 for drunk driving and homosexual acts, and distributed it to the press, conservative groups, members of Congress and Senators. They sent one copy to Senator James O. Eastland, who served on the Senate Internal Security Subcommittee.\(^\text{176}\) After Kuchel discovered the document, exposed the false charge and described the case as dripping "with malice," a grand jury indicted Krause and a former director of Fi-Po, who resigned from the department prior to grand jury proceedings.\(^\text{177}\) In August 1965, Krause pled guilty to a misdemeanor.\(^\text{178}\)


\(^{176}\)In 1950, two Kuchel staffers were arrested for drunk driving during his tenure as California State Controller and were convicted. See Turner, *Police Establishment*, 268-69.

In addition to participating in conservative anti-communist politics, Parker spoke out more frequently against judicial decisions. By 1960 the California and United States Supreme Court justices had issued decisions that required timely arraignments for suspects, disclosure of informants’ names in court and court approval for wiretaps. The justices upheld rights of suspects and curtailed police powers in arrests and investigations.

United States Supreme Court justices continued a similar pattern of upholding rights of individuals and constraining powers of the police. In 1960, in *Robinson v. California*, justices declared unconstitutional a California statute defining addiction as a misdemeanor and declared it cruel and unusual punishment in violation of the Eighth and Fourteenth amendments. In 1961, in *Mapp v. Ohio*, justices applied the federal exclusionary rule of evidence to all states and required prosecutors to submit legally obtained evidence in court. In 1962, in *Gideon v. Wainwright*, justices required all

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179 Charges against Jack Clemmons, the director of Fi-Po, were later dropped. See “Four Indicted, Accused of Plot to Libel Kuchel,” *Los Angeles Times*, 18 February 1965, “Kuchel Defamer Punished” *San Francisco News Call Bulletin* 4 August 1965.


181 *Smith v. California* 361 U.S. 147 (1959). In 1964, PID writers cited the following two cases in attempting to prove that judicial decisions curtailing police powers contributed to the rise in crime in Los Angeles. In one case, a city ordinance required a man to register with the police after conviction for failing to remain in a public service camp as a conscientious objector in World War II. California Supreme Court justices ruled the ordinance unconstitutional. See *Abbott v. City of Los Angeles* (53 Cal.2d 674 26 February (1960). In another case, Emery Newbem was an alcoholic whom LAPD police arrested more than two hundred times and had protested the department’s refusal to allow him to make phone calls. California Supreme Court Justices ruled that a person in custody could make up to six telephone calls. See *In Re Newbem* 55 Cal.2d 508 (1961); “Police Adopt New Rules on Persons Accused May Call,” *Daily Journal*, 15 March 1961. See *LAPD Annual Report 1964*, 11, Box C-2003, LACA.

suspects including the indigent to counsel. In 1963, in *Fahy v. Connecticut*, justices ruled that police could not submit evidence for the commitment of a crime through illegal search and seizure.

Parker reserved some of his most strident criticism for decisions he viewed as dangerous to the moral and political foundations of American democracy. He told an interviewer that when the California Supreme Court justices overturned two vice laws which had been in effect for decades "in the guise of restricting the authority of the police, such decisions actually amount[ed] to a lifting of moral restraints." After the murder of two police officers on the Westside, he told an audience that supporters of court decisions must share "moral guilt." As the result of such decisions, he warned an audience, in thirty years Americans would live under a Socialist government without changing the Constitution because the Supreme Court handed down social philosophy cloaked in legal opinions. Judicial restrictions on police authority to conduct

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184 *Fahy v. Connecticut* (375 U.S. 85 (1963)).

185 As Supreme Court justices struck down school prayer in *Engel v. Vitale* in June 1962, most Catholics opposed the decision as counter to American religious heritage. See Allitt, *Catholic Intellectuals*, 107. Parker did not comment on this decision but it is likely he saw this as another indication of the demise of American religious life.


investigations weakened America and enabled communism to destroy the nation.\textsuperscript{189}

He made equally harsh judgments about the justices' assumption of powers that abolished checks and balances articulated in the Constitution. In Chicago, he warned his listeners that "our free society would be in danger and our international enemies could possibly destroy us if the judiciary continues to spell out the rules of criminal investigation."\textsuperscript{190} In a speech at the National Conference of Police Organizations in Los Angeles, he anticipated that the judiciary would control the police without accountability, the "antithesis of fair play or enduring governmental organization."\textsuperscript{191}

In an almost reckless disregard for the division of powers upon which the continued success of this form of government is predicated, a prevailing trend within our judicial structure has rebuked both executive and legislative branches.\textsuperscript{192}

Parker continued to link court decisions restricting the police with increases in crime but failed to give specific explanations. In Congressional testimony in 1959 he presented a chart listing California Appellate Court decisions and the percentage of crime that increased after the \textit{Cahan} decision, although he did not show how each decision affected the rate of specific crimes.\textsuperscript{193} He used the same method in a chart in the

\textsuperscript{189}\textsuperscript{Woods, "Progressives and Police," 454, citing "Parker Says Curbs on Police Aid Reds," \textit{Los Angeles Times}, 18 May 1961.}

\textsuperscript{190}\textsuperscript{Speech delivered to Northwestern University's annual conference of police officials, "Parker Says Curbs on Police Aid Reds," \textit{Los Angeles Times}, 18 May 1961.}

\textsuperscript{191}\textsuperscript{"March of Events, The Courts and the Police," \textit{Los Angeles Herald-Examiner}, 29 November 1964.}

\textsuperscript{192}\textsuperscript{Ibid. A month earlier Parker told an audience at the IACP convention in Louisville that police work was "tragically weakened by a judicial takeover." "Parker Attacks Court-Imposed Police Curbs," \textit{Los Angeles Times}, 27 October 1964.}

When the Supreme Court struck down wiretapping as a violation of the Federal Communications Act in 1960, Parker argued that prohibitions against wiretapping benefited criminals, no longer provided protection for law-abiding citizens, and increased crime. In 1964, the chief told a business audience that when the California Supreme Court decided the Cahan case, he was alone in predicting a rise in crime, and that crime had increased one hundred twenty percent in the last seven years compared with a thirty-one percent growth in population. In 1965, he cited decisions in the Escobido, Dorado, Mapp, Mallory, and Killough cases to castigate his critics for the "canards that are carelessly bandied about in an attempt to justify narrowing the area of police authority." One such canard was that court decisions did not cause an increase in crime.

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194 The graph purported to show the relationship between court cases that protected suspects and crime increases, 11. PID writers described how Irvine v. California, People v. Cahan, Mapp v. Ohio, Escobido v. Illinois and People v. Dorado weakened the police in fighting crime. The courts used language implying a distrust of local authority and the trend indicated that the judiciary would control the entire process of arrest and obtaining evidence. "It is inconceivable," they wrote, "that such a system will enable law enforcement agencies to cope with our skyrocketing crime participated in by a horde of migratory perpetrators," See LAPD Annual Report 1964, 10-11.


198 Parker, "Lawman's Lament," 604. The other canards he cited were adaptability of police to the new rules mandated by the courts and efficient performance by federal law enforcement agencies, 603.
Parker was one of many public officials who opposed court decisions.\textsuperscript{199} Cook County District Attorney Fred Inbau had argued in the Northwestern law review in 1957 that the division of powers did not include authority for a court to exert control over the police, although some judges saw their role as part time commissioners.\textsuperscript{200} Inbau opposed the exclusionary role and warned that residents would need to sacrifice some individual rights and liberties to achieve a safe society.\textsuperscript{201} Senator John McClellan (D-Ark) criticized Supreme Court decisions for engendering disrespect for law and for favoring rights of individuals over rights of society which spurred the growth of crime.\textsuperscript{202}

Police chiefs and other public officials in Chicago, Washington, DC, and Santa Ana, California criticized Supreme Court decisions, especially those on searches and seizures.\textsuperscript{203} O. W. Wilson told colleagues that justices became so concerned with the rights of criminal defendants that their decisions crippled the exclusionary rule and prevented police from questioning suspects without counsel present. When justices extended the rights of suspects they decreased the rights of victims, and made it more

\textsuperscript{199} Frank Donner describes the reaction as "occupational hostility" and cites Yale Kamisar "Criminals, Cops and the Constitution," in Nation, 9 Nov 1964. See Donner, Protectors of Privilege, 248.

\textsuperscript{200}"March of Events, The Courts and the Police," Los Angeles Herald-Examiner, 29 November 1964. The newspaper article cites an article in the March-April 1957 issue of the Northwestern University Law Review.

\textsuperscript{201}Skolnick, Justice Without Trial, 217; "More about Public Safety v. Individual Liberties" in September 1962, Journal of Criminal Law, Criminology and Police Service 53, 329. Deputy Attorney General Nicholas Katzenbach testified in 1963 that he was not aware of any evidence supporting the argument that a substantial number of criminals evaded punishment because of the rule imposed by the Mallory decision, Cray, Big Blue Line, 93-95.


\textsuperscript{203}Bopp, O. W., 110-11; Cray, Big Blue Line, 261.
difficult for police to maintain order. Supreme Court Justice Byron White questioned "additional barriers to the pursuit of truth" when police had to limit the use of hidden microphones. In July, 1965, Los Angeles County District Attorney Evelle Younger, Parker and Sheriff Pete Pitchess agreed that court decisions hindered law enforcement, especially after California courts had temporarily abolished the death penalty.

Though Parker spoke frequently of the dangers of judicial decisions to policing, he nevertheless announced he would enforce the law accordingly. In 1964, after Supreme Court justices ruled in Escobido that police refusal of counsel to suspects rendered their investigations inadmissible, Parker complained that the decision did not "enhance the security of America against crime," but announced that officers would not refuse a suspect's demand for an attorney. The chief nevertheless issued Special Order 15 banning press interviews with suspects until they were arraigned. After Supreme Court justices ruled in the Miranda case that police had to advise suspects of their right to silence until they were provided with counsel, Parker issued a special order for compliance a week later.

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204 The requirement for police to advise suspects of their right to counsel is in Escobido v. Illinois 378 U.S. 478 (1964) and Miranda v. Arizona 384 U.S. 436 (1966). See Bopp, O. W., 111.


207 He argued that the department complied with a California Supreme Court ruling two years earlier. See Cray, Big Blue Line, 102, and "Parker Sees L.A. Unaffected By Court Ruling," Los Angeles Herald, 26 June 1964.


209 "Decision Alters Police Procedure," Los Angeles Times, 21 June 1966. In 1963, after search and seizure laws tightened by the Supreme Court in Mapp v. Ohio, police described them as the end of police...
Despite Parker's criticism of court decisions, the chief maintained his conviction that the police protected civil rights of all residents in Los Angeles. In 1960, he debated his long time adversary, A. L. Wirin, who had litigated against him on wiretaps in 1957 and on behalf of Mickey Cohen and John Hunley Abbott in 1960. For Wirin, civil rights did not have sufficient protection. He argued that Hungarian Freedom Fighters could not distribute leaflets opposing communism at Los Angeles Airport when Soviet Deputy premier Mikoyan visited. Californians were subject to more loyalty oaths than residents of any other state and they lacked the freedom from unreasonable searches and seizures due to the failure of local law enforcement authorities to comply with a state constitutional mandate. Minority residents lacked freedom from racial discrimination due to selective law enforcement. Parker argued that his officers protected civil rights and cited the Magna Carta, the Bill of Rights, and the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Amendments. He could not find any cases of citizens deprived of the right to vote in Los Angeles and no "supportable evidence" that residents were not afforded their full civil rights. But, he warned, the trend was to increase protections for suspects although crime continued to increase "at an alarming rate."


212.Ibid.
At the same time Parker embraced the new conservative movement and sharpened his attacks on the judiciary, he continued to warn Americans about what he claimed was the decline of morality. A global revolution against constituted authority was threatening America, he told his audiences, and its citizens needed to undergo a moral and spiritual rebirth. He complained that mothers who worked outside the home threatened family stability. He worried that divorce and single parent families resulted in children who were an "unfortunate accident of marriage rather than the purpose of marriage." In Sacramento he told legislators that adult moral degeneracy was responsible for doubling the crime rate. Promiscuity was fashionable. It shook the foundations of American life and contributed to a crime increase because citizens lacked self-discipline which he saw as the strength of a self-governing democracy.

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213 Morality Breakdown Can Destroy U.S., Chief Parker Says," Los Angeles Times, 13 May 1962. Another example is a speech he gave a year earlier to the Southern California Businessmen's Association. Parker told his audience that "The crime problem in the United States points to the last of the self-discipline the Nation must follow to match communism's threat to freedom...Self-discipline of the free mind must match the iron discipline of the mailed (nailed) fist." See "Parker Calls for More U.S. Discipline," Los Angeles Times, 4 May 1961.

214 Marx, "Cop as Crusader," 48. Parker told Marx that on the matter of law and order he agreed with Robert Hutchins, who headed the Center for the Study of Democratic Institutions in Santa Barbara and acknowledged that he did not agree with him often. Parker repeated this theme in a speech at the annual meeting of the National Conference of Police Associations in December, 1961. He warned his colleagues the revolution paralleled the "aims and objectives of communism in disrupting the Free World." See "Parker Tells World Revolt Against Law," Los Angeles Herald, 6 December 1961. Parker used the theme of global revolution against constituted authority in other speeches. One was a speech before the Transportation Club. See "Parker Cites Danger in Revolt Against Law," Los Angeles Examiner, 22 March 1961; Another was a speech he gave to the Los Angeles chapter of the Federal Bar Association, where he told his audience that only the police were the "real guarantors of freedom in America." See "Parker Deplores Court Reins on Policemen," Daily Journal, 29 May 1963.


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And now there is a tendency to declare 'legal' those things which formerly were illegal; this reflects a tolerance of behavior that will eventually destroy our society.  

He argued that citizens lacked religious direction. In a speech he gave to a Catholic youth organization, he told his audience "There is less excuse for a Catholic failing as a citizen than for one who has not had the benefit of Catholic training." He told an interviewer for a Catholic magazine that if Biblical truths were applied in daily life, police would have no problems. Individuals who learn to obey God early in life would continue to do so for the rest of their lives.

According to Parker, moral decline contributed to an American vulnerability to communism and disrespect for the law. After returning from Europe in 1960 he told an audience that communists and those who shared their views contributed to the erosion of discipline and spread a policy of "soft indulgence." He warned that "every nation in history that has failed to enforce its rules has perished...I feel that Khrushchev is counting on this when he boasts he is going to bury us and our grandchildren will live under communism."

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217 McDonald, "Police," 22.


Parker warned his officers to "remember Rome." While communists may not have initiated "soft indulgence," they used it to weaken the moral fiber of the enemies of the Red Empire. Two thousands years ago, a virile, hardworking, hard-fighting Roman Empire fell into the hands of barbarians because of similar practices. Parker attributed moral decline to growing affluence and urbanization. He found it hard to believe that society could violate the "fundamental rules of human conduct" and survive. For the chief it was only a matter of time before civilization destroyed itself.

The chief complained that moral depravity and political interference with the police prevented officers from doing their jobs. American urban life had become "so lawless that police service is representing an ever increasing share of municipal budgets." Police had trouble pleasing elected officials because the political climate prevented impartial law enforcement. The police were becoming political tools.

The chief argued that the country was disintegrating into a condition close to anarchy. When the police tried to deal with the problem of crime, "we always end up with theorists expanding the area of freedom around law breakers." In December 1960, American urban life had become "so lawless that police service is representing an ever increasing share of municipal budgets." Police had trouble pleasing elected officials because the political climate prevented impartial law enforcement. The police were becoming political tools.

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1960, Parker discussed the moral consequences of criminal conduct with his audience on a radio program on local station KFI. He warned that America had the dubious distinction of being the most lawless nation in the world and that the easy solution was to blame the police.

...The indulgent and charitable attitude we continue to exhibit toward our criminal elements further adds to the attractiveness that California presents to the lawless. We will not solve the crime problem in this Nation until we look upon this social disease with the same contempt and concern as we do polio and other crippling physical diseases.228

The chief was particularly angry that critics who opposed police procedures complained about poor police service when they became victims of a crime:

People cry out against us when we want to use wiretaps or other devices to catch known offenders and they yell about civil rights if we stop a car on suspicion and just happen to find it full of stolen goods... But let these same crusaders become the victims in a crime, and the whole picture changes. Now they call the police in a hurry, and they want the villains put away for life.229

In 1962, the chief spoke in Utah and Illinois on the dangers of moral depravity and lawlessness on policing and American democracy.230 He advocated restoring respect
for policing to save America from itself. Self-indulgence weakened personal responsibility and the judicial constraints on police increased crime. Residents wanted the police to enforce laws selectively because of an unprecedented emphasis on civil rights. To maintain the common good and contribute to the rebirth of morality and strength of character, the "battle cry in the campaign to strengthen America’s discipline," civic leaders must support police performance, improve standards and prevent improper political controls over police. Without the force of law, morality and government, America will become weak and lose in a confrontation with the Soviet Union.  

Parker continued to lecture police and the nation on the hazards of a lax society and its effects on the police profession. In 1964 he cited several reasons for the difficulty in recruiting new men to policing. Police symbolized authority, which had generated fear in citizens since the Magna Carta and had become a part of our national consciousness since the early years of the Republic. Officers suffered from low morale

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Parker angrily defended officers who released information on alleged criminals before trial. In a heated exchange with California Attorney General Mosk, prosecutors in California and law enforcement officers, he vehemently disagreed with Michael Canlis, San Joaquin County sheriff and secretary of California Peace Officers Association that police were accountable to courts because they released information on alleged criminals before trial. Parker resented the accusation and yelled at Canlis, who was sitting at a panel with Mosk and Thomas Lynch, the San Francisco District Attorney: "The thing I resent is, everybody wants to put the monkey on the back of the law enforcement officers - I say move it back up where it belongs...If you lose a case don’t say it’s because we’re immoral. See “Parker Says Stop Blaming Police for ‘Trial by Press,’” Valley News, 30 January 1964, “Defends Police Role in News Coverage,” Citizen-News, 29 January 1964.
because of the revolt against authority and because the civil rights movement protected wrong-doers at expense of law abiding citizen. \(^{232}\)

As Los Angeles changed all around him, Parker embraced the growing conservative anti-communist movement, and continued to wield power over Police Commissioners and elected officials. As the most powerful man in Los Angeles, he meddled in mayoral elections with impunity and retained files on real and imagined opponents. He maintained his local and national reputation as the premier chief in American policing with an effective public relations operation. He spoke to audiences across the country on the dangers of judicial decisions, communism and moral laxity to American democracy and western civilization.

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\(^{232}\) L.A. Chief Parker Speaks on Recruitment Problem, Cites Reasons for Public's Attitude toward the Police," *Michigan Police Journal* (January 1964.) In a speech he gave to the Los Angeles chapter of the Federal Bar Association, he told his audience that only the police were the "real guarantors of freedom in America." See "Parker Deplores Court Reins on Policemen," *Daily Journal*, 29 May 1963.
CHAPTER 6

THE CHIEF CONFRONTS THE CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT

As Parker entered his second decade as chief, he engaged in bitter arguments with civil rights leaders over officer conduct towards minority residents. He faced increasing criticism from members of civil rights commissions, committees and advocacy groups who accused him of tolerating race-based arrests and harassment, and refusing to publicly account for officer misconduct. In accusing the chief of refusing to acknowledge the abusive treatment of residents in black and Hispanic neighborhoods, civil rights leaders and supporters challenged his power and effectiveness as chief.

Racial conflict dogged him for the rest of his tenure, prompting testy exchanges with civil rights leaders over his racial slurs and angry outbursts over officer misconduct.¹ When civil rights leaders accused officers of harassing and occasionally physically abusing minority residents, the chief refuted the charges as myths created by civic and religious leaders to exploit poor residents and provoke a social revolution.² Parker had tried to dismiss the race problem ever since a grand jury indicted his officers for

¹"Police Brutality persists, Negro Pastor Insists but Parker Denies," Los Angeles Times, 13 June 1962; "Parker Charges Critics with Castro Tactics," Los Angeles Times, 1 July 1960. The civil rights leaders discussed in this chapter are mostly African-American, based on my findings. During Parker's last six years in office, he engaged in one lengthy altercation with Mexican-Americans, discussed in this chapter, but did not, to my knowledge, engage in lengthy public debates with other community leaders who spoke on behalf of other ethnic or racial groups, such as Japanese, Chinese, or Jews.

the Bloody Christmas beatings of December 1951. He defended his officers and accused his adversaries of lawlessness, communist influence and undermining the police. As the confrontations escalated, he sharpened his attacks against civil rights leaders, as he had against judges whose decisions, he argued, weakened the police and moral fiber of America.

As he had many times, when Parker fought back by vigorously defending his operations and his officers, he exacerbated racial tensions. In testimony before civil rights commissions he denied discrimination and praised his officers' conduct. He insisted that his opponents leveled unwarranted criticism towards the police and took his statements out of context.3 He complained that newcomers to the black community in Los Angeles were causing most of the trouble.4

Within the department, the chief sanctioned practices and political activity that reinforced prejudicial policing. He tacitly approved of officers who enforced unofficial curfews and de facto segregation. He favored political activity for positions he supported and punished officers who engaged in political activity for positions he opposed. He stood by when a captain encouraged Fire and Police Protective League members to lobby state legislators to oppose bills demanding lay oversight of police departments.5 But he


5 n.d. Box 27, Folder Police Dept, Roybal Papers.
refused to tolerate one officer's off-duty picketing to protest discrimination against minorities and punished him with a six-month suspension.6

Civil rights leaders and supporters did not succeed in forcing Parker to change what they believed to be race-based policing in Los Angeles, but they did succeed in making headlines, widening their base of support and defining the debate about professional policing.7 In Los Angeles, a coalition of Westside liberals and black middle class civic leaders built on growing sympathy with the civil rights movement nationwide and championed local civil rights efforts, challenging Parker's authority and his willingness to meet with black leaders. Paul Weeks, a Los Angeles Times reporter, covered race relations and gave white residents a deeper understanding of black life in the city. Tom Bradley, a new council member who had retired after twenty years with the LAPD, often confronted Parker in council chambers about discriminatory practices by his officers. With growing support and coverage of local and national civil rights issues, members of federal and state civil rights commissions and committees stepped up their campaigns for improving relations between officers and minority residents. Individuals began to demand a civilian review board which addressed the failure of Police Commissioners and IAD officers to discipline officers for racially motivated misconduct.

Parker not only refuted accusations of police harassment of minorities; he also confronted accusations of discrimination against black officers within his department.


7Growth and opportunities for blacks were limited compared to whites, motivating many blacks to support a civil rights movement in Los Angeles and black candidates for the city council, yet they saw themselves as a group with the same potential and opportunity as others who lived in Los Angeles and compared themselves to whites in the city rather than blacks in other cities. See Sides, L.A. City Limits, 130, 173; Paul Weeks, “Law Enforcement Hit by Negroes,” Los Angeles Times, 25 June 1963.
The chief consistently denied treating black and white officers differently. In 1961 he quietly issued orders for black and white officers to ride together in patrol cars and work together on investigations, but he did not expand promotional opportunities for black officers and did not significantly increase the number of black recruits.8

In spite of his disdain for critics, he nevertheless fulfilled his duties as chief and directed his officers to provide security for Reverend Martin Luther King, Jr., when the civil rights leader visited Los Angeles.9 As he had fulfilled his law enforcement responsibilities for Soviet Premier Nikita Khrushchev although he abhorred communism, he provided Dr. King with a considerable number of officers when he spoke at a rally attended by 25,000 people to raise money for the Freedom Riders in 1961. One of his spokesmen told reporters that the rally was "the largest assembly of Negroes in Los Angeles within memory."10

Parker became increasingly out of touch with the race problem in Los Angeles. In August, 1963, thousands of Angelenos had peacefully demonstrated for civil rights, but after riots in Harlem in July of 1964, the chief began to waver in predicting a stable future for blacks and whites living together. In some remarks he boasted of the city's

8Domanick, *To Protect and To Serve*, 140. One officer, Jesse Brewer, acknowledged slightly increased opportunities for promotion but no significant gains. See Sonenshein, *Politics in Black and White*, 76.

9Gates, *Chief*, 75. Gates wrote that it was unheard of at the time to provide such security for a black leader. In February, 1965, someone phoned the *Valley Times* with a death threat for Dr. King who was scheduled to speak in several different locations in Los Angeles that month. Officers from the Intelligence Division, who provided security for presidential visits and other dignitaries, met Dr. King at the airport and provided security during his visit. See "Dr. King’s Life Threatened Here," *Valley Times*, 25 February 1965.

tolerance for racial minorities but on other occasions he warned of violence.11

Racial Conflict in the Department

Parker often defended his department's personnel practices and cited his commitment to equal treatment for all officers. He repeatedly cited meritocratic hires and promotions, non-discriminatory assignments and community outreach. His black officers, however, did not benefit from them. During the chief's tenure, no black officer attained a rank above lieutenant except one, and after his retirement no black officer attained a rank above sergeant.12 Throughout the 1950s, Parker sanctioned segregated patrols and sustained sharp limits on black hires.13 He gave lip service to the Community Relations Division, but never allowed it the prestige he accorded divisions for detectives, training, patrol or public relations.14

When Parker took office in 1950, there were approximately one hundred black officers in the department, or about one percent.15 During his first decade as chief, his personnel staff did not actively recruit young black men or women who had graduated from high school, nor did they encourage black officers to advance beyond sergeant. If

13Segregation in police departments was common in the 1950s. See Fogelson, Big City Police, 247-48.
14Domanick, To Protect and to Serve, 182.
15During Parker's approximately thirty years in the department, according to Roscoe Washington, personnel officers hired one black officer to replace each black retiree. See "Era of Parker." In 1953, Washington was guest of honor at a dinner celebrating twenty-eight years with the department with four hundred guests including Chief Parker, Mayor Poulson and Eugene Biscailuz, the Los Angeles County Sheriff. See "400 Attend Testimonial for 'Rocky' Washington" California Eagle 14 May 1953. In spite of the department's appreciation of his service, however, Washington could not advance to captain despite passing the exam four times. See Domanick, To Protect and To Serve, 167.
black officers did well on written promotional exams, testing staff rated them low on their oral exam to prevent them from attaining high scores overall and becoming eligible for promotions to lieutenant and captain.\textsuperscript{16}

Tom Bradley's experience was common. In 1940, Bradley was one of a small number of African-Americans at the police academy and quickly learned that his opportunities were limited.\textsuperscript{17} Unlike white officers, after graduating from the academy Bradley reported to the Newton station in the heart of black Los Angeles, the only station with black officers.\textsuperscript{18} He and his black colleagues went either to Newton or the Traffic Division where they directed traffic in downtown Los Angeles inhaling fumes all day.\textsuperscript{19} For his entire career, he endured segregation in patrol cars.\textsuperscript{20} If a black officer called in sick his supervisor sent his partner home because there was no assignment for a single black officer.\textsuperscript{21} Bradley advanced through the ranks to sergeant, working as a detective and vice officer.\textsuperscript{22} He remained a sergeant for at least ten years despite placing high on


\textsuperscript{17}Ibid., 5; Robinson, "Bradley, Los Angeles' First Black Mayor," 49. In his twenty years with the LAPD, from 1940 to 1960, the number of black police officers increased by only fifty. See Payne and Ratzan, \textit{Impossible Dream}, 33-34.

\textsuperscript{18}He was one of four black officers in a class of seventy-two. See Payne and Ratzan, \textit{Impossible Dream}, 33. The department physician initially rejected him because of a heart murmur. Bradley knew the doctor had misdiagnosed him because he had competed in college athletics, arranged for a second physical and passed. See Bradley oral history, 44, 64.

\textsuperscript{19}Bradley oral history, 64; Horne, \textit{Fire This Time}, 135.

\textsuperscript{20}Robinson, "Bradley, Los Angeles' First Black Mayor," 57.

\textsuperscript{21}Parks, interview.

\textsuperscript{22}Bradley oral history, 49; Robinson "Bradley, Los Angeles' First Black Mayor" 62; Domanick, \textit{To Protect and To Serve} 86, 141.
promotional lists.  
In 1955 Bradley requested a transfer to the Community Relations Detail to improve communication with the city’s black residents. In that assignment he worked closely with dozens of community groups and merchants in many sectors of the city. He occasionally spoke out after reading of police brutality in black neighborhood weeklies and meeting with victims, and later admitted that others may have considered him a troublemaker. He believed he had the chief’s support, but by the late 1950s Parker decided he was disloyal and exiled him to the Wilshire Station, denied him a spot on a detective squad and refused to grant him any more special assignments. Bradley advanced to lieutenant in 1958, one of the few African-American officers to attain that rank. In 1961 he retired after twenty years to practice law and contemplate his future.

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23 Bradley oral history, 57.

24 Payne and Ratzan, Impossible Dream, 52; Bradley oral history, 60; Sixth Annual Report, Los Angeles County Conference on Community Relations, Box 41, Folder 11, ACLU Papers; Domanick, To Protect and To Serve 141. Bradley worked with Julio Gonzales whom Parker had appointed as liaison to the Spanish speaking community in 1953. See “Police Create Liaison Post,” Los Angeles Examiner, 23 November 1953.

25 Bradley oral history, 61.

26 Ibid., 74; Domanick, To Protect and To Serve, 163.

27 Domanick, To Serve and to Protect, 164-65; Gates, Chief, 66. Tom Reddin had requested Bradley for the detective position. Reddin became Chief of Police in 1967 and served for two years. See Domanick, To Protect and To Serve, 165. Daryl Gates, Parker’s driver in 1951 and Chief of Police from 1978 to 1992, wrote that Parker believed Bradley had betrayed him. He heard that Bradley took care of his friends instead of supporting his fellow officers and consequently lost the trust of his colleagues at Wilshire. See Chief, 66. Parker assigned officers who offended him to stations far from headquarters. See Dotson, interview.

28 Robinson, "Bradley, Los Angeles' First Black Mayor" 69; Payne and Ratzan, Impossible Dream, 53.

Black officers worked in vice and juvenile divisions and worked with detectives but at only three stations, Newton, 77th Street and University, all in South Central Los Angeles, and all heavily black and poor sectors of the city. Few if any black officers worked on the sixth floor of the Police Administrative Building, where the executive offices were located. As late as 1964, blacks numbered no more than three hundred twenty-five out of approximately 5,200 officers, of whom twenty-five were sergeants and only three were supervisors. Many had made the same decision Bradley had; they attended law school and passed the bar to prepare for an alternate career.

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30 The University station near the University of Southern California later became known as Southeast. Broome, *LAPD's Black History*, 116-17. When Billy Wedgeworth began his career in the department in 1960, he worked at the 77th Street station where officers assigned him to drive car number 12879, used exclusively by black patrol officers. Wedgeworth retired at the rank of commander in 1990. See "Era of Parker."

31 Parks, interview.

32 Black officers were between two and four percent of the total number. See Domanick, *To Protect and to Serve*, 140; *LAPD Annual Report 1965*, 5, Box C-2003, LACA; *Testimony Before the Governor's Commission on the Los Angeles Riots*, (Los Angeles: 1965), hereinafter referred to as McCone Commission transcript, Thursday 16 September 1965 11 a.m., testimony of William H. Parker, 25; also in 11:24-25. Among civilian personnel approximately twenty percent were black because of the large numbers of black men who were technical workers and black women who were clerical workers. See Payne and Ratzan, *Impossible Dream*, 33-34. Black women worked in clerical positions in both city and county government at a time when many black men had difficulty finding employment as police officers and firefighters, *L.A. Limits*, 91-92. By 1960 six out of sixty-seven graduates of the police academy were black, Letter to Friend from Ethel C. Bryant, n.d. Box 24, Folder 13, ACLU Papers. By 1965, there were nine black recruits at the academy and personnel officers planned to promote eleven black officers to sergeant. See McCone Commission transcript, 11:134. In 1965, Yvonne Bratwaite, a staff attorney for the McCone Commission, conducted research on black employment and learned that the Los Angeles Fire Department did not hire black clerical workers even after they passed a written exam and qualified for oral interviews. See Horne, *Fire This Time*, 76. By the early 1960s, twenty percent of the population in Los Angeles was black and Hispanic. See Gazell, "Parker, Police Professional," 34. Paul Jacobs estimates that the black and Hispanic population in Los Angeles at the time totaled seventeen percent, eight percent black and nine percent Hispanic. See Jacobs, "Los Angeles Police," *Atlantic Monthly*, 218 (December, 1966), 99.

The chief fended off accusations of segregation but former officers recalled Parker's commitment to the practice.\textsuperscript{34} When faced with charges that he favored white officers, the chief countered that his recruiters attempted to attract officers of all races but were not successful with blacks.\textsuperscript{35} Tom Bradley remembered hearing that when the chief was drunk, he expressed "hostilities to the very principle of equal opportunity for minority races."\textsuperscript{36} Years later, retired chief Bernard C. Parks recalled that "he did not feel the necessity to embrace diversity. It was a major blind spot and he had no idea what impact it had on black officers."\textsuperscript{37}

Black officers responded to this treatment with bitterness, resentment and occasional excessive use of force. Black officers not only experienced segregation in the department, they also knew that many blacks outside the department held the LAPD in contempt. After twenty years of service many officers left, and some became strong critics of the department.\textsuperscript{38}

\textsuperscript{34}White officers claimed that black officers preferred to work and eat with each other. See Domanick, \textit{To Protect and to Serve}, 140.

\textsuperscript{35}Letter to Friend from Ethel C. Bryant, n.d. Box 24, Folder 13, ACLU Papers. In 1962, Commissioners produced evidence on recruitment to show that in the previous two years, one hundred forty-five officers came from northern states, in addition to two hundred-one from California, and only thirty-three from the South, Police Commission Minutes 25 July 1962. David Cunningham told author it was common knowledge that the LAPD recruited from the South, but evidence in minutes proved that the majority of officers came from northern states. Mayor Yorty's Administrative Assistant, Ethel C. Bryant, acknowledged that the "belief persists in the community" that LAPD officers actively recruited candidates from the South, and quoted the numbers which appeared in the Police Commission minutes of 25 July 1962. See Letter to Friend from Ethel C. Bryant, n.d. Box 24, Folder 13, ACLU Papers.

\textsuperscript{36}Bradley praised the chief for establishing rigorous standards for officers and managing the department. See Bradley oral history, 94-95.

\textsuperscript{37}Parks, interview.

\textsuperscript{38}Jacobs, "Los Angeles Police," 99.
In June 1961, Parker desegregated the department not because it was the right thing to do, but because he did not want newly elected Mayor Sam Yorty to force him into it. The mayor-elect had campaigned on a platform to abolish segregation in the LAPD and the chief wanted to pre-empt him.\textsuperscript{39} Parker quietly sent out word to his subordinates to integrate the department.\textsuperscript{40} The chief gave no written order; instead he assigned his area commander to drive to each station and verbally order his captains to integrate their staffs.\textsuperscript{41} The chief told his captains that anybody who resisted could turn in their badge, although none did.\textsuperscript{42}

Parker was the first chief to successfully integrate the department but not the first who tried. When Charles Mathews, the first African-American police commissioner, had proposed integrating the motorcycle patrol in the late 1940s, neither the chief nor Commissioners pursued it.\textsuperscript{43} General Worton retired in 1950 before he could implement

\textsuperscript{39} "He wanted to beat Yorty to the punch (and) didn’t want to be ordered to do it." See Cannon, \textit{Official Negligence}, 70, citing interview with Jesse Brewer 7 September 1994.

\textsuperscript{40} Domanick, \textit{To Protect and To Serve}, 167.

\textsuperscript{41} Ibid., citing interviews with James Fisk and Stanley Sheldon, endnote, 461.

\textsuperscript{42} Bradley oral history, 69. Ed Davis, who was a captain in 1961, remembered that integration was not universally applauded as a wonderful thing to do but there was no fallout and it worked nicely. See "Era of Parker." Parker's mentor, O. W. Wilson, who was chief of the Chicago Police Department, integrated his department earlier and with greater success. In 1960 when Wilson became chief, he argued successfully before the civil service commission to rescind its prohibition of flat feet, an excuse used to weed out black candidates. In two years the number of black officers in the Chicago police department increased from seven hundred to 1,200 out of 9,000. See Bopp, \textit{O. W.}, 97.

\textsuperscript{43} Mathews oral history, 13. Mathews resigned from the Commission in the late 1940s. In October, 1955, officers from the Intelligence Division illegally wiretapped city council sessions when members discussed integrating the Los Angeles Fire Department, a goal the NAACP had campaigned for since Poulson began his first mayoral term in 1953. See Woods, "Progressives and Police," 470; Sides, \textit{L. A. City Limits}, 148. Fire Chief John Alderson argued against it but lacked Chief Parker's power and influence. Mayor Poulson arranged for his termination in December, 1955 and appointed a new fire chief who implemented the desegregation plan. See Sides, \textit{L. A. City Limits}, 149.
an integration plan for Central Division. In the late 1950s, after Tom Bradley had advanced to lieutenant, he raised the issue of integration with his captain, who conveyed it to the chief. Bradley convinced Parker to allow him to try it as an experiment with officers under his supervision at Wilshire, where Bradley was assigned. He had told the chief that unless he adopted integration on a citywide basis, the experiment would prove difficult. A week before the new assignments took effect, Bradley learned that some of his officers received abusive calls from white officers at stations throughout the city. He reluctantly reassigned one officer who requested to be taken off the integration experiment. On the first day, some of his officers were targets of a "very sick kind of treatment." After Bradley told his captain that any attempt at integration would fail as long as the chief did not support it, he gave up his experiment.

Parker's order a few years later did not, however, improve relations between black and white officers and in some cases made them worse. When white officers walked up to a lieutenant's desk and threw down their badges rather than work with a black officer, the lieutenant did not refuse the demand if the officer was adamant. Older white

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44 Domanick, To Protect and To Serve, 102. Bradley wrote a memo recommending improvements in police-minority relations and abolishing discrimination in the department but never heard from him. See Bradley oral history, 91-92.

45 Robinson, "Bradley, Los Angeles' First Black Mayor" 65; Bradley oral history, 67.

46 Segregated radio patrol cars were costly, dangerous and inefficient. See Payne and Ratzan, Impossible Dream, 54.

47 Bradley oral history, 68.

48 Ibid., 67-69.

49 Ibid.

50 Souza, “Perspective on the LAPD,” Los Angeles Times, 12 October 1995.
officers who resisted working with black officers created problems when they all needed to work together to defuse tensions in mixed crowds in 1962 and 1963. At one police station, an officer put up a photograph of Eleanor Roosevelt with "nigger lover" scrawled on her face. Black officers removed the photo but another picture with the same epithet replaced it. If black officers objected to the way other officers treated blacks, white officers accused them of "putting their color before their duty."\footnote{Ibid.}

### Tensions Escalate

Parker's view of policing focused on effect not cause.\footnote{Turner, citing Officer Norman Edelen, in Police Establishment, 91-92. In 1964, Bradley wrote a letter to Commissioners after receiving complaints about racist material on LAPD bulletin boards. He visited the Traffic Enforcement Division and found a bastardized version of the 23rd Psalm smearing Senator-elect Robert Kennedy, Martin Luther King, Jr. the Supreme Court, the Urban League, civil rights activists and residents of federal housing projects. Francisco Bravo discussed the matter with Parker who ordered an investigation. See "Police Board 'Smears' Hit by Bradley," Los Angeles Times, 20 September 1964. In 1965, Bradley complained about racist materials on station bulletin boards with fake NAACP membership forms and boxes for marital status with the following options: "shacked up _____ Making out _____ -- worn out _____ still trying ______." Other parts of the fake form included "I believe in equality: that Niggers is better than white folks is" and "Make of auto: check: Lincoln, Imperial, Cadillac, Horne, Fire This Time, 39, citing Tom Bradley to Sam Williams, 15 Sept 1965, box 14, 101, v. 2, McCone papers.} He refused to understand the social and economic underpinnings of criminal behavior, and clashed repeatedly with his challengers. From 1960 till the end of Parker's career in 1966, he fought City Council members and civil rights leaders over allegations of racist conduct by his officers, and over intemperate remarks he had made about black and Hispanic residents. He made headlines more frequently as he exchanged charges and counter charges with an array of critics whom he failed to intimidate. As the civil rights movement gained momentum in Los Angeles, he testified at hearings conducted by the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights...
and battled accusations by Council members and black attorneys of excessive force on residents during a raid on a Black Muslim mosque. He engaged in battles with local and national leaders of the NAACP and the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE), who began to call for his resignation.

In 1963, Tom Bradley campaigned for a seat on the City Council. Though Parker convinced Mayor Yorty to oppose him, Bradley won a seat to represent residents of the Tenth Council District in 1963 and joined two other blacks, Billy Mills, who represented the Eighth District and Gilbert Lindsay, who represented the Ninth. Bradley brought to his office twenty years of experience with the LAPD and knowledge of the city’s bureaucracy. He did not fear the chief and frequently charged him with discriminatory policing and fomenting racial tensions. Bradley, Lindsay, Mills and Rosalind Wyman all spoke out against abuse in the department but they could not effect

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54 Payne and Ratzan, Impossible Dream, 56; Bradley oral history, 77, 82-83. Bradley's supporters were Jews as well as blacks, colleagues in the Democratic party, and a network of associates and supporters he had built during his years in the Community Relations Detail and at the Wilshire station. See Robinson, "Bradley, Los Angeles' First Black Mayor," 65, 71-72. His supporters were also a substantial number of African-American residents in the council district who now constituted a majority of voters. See Bradley, interview, 3. By 1963, African-Americans were the majority in three contiguous council districts. See Sonenshein, Politics in Black and White, 34, 68; Cunningham, interview. Bradley, Billy Mills and Lindsay forced the Council to acknowledge the growing civil rights movement and its supporters. See Sides, LA. City Limits, 130, 155, 158. Bradley also built on the success of earlier coalitions between blacks and Jews who had first become active in politics as members of the working class. See Leonard, "Little Fuehrer," 102. Members of his coalitions would become the backbone of support for black and Jewish council members who confronted Parker on police harassment of minorities and the need for greater accountability. Bradley was one of a number of political activists whose rise in Democratic politics in Los Angeles was common in postwar America in the west and north. See Self and Sugrue, "Power of Place," 29-30.

55 Bradley was no good as a police officer, Parker told Yorty, and he would be no good as a Council member. According to David Dotson, Parker regarded Bradley as a subversive and part of a conspiracy to degrade the police. Dotson, interview; Samuel Yorty, oral history interview, Special Collections, UCLA, 117. Yorty needed Bradley to form a majority on the city council. See Payne and Ratzan, Impossible Dream, 63; Robinson, "Bradley, Los Angeles' First Black Mayor," 88-90; Councilman Billy Mills also brought experience in law enforcement to the city council. From 1957 to 1960 he worked as a probation officer with gangs and was familiar with LAPD officers' maltreatment of suspects. He understood both black rage and white reaction. See Horne, Fire This Time, 296-97.

56 Bradley oral history, 114-16.
change because the chief exerted overwhelming influence over the most Council members and all five Police Commissioners.\textsuperscript{57}

The conflict over race-based policing spilled into white newspapers. Reporters for the mainstream dailies wrote stories about the exchanges, animating the struggle for civil rights in Los Angeles and challenges to Parker's authority. The civil rights beat, however, was not a popular one. Bill Thomas, an editor at the \textit{Daily Mirror}, and subsequently at the \textit{Los Angeles Times}, had trouble assigning reporters to cover it, despite frequent clashes between Parker and his adversaries.\textsuperscript{58}

One exception was Paul Weeks, a white reporter who wrote a series on blacks in Los Angeles in 1956 for the \textit{Los Angeles Mirror} and another series in 1963 when he wrote for the \textit{Los Angeles Times}.\textsuperscript{59} Weeks gave equal space to black residents, attorneys and civil rights leaders in his in-depth report on the tensions between residents and the police, "the most spectacular issue."\textsuperscript{60} He met with black residents who told him they drew a distinction between themselves and blacks in the south, and between Parker, a

\textsuperscript{57}No critic of the police department was appointed to the Police and Fire Civil Defense Committee. Occasionally other Council members quietly encouraged Roybal and Wyman, but they never joined them because of their fear of the chief. Bradley earned a reputation for being anti-police from the Police Protective League and the chief, but it arose from his opposition to a proposed change in police pensions, which voters approved but later regretted due to cost. The pension fluctuated with the rate of inflation and though he would have personally benefited from the change, he opposed it. See Sonenshein's interview with Bradley in \textit{Politics in Black and White}, 76; Bradley oral history, 80, 144-46. City council member Rosalind Wyman told Parker he needed to go into the community and learn why residents were angry. He did not take her advice. See Wyman, interview.

\textsuperscript{58}Thomas, interview.


northern professional police officer, and Sheriff Bull Connor in Birmingham, Alabama. Weeks spoke with Reverend Maurice Dawkins, a prominent pastor and civil rights leader, who acknowledged that Parker had given him advice and protection for peaceful demonstrations. And he spoke with Inspector Ed Walker who told him that Parker had integrated the department and assigned black officers to stations throughout the city and that a black officer lectured new recruits at the police academy. Though black civil rights attorneys Loren Miller and Thomas Neusom told Weeks that police bred fear in blacks and that harassment could become dangerous if officers and civic leaders did not mediate, Weeks concluded that police officers and black residents were far apart, but they were willing to work it out.61

Weeks also spoke with the chief who praised his department but disparaged leaders of the civil rights movement. Parker claimed he enforced equality in both employment and promotional opportunity in his department. But he suspected that civil rights leaders were attempting to soften up law enforcement so they could turn peaceful demonstrations into lawless activity. He thought that civil rights leaders were out of touch with minority residents who were not ready to demonstrate on a large scale. But he was confident that Los Angeles would not succumb to a threat of disorder because he managed the "most advanced department in the nation in human relations."62

61 Weeks, "Law Enforcement Hit by Negroes," Los Angeles Times, 25 June 1963. In 1962, the LAPD had two hundred black officers out of approximately 4,500. See Woods, "Progressives and Police," 459. Weeks noted contradictory comments by department officers on the number of black officers. LAPD personnel officers claimed there were no official statistics on the percentage of black personnel but civil rights leaders and commissioners could easily estimate the numbers of sworn and civilian African Americans in the department. When minority groups requested crime statistics by race, Parker submitted the numbers but said his officers did not use them.

When Weeks spoke with Sergeant Robert Cutts, past president of the Fire and Police Protective League (Fi-Po), Cutts framed his opposition to civil rights leaders in more strident terms. He accused civil rights leaders, who "constantly clamor for equal rights" of threatening disorder to strip the police, "the smallest and most oppressed minority," of their right to settle grievances filed against them through the legal process. "We have a gun pointed at our head; the holder is counting 10 and we are supposed to agree or else."63

In an editorial, writers for the Los Angeles Times urged caution in obtaining full civil rights and illustrated ambivalence towards some of the changes in race and politics that were transforming Los Angeles. They acknowledged the existence of inequities and emphasized accelerating the pace for civil rights using a responsible approach rather than inflammatory tactics. They praised the NAACP’s program for ending discrimination in education, employment, housing and law enforcement and noted that laws were now in place in the city of Los Angeles, Los Angeles County and the State of California prohibiting discrimination in a variety of environments and commercial transactions. They noted that education and enlightenment would erase racial prejudice but insisted on distinguishing between civil equality and social privileges, and called them “essentially a

Conference of Christians and Jews, including Deputy Chief Noel A. McQuown, the commander of Personnel and Training Bureau, and three captains. See Police Commission Minutes, 25 January 1961, 13 December 1961, 23 January 1963. The LAPD’s training curriculum consisted of classes in sociology and race relations but the humanities component of the academy was largely perfunctory during the Parker years. Dotson, interview.

matter of a man’s conscience.”64 Editors did not assign another series until August, 1965.65

One of the first confrontations with the chief over race involved the issue of a civilian review board. For years, ACLU and NAACP attorneys had tried in vain to persuade Police Commissioners to exercise their oversight more aggressively on police misconduct. They argued that police officers were accountable for their misconduct to elected and appointed officials and residents.66 They knew of cases where IAD officers retaliated against litigants by bringing charges against them for filing false reports.67 Though supporters of civilian review boards failed, they distrusted Parker's defense of equal enforcement of the law for all residents and the efficacy of internal review and discipline. In agitating for review boards, supporters exposed the weakness of Police Commissioners in overseeing the chief and his officers.

Proposals for such boards were not new. Shortly after council member Ed Roybal's election in 1949, he proposed a full-time citizen review board.68 In 1952, after the Bloody Christmas beatings, members of the Independent Progressive Party proposed a civilian review board.69 Representatives of civil rights organization at the time tracked


65Until August, 1965, there were no black reporters. See Gottlieb and Wolt, Thinking Big, 344.

66Brown, Working the Street, 60.


69Escobar "Bloody Christmas," 189.
the failure of LAPD officers and other city officials to process complaints, based on officers' assertions that complainants were trouble-makers and that the officer himself was above suspicion.\footnote{They also objected to officers' refusal to allow counsel to accompany complainants although investigative staff recorded the conversations. See "Report to the Los Angeles Police Commission," 3-4.}

In the spring of 1960, ACLU and NAACP leaders introduced a proposed ordinance for members of a civilian review board to process complaints filed by residents against the LAPD, and then submit their findings to the Police Commission.\footnote{They suggested that a list of prospective members be prepared by a judge of the Superior Court, local committees of the Republican and Democratic parties, political science professors of local public and private colleges and universities and the Los Angeles County Human Relations Commission, and appointed by the mayor. See Schiesl,"Behind the Badge," 159-60; Woods, "Progressives and Police," 474.} Board members would execute administrative responsibilities similar to a Fair Employment Practices Commission and the local Civil Service Commission.\footnote{Manes, "Report on Law Enforcement," 62, 64-65, 67.} Members would receive, hear and investigate complaints for abusive language, false arrests, unwarranted interference with private property or business, discrimination, use of force and searches and seizures. They would ensure the complainants' right to protection from prosecution or punishment for filing a claim with the board.\footnote{If the board found misconduct it could award the complainant an amount not to exceed $500. See Exhibit B, "Proposed Ordinance to Create a Police Practices Review Board" is attached to Exhibit A and is from Box 29, Roybal Papers.}

Parker opposed the review board by arguing that it threatened officer morale and was not necessary because malpractice complaints were isolated.\footnote{"Council Spurns Review Board," \textit{Los Angeles Examiner}, 29 April 1960; Cray, "Police and Civil Rights," 11. To squelch criticism and support for external controls over discipline, Michael Brown Parker argued that the public did not understand what law enforcement required, and no lay oversight board could adequately manage the LAPD. Though Parker argued that his officers were employees of the public he demanded autonomy for disciplining them. See Brown, \textit{Working the Street}, 60.} He garnered support
from city council members who opposed any attempt to undermine the morale, service or effectiveness of the department and steadfastly praised the LAPD as one of the outstanding law enforcement organizations in the world. In April 1960, after the city council rejected the review board, Parker wrote to council members conveying his "enthusiastic response" and expressed gratitude at a time when "other cities of the free world are making a mockery of their police.

Attacks on the board proposal continued for several months after the council's rejection and came from residents, the American Legion, the Police and Fire Protective League, editorial writers for daily newspapers and even from Mayor Poulson. Several women who were residents of Los Angeles wrote to Council member Roybal to complain that the ACLU's support of the board "would do nothing but further the communist conspiracy" and warned that a vote in favor of the board would turn the City of Angels into a "City of Demons." American Legion officials opposed review boards and

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75 CF 95998, Box A1577, LACA; Police Commission Minutes, 28 April 1960.

76 The city council's rejection of the review board is in CF 95998, Box A1577, LACA, and noted in Police Commission Minutes, 28 April 1960. Letter from W. H. Parker to Council of the City of Los Angeles, 17 June 1960, CF 95998, Box A1577, LACA. Two weeks earlier, Parker wrote the city council to express gratitude for its "quick response in re-affirming your confidence and support following the recent attack upon the administration of this department." See CF 101166, Box A1629, LACA.

77 In December, 1960, Mayor Poulson spoke on radio station KFI to oppose the review board. He discussed a range of cases investigated within the past ten years and told his audience that about one-third were sustained, one-third were not sustained, and a quarter were unfounded. See "Mayor Again Opposes Police Review Board," Los Angeles Times, 21 December 1960. The rest resulted in exoneration for officers or penalties for misconduct unrelated to the complaint. Manes cited statistics in an attempt to show that IAD officers investigated thousands of complaints but did not separate charges of abuse from the others. See Manes, "Report on Law Enforcement," 15, 42-44.

78 For references to a "communist conspiracy," see letter from Mrs. H. Laugham, Jr., 6 July 1960 to Edward Roybal; for references to a "city of demons," see letter from Virginia Carson, 23 June 1960 to Edward Roybal; letter from Mrs. Walter Teringa to Edward Roybal, 1 July 1960; letter from Lynn Cordner to Edward Roybal, 6 July 1960; letter from Mrs. Mollie S. O'Melveny, to Edward Roybal, 5 July 1960, Box 29, Folder Police Department, Roybal Papers. Many of these letters had identical wording. The Knights of Columbus opposed the review board as did the Los Feliz Young Republicans and the SOS.
equated police critics with communism. Authors of an article in the Police and Fire Protective League's newsletter argued that the Communist Party and organized crime would support a review board.

Editorial writers of both the *Los Angeles Examiner* and *Los Angeles Times* sided with the chief and denounced the review board as superfluous, particularly when the department was performing at peak efficiency. An editorial writer at the *Los Angeles Times* called the police review board a “kangaroo court that would be its own investigator, prosecutor, judge and jury,” place the police in double jeopardy and “demoralize the personnel and downgrade the efficiency of what is probably the best metropolitan police force in the nation.” The review board was redundant because a resident could file a complaint with the Police Commission, IAD, City Attorney or District Attorney, or even a grand jury.

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79 Legion officials also accused members of the ACLU and NAACP of supporting a plot to undermine and demoralize police forces. See “Legion Struts Up Market St in 42nd Annual Parade,” *San Francisco Call*, 25 August 1960.


Captain Ed Davis, vice-president of the Police and Fire Protective League, warned that it would compromise Section 202 of the city charter which authorized the LAPD to discipline its own officers. Davis denied that officers used excessive force against minority suspects and blamed black leaders for convincing minority residents that officers were biased against them. Davis urged his audience to speak with members of the Chamber of Commerce, friends, elected officials and officials in the Democratic and Republican parties against the “revolutionary tribunal.”

Commissioners eventually accepted complaints from residents who did not wish to file them with IAD. They hired independent hearing officers and made modest changes to filing procedures. In April 1962, they hired a black female attorney and social worker and the following year, another black female attorney, Mrs. Yvonne Brathwaite. But the Commissioners' efforts did not satisfy everyone. Supporters of review boards...
brought the issue to Sacramento but could not summon the required votes for a state-wide measure.  

One manifestation of Parker's callousness in race relations was in making offensive remarks that provoked anger from opponents and critics. He insisted his remarks were misquoted and then summoned Commissioners and elected officials to rally to his side. In late January 1960, at hearings held by the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights in Los Angeles, Parker responded to the president of the ACLU of Southern California, who testified to “recurring instances of police violation of civil rights of Mexicans and Negroes.” Parker identified himself as "the dean of police administrators


in America, I seem to be the only one in any large city who has survived this long." He denied that any racial segregation existed in the city since his arrival in 1922. He claimed to harbor no prejudices, and cited his war record working with Germans and Italians, "not in a boastful sense," but to show that he had contact with people other than his immediate neighbors. The chief denied assigning officers to tasks based on their color and maintained that he assigned officers based on residency and seniority instead. He defended his record for meritorious personnel practices during his tenure as chief, and never, to his knowledge, did he pass up a Negro for promotion. The police themselves, he testified, not Negroes, were the "greatest dislocated minority in America."

His testimony on cultural assimilation on the East Side where many Mexican-Americans lived, provoked outrage that lasted for months. He told the Commission:

...the Latin population that came in here in great strength were here before us and presented a great problem because I worked on the East Side when men had to work in pairs— but that has evolved into an assimilation, and it was because some of those people were not too far removed from the wild tribes of the inner mountains of Mexico. I don't think you can throw the genes out of the question when you discuss behavior patterns of people.

When Parker's comments on Mexicans appeared in newspapers the following day, he denied any bias. He claimed that his comments referred to the Mexican-American

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89He testified that between 1952 and 1960 the black population rose about fifty-nine percent while the population rose about eleven percent and Los Angeles experienced growth without violence. See U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, 12, CF 94485, Box A 1559, LACA.

90Ibid., 12, 19.

91Ibid., 13. Parker did not need to mention that Germans and Italians were white.

92Ibid., 30.

93Ibid., 15.

community's past, not its present. "It was never my intention to cast any aspersions upon the Mexican-American residents of Los Angeles, a group of people with whom I have worked and associated without friction in 38 years of residence in this community." He refused to apologize for his remarks, and ignored a letter from the Mexican Consul General for Los Angeles who asserted that Mexicans took pride in their civilized and cultured Indian heritage.

Though Council member Roybal charged that the chief had disgraced the city with his remarks about Americans of Mexican descent, editorial writers supported the chief and castigated his critics. After the chief played a tape recording of the testimony to "bring fact out of innuendo," he admitted that the phrase "wild tribes" was a "slip of the tongue." The writer for the Herald-Examiner argued that Parker did not target Mexicans but referred to those "certain lawless or difficult elements" that existed in small numbers in all races. The editorial writer for the Los Angeles Times argued that the real victims were "citizens of Mexican descent who were incited to unite on a 'hate


99 Letter from W. H. Parker to City Council, 29 January, 1960, CF 94485, Box A1559, LACA. Roybal told Parker he still owed the council a written apology but never received one. "Council hears Parker's Recording on 'Wild Tribes,'" Los Angeles Times, 3 February 1960.

100 The United States of America," editorial, Los Angeles Herald and Examiner, 1 February 1960, B-2.

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figure’ – the Los Angeles chief of police – and presumably to reward the agitators with their votes.”

Parker had displayed courage and candor, “qualities which have made him famous as a policeman and a perfect whipping boy for the minority manipulators. The demagogues were exposed and an honest cop was vindicated.”

Two and a half years later, the charges and countercharges intensified. In September, 1962, Parker testified before the California Advisory Committee to the U.S. Civil Rights Commission to defend his record on policing in black neighborhoods and personnel practices within his department. He told members that it was "clearly and conclusively demonstrated" that LAPD policies were non-discriminatory in both personnel administration and law enforcement. He repeated the argument that half the crimes of violence in Los Angeles were among blacks themselves and that law enforcement on their behalf was essential. He charged that certain elements tried to inflame the black community with false stories of police abuse.

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102 Ibid. After receiving support from council members and the Los Angeles Times, Parker wrote to the council that he had intended to praise the "Latin group" for assimilating contrasting cultures and said that his comments referred to cultural conflicts in the past which were inaccurately reported. "You may be assured," he told the council, "that I did not intend to asperse any person or group or persons, past or present." See Letter to City Council from W. H. Parker, 8 February 1960 CF 94485, Box A1559, LACA. The Belvedere-Citizen, 4 February 1960, noted Parker’s “admitted sociological ignorance.” In March, Mexican-American organizations demanded a censure for Parker or an apology from him but by then the furor had died down. See Federation of Spanish-American Voters, 18 March 1960, in CF 94885 Supplement #2, Box A 1559, LACA; letter to City Council from Commander of Veterans of Foreign Wars, Post 6415, 3 February, 1960, CF 94485, Supplement #1, LACA; Resolution, Musicians Mutual Protective Association, 23 March 1960, Box 29 Folder Police Chief Parker, Roybal Papers; Police Commission Minutes, 30 March 1960.

103 No Police Race Bias- Parker,” Los Angeles Herald-Examiner, 13 September 1962. The author could not locate transcripts for Parker's testimony nor find evidence to support his statement that attorneys in the Department of Justice concluded that he had not violated civil rights laws.

104 Schiesl, “Behind the Badge,” 161. Also that year, Parker argued, “the main source of Los Angeles crime just happens to be in the areas populated heavily by the Negroes, and Negroes just happen to be figuring in most of the city’s crimes. I don’t say this from opinion. This comes from the records.” See
Advocates for minority groups persisted in contradicting the chief, triggering angry exchanges of accusations for several months, with no apparent effect on defusing tensions. Representatives of the ACLU reported to the California Advisory Committee that IAD officers harassed minorities both at home and at work, threatening them with criminal prosecution if the LAPD could not sustain their complaints. John Buggs, head of the Los Angeles County Human Relations Commission, told members of the Advisory Committee that minorities complained of abuse while officers defended their actions.

In January, 1963, James Pike, Bishop of the Episcopal Church for northern California and chair of the California Advisory Committee to the U. S. Commission on Civil Rights, engaged the chief in a debate over racial problems with officers. Bishop Pike charged LAPD officers with a "bad psychological pattern" towards minorities because of an inadequate number of black officers, and insufficient training in human relations and an unwritten policy whereby officers ignored grievances from African-Americans. Parker countered that race relations had improved since he had testified in

Los Angeles Sentinel, 17 May 1962, from "Police Chief William H. Parker Speaks,"1, prepared by Community Relations Conference of Southern California, SRLF, UCLA.

Schiesl, "Behind the Badge," 162.

Ibid., 161. The testimony came at a time when black political activists began to branch out. In the October 20, 1962 edition of the Nation, Loren Miller, a black attorney, argued that black political activists were starting to dismantle the tradition that whites spoke for them. See "Farewell to Liberals: a Negro View," vol. 195:237. Woods argued that by the early 1960s, black political activists were beginning to form two distinct groups. One was middle class which embraced the NAACP, the Urban League and the ACLU, and pursued legal means for integration; the other was militant and embraced the Black Muslims or the Nation of Islam. See Woods, "Progressives and Police," 471. Civic leaders were uncomfortable with Black Muslims because they advocated separatism, practiced non-Western religion and did not get involved with solving poverty or improving relations with the police. See Home, Fire This Time, 132.

September and doubted the Bishop would be aware of that. He cited a new program to correct officers' racially offensive speech, an increase in the venues for filing complaints and an increase in the number of officers working in schools that blacks and Mexican-Americans attended. Many race problems, he argued, stemmed from massive population growth. The bishop’s comments “attempt to stir up further problems where there is no basis for them. The Negro community here has praised us long and loud. We have the best relationship with Negroes of any large city in America today.”

Members of the California Advisory Committee issued a report in August, 1963 and provoked further rounds of accusations and counter-accusations. Parker complained that the report did not adequately sample community attitudes and did not include a majority viewpoint. Mayor Yorty claimed he had read about the California Advisory Committee’s hearings in the communist press and expressed concern that the Advisory Committee would damage race relations and impede progress in Los Angeles. Editorial writers for the Los Angeles Times attacked the report’s recommendation for federal government assistance to train officers in minority group relations. Los Angeles was a city “with the most rigorously trained policemen in the United States, which takes pride in its course in this complicated field.”

As Parker disputed charges of prejudicial policing, tensions escalated between officers and minority residents involving shooting deaths, a raid on a Black Muslim

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mosque and harassment of black residents. In July, 1960, Officer Francisco Lopez pursued Leon Carter, Jr., a young man who was joyriding with two friends in a stolen car. When Carter did not stop, Lopez fired his gun and killed him, resulting in the nineteenth shooting death by an LAPD officer that year. After Lopez was convicted by a coroner’s jury, which included six African Americans, the chief criticized the coroner for using an unreliable method for selecting jurors, and forced him to empanel another jury. In the second trial, Lopez was acquitted on justifiable homicide, and six years later he patrolled the same neighborhood.

In April 1962, two officers stopped two men in a car whom they suspected of burglary near the Black Muslim Mosque Number 27. When the men resisted and several members of the mosque rushed out to help them, the confrontation intensified as reinforcements arrived from local police stations and members of the mosque grabbed firearms and heavy objects to hurl at the police. After police restored order, one officer

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114 It is unclear how the coroner selected jurors for the first trial. For the second trial, the coroner selected jurors from a Superior Court jury pool. Jurors reached their decision in spite of the fact that the police manual did not instruct an officer to shoot unless it was necessary to save himself, a citizen, officer or prisoner. See Cray, *Big Blue Line*, 165-67; Manes, “Report on Law Enforcement,” 13.

Not all confrontations involved the police. Council member Ed Roybal, who had challenged Parker on behalf of constituents whom police had abused, brought one to the attention of Police Commissioners. After he learned that a White Citizens Council had sent threatening letters to Johnny Otis, a white rock-and-roll promoter, and that white separatists had burned a cross on his front lawn, Roybal introduced a resolution urging the city council to explore racial and religious violence and the Police Department to investigate. He received no support from city council members or Commissioners. Otis angered white racists because he had protested discriminatory practices by the Teamster’s Union. See CF 95270, Box A1568, LACA; Police Commission Minutes, 23 March 1960.
was shot and two were severely beaten. One Black Muslim was killed, another permanently disabled and five others seriously wounded.\textsuperscript{115}

Civil rights and black religious leaders issued press releases and appealed to Police Commissioners to resolve tensions between police and the black community. Reverend Maurice S. Dawkins, representing the Social Action Committee of the People’s Independent Church of Christ, issued a press release condemning police brutality “unalterably and categorically.”\textsuperscript{116}

Police Commissioners and Parker reluctantly agreed to meet with Reverend H. H. Brookins, pastor of the First African Methodist Episcopal Church. As the meeting with black leaders and Commissioners began, Parker told Reverend Brookins that he had not come to be lectured but remained only at the behest of John Kenney, Police Commission president. Parker later told reporters that he had heard only heated suggestions from black participants.\textsuperscript{117} When the chief met with Reverend Brookins a month later, Brookins told Parker racial tensions were "running at fever pitch" because of police brutality and that many residents thought Parker was prejudiced against them.\textsuperscript{118} After


Thirty-three years later an LAPD officer recalled that in 1962 “the department saw Black Muslims as a group who believed they were God’s chosen people and were as racist towards whites as George Wallace was toward blacks...Their neat black suits and closely shaven heads were a direct challenge to racist cops - - and even fairer minded officers.” See Souza, “Perspective on the LAPD,” \textit{Los Angeles Times}, 12 October 1995.

\textsuperscript{116}Police Commission Minutes, 31 May 1962.

\textsuperscript{117}Los Angeles Sentinel, 17 May 1962; Police Chief William H Parker Speaks,” prepared by Community Relations Conference of Southern California, SRLF, UCLA; Turner, \textit{Police Establishment}, 71.

\textsuperscript{118}Police Brutality persists, Negro Pastor Insists but Parker Denies," \textit{Los Angeles Times}, 13 June 1962. LAPD officers kept close watch on Reverend Brookins, who was a confidante of Tom Bradley.
Parker left the meeting, he told reporters, "I don't know how the ministers got into this situation or why...They may not be in anything with Malcolm X, but they are right down the line with what he is trying to accomplish."\textsuperscript{119}

A few days after meeting with Reverend Brookins, Parker denied charges of brutality leveled against him by the United Clergymen of Central Los Angeles, who represented 275,000 members of their churches. The chief ignored their demand that Mayor Yorty investigate him to "avoid dire consequences in the community." Parker countercharged that such allegations were part of an organized effort to "destroy the will of the police and blunt their efficiency" and told a reporter that the Federal Civil Rights Commission completely absolved his department of charges in the Muslim shooting, "and that commission doesn't take charges of brutality very lightly either."\textsuperscript{120}


\textsuperscript{120} "Race Relations: New Charges of Brutality," \textit{Los Angeles Times}, 17 June 1962; Marx, "Cop as Crusader," 48. Parker may have been a more extreme example of a chief who harbored a strong distaste for community relations. Nationwide, police felt alienated from residents, particularly black residents, whose culture was foreign to them; Dotson, interview; Murphy and Plate, \textit{Commissioner}, 115. In December 1962, in response to the Black Muslim shootout, Parker issued Special Order No. 33, requiring his officers to recognize constitutional guarantees of racial equality and religious liberty and prevent situations "conducive to racial or religious tensions." An officer must distinguish between his right to personal opinions and his sworn duty as an officer. Officers often ignored the order and commanders did not seem to enforce it. See Conot, \textit{Rivers of Blood}, 96-97.

FBI agents continued to report on Parker to Hoover. In November, 1962, a local agent suggested a rapprochement with the LAPD since Parker was sixty years old, nearing retirement and some agents had shared information about Black Muslims with the LAPD during the shootings that year. The agent thought the department "felt better toward the Bureau than at any time in the recent past" and suggested revisiting the ban on LAPD officers training at the National Academy. His superior, however, recommended against it. Memo from C. A. Evans to Mr. Belmont, 5 November 1962, FBI 62-94062. FBI officials routinely accepted candidates from the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department, however, in part because Sheriff Peter Pitchess was a former FBI agent. See Donovan, "I Have No Use," 184. In December 1964, one agent speculated that if James Roosevelt, son of Franklin D. Roosevelt, were to challenge Yorty for mayor in the spring of 1965, he would focus on race relations and highlight the chief's controversial role in the conflict. If that were to occur, the agent reported that Parker might announce his retirement within a few months. See Memo from C. A. Evans to Mr. Belmont, 11 December 1964, FBI 62-96042. By May 1965,
At the height of their contentious debate, Hugh Manes, a black civil rights attorney and counsel for the ACLU, compiled a report citing instances of police harassment which addressed how black residents viewed the police. To many black citizens the police symbolized tyranny and ruthlessness; to many officers black citizens symbolized savagery. Police officers exposed their fear of blacks through disrespect, prejudice and a mistaken belief that every black man was a potential assailant. Manes noted that routine police stops often escalated into confrontations when officers arrested a suspect, a large crowd would approach and demand that they free the arrestee. If officers heard verbal abuse from anyone in the crowd, they booked him or her for resisting arrest. If a reporter for the mainstream press covered the incident, he or she usually reflected the officers' version of events.

In April 1964, Billy Mills, a black Council member, and Parker disputed police harassment. Mills wrote to the chief complaining that police officers had stopped him seventeen times while driving a city car. To improve relations between the LAPD and black agents reported that the chief continued to promote himself and his officers as models of non-discriminatory policing. According to an assistant FBI director “Parker was one of the few Chiefs of Police who thought that he and his Department were above investigation with respect to civil rights matters.” See letter from C. D. DeLoach to Mr. Mohr, 6 May 1965, in FBI file 62-96042.

Manes argued that in contrast to the mainstream white press, black weeklies reported police killings or shootings of blacks in each issue. See “Report on Law Enforcement,” 9, 12. In 1963, black clergy banded together with the NAACP, ACLU, the Congress for Racial Equality (CORE), labor unions, former police lieutenant Tom Bradley, Councilman Gilbert Lindsay and attorney Loren Miller to form the United Civil Rights Committee (UCRC). See Sides, L. A. City Limits, 163. Inspired in part by a recent visit of Martin Luther King, Jr. to Los Angeles where he spoke before more than 35,000 people, the group appointed Reverend Brookins to be the group’s leader. More aggressive than the Urban League or the NAACP, the UCRC lobbied for public accountability of police misconduct, a police review board and a revised personnel policy to promote and hire more minorities. See Schiesl, “Behind the Badge” 162-63; Monroe oral history, 146-47; Weeks, “Law Enforcement Hit by Negroes” Los Angeles Times, 24 June 1963. The UCRC worked closely with the California Democratic Council (CDC). See Horne, Fire This Time, 46.


Ibid., 4.
black residents, he proposed discussing expanding the department's Public Information Division. The chief countered that Mills' complaints were "not factual" and stopping him was not due to lack of training. Parker chided Mills for making public statements that others could use to rationalize lawless behavior. Such remarks can "only serve to stimulate further disorders and additional physical demonstrations against constituted authority."  

As police officers patrolled the city, they strictly limited the mobility of black residents. Officers prohibited blacks from traveling north of Beverly Boulevard and west of La Brea Boulevard, in the affluent part of town. If officers found a black man near the Hollywood station, they interrogated him, checked for outstanding warrants or tried to match him with a crime report. Sometimes they would take him to a call box at Outpost Canyon and Mulholland Drive, a good distance northwest of the central city, where most blacks lived, and far from public transportation. If they could not find the means to arrest the man, they told him to walk back. Years later, one officer recalled that

We were a mercenary army unofficially empowered to arrest anyone at any time for any cause. The most common was drunkenness or drinking in public view, but more exotic charges could always be approved by the detectives on probable cause. 

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124 "Parker Criticizes Talk That Encourage Strife," Los Angeles Times, 14 April 1964; "Mills Proposes Law 'Relationship' Plan, Los Angeles Herald-Examiner, 17 April 1964. A police officer's defense for stopping a black driver was that he fit the profile of a suspect. See Cannon, Official Negligence, 68.


127 Ibid.
In February 1962, leaders of the local branch of the NAACP confronted the chief with charges of police abuse by sending a twelve-page memo to the members of the Police Commission. The NAACP leaders expressed concern about the "unequal, unfair, discriminatory application of justice by the Los Angeles City Police Department." Police brutality was an established fact in Los Angeles, they argued, and "prejudice and unequal administration of justice cast a dark cloud over law enforcement in this city." In addition, they claimed that "Negroes in Los Angeles never know where or at what hour they may come to blows from the guardians of the law who are supposed to protect them but from whom they are helplessly unprotected." NAACP leaders also issued a press release charging individual officers with misconduct.

Officials of the Police Protective League and Inspector Ed Walker reacted immediately. League officials sought legal counsel to determine if the press release was libelous because it named individual officers and asked Commissioners to join them in a lawsuit. A spokesman for the LAPD called the charges of brutality "an irresponsible

128 Text of accusations taken from Police Commission Minutes, 7 March 1962. This was not the first time leaders in the local branch of the NAACP expressed their anger towards Parker. In 1957 the board called for Parker's removal because of his opposition to Eisenhower's civil rights bill. See Police Commission Minutes 13 February 1957. Horne argues that by the mid-1950s the NAACP, composed primarily of members of the black middle class were out of touch with working class blacks, who were the majority of residents in the city's most populated sector, South Central Los Angeles, and, specifically Watts. See Horne, Fire This Time, 14.


130 Editorial, Los Angeles Herald-Dispatch, 15 February 1962. Commissioners unanimously referred the letter to the chief for study and requested his comments. See Police Commission Minutes, 21 February 1962.

Walker acknowledged that in a large city there were bound to be complaints but to "level a blast like this and then sit back is not the way to handle the matter." The Police Commissioners wrote to Roy Wilkins at the national office of the NAACP and attacked leaders of the Los Angeles branch. They argued that the press release was libelous and provocative, created "unwarranted divisiveness" and retarded progress in race relations. Commissioners asserted that Parker and his officers were committed to equal treatment under the law.

Despite charges and countercharges between the chief and his critics, Parker expressed confidence in his officers' conduct and in black residents' resistance to civil unrest. In June 1963, Parker told reporters he doubted that demonstrations would reach the crowd control for police squads. He inventoried equipment including helmets and gas masks, intensity of those in the South, but just in case, he authorized refresher courses in to make sure they would be available in an emergency. "We don't intend to use police dogs. Their use would impair the policeman because of what it does to his public image."

Two months later, in August 1963, when the United Civil Rights Committee (UCRC), a local civil rights organization, sponsored a peaceful march of 5,000 to the

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133 Police Commission Minutes, 28 February 1962.

134 Police Commission Minutes, 7 March 1962. Mayor Yorty wrote Commissioners asking them about specific cases cited in the press release and Commissioners replied that IAD officers were investigating six of ten cases the NAACP had cited and that complainants had not reported four others. See Police Commission Minutes, 14 March 1962.


136 Ibid.
steps of City Hall to observe Equal Rights Day, officers had little trouble maintaining order. There were no serious incidents and uniformed police "were conspicuously absent but plainclothesmen roamed through the crowd, with little to do but observe." Officers watched as monitors from civil rights organizations who had trained in previous non-violent demonstrations kept the marchers disciplined.\footnote{The march in Los Angeles took place several days after the March on Washington. See Paul Weeks, "L.A. Has its Largest March for Civil Rights," \textit{Los Angeles Times}, 29 August 1963.} So far, it seemed that Parker's prediction was true.

Criticism of the chief continued and Parker responded in kind. Thomas Neusom, an attorney for the UCRC, argued that Parker did not participate frequently in human relations commissions nor did he express a commitment to principles of liberty and justice. Hugh Manes accused Parker of undermining the courts, judicial decisions and the Constitution.\footnote{"Chief Parker Criticized by Civil Rights Panel," \textit{Los Angeles Times}, 9 January 1964.} Parker complained that minorities controlled the Police Commission.\footnote{Woods, "Progressives and Police," 468. During Parker's tenure the Police Commission always had a black member. After Yorty became mayor in 1961, he appointed Everett Porter, whom Yorty had earlier supported for City Council when he and Bradley had run for the same Council seat. He also appointed one Mexican-American, Dr. Francisco Bravo. The three other members, John Kenney, John Ferraro and Michael Kohn, were white. See \textit{LAPD Annual Report 1961}, 3.}

In April 1964, when members of the California Democratic Council (CDC) passed a resolution calling on Yorty to condemn police for "unfounded attacks on civil rights demonstrations," Parker countered by telling reporters there "has not been one established act of abuse on a civil rights demonstrator in recent years."\footnote{"CDC Accuses Police of Attacking Civil Rights," \textit{Los Angeles Times}, 13 April 1964.} When CDC members cited Inspector Ed Davis' comment that officers were running into second
generation communists on picket lines, Parker told reporters that Davis' lines were taken out of context, a response he frequently used to counter his own opponents' accusations. "The Los Angeles Police Commission and I run the department, not the inspectors."\(^{141}\)

In May 1964, the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE), one of the more aggressive civil rights organizations in Los Angeles, provoked another barrage of charges and countercharges by demanding Parker's resignation.\(^{142}\) Several officials mounted a vigorous defense of the chief. Sergeant Robert Cutts, past president of Fi-Po, demanded that the black community repudiate the demand for Parker's resignation and claimed that CORE was part of a "new area of racketeering against businessmen, their employees and their customers."\(^{143}\) Cutts accused CORE leaders of playing Russian roulette with the peace and security of the community, and being a subversive influence on the civil rights movement.\(^{144}\)

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\(^{143}\) Cutts was also president of the National Conference of Police Associations which accused police critics of communism. "Demand for Parker's Resignation Criticized," *Los Angeles Times*, 8 May 1964.

\(^{144}\) Mayor Yorty also defended the chief. "Demand for Parker's Resignation Criticized," *Los Angeles Times*, 8 May 1964. Glenn Souza, a former LAPD officer, noted that the civil unrest of 1960s was anathema to conservative officers who served under Parker. They were mostly white men who had fought in World War II and Korea and believed that the protesters represented communists who had fought against them in Asia. See "Perspective on the LAPD," *Los Angeles Times*, 12 October 1995.

Yorty told reporters he did not know whether communist influence was responsible for charges of police brutality but reminded them that Hoover had warned of red infiltration in the civil rights movement. "Yorty Blasts CORE in Parker's Defense," *Citizen-News*, 7 May 1964. Hoover suspected that enemies of the police were communists. See Fogelson, *Big City Police*, 239.
Other officials rallied behind the chief. All but two of the city council members commended the chief and none of the Council's three black members called for his resignation.\footnote{Vote Backs Police, Brutality Denied,} The Los Angeles County Grand Jury commended him.\footnote{Chief Parker Gets Commendation From County Grand Jury} One resident thanked City Council members for defending the chief given the subversion and violence Angelenos faced.\footnote{Letter from Mrs. O. Clemons to City Council members} The Veterans of Foreign Wars expressed pride in the chief for protecting their society from mob rule, and Commissioners commended him for protecting residents against "organized vice, hoodlumism and anarchy."\footnote{Police Commission Minutes}

In early June, CORE leaders issued a press release charging that LAPD officers enforced the law with two sets of rules, one for the middle-class white majority and the other for blacks, Indians, Mexican-Americans, poor whites and bohemians. Parker, they argued, refused to acknowledge any need for reform, and blamed minority communities for disturbances. They claimed he accused protesters of disrespect for law and order, and charged his opponents with inciting anarchy. CORE leaders also charged that Parker's outbursts against court decisions protecting civil liberties paralleled those of his

\footnote{Vote Backs Police, Brutality Denied,} \textit{Citizen-News}, 7 May 1964. The City Council adopted a resolution commending Parker with only Mills and Gilbert Lindsay, two of the three black members, opposing the motion. \textit{See "Police Board, Yorty, Council Back Parker," Los Angeles Times,} 7 May 1964.


\footnote{Letter from Mrs. O. Clemons to City Council members} 8 May 1964, CF 101166, Box A1629, LACA.

\footnote{Police Commission Minutes} 3 June 1964. Commissioners wrote that Parker deserved support and gratitude from citizens of every race, creed or economic level and they refused to be pressured to fire a dedicated public servant by threat, pressure or street demonstrations. \textit{See Police Commission Minutes,} 6 May 1964. When the white majority dominated city politics, under the influence of the \textit{Los Angeles Times}, business interests and a white City Council, the LAPD was a beacon of professionalism and guardian of the city's safety. But once the city's minority populations obtained a stronger voice, "no police department could play that role." \textit{See Cannon, Official Negligence,} 583.
counterparts in totalitarian societies, to whose "basic social philosophies the United States of America is diametrically opposed."  

The Chief Fights Back

In addition to exchanging accusations with his critics, Parker retaliated with dire warnings about the future of American democracy, and engaged the media in his campaign. The chief faced the same race-related pressures as other chiefs in the 1960s but Parker chose confrontation rather than accommodation. The chief painted "to protect and to serve" on patrol cars and banned dogs for crowd control in order to present the image of firm yet approachable officers. But he did not hesitate to use harsh rhetoric or severe punishment for officers who disagreed with his own brand of political

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149 Folder: Civil Rights, 1965, Box C-1006, Yorty papers. CORE leaders emphasized that the most important reform was in handling malpractice complaints and argued that it was not an internal matter but one requiring aggressive commission personnel to investigate and hold public hearings.

While black civil rights leaders confronted Parker with accusations of police abuse, not all the casualties were black. On February 24, 1965, police undercover agents in the San Fernando Valley failed to identify themselves to John Grudt, a white carpenter for the movie studios, who mistook them for armed robbers. He tried to escape but ran his car into theirs. They shot and killed him before he could explain what he had done. See Cray, *Big Blue Line*, 168-69. Two days after Grudt's death, Parker issued orders to suspend using unmarked patrol cars in high crime areas. See "Police Kill Motorist; Order Probe," 24 *Los Angeles Times*, February 1965; editorial, "Grave Responsibility of Police," *Los Angeles Times*, 1 March 1965. Bradley and Police Commissioner Francisco Bravo met in front of reporters to discuss Bradley's request for the Council to investigate Grudt's killing. Bravo told him to refrain from performing the job of a Police commissioner, refuted his charge that the Commission was a "rubber stamp for the chief of police," and accused him of convicting officers before the facts emerged. See “Head of Police Board Assails City Councilman,” *Los Angeles Times*, 6 May 1965; “Police Panel Chief Rips Councilman,”*Los Angeles Herald-Examiner*, 5 May 1965.


151 Parker Doubts Riots will Start," *Los Angeles Times*, 22 June 1963; Section 63.98 of Municipal Code was amended, Ordinance No 125710, effective October 1, 1963, CF 14089, Box A 1783, LACA.

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activism. By 1964, he predicted civil unrest and peace, indicating uncertainty and a lack of confidence in his ability to control events in Los Angeles.

Parker had always charged his critics with subversion but he increased his attacks as they increased theirs, to de-legitimize them and draw attention instead to the difficulties of policing American cities.\(^\text{152}\) In a speech in 1960, Parker conflated the same forces backing the Castro regime with those behind the Los Angeles County Coroner’s original jury convicting officers who had shot and killed Leon Carter, Jr. "The type of democracy they (the NAACP and ACLU) are trying to sell is represented by People’s World. This isn’t democracy – this is soft indulgence without discipline."\(^\text{153}\) Black leaders, he told listeners, waged a "heavy attack of psychological warfare" against them through litigation. The NAACP and ACLU, he complained, obscured the high black crime rate by charging that the police were "invariably brutal and the suspects are invariably innocent."\(^\text{154}\)

In 1962, Parker used a different strategy for advancing his views. He granted an interview with Donald McDonald at the Center for the Study of Democratic Institutions, which Parker acknowledged for its "liberal leanings."\(^\text{155}\) He softened criticism of his

\(^{152}\) By 1960 Parker used anti-communism and racist sentiment more frequently in response to the civil rights movement and to counter demands for greater accountability. See Woods, "Progressives and Police," 439.

\(^{153}\) See “Parker Charges Critics with Castro Tactics,” Los Angeles Times, 1 July 1960. People’s World was the west coast paper published by the Communist Party. When Parker and his officers accused civil rights leaders of communist influence, they could not identify anyone in the NAACP because its leaders expelled black and white leftists who fought racism militantly in the 1950s, at the height of the Red scare. In 1960 and again in 1962, leaders of local NAACP branches purged members per directives from the national office. See Horne, Fire This Time, 13, 174.

\(^{154}\) “Parker Charges Critics with Castro Tactics,” Los Angeles Times, 1 July 1960.

\(^{155}\) The organization was headed by Robert Hutchins, a former president of the University of Chicago, with whom Parker publicly acknowledged that he disagreed on most political issues. See Parker, "Police Service," 10-11.
opponents and demonstrated some understanding of the connection between social
problems and crime. He insisted that the police were doing the best job they could. His
officers did not single out minorities because they would not deprive law-abiding citizens
of their rights.\footnote{156} When black leaders criticized the police to distract attention from high
crime rates, reporters magnified police failures and minimized police successes. When
they drew attention to a small number of police brutality cases, his officers had greater
difficulty patrolling the streets.\footnote{157} Parker maintained that in spite of criticism, race
relations were good in Los Angeles because it was the "most progressive city in the
nation" in assimilating its minorities.\footnote{158} The police had a responsibility to determine the
locus of crime and could not allow "social and economic disabilities" to prevent them
from enforcing the law.\footnote{159} The police must "also be interested enough in our work to
look into some of the causes of these problems. Certainly to pretend the problems do not
exist is foolish."\footnote{160}

In 1963 and 1964, he directed PID writers to portray his officers in the
department's annual report not as opponents of civil rights, but as public servants who
stood with the community to resist anti-democratic forces. His writers praised the city's
residents for resisting demagogues who sought to exploit demonstrators by focusing on

\footnote{156}McDonald, "Police," 15. Parker told McDonald he had written this policy of nonracial policing
in a pamphlet for the National Conference of Christians and Jews.

\footnote{157}Ibid., 13.

\footnote{158}McDonald, "Police," 18. In 1960, when political scientist James Q. Wilson observed that Los
Angeles had no racial violence, he speculated that the low-density rate of 4,400 persons per square mile in
the city's center might account for relative urban calm. See Wilson, \textit{Negro Politics}, 103.

\footnote{159}McDonald, "Police," 15, 18.

\footnote{160}Ibid., 18.
the police and for not falling "prey to subterfuge."161 At the end of the report, writers included a plea for "community compatibility" based on faith in mankind, and warned that if the citizenry could not lay a foundation for civic consonance, "there is little hope for tolerance and harmony between nations."162 Yet the following year, his writers scoffed at civil rights leaders, describing them as false prophets and detractors of law enforcement who had predicted a long hot summer. These leaders were wrong because the great majority of blacks obeyed the law, refused to support advocates of anarchy and demonstrated lawfully with police protection.163

In the summer of 1964 as tensions escalated around the country, Parker chose sympathetic audiences to deliver heated rhetoric that reflected his pessimistic forecast for America. In July, Parker spoke to attendees at the National Conference of Police Associations in Los Angeles, shortly after civil unrest had occurred in Harlem. He sharpened his attacks and warnings but still expressed confidence that racial violence would bypass Los Angeles.164 Still, he predicted impending doom due to the lawlessness


162 Ibid., 25. Writers noted that in seventy-five demonstrations, almost seventy-seven percent of the demonstrators were white and twenty-seven percent were black. See LAPD Annual Report 1964, 8. There is no explanation to account for these statistics. In a speech before the Los Angeles County Bar Association, Parker told his audience that demonstrators were seventy percent white in a city where the black population was 600,000 out of approximately 2.5 million. See "Parker on 'Civil Rights,'" Valley-Times, 26 June 1964. In his speech, the chief attributed attacks on police to subversive elements dedicated to destroying the social order and authorizing a citizen committee to oversee police discipline without regard for their performance. He received a standing ovation after his speech. See "Parker Discounts Fear of Race Rioting in L. A," Los Angeles Times, 26 June 1964; "Where the Blame Lies," Los Angeles Times, editorial, 30 June 1964. The first efforts in police-community relations in the 1940s were limited, lost momentum in the 1950s, but returned "with a vengeance" in the 1960s. See Walker, Critical History of Police Reform, 171.

163 LAPD Annual Report 1964, 8.

164 Stories dominating newspapers that summer were about white violence in the South and black violence in the North. See Joseph Lelyveld, "Breaking Away," New York Times Magazine, 6 March 2005,
of civil rights participants. He conflated an active judiciary with demonstrators' selective observance of laws to warn of a socialist state within the next thirty years.\textsuperscript{165} The country hinged on anarchy. "We are currently undergoing a revolution and it is not entirely a bloodless one."\textsuperscript{166} Local and state laws were nationalized and each citizen was becoming his own Supreme Court. He complained that the police were portrayed in the same light as criminals. Though he had called for federal troops to restore order in Harlem, he praised the dearth of violence in Los Angeles because blacks were better educated there than in other cities.\textsuperscript{167}

The following month, Parker chose the national weekly magazine, \textit{US News \\& World Report}, to express his views to readers nationwide.\textsuperscript{168} In an interview he repeated many of the arguments he and his officers had used in countering accusations from civil rights leaders in Los Angeles. The police were disorganized and victimized by CORE and other nationally, well-organized groups; no one cared what happened to the police; and apathy contributed to a disinterest among young people in becoming law


\textsuperscript{165} "N.Y. Riots Border on Anarchy, Parker Says," \textit{Los Angeles Times}, 21 July 1964.

\textsuperscript{166} Ibid. In May, 1965, on a radio program with former Notre Dame University Dean Clarence Manion, a member of the John Birch Society's National Council, Parker warned that continual downgrading of police could lead to a complete breakdown of the American way of life and eventual dictatorship. He blamed civil disobedience, demonstrations and court decisions for undermining good law enforcement and for changing the public image of police. For Manion reference see Donner, \textit{Protectors of Privilege}, 248. See also "Parker Hits Disparaging of Police," \textit{Los Angeles Times}, 31 May 1965.


\textsuperscript{168} Another prominent conservative who assumed that the civil rights movement incorporated elements of communism was Senator James Eastland (D-Mississippi). See James T. Patterson, \textit{Grand Expectations} (New York, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), 417. Catholic conservatives regarded the civil rights movement as sympathetic to anarchy or susceptible to a militant laity and communist influence. Christian and Jewish clergy as well as Catholic liberals supported Dr. King as a prophetic figure in a sinful America. See Allitt, \textit{Catholic Intellectuals}, 83, 110, 113.
enforcement officers. He decried civil disobedience because it sanctioned citizens to disobey laws that were not based on justice. When citizens disregarded the rule of law they contributed to the destruction of a free society.

And then you're going to get sporadic anarchy until sometime the man on the white horse will come forward and lead you into slavery under the pretext of solving your problem. This is history.

In speaking with the *US News* reporter, Parker spoke more candidly than he did with local reporters. He acknowledged that the majority of black residents were law-abiding and that the police had a duty to protect them from the "lawless element." He understood that a black officer had great difficulty patrolling a black neighborhood because so few black men wanted to become police officers. Yet the civil rights movement was too emotional and disastrous for people who could not distinguish the facts. Negroes, he reminded the reporter, accounted for a fair number of the nine million illiterates identified by the U.S. Census Bureau.

In California, the chief continued to align himself with conservatives who were becoming increasingly agitated by those liberals and civil rights leaders who demanded legal proscriptions against discrimination in housing and employment. In November 1964, after voters approved Proposition 14 which repealed the Rumford Fair Housing Act

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169 *US News & World Report*, 10 August 1964, 34. Parker did not mention that the International Association of Chiefs of Police, and the National Conference of Police Associations consistently addressed charges of police harassment and abuse.

170 Ibid., 34.

171 Ibid., 34.

172 Ibid., 36.

173 Ibid., 34.

of 1963, Parker told reporters that he did not foresee an upswing in racial tension, because “the Negro community is not prone to reckless or violent demonstrations” and that the Los Angeles County Human Relations Commission was handling the problem adequately. He disagreed with religious and civic leaders who warned that repeal of the fair housing law was a "sure source of trouble to come."175

Parker tacitly allowed his officers to engage in conservative political activity but did not condone the conduct of officers who spoke out in favor of civil rights. For years, Parker had defended his officers' policing and on occasion boasted to an interviewer that he did not muzzle his officers if they wished to speak with reporters. Sergeant Michael Hannon, however, was not an officer who agreed with the chief.176 A seven-year veteran of the department, white, twenty-eight years old, married with four children and a law student off-hours, he was the kind of officer who appeared in promotional materials PID staff had passed along to editors at the Los Angeles Examiner just a few years earlier.177 Hannon joined CORE and Norman Thomas' Democratic Socialists in the early 1960s, and participated in meetings and demonstrations off-duty. After officers discovered his membership, he endured harassment when they stole his ticket books, subscribed to the

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175 "Parker, Minister, Disagree on Racial Tension Increase," Valley-News, 10 November 1964. William Levin, of the San Fernando Valley Jewish Relations Committee and Reverend John Wetzel of St. Phillips Lutheran Church both observed that ghettos were growing and de facto segregation was a reality in Los Angeles. Parker followed his forecast for racial peace with an affirmation that there was no discrimination within his department and his officers enforced the law without regard to race. See “Parker, Minister Disagree on Racial Tension Increase,” Valley-News, 10 November 1964.


176 McDonald, "Police," 17.

177 "Policeman Suspended over Rights Activities, Faces Trial," Los Angeles Times, 5 June 1965; "Police Officer is a man who has made good" Los Angeles Examiner 4 September 1959.
People's World in his name and used the police station as his address. His performance ratings, which had been flawless, began to decline.\textsuperscript{178}

Hannon faced a ten-count charge including conduct unbecoming an officer, participating in demonstrations, writing scurrilous material about the department for a CORE publication and sleeping on duty.\textsuperscript{179} He hired A. L. Wirin, Parker's old legal adversary, who had successfully litigated against the department in the past. They prepared their defense against the charges to counter Parker's denial that he was punishing Hannon for expressing his political views.\textsuperscript{180}

Before the trial, Parker told members of the Peace Officers Association that officers should not participate in off-duty activities inimical to the department but did not punish subordinates for off-duty activity in conservative politics.\textsuperscript{181} He argued that Hannon's offense was not political affiliation but of demonstrating with a sign comparing President Johnson's conduct in the Dominican Republic with Soviet Premier Khrushchev's in Hungary. He predicted that the outcome of the upcoming trial would affect every police department in the country.\textsuperscript{182}

\textsuperscript{178}Tumer, Police Establishment, 90. One officer who followed him to civil rights meetings in plainclothes pretended to be sympathetic and made recordings of the meetings. Later, the officer appeared in uniform at the station where Hannon recognized him. Another officer who replaced him was confronted by Hannon at a civil rights rally when he noticed a gun bulging underneath his sport shirt. See Police Establishment, 90.

\textsuperscript{179}Policeman Suspended over Rights Activities, Faces Trial," Los Angeles Times, 5 June 1965.

\textsuperscript{180}Ibid.

\textsuperscript{181}Tumer notes that Parker disciplined officers for political activity only when they drew attention from the press. Turner, Police Establishment, 264-65. Nor did he discipline Inspector Ed Davis for exhorting members of the Protective League to lobby against legislation for civilian review boards in Sacramento. n.d. Box 27, Folder Police Dept, Roybal Papers. Parker himself had attended conferences sponsored by the American Legion. See Police Commission Minutes, 2 November 1960, 29 July 1964.

\textsuperscript{182}Trial of Officer-Picket Seen as National Issue," Los Angeles Times, 17 June 1965.
The chief was determined to punish Hannon and engaged in a heated exchange with Wirin over his own remarks. At the trial, Wirin used Parker's statements to show that the chief had expressed his own political views in public, but had denied the same right to Hannon, and cited Parker's criticisms of the judiciary. Parker defended his statements claiming that he had a responsibility other officers did not have and argued that Wirin had taken his statements out of context. When Wirin asked him if he was prejudiced Parker shouted "It is a lie! A big lie!" He denied using the big lie technique as Hitler had done during World War II. "I was against him and I have a Purple Heart to prove it."183

Officers presiding at the trial board found Hannon guilty of civil rights activities and sleeping on duty, to which Hannon had admitted prior to the trial, and submitted their verdict for Parker to review, recommending dismissal. They did not change their verdict despite Hannon's argument that they were convicting him of heresy for expressing a liberal point of view.184 Parker refused Hannon a second trial but reduced the conviction of dismissal to six months' suspension, arguing that the record did not fully or fairly support the case.185 He agreed to review current rules governing off-duty political activities.186


Wirin and Hannon announced to reporters their plans to fight the conviction in federal court at the same time that Parker announced that he would like to see proscriptions against participating in contentious political activities.
conduct but expressed disappointment that the trial board did not convict him of explicitly participating in demonstrations.186

Over the next several months, Parker made contradictory predictions of peace and unrest. In September of 1963 he told an audience "this city is ten years ahead of other major metropolitan areas in assimilating the Negro minority."187 In April, 1964, after a group of black resident followed five traffic victims to a hospital and demonstrated at the Newton Station against police brutality, both James Farmer, the national director of CORE, and the chief predicted further outbreaks of anti-police violence.188 In May, Parker called civil rights leaders' demands for his resignation "attention-getting devices," and reversed an earlier prediction that anti-police violence would increase in Los Angeles. "The city will not be the focus of much trouble."189

In his public statements Parker drew a distinction between his officers and those in other regions of the country. In contrast to riots in Harlem in the summer of 1964, the chief told the Bar Association of San Fernando Valley that mass racial violence would

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186 "New Rules Planned for Policemen," *Los Angeles Times*, 29 July 1965. When Hannon returned six months later, Parker assigned him to a three by five foot, locked, bulletproof glass cage in the treasurer’s office for six months where he was not permitted to smoke, read, drink coffee or speak with anyone else. He filed suit against the department for lost wages and for the trial board to expunge his record, and resigned in the spring of 1966. See "Penalized Officer Hannon Resigns," *Los Angeles Herald-Examiner*, 4 June 1966. With a law degree from night school, Hannon became an attorney in private practice. See Turner, *Police Establishment*, 92.


not occur in Los Angeles because the majority of blacks did not want to start trouble.\textsuperscript{190} The real troublemakers were only about fifty out of approximately 500,000, most of whom arrived after World War II. "Any community that can digest such a large group without a disturbance should receive credit."\textsuperscript{191} But he was ready. He consulted with Governor Brown, who assured him that the National Guard would respond if necessary. The chief wanted to handle civil unrest without using weapons and trained his officers for riot control, ordering them not to fire warning shots. Unlike Southern police officers, he would not use police dogs or electric prods.\textsuperscript{192}

Others were not as confident. In May 1964, Howard Jewell, assistant Attorney General to Stanley Mosk, California's Attorney General, predicted an outbreak would occur because of strong anti-black sentiment among LAPD officers. "Chief Parker does not dislike Negroes because they are Negroes, but because they dislike the police department. This, in Parker's book, is the only unforgivable sin."\textsuperscript{193} Jewell thought Parker ran his department well and that he himself was not bigoted. However, Jewell warned of violence if demonstrations were large and that the National Guard would police Los Angeles, not the LAPD. He predicted loss of life and property damage in the millions.\textsuperscript{194}

\footnotesize
\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{190} In the summer of 1964, riots occurred in Harlem and Rochester, New York; Jersey City, Paterson and Elizabeth, New Jersey, and Chicago. See Ethan Rarick, \textit{California Rising, Life and Times of Pat Brown} (Berkeley, Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2005), 317.
  \item \textsuperscript{191} "Harlem Chaos Won't Come Here—Parker," \textit{Valley Times}, 22 July 1964.
  \item \textsuperscript{192} \textit{US News}, 36.
  \item \textsuperscript{193} Jacobs, "Los Angeles Police," 99-100.
  \item \textsuperscript{194} Jewell noted similarities between Parker and civil rights leaders. Each was "independent and strong willed," each regarded himself as "champion of a beleaguered minority," and was determined not to
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Council members Tom Bradley and Billy Mills and journalist Paul Weeks all of whom maintained close ties with black residents, predicted violence. Bradley understood that the increasing hostility and friction between police officers and a large segment of the black community could result in a major confrontation. He later recalled that the chief chastised him for making such a statement. All three tried to alert others of the dangers but no one listened or took any corrective action. When Weeks left the black beat in 1964, he warned, "This town is going to blow up one of these days, and the Times won't know what hit it." When Weeks left the black beat in 1964, he warned, "This town is going to blow up one of these days, and the Times won't know what hit it."195

In June 1965, Parker appointed a liaison to the black community as a way to mollify black civic leaders and to attempt to discourage challenges to his authority. He called Inspector James Fisk, commander of the bureau for stations in black or mixed neighborhoods, into his office. He asked him to do something about blacks in Watts and to gather all the intelligence he could about them. Parker told Fisk he had selected him because he was the only one Parker knew who was interested in blacks.

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197 The stations were University, 77th Street, Newton and Wilshire. Fisk was a 1939 graduate of UCLA, an elder of the Hollywood First Presbyterian Church, a member of its Urban and Ministerial Relations Committees, and a 1940 classmate of Bradley and Ed Davis at the police academy. See Domanick, To Protect and to Serve, 182.
198 Dotson, interview.
199 Fisk later told a reporter he did not know whether to be flattered or appalled. At the time, Fisk said, having good relations with the black community was tantamount to treason. See Domanick, To Protect and To Serve, 182.
Though Fisk had encouraged him to accept different views, Parker ignored his suggestions.\textsuperscript{200} Parker gave him an official title, liaison officer to the black community, and announced his new position to reporters.\textsuperscript{201} In July, when Fisk brought a black youth choir to police headquarters for a tour, Parker lunched with them and posed for newspaper photographs with the group.\textsuperscript{202}

On August 8, 1965, the chief celebrated his twentieth-eighth year in the LAPD and the beginning of his sixteenth as chief.\textsuperscript{203} He had taken a month's sick leave in March for surgery for a heart condition; in the past few years he had started to speak about retiring.\textsuperscript{204} He became less involved in the day-to-day activities of the department, leaving details to his staff.\textsuperscript{205} Three days later, he would confront a disaster like no other in the history of the city.

\textsuperscript{200}Parker failed to understand the importance of many of Fisk's suggestions. See Dotson, interview.


\textsuperscript{205}Conot, \textit{Rivers of Blood}, 418.
CHAPTER 7
THE CITY EXPLODES

The most tumultuous week in Parker's entire LAPD career began with a drunk driving arrest on a hot night in August 1965. At around 7 p.m. on Wednesday, August 11, Marquette Frye, a twenty-one-year-old African-American man, drank a little too much, settled into the driver's seat of a car, started the engine and took off.¹ He did not drive very far because Officer Lee Minikus of the California Highway Patrol (CHP) arrested him on a drunk driving charge at the corner of 116th Street and Avalon Boulevard, a few blocks from Watts, where the poorest black residents of Los Angeles lived.² Frye had a record of petty crimes, and when his mother learned of the arrest, she arrived on the scene and argued with the officers, who arrested her and Marquette's brother, who had also resisted the officers.³

What began as a routine arrest quickly turned into a confrontation as a crowd gathered after CHP officers radioed the LAPD for help.⁴ As LAPD officers arrived,

¹Horne, *Fire This Time*, 54.

²McConne Commission transcript, 12:9.

³Rarick, *California Rising*, 322. Home also notes Frye had previous run-ins with law enforcement as a juvenile and dropped out of high school. See Home, *Fire This Time*, 54.

⁴Governor's Commission on the Los Angeles Riots, *Violence in the City – An End or a Beginning?* (Los Angeles, 1965), 10-11.
they saw a CHP officer punch Frye after handcuffing him.\(^5\) After CHP officers left with the Fryes followed by a patrol car and a tow truck pulling Marquette’s car, LAPD officers reached into the crowd and pulled out Joyce Gaines, whom police thought had spit on them. They handcuffed her, forced her into a patrol car and drove off, after which men and women began to throw rocks, bottles and sticks at the officers who remained.\(^6\)

The violence continued for the next four days, causing death and destruction and exposed the fatal flaws of Parker's crime prevention strategies and his disinterest in race relations. Among police critics he had acquired a reputation for excessive use of force and refusal to understand the economic and social causes of crime and poverty. He had argued for a strong police presence in black neighborhoods because of the high crime rate but never sought to understand why it remained so high. He blamed civil rights leaders and supporters for fomenting trouble but refused to address victims' charges of police harassment with investigations and punishment of officers.

In the course of the riots, Parker lost control of his department, his chain of command and his officers. He had made no plans for civil unrest on such a large scale, despite arrangements with Governor Brown to request the National Guard, and watched as his commanders improvised for the first few days, without coordination, adequate

\(^5\) Bystanders also reported that CHP officers kicked Frye as they forced him into the patrol car. See Rarick, *California Rising*, 322.

\(^6\) Conot, *Rivers of Blood*, 17-22. Gaines' hair was in curlers and she was wearing a dress that some in the crowd mistook for a maternity dress. When they saw officers forcing her into the patrol car, they were furious at how police officers treated a black woman who was pregnant, which may have fueled their anger. See Gerald Horne, “Black Fire, ‘Riot’ and ‘Revolt’ in Los Angeles 1965 and 1992” in Lawrence B. De Graaf, Kevin Mulroy and Quitard Taylor, eds., *Seeking El Dorado* (Seattle and London: University of Washington Press, 2001), 379; Conot, *Rivers of Blood*, 17-22; “Preliminary Report, 10 May 1967, Staff Report on Los Angeles Riot, Testimony Prepared for the Police, Fire, and Civil Defense Committee of the Council of the City of Los Angeles,” 7-8, CF 125,342 and 125,343 Box A-1923, LACA.
communications, preparation or equipment. His staff independently arranged for LAPD representation at a community meeting because the chief refused to meet with black leaders. When he finally arranged for reinforcements from the National Guard, he had to cede control of the expanded operation to a California state commander.

As images of the rioting and of officers with helmets and shotguns appeared in newspapers and on television, the chief lost control of the image of the LAPD officer he carefully nurtured through print media, annual reports and *Dragnet*. For the first time in his career, he had to face bold questions from nationally recognized journalists on television news shows, and skeptical responses to his answers that blamed others for much of the violence. He also had to face a new brand of journalist in Los Angeles, who now covered policing with analytical and investigative reporting, and drew on scholars in criminology, psychiatry and sociology to provide readers with insight into the complexities of urban violence, black poverty, and policing.

The chief showed neither remorse nor insight, yet he received overwhelming support from white-owned corporations and businesses, white residents and most elected and appointed officials. During testimony at hearings conducted by members of the McCone Commission, convened by Governor Brown to determine the cause of the riots and recommend solutions, the chief expressed anger and bitterness but was exonerated for his conduct preceding and during the riots.

Despite official expressions of support for the chief, he irreparably damaged his reputation and never regained the local and national stature he had worked so hard to cultivate. Weakened physically and professionally, he further withdrew from day-to-day operations amid rumors of heart disease and imminent retirement.
Throughout his career, Parker had ignored economic, racial and social factors that contributed to poverty and crime. He knew little about black residents other than the crime rate in their neighborhoods. He did not differentiate between black middle class and poor black areas of the city. He praised the city's assimilation of minorities but seemed oblivious to the sharpened lines of segregation and the increasing isolation of poor black residents in Watts.

Unlike Parker, others in city government had recognized the complexity of racial tensions with the police and had made an effort to understand them. Inspector James Fisk, whom the chief appointed in June 1965 to be his liaison to the black community, increased his contacts with black civic and religious leaders, and spoke of the importance of treating all residents with dignity. Deputy Chief Tom Reddin was ready to meet with anyone so he could understand problems and attempt to solve them, but neither he nor Fisk could develop an effective program without strong support from the chief. Black council members Tom Bradley and Billy Mills understood the severity of black anger towards the police and the potential for violence but neither of them could wield influence over the chief.

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7 In many of his speeches he emphasized that police officers were not social workers. One example is in Parker, "Crime and Belief," 12.

8 McDonald, "Police," 18; Sonenshein, Politics in Black and White, 80.


10 Domanick, To Protect and to Serve, 204.

Poverty, the Police and the Riots

The rioting that convulsed the city for five days centered in Watts, home to the poorest residents of Los Angeles, isolated from the rest of the city because of an absence of public transportation, and known outside its boundaries only to black civic leaders and to officers who patrolled South Central Los Angeles. To an outsider, Watts did not look like a slum.12 There were no tenements and the expanse of space and blocks of modest homes surrounded by front and back yards gave South Central Los Angeles the appearance of a low-income area that seemed relatively stable.13 Watts was east of the Harbor Freeway, Interstate 110 that ran north and south, which divided middle-income blacks, who lived west of the freeway in the neighborhoods of Crenshaw and Adams, from poor blacks in Watts, creating “separate and distinct Negro populations.”14

Most Watts residents had either migrated to the city with their parents before 1960 or were native Angelenos.15 They were not, as Chief Parker announced to reporters, “the Johnny-come-latelies, out of the cane-brakes of Louisiana and so forth, where they have had an entirely different police experience and they have no opportunity

12 A German reporter wandered around the area for a few days, amid palm trees and other greenery and walked into the 77th Street police station to ask, “Where are the slums?” See Conot, Rivers of Blood, 366-67.
13 Monroe oral history, 169-70.
14 Governor’s Commission, Violence in the City, 77. Some articles and reports cited a study conducted by the Urban League which ranked Los Angeles the best city for housing, income and employment for blacks in 1964. See Governor’s Commission, Violence in the City, 3. The Governor’s Commission report did not comment on whether or not the Urban League distinguished between lower and middle-class blacks. Bunche notes that some black professionals became active in civil rights organizations; others distanced themselves from lower-income blacks. See “Past Not Necessarily Prologue,” 123-24. John Buggs told Roger Wilkins, who visited Los Angeles after the riots at the behest of President Johnson, that he had not been to Watts in five years. See Roger Wilkins, “The Watts Riots, Burned Into Memory,” Washington Post, 23 August 2005.
to adjust to this community."16 Four out of ten lived below the poverty line, approximately one in three was unemployed and six out of ten lived on welfare.17 Eight out of ten residents were black.18 Those without cars had to rely on inadequate public transportation.19 Residents lived in overcrowded homes and apartments and in five public housing projects, making Watts the section with the highest density in the city.20 Many residents lived on dark, unpaved streets, and paid above-market prices for poor quality food from local grocers.21

Residents of Watts lived with a strong police presence. Officers received scant training at the academy in race relations and they compensated for their low stature as patrol officers with zealous law enforcement.22 "In that ghetto we walked around being

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16From transcript of Lawrence Lipton’s column, LA Free Press, 20 August 1965; Los Angeles Times, 15 August 1965, taken from “Chief Parker Speaks.”

17Schiesl, "Behind the Shield,” 163; Large numbers of black men and women had found employment in the aerospace industry during World War II, but were dismissed when the war ended and unable to find manufacturing jobs in the suburbs. Of the manufacturing jobs that remained employers hired Mexican rather than black workers. See Sides, L. A. City Limits, 81, 94. Even as jobs flowed into regions outside Watts, more blacks migrated to Los Angeles, increasing its black population more than Detroit or New York. The black population in Los Angeles County in 1965 was 600,000, more than eight times the population of blacks in the county in 1940. See Elizabeth Poe, “Nobody Was Listening,” in John and LaRee Caughey, Los Angeles, Biography of a City (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1977), 426.

18Rarick, California Rising, 320.


21Rarick, California Rising, 320.

22Jacobs, "Los Angeles Police," 97. Jacobs argues that LAPD training was too militaristic, with over two hundred hours on firearms, control tactics and police procedure with only two hours on race relations. Jacobs memorandum to the Kerner Commission, cited in Horne, Fire This Time, 165. Patrol officers ranked below lieutenants, detectives and their superiors. See Fogelson, Big City Police, 223. Tom Bradley testified that some of his former LAPD colleagues had confided to him that some officers had no
an occupation army in a foreign country," according to Sergeant Michael Hannon, a white police officer who was sympathetic to black residents. Hannon recalled that officers working out of the Newton Station, which served a large black population, patrolled neighborhoods with shotguns.

Parker and his officers tried to organize a response to the escalating violence but failed because they had no emergency plan and tried to use a communications system that had broken down. Parker assigned Deputy Chief Tom Reddin, head of the Technical Services Bureau, to take charge but neglected to notify Deputy Chief Roger Murdock who headed the Patrol Bureau. The chief did not realize that Reddin and Murdock had issued conflicting orders. While Murdock dispatched a mobile command post to the area, scores of Parker's officers sat in the auditorium at police headquarters waiting for deployment. Though the chief needed additional officers, he refused assistance from

basis for shooting but took advantage of the situation. See Horne, *Fire This Time*, 145, citing Bradley's testimony before McCone Commission, 3:29-36.

Turner, *Police Establishment*, 89. Hannon also said that officers made no effort to understand black residents and captains executed policies for black neighborhoods that differed from white neighborhoods. One-man radio cars were not to be used south of Olympic Boulevard. Judge Loren Miller, a former attorney for the ACLU, told the Commission that the children of the Great Migration were frustrated with segregation but outraged by continued harassment by LAPD officers. Blacks in Los Angeles did not compare themselves with blacks in Harlem, Philadelphia or Kansas City but with whites in other sectors of the city. See McCone Commission transcript 10:18; Sides, *L.A. City Limits*, 173.

In Highland Park where Hannon had also worked, officers used shotguns only in stakeouts or on special assignment. See "Police Malpractice and the Watts Riot, Report by the American Civil Liberties Union of Southern California" in "Background for Action," 78/80, Box 15, Folder Nov-Dec, 1965, NAACP West Coast Region papers.

John Powers later recalled that there were no plans. We "flew by the seat of our pants." See"Era of Parker."

Los Angeles County Sheriff Pete Pitchess who had dispatched one hundred-fifty deputies to wait at a Sheriff's station near Watts.27

Parker hesitated to restore order with a heavy show of force from his own officers because he did not want to provoke more violence. He sought to maintain restraint in order to distinguish LAPD officers from those in the South who used hoses or dogs on rioters. Parker did not issue orders to fire on them unless they assaulted his officers, "a matter of state law."28 He had purchased helmets for all officers in the field which they carried in vehicles but he did not order his men to wear them on routine patrols because they would not communicate effectively with the public.29 And he did not encourage his commanders to assign large numbers of officers to Watts.30

Nevertheless, Parker did not communicate clearly with his officers because of confusion at headquarters which exacerbated problems in the field. When Commander Daryl Gates heard one of Parker's orders, he realized the chief had no idea what was going on. Gates turned off his field radio and on his own decided to increase the number of officers.31 He quickly sensed that the communication system was unreliable and gave

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27 Cannon, Official Negligence, 340; Domanick, To Protect and To Serve, 182-83. Parker was not on good terms with Sheriff Pitchess, who cooperated with the UCRC in assessing race relations and operations within the LASD, which Parker refused to do with the LAPD. See McCone Commission Transcript, 11:119-20; Conot, Rivers of Blood, 235.

28 Conot, Rivers of Blood, 37; McCone Commission transcript, 11:159.

29 McCone Commission transcript, 11:91, 78. Several months later, the chief told an audience at a meeting of the National District Attorneys Association that although he preached a doctrine of a safe and secure Los Angeles, he was personally apprehensive and had bought $50,000 worth of helmets for his officers. See Memo from H. L. Edwards to Mr. Felt, 4 March 1966, FBI 62-96042.

30 Testimony of Deputy Chief Roger Murdock, McCone Commission transcript, 10:41.

orders independently for the next several hours as he improvised in a "crazed carnival atmosphere." He and his officers found one group of rioters, dispersed them and moved on. When they later returned to the same spot another group had formed.

There were seventy of us, eight hundred of them, maybe a thousand as the night wore on. We were constantly ducking bottles, rocks, knives and Molotov cocktails. One officer was stabbed in the back. Guns were poked out of second-story windows, random shots were fired. The rioters uprooted wooden bus stop benches, pulling them out of their concrete bases and setting them on fire...It was random chaos, in small disparate patches.

The rioting increased during the evening as the crowd swelled to several hundred, and men and women hurled rocks at other patrol cars and at cars driven by whites. People in the crowd overturned and burned cars, and pulled a white reporter out of his car and beat him. Others threw rocks at firefighters who tried to throw pour water onto a burning car. One person stabbed a police officer. They also began looting stores in the area.

Murdock and Lieutenant Frank Beeson, Jr., who worked out of the 77th Street station, tried to coordinate a response and failed. Beeson encountered “constant delay and bickering” because of a “complete breakdown at the administrative level.” He decided not to shoot looters after asking his superiors for an order. Murdock set up a

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32 Gates, Chief, 90. Over the next few days, Gates heard one set of instructions from Murdock and another set of instructions at night from Reddin, Domanick, To Protect and to Serve, 182-83.

31 Gates, Chief, 90-91.

34 Cannon, Official Negligence, 340.

35 Rarick, California Rising, 322.

36 Horne, Fire This Time, 57, citing interview with Frank Beeson, Jr., 2 November 1965, box 4, 4b McCone papers.

37 One lieutenant ordered his officers to shoot if anyone resisted or tried to escape from a felony arrest, which included throwing rocks or committing burglary. See Conot, Rivers of Blood, 242-43. Beeson attempted to coordinate plans with Gates and Murdock as they engaged in battle with rioters. Deputy Chief
mobile command post but failed to create a perimeter, ordered his officers to retreat, and moved the command post back to the 77th Street station. By dawn on Thursday, August 12, one of the areas he had tried to cordon off looked like a bombed out zone.

On Thursday, a staff member in the chief's office took a call from the Los Angeles County Supervisors' office requesting that a representative from the LAPD attend a community meeting that afternoon in Athens Park, near South Central Los Angeles. The staff member did not bother to inform the chief because he knew that Parker suffered from heart disease, often exhibited a bad temper and had increasingly distanced himself from daily operations. He avoided giving the chief details that would anger him.

At the meeting residents, public officials, and representatives of local civic organizations and law enforcement agencies all pleaded for calm as camera operators and reporters recorded the proceedings. John Buggs, head of the Los Angeles County Human Relations Commission, proposed that Deputy Chief Murdock and Inspector Fisk assign

Reddin did not take charge until Friday morning, August 13. See McCone Commission transcript, 12:9. Lieutenant Elber W. Mead, a night watch commander at the 77th Street station, later said officers went by the manual but their biggest mistake was that they did not throw it in the incinerator. See Conot, _Rivers of Blood_, 43.

38 Gates, _Chief_, 91; Rarick, _California Rising_, 323.

39 Rarick, _California Rising_, 323. Rarick notes that the corner of Imperial Highway and Avalon Boulevard contained five burned out cars, 323.


41 When Parker faced challenges to his statements, he often exploded. See Conot, _Rivers of Blood_, 418. He isolated himself from residents and elected officials, meeting with City Council members and the mayor only when they requested it and sometimes creating difficulty for a meeting at all. See Fogelson, _Big City Police_, 223.

42 Conot, _Rivers of Blood_, 155.
only black officers in plainclothes to patrol in unmarked cars but both men refused.\textsuperscript{43} When a young man spoke up to incite black residents to riot and give whites their due, producers broadcast the young man's comments but not those of others who disagreed with him, including all of the public officials and civic leaders who appealed for calm.\textsuperscript{44}

The chief followed a plan he had developed with Governor Brown in 1963 and 1964 for deploying the National Guard in the event of civil unrest.\textsuperscript{45} Late Thursday afternoon Parker notified Lieutenant General Roderic Hill of the California National Guard that he might need state troops even though he was reluctant to use them.\textsuperscript{46} Parker did not want the Guard in Los Angeles any longer than necessary because he had seen footage of federal troops in Little Rock punching people "in the butt with bayonets and forced up on their porches."\textsuperscript{47} He was mindful that the Guard was trained for combat in Vietnam, not for maintaining order in American cities, and feared they might provoke further violence. To a chief who based his local and national reputation on his own

\textsuperscript{43}\textit{Ibid.}, 144-45, 153-54, 166-67. That evening Murdock told Buggs that the situation required large numbers of black and white officers and assistance from other law enforcement agencies. Testimony from McCone Commission transcripts, 10: 14-18.


\textsuperscript{46}Over the next twenty-four hours the chief encountered indecision from state officials at several levels before reaching the proper authority. See Conot, \textit{Rivers of Blood}, 154; Governor's Commission, \textit{Violence in the City}, 14.

\textsuperscript{47}McCone Commission transcript, 11:98.
professional officers, the National Guard presence in Los Angeles would symbolize his inability to handle urban unrest.\textsuperscript{48}

By the time Parker called Lieutenant General Hill in Sacramento that Thursday afternoon, his office was in chaos. He and his staff competed for space with a television crew and twenty reporters who filed stories for local and national media.\textsuperscript{49} When he spoke with Richard Kline, Staff Secretary to Governor Brown for Southern California, Kline could hear the commotion.\textsuperscript{50}

For Kline, his conversation with Parker confirmed his view of the chief's racist sentiments and resulted in a tense exchange when he informed Parker that Governor Brown was out of the country. Kline told the chief that Lieutenant Governor Glenn Anderson was acting Governor while Brown was on vacation in Greece, and would speak with him the following day when he arrived in Los Angeles. When Kline raised the subject of the black community, the chief "became very agitated and, in effect, exploded and said he didn't want to have a meeting with any Negro leaders or with anybody."\textsuperscript{51} Kline wondered how serious the situation really was because the chief often alarmed officials without substantive explanations.\textsuperscript{52}

On Friday, after a night filled with violence involving some one thousand rioters and five hundred officers, Parker faced a riot that surged northward fifty to sixty blocks,
eventually covering an area of forty-six and a half square miles, equal to the size of Manhattan.\textsuperscript{53} Parker had opened an Emergency Control Center at police headquarters to improve coordination among units as his officers encountered fierce resistance from rioters.\textsuperscript{54} He ordered his men to patrol in twelve-hour shifts, and ordered detectives to ride with officers in patrol cars and arrest rioters.\textsuperscript{55} His officers used a new tactic, deploying patrol cars with four officers inside, each armed with shotguns.\textsuperscript{56}

Compounding the problem of insufficient troops and bedlam in his office was the chief's inexperience with urban violence. He had never battled rioters and

I had never read about a riot this way, where the people rested the first night and then the next night...Our men were, I think, as perplexed by this spectacle as anyone else, and, and if you look at the film... you will see their hesitation to move.\textsuperscript{57}

\textsuperscript{53}Governor's Commission, \textit{Violence in the City}, 1; Powers, "Era of Parker."

\textsuperscript{54}Governor's Commission, \textit{Violence in the City}, 15-16. LAPD Commander Richard Wedgewood noted that officers requested fire trucks but had trouble coordinating with police patrols because of the breakdown in communications. See "Era of Parker."

\textsuperscript{55}Conot, \textit{Rivers of Blood}, 201.

\textsuperscript{56}Gates, \textit{Chief}, 99-101; Horne, \textit{Fire This Time}, 237. Robert Calkins, who served in the LAPD from 1950 to 1977, said that black officers came back to stations in patrol cars with their headlights and tail lights broken and windshields shattered. "Boy, these people are really mad. They're mad at me and I'm the same color they are." See "Era of Parker."

\textsuperscript{57}Horne, \textit{Fire This Time}, 138, citing testimony of William H. Parker, 2 p.m. 16 September, 1965, vol. 11, McCone Commission transcript. Deputy Chief Tom Reddin and ACLU executive director Eason Monroe also commented on the start-and-stop nature of the riots. Testimony of Deputy Chief Thomas Reddin, McCone Commission Transcript, 12:15; Monroe oral history, 170-71; Yorty oral history, 154. Riots in Washington and Chicago in 1919 and Harlem in 1964 also started, sputtered during the day, and intensified during the night. An FBI report in 1964 noted that riots that summer escalated from a minor incident, involving violent interference with police on scene, followed by a gathering crowd. Respected black and civic leaders made every effort to stop the violence but only massive police action with assistance from National Guard troops restored order. See Conot, \textit{Rivers of Blood}, 201.
He saw that the start-and-stop violence in Los Angeles differed from the violence that had occurred in eastern cities the previous summer.\textsuperscript{58} His officers retreated when the violence abated but when they returned to the streets, rioters resumed burning, looting and throwing rocks.\textsuperscript{59}

Parker showed some understanding of the deep-seated anger and frustration of the rioters but did not acknowledge his own role in fomenting tensions between poor black residents and the police. The violence, Parker told a reporter, was a result of "the terrible conflicts building up with these people. You can't keep telling them that the Liberty Bell isn't ringing for them and not expect them to believe it."\textsuperscript{60} Yet, he had refused to meet with black leaders unless he was forced to, refused to understand the toxic connection between black poverty and crime, and never made race relations a serious area of study or a prestigious assignment for patrol officers.

As Parker assessed the growing violence Friday morning and struggled with chaos in his office, he called officials in Sacramento to request the Guard, but endured hours of delay which further diminished his control over the rioting.\textsuperscript{61} From late morning until late afternoon, he quarreled with several different men over the extent of the violence, the correct procedure for formally requesting troops and the deployment

\textsuperscript{58}Horne, \textit{Fire This Time}, 147, citing Reddin's testimony before the McCone Commission, 14 October, 1965, 12:6-9, 15.

\textsuperscript{59}Eason Monroe observed this pattern on the third, fourth and fifth day of rioting as well. See Monroe oral history, 70-71.

\textsuperscript{60}Art Berman, "Eight Men Slain: Guard Moves in," \textit{Los Angeles Times}, 14 August 1965.

\textsuperscript{61}Parker conferred with Mayor Yorty who agreed to his request for the Guard. After speaking with the chief and as the riot worsened, Yorty flew to San Francisco to speak at a luncheon meeting in San Francisco. See Rarick, \textit{California Rising}, 325.
schedule. When the chief learned that Lieutenant Governor Anderson wanted to meet with him and black leaders to discuss the situation, he exploded. In the middle of a second day of violence, when his beleaguered officers were engaged in battles covering a sizeable slice of the city, he needed to arrange for troop reinforcements, not conduct conversations about race relations. In early afternoon, when Major General Charles A. Ott of the National Guard arrived to discuss coordination with him, Parker could not meet with him because of the chaos in his office. After Major Ott left, the chief received word in the late afternoon that the Guard would begin to arrive in Los Angeles in the early evening.

Until deployment of the Guard, Parker could muster few resources to support several hundred officers, aided by the LASD and CHP, as they continued to battle thousands of rioters in ninety-degree heat. Police could do little as a crowd circled the 77th Street police station, fired on police and news helicopters, and forced their way into

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62Conot, Rivers of Blood, 199-201; 214-217.
63Ibid., 215-17.
64Parker complained that the press had taken over his office. See Conot, Rivers of Blood, 237.
65Ibid., 217. Earlier that afternoon, Hale Champion, Director of the California State Department of Finance, called Governor Brown in Athens, Greece to brief him on the situation and received directions to mobilize the Guard immediately. Lieutenant Governor Anderson did not arrive in Los Angeles until late afternoon, after attending meetings in Berkeley and Sacramento. See Rarick, California Rising, 314, 325; Governor’s Commission, Violence in the City, 16-18. Lieutenant Governor Anderson agonized over deploying the Guard because the troops had not maintained order in an emergency since a general strike in San Francisco in 1934. He also needed to keep some troops ready for possible deployment to Berkeley, where a train carrying troops bound for Vietnam would pass through the city and might encounter demonstrations from opponents of the war. See Testimony of Glenn Anderson, McCone Commission transcript, 3:33.
66Charles Davis, Jr., "Anatomy of a riot, Minor Incident Ignited Violence," Los Angeles Times, 15 August 1965. The number of LAPD sworn personnel in 1965 was 5,181. See Gates, Chief, 105. Officers from several law enforcement agencies assisted the LAPD with mobile jails, booking large numbers of arrestees and controlling the violence. See Horne, Fire This Time, 146.
the United States Post Office on 103rd Street. Parker's officers were "nearing exhaustion" after "700 helmeted and shotgun-carrying officers fought a virtual guerilla war during the night with mobs of frenzied Negroes." Early Friday evening while the Guard continued to mobilize, officers exchanged fire with rioters and killed a bystander, and as the chaos continued, two more deaths followed.

On Saturday, with temperatures in the mid-nineties, Parker still had not regained control of his operations. He had watched the rioting continue unabated as National Guard troops swelled to 3,300, battling rioters who shot at them every two to three minutes. While he coordinated operations with commanders from other law enforcement agencies, he had to cede control of police escorts for fire trucks to Guard soldiers to protect firefighters from snipers and rocks. The chief also had to cede control to Lieutenant General Hill who issued orders to shoot after a driver rammed his car into a Guardsman who beat him to the ground. Parker told reporters "this situation

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67 Berman, "Eight Men Slain: Guard Moves In," Los Angeles Times, 14 August 1965. 103rd Street became known as Charcoal Alley because of the devastation. See Rarick, California Rising, 329.

68 One firefighter was crushed by a falling wall and a Los Angeles County Sheriff accidentally killed another sheriff when his gun went off as he struggled with rioters. See Governor's Commission, Violence in the City, 16-21. At the Do-Rite Market, clerks shot an eighteen-year old who had made his way in and killed him with a 12-gauge shotgun. A woman died in a burning building. See Rarick, California Rising, 329.

69 Governor's Commission, Violence in the City, 19-21.

70 Ibid. An LASD station in the area turned its lights off to avoid shots from rioters. At police headquarters, a reporter for the Los Angeles Times claimed that for the first time in his career, he saw policewomen take handguns out of their purses and strap them to their belts. See Rarick, California Rising, 331.

70 Governor's Commission, Violence in the City, 19-21. The few black firefighters in the Los Angeles Fire Department faced "ethnic slurs, taunts and acts of cruelty." Nevertheless their superiors wanted them to sit at the front of fire trucks to avoid attacks by residents. Se Horne, Fire This Time, 76.

71 Horne, Fire This Time, 82.
is very much like fighting the Viet Cong... We haven’t the slightest idea when this can be brought under control.”

By late Saturday afternoon, Parker, Lieutenant Governor Anderson and Lieutenant General Hill agreed to a curfew which, by late Saturday night, led to a reduction in the violence. National Guard troops and LAPD officers set up road blocks to create a border around forty-six and a half square miles of the city. Parker and Lieutenant Governor Anderson appeared on television to explain the curfew. To secure the border, Parker coordinated with Lieutenant General Hill to increase Guard troops to 13,000, maintain LAPD strength at nine hundred and request several hundred officers from the LASD.

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72 Horne, Fire This Time, 64, citing "Negro Riots Rage On; Death Toll 25," Los Angeles Times, 15 August 1965. Deputy Chief Roger Murdock told reporters the best way to suppress the disturbance was “to put as many people as we can in jail... That’s certainly no secret.” In Washington, President Johnson’s staff discussed the riots. While President Johnson stayed in Texas at his ranch, presidential assistant Joseph Califano, Jr. authorized logistical assistance to the Guard with support from Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara and Attorney General Nicholas Katzenbach. In discussions in Texas, Johnson told an aide he would decide where soldiers would go. Though President Johnson did not federalize the Guard, the Sixth Army provided logistical support to the Guard including 300,000 rounds of ammunition and several hundred chemical grenades. Aircraft from the US Air Force, Air Force Reserve and the Arizona National Guard lent support as well. See Paul J. Schieps, The Role of Federal Military Forces in Domestic Disorders, Jeffrey J. Clarke, ed., Army Historical Series (Washington, DC: Center of Military History, United States Army, 2002), 169, 171. "I’ll let ‘em know whether they’re going to Los Angeles or Vietnam." See Rarick, California Rising, 331, taken from conversations 8536 and 8538, tape WH6508.04, LBJ Library and Museum.

73 Commander Wedgewood, "Era of Parker"; Governor’s Commission, Violence in the City, 19-21. "... At some point the chief gave the order that looters would be shot... Pretty much after the curfew we looked down the street and there was nothing moving." See "Era of Parker." Richard Kline testified that Parker frightened black and white residents when he spoke on local television to warn those in the curfew zone to remain in their homes. See Horne, Fire This Time, 159, citing McCone Commission transcript, 9:15, 34. See also Governor’s Commission, Violence in the City, 19-21.

74 The rioting had now spread south to San Diego, east to Pasadena and northeast to Pacoima, a Los Angeles neighborhood twenty miles north of the curfew zone and to Monrovia, twenty-five miles east of the city. See Governor’s Commission, Violence in the City, 22. Law enforcement officers from eighty-five government agencies provided assistance, including 13,000 from the California National Guard, a few hundred sheriffs from the LASD, seventy from the CHP, thirty-seven from the Los Angeles County Marshall’s Office, twenty-four from the Santa Monica Police Department, twelve from the California Department of Corrections. Staff from the city’s receiving hospital all provided assistance. See LAPD
On Sunday, Parker's control eroded further as Governor Brown arrived in Los Angeles, briefly visited Watts, fended off an argument with the chief and took charge of the curfew. Governor Brown was the only major official to tour Watts. He later met with fifty black leaders and promised food aid from Sacramento. He disputed a claim Parker had made earlier that white residents needed to arm themselves, arguing that the police and Guard prevented further danger. As Governor, he assumed authority for the curfew, lifted it on Tuesday, August 17th and ordered Lieutenant General Hill to begin demobilizing the Guard.

A few days after Governor Brown arrived in Los Angeles, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. came to the city to assess the damage and meet with residents, civic leaders and

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75 Rarick, California Rising, 332. Yorty flew over in a helicopter and Parker refused to attend any meetings with black leaders. Reverend Brookins later testified at the Mc Cone Commission that a deputy chief told him Parker would not consult with black leaders because they were part of the problem. See California Rising, 332, citing Brookins' Mc Cone Commission transcripts, 4:72. On Monday, August 16, Governor Brown spoke with a reporter from the Los Angeles Times and said he had no idea of the potential for violence in Watts. He knew of unemployment but did not comprehend until that day the depths of poverty and frustration. See Rarick, California Rising, 333, citing "Brown Will Appoint 7-Man Investigative Panel,” Los Angeles Times, 17 August 1965.

76 Harry Trimbom, "Brown, Parker Differ on Whites Buying Arms," Los Angeles Times, 16 August 1965. On Sunday evening, Commander Gates took a group of LAPD officers to assist police in Long Beach, where they fought a small number of rioters. LAPD officers expanded their patrol area to San-Pedro-Wilmington, the city’s southernmost neighborhood, 12 miles south of South-Central, to battle more rioters who set several fires. See Governor's Commission, Violence in the City, 22; Gates, Chief, 101-02.

77 Governor’s Commission, Violence in the City, 19-21. By Sunday, August 22nd, all but twenty-five of the Guard had left. Just before Governor Brown lifted the curfew, violence erupted again early Tuesday morning, August 17, when police raided a Black Muslim mosque after receiving an anonymous call that men inside carried guns. After a fire and shootout, police charged nineteen Muslims with felonies, intensifying the friction between two black council members, Tom Bradley and Billy Mills, and the police when the council met to determine the cause of the raid. Mills accused officers of starting a fire, and requested an investigation but Police Commissioners refused. “Muslim Raid Witnesses Fear Police, Mills Says,” Los Angeles Times 21 September 1965; “Police May Have Set Muslim Fire, Mills Suggests,” Los Angeles Times, 23 November 1965; Police Commission Minutes, 12 January 1966, 9 February 1966.
public officials, and engaged in a tense encounter with the chief.\textsuperscript{78} In a stormy meeting Dr. King met with civil rights leaders, the mayor, the chief and their aides.\textsuperscript{79} After Yorty and Parker defended the police response, they listened as Dr. King told reporters that residents of the black community felt that the chief did not understand their problems and suggested that Parker resign. Parker told them he regretted being a "bad host but I couldn't accommodate him on this occasion" by resigning.\textsuperscript{80} Dr. King later told President Johnson that the chief railed against black agitators.\textsuperscript{81}

While the embers cooled in Watts, reporters, council members and law enforcement officials assessed the scale of death and destruction.\textsuperscript{82} There were thirty-four deaths, including one LAFD firefighter, an LASD deputy, and a Long Beach police

\textsuperscript{78}"Dr. King Arrives Here to Study Riot Problems," Los Angeles Times, 18 August 1965. During his stay, Dr. King noted the resentment of poor blacks towards the black middle class, criticized black leadership, and promised to discuss the "blind intransigence and ignorance of tremendous social forces which are at work here" with President Johnson the following week. He characterized the riots as a "language of the unheard" and a "sort of blind and misguided revolt against the nation and any authority." See Hom, Fire This Time, 183, citing Nation, 3 March 1991, and "Dr. King Arrives Here to Study Riot Problems," Los Angeles Times, 18 August 1965. Dr. King also went to Watts to attempt to speak with residents but left quickly after they told him they wanted jobs, not dreams. See Rarick, California Rising, 336; "King Assailed by Yorty After Stormy Meeting," Los Angeles Times, 20 August, 1965; Magnificent Montague, "The yelp that burned L.A.,” Los Angeles Times, 7 August 2005; Memo from Leonard H. Carter to Roy Wilkins, 10 September 1965, Box 15 Folder May-Sept 1965, NAACP West Coast Region Papers.

\textsuperscript{79}While "established Negro leadership was busily engaged in discussing the rioting," the "leaders of the rioting was [were] obviously not present at the conference." The NAACP had no branch in Watts and no spokesman for the area. See Memo from Leonard H. Carter to Roy Wilkins, 10 September 1965, Box 15, Folder May-Sept 1965, NAACP West Coast Region Papers.

\textsuperscript{80}"King Assailed by Yorty After Stormy Meeting," Los Angeles Times, 20 August, 1965. Mayor Yorty accused Dr. King of "performing a great disservice to the people of Los Angeles" in finding fault with the police but Dr. King argued that law and order must accompany justice and human dignity."

\textsuperscript{81}Rarick, California Rising, 335.

\textsuperscript{82}The riots were the most destructive since the Detroit riots in 1943 and the first in a new wave of urban violence that would hit Chicago, Tampa, Cincinnati, Atlanta, Newark and Detroit. See Sides, L. A. City Limits, 4. Riots in the 1960s differed from riots in 1930s because of geographical boundaries and because black rioters were both perpetrators and victims. See Robert Fogelson, "Violence as Protest," in Roger Lane and John L. Turner, Jr., eds., Riot, Rout and Tumult, Readings in American Social and Political Violence (Westport, CT: Greenwood, 1978), 329-30, 343.
officer. LAPD officers, the Guard and other law enforcement officers shot and killed twenty-seven. More than a thousand individuals sustained injuries, including ninety LAPD officers, one hundred National Guard troops and twenty-three other government agency employees. Property damage totaled approximately $40 million. Among the six hundred buildings destroyed were businesses, schools, a library, churches, apartment houses, and homes. Each of the one hundred-three LAPD patrol cars that entered the riot area sustained damaged.

City officials began to clean up amidst lingering fears of black rage. City officials insisted on removing rubble to prevent disease and sent in demolition crews when property owners did not act quickly. Council member Ed Edelman, who had just won election to represent the wealthy, white fifth district on the Westside, asked the chief for

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83 Governor's Commission, Violence in the City, 23. Of the thirty-four deaths, jurors convened by the Los Angeles County Coroner concluded that twenty-six were justifiable homicides, including sixteen by LAPD officers and seven by the Guard. Jurors ruled five of the deaths homicide, four criminal and one accidental. Jurors did not attribute any criminal homicides to law enforcement officers. See Cannon, Official Negligence, 637, fn. 24. Law enforcement agencies arrested 3,345 of whom approximately 1,800 had previous criminal records but many of those arrested did not go to trial and some criminal records included misdemeanors. See Parker testimony, McCone Commission transcript, 11:123-24. Attorneys who volunteered to represent arrestees were Yvonne Brathwaite and A. L. Wirin, and other attorneys from the NAACP and ACLU. See Horne, Fire This Time, 237, 239; Monroe oral history, 171; Memo to Robert L. Carter from Barbara A Morris, 10 September 1965, Box 15, Folder May-Sept 10, 1965, NAACP West Coast Region Papers.

84 Governor's Commission, Violence in the City, 23. Estimates of participants in the riots ranged from 10,000 to 80,000. Those sympathetic with the police estimated that 10,000 to 30,000 or two percent of the black population of 650,000 in Los Angeles County were involved. See Governor's Commission, Violence in the City, 1. Robert Fogelson used the larger figure of 80,000. See "White on Black: A Critique of the McCone Commission Report on the Los Angeles Riots," Political Science Quarterly 82, no. 3, 1967, 342.

85 Governor's Commission, Violence in the City, 23; Parker's testimony, McCone Commission transcript, 11:42. The bulk of the property damage was to businesses. Some of the violence was aimed at stores owned by Jewish merchants. See Horne, Fire This Time, 78.

86 Domanick, To Protect and to Serve, 184-85.

87 Conot, Rivers of Blood, 365.
more patrols for his constituents in the wake of a murder in the neighborhood of Beverlywood and Cheviot Hills. Edelman asked the chief to notify him of "any changes you feel are warranted at the present time."88

Parker's Response

As Los Angeles slowly recovered from the riots amidst an uneasy calm, Parker avoided taking responsibility for any of the violence and blamed others. He never recovered from the blow to his reputation as chief of the most efficient police department in the country. He had to answer questions from journalists who questioned the effectiveness of proactive policing and later analyzed how the violence eroded confidence in the LAPD. During five days of battles between law enforcement officers and residents in Watts, Americans watched nationally televised news broadcasts of violence in Los Angeles as Parker struggled to restore order.

Parker still enjoyed strong support among white residents and local business leaders. Members of the McCone Commission, gubernatorial appointees who represented legal, ethnic and religious communities and conducted hearings to determine causes of the riots and recommend ways to prevent further violence, exonerated the chief. Residents and members of civic organizations and businesses praised his conduct, affirming his view that his officers had heroically maintained the social order and saved the city from an anti-democratic mob.

From the first day of the riots through the end of August, Parker spoke frequently with reporters, offering provocative racially-charged statements to explain what happened

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and who was at fault, deriding black residents and asserting white superiority. He blamed the CHP for bungling Marquette Frye's arrest and the media for televising the violence.  

On Thursday, August 12, he told reporters that the violence began when "one person threw a rock and then like monkeys in a zoo, others started throwing rocks." On Friday he said the riots might not have started "if police hadn't been handling Negroes with kid gloves." After the violence ended, he announced to reporters that "we're on the top and they're on the bottom."  

On Saturday, August 14, he told a television news interviewer that rioting occurred because of the summer heat and because black leaders were demagogues whose

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89"Parker Puts Blame on Riot on State Highway Patrolmen," Los Angeles Times, 30 August 1965. Several months later LAPD officers repeated their charges that televised coverage increased the rioting when they testified before the Police Fire and Civil Defense Committee. Reporters for local television, however, testified that when police asked the news media to relocate, they did so, and that rioters followed the camera. Hugh Brundage of KTLA and Alan Moll of KJH-TV told the committee that their coverage made viewers aware of the violence and deterred many from coming into Watts. See "Preliminary Report," 10 May 1967, 14-15; "Parker Says Organized Groups Added to Riot," Los Angeles Times, 14 September 1965; "Blames Group for Egging on Watts Rioters," St. Louis Post-Dispatch, 14 September 1965.


91Berman, "Eight Men Slain; Guard Moves In," Los Angeles Times, 14 August 1965.

92Excerpted from Time magazine, in "Chief Parker Speaks," 13. When Roger Wilkins visited South Central a week after the rioting ending, officers stopped and interrogated him, then let him go. See Horne, Fire This Time, 144. A few weeks later, Wilkins used Parker's quote in a column to note that he sympathized with blacks who "boil daily" and emphasized that they were on the bottom in employment and housing. However, he condemned the violence. He had long worked with sympathetic whites and knew that many did not agree with Parker. See "We're on Top," San Francisco News Call Bulletin, 6 September 1965. http://www.multied.com/Bio/people/Wilkins.html, accessed 19 October 2005.
objective was to "relieve the Negro people of all responsibility for their actions." He denounced black leaders who had pleaded with police commanders to refrain from mobilizing their officers to patrol Watts. He initially pulled officers out of the area and regretted his decision because the tactic failed to restore calm. He told reporters that "the so-called leaders of the Negro community can't lead at all" and complained that any attempt to blame police for rioting was a "vicious canard." He had trained his officers to use restraint and charged that meddlers who preached constantly about alleged police brutality encouraged the violence.

In interviews, the chief dismissed explanations of social and economic despair as causes of the violence, and argued that only the police could save Los Angeles from lawless residents. When reporters mentioned unemployment, poverty, poor education and black resentment of police harassment, the chief insisted that he was a police officer, not a sociologist. He acknowledged that Proposition 14, which repealed the Rumford

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95 "Parker Raps 'False Negro Leadership,'" Los Angeles Times, 15 August 1965. A few days later, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. refuted Parker's assessment of black leadership in Los Angeles but also said that no leaders could have handled the situation because "rioters do not listen to reason." See "Dr. King Arrives Here to Study Riot Problems," Los Angeles Times, 18 August 1965. In an NAACP report of September, 1965, Reverend Brookins, head of the UCRC, denounced both Mayor Yorty and Chief Parker. Parker and Yorty responded that there were no Negro leaders. See Memo from Leonard H. Carter to Roy Wilkins, 10 September 1965, Box 15, Folder May-Sept 1965, NAACP West Coast Region papers.

96 "Parker Raps 'False Negro Leadership,'" Los Angeles Times, 15 August 1965. He discounted charges of brutality as untrue, but if they continued, he warned that the LAPD would not be able to recruit young men to policing. See "Back Police - Chief Parker Warns Public," Valley-News, 19 August 1965.

97 Transcript of Parker interview on Newsmaker, in "Chief Parker Speaks," 9. Eason Monroe expected violence in Harlem, Detroit or Chicago (which all exploded a few years later) but not in Los Angeles, and thought that the black community had organized effectively for better jobs, schools and policing. See Monroe oral history, 150, 169-71. Mayor Yorty admitted that unemployment in Watts had
Fair Housing Act in November, 1964, may have contributed to the riots, “but what type of blackmail do you submit to in order to get your neighbor to live with you?”98 He exploited white fears of unruly blacks by warning of an increase in the black population to forty-five percent of the residents of Los Angeles.99

Now how are you going to live with that without law enforcement? If you want any protection in your home and family in the future, you’re going to have to get in and support a strong police department. If you don’t do that, come 1970 God help you!100

Parker revived his arguments against permissiveness and civil disobedience, warning that such forces would hasten the demise of American society. "It is hard for me to believe that our society can continue to violate all the fundamental rules of human conduct and expect to survive."101 Non-violent, civil disobedience was a "revolutionary tool to overthrow existing governments."102 America was in the throes of a major upheaval, he told reporter Don Moser for Life Magazine, and police were the public face

been a problem and greater than in white neighborhoods, “but because you’re out of a job doesn’t mean you have to riot.” See Yorty oral history, 154.

98 Transcript of Parker interview on Newsmaker, in “Chief Parker Speaks,” 8-9. Dr. Alvin Pouissant, a black psychiatrist and head of UCLA’s Neuropsychiatric Institute (NPI), told reporters from the Los Angeles Times that Proposition 14 made black residents feel trapped, as if there were no way to escape low-income housing areas. See Nicolaides, My Blue Heaven, 324-25.

99 Transcript of Parker interview on Newsmaker, in “Chief Parker Speaks,” 9.

100 At the same time that Parker complained of a possible decline in recruitment, the Board of Directors of the Apartment Association of Los Angeles County requested his department to create auxiliary forces with riot guns. See Horne, Fire This Time, 165. In his autobiography, Daryl Gates notes that he developed SWAT teams in response to requests from private organizations for a swifter and more flexible unit in the department. See Gates, Chief, Chapter 8, passim.; transcript of Parker interview from Newsmaker, 14 August 1965, in “Chief Parker Speaks,” 9.


102 Parker made these remarks before an American Legion convention in Portland, Oregon. In his speech he urged the Legion to adopt a platform for respect for the rule of law. See Peter Tugman, The Sunday Oregonian, 22 August 1965, in "Police Chief Parker Speaks," 14.
of government which “always happens when a government is being overturned. You kill
the policeman because he wears the badge. You don’t kill the meter reader.” 103

Black leaders blamed Parker for the riots and some white officials blamed
communists. After the violence ended, Mervyn Dymally, leaders of CORE and the
UCRC, citing Parker's poor performance during the violence, called for his resignation.104

Mayor Yorty, C. Erwin Piper, the City Administrative Officer, and Senator George
Murphy (R-California) accused communists of falsely charging the LAPD with police
brutality, attacking the chief or exploiting tensions in Watts.105

At the end of August, Parker went on NBC's Meet the Press to speak to a national
audience about the riots, his officers and calls for his resignation, and refused to
acknowledge any responsibility for the violence.106 After an introduction as “the most
respected police officer in the United States after J. Edgar Hoover,” he blamed the
California Highway Patrol for starting the riots. If his officers had arrested Frye there


104 “Rights Group Wants Parker to Quit Job,” Los Angeles Times, 24 August 1965; “City Moves on
Many Fronts to Aid Riot Area,” Los Angeles Times, 24 August 1965; “Dymally Calls for Parker's

Several days after the rioting ended, Yorty asked Parker for files on communist plans to undermine
the police. He later told reporters communists leveled false charges of brutality against the police. See Memo
from Mayor Yorty to Chief Parker, Folder Correspondence July-Aug 1965, Box C-1005, Yorty Papers. A
year later in testifying before a Senate Committee chaired by Senator Abraham Ribicoff (D-Connecticut),
Yorty produced evidence of communist charges of police brutality in the 1930s. However, he backed down
slightly from his charge in 1965 that the riots were communist-inspired but alleged that communists were
in the area and “working all the time.” See File: Senate Hearings 23 August 1966, 703, 717, Box C-1925,
Yorty Papers.; Bollens and Geyer, Yorty, 154. CAO C. Erwin Piper wrote Mayor Yorty a memo blaming
communists for public attacks on the mayor and the chief. See Sonenshein, Politics in Black and White,
80-82.

would have been no violence. He denied that his officers had deliberately abused black residents, despite charges brought by a number of black attorneys, and argued that allegations of physical brutality were tactics to weaken police response. His officers had made hundreds of arrests in Watts before and did not provoke rioting in spite of the fact that Watts was a high crime area. He refused to resign because he did not believe it would bring peace to Los Angeles and might result in a deterioration of public security. Besides, he said, those calling for him to step down represented only one race. Finally, he told his audience that he had not intended to ridicule blacks with his statement about "monkeys in a zoo" but referred to rioters in general and "someone took the phrase out of context."  

Parker explained the police response several more times and never wavered in his belief that his officers did not contribute to the violence. In mid-September he engaged in a contentious argument with Council member Tom Bradley, and repeatedly complained that Bradley was trying to blame the police, who, Parker said, were the real

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107 Some excerpts from the program are in "Parker Puts Blame for Riot on State Highway Patrolmen," Los Angeles Times, 30 August 1965.

108 Parker denied that blacks lacked confidence in his officers and told viewers that black attorneys volunteered to investigate complaints of police brutality and "did not find one single charge they could press." "Parker Puts Blame for Riot on State Highway Patrolmen," Los Angeles Times, 30 August 1965; memo from M. A. Jones to Mr. DeLoach 30 August 1965, FBI 62-96042.

109 Memo from M. A. Jones to Mr. DeLoach 30 August 1965, FBI 62-96042, which included a summary of Parker's interview on NBC.

110 Ibid.

111 Ibid.
victims, the "No. 1 scapegoat." Accusations of police brutality, Parker told Council members, were a "deliberate attempt to keep the focus on the police department rather than on the rioters." Despite Bradley's explanation that he was asking questions for the general public, Parker refused to believe him. "I can't accept that. I think you are trying to pin this on the police. I'll go to my grave thinking this was your intention."

Though the chief refused to take responsibility for police abuse or his department's chaotic response, he drew overwhelming support from a majority of white residents, businesses, public officials and white sympathizers all over the country. Residents of Los Angeles and members of Chambers of Commerce sent him letters


114 Whites gave Parker a 79% favorable rating and Latinos gave him a 84% favorable rating; blacks gave him a 76% unfavorable rating. Percentages do not add up to 100% because not all categories of residents were included. Jews were more supportive of the black drive for equality than other whites. See Sonenshein, Politics in Black and White, 87, citing Sears and McConahay, The Politics of Violence: The New Urban Blacks and the Watts Riot (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1973), 59, 165, 549.

Two hundred housewives attended a city council meeting and commended the mayor and the chief for their “staunch stand” during the riots.\footnote{Housewives Visit Council, Laud Riot Handling,” Los Angeles Herald-Examiner, n.d. CF 122851, Box A1891, LACA.} Gene Roddenberry, the former officer who now wrote television scripts, sent him a letter praising his qualities as chief.\footnote{Roddenberry also sent a letter to Mayor Yorty praising the chief. See Alexander, Star Trek Creator, 233-34.} Some supporters enclosed checks for wounded officers and their families.\footnote{Police Commission Minutes, 25 August 1965, 15 September 1965.} Two sent letters from Great Britain and hundreds sent telegrams and letters from all over the country. One telegram from an Alabama state trooper in Mobile wired the department “We extend our sympathy but now you know what the non-violent movement is like.”\footnote{Mail Deluge Hails Chief in Riot Curb,” Citizen-News, 18 August 1965.} Senator George Murphy praised the chief and Mayor Yorty. Senator Robert F. Kennedy (D-New York) still believed Parker was
the best chief in the country. Former Mayor Fletcher Bowron sent him a letter of praise and support. Not surprisingly, Parker garnered support from Police Commissioners and City Council members for his devotion to duty. When Roy Wilkins suggested that he should resign if twenty percent of the people did not want him, Parker replied:

That's the rule of the minority, and if we're going to divide into enemy camps based upon color, they should remember that the majority is white. Since Watts, I've never gotten so many awards and citations in my life. Only the other day when I was having lunch with the president of a bank a woman came over to our table and said "God Bless you. Just let me hold your hand."

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121 Parker responded and noted that it was among thousands of letters of support, "following the recent demonstrations of mob violence in Los Angeles." See Letter to Parker from Fletcher Bowron, 31 August, 1965, Box 6, Folder 1965, Bowron Papers.

122 Police Commissioners issued a press release expressing shock and sadness at the tragedy and simultaneous praise for the chief. See Police Commission Minutes, 18 August 1965. The Grand Juror's Association of Los Angeles County adopted a resolution on 8 September 1965, and sent it to Police Commissioners who incorporated it into their minutes of 29 September 1965. Tom Bradley was out of town on a trip sponsored by the Department of Water and Power, Gilbert Lindsay was not in council chambers and Billy Mills voted against the commendation. See "Parker Given Confidence Vote by City Council," Los Angeles Herald-Examiner, 27 August 1965; CF 122851, Box A1891, LACA. City Council members passed two resolutions, in October 1965, and March 1966, each without support from black council members. Bradley later told reporters under no conditions could he pay the chief a glowing tribute for his conduct in human relations. See "Negro Councilman Opposes Resolution Honoring Parker," Los Angeles Times, 29 March 1966. Parker did not garner any commendations from the California State Legislature. In Sacramento Democrats defeated a proposal for commending the chief by a vote of 41 to 25 in the Assembly Rules Committee. See "Democrats Block Bid to Commend Parker," Los Angeles Times, 7 October 1965. The riots signaled a change in race and urban politics. For a discussion of the change due to urban decay and the rise of black-white coalitions. See Self and Sugrue, "Power of Place." In Los Angeles, efforts to build such a coalition did not come to fruition until Tom Bradley's mayoral election in 1974.

Nicholas Lemann noted that the riots began five days after President Johnson signed the Voting Rights Act on August 6, 1965, and the violence destroyed not only much of Watts but also "much of white America's store of racial good will." See "The Long March," The New Yorker, 10 February 2003, 90. In southern California, the Watts riots solidified resistance among white conservatives to many forms of integration. Residents in South Gate, next door to Watts, complained that crime increased and police constraints endangered their lives. See Nicholaides, My Blue Heaven, 325-27. For a discussion on political differences among whites, regarding Proposition 14 and conflicts on race and ideology, see Sonenshein, Politics in Black and White, 67; "Los Angeles Police Chief," New York Times, 14 August 1965.

As Parker spoke with reporters for local and national publications, justifying his conduct during the riots, he encountered journalists who were skeptical of his style of policing in a modern, racially mixed society. His racist remarks found their way into newspapers and magazines and one New York Times reporter noted that one of his phrases, "monkeys in a zoo," had come back to haunt him.124

Reporters for the national media, who had gained experience covering both the civil rights movement in the South and urban violence in the North, did not take Parker's comments at face value. They exposed flaws in his leadership and cited his refusal to contend with the consequences of black poverty. A New York Times reporter delved into his reputation, noting that he had made many enemies, had described a call for his removal as an example of the "big-lie technique," reacted vigorously to criticism, and developed a habit of responding abrasively to comments.125 Even Howard K. Smith, a veteran broadcast journalist who interviewed Parker on ABC's Issues and Answers on August 23, 1965, told viewers that Parker's officers had won a reputation for efficiency as well as one for enmity towards the poor, ignorant and unemployed.126 Don Moser, a reporter for Life Magazine, acknowledged that Parker was "one of the most respected police executives in the country" and that his men were "sharp, well educated...well paid and untainted by scandal," but also observed that his denial of police brutality and explanation of his phrase "monkeys in the zoo" were unconvincing.127

125 Ibid.
126 Turner, Police Establishment, 84.
A reporter for the *Wall Street Journal* contrasted the limits of Parker's police philosophy with that of Inspector Fisk and Dean John Lohman of the School of Criminology at the University of California, Berkeley. The reporter wrote that Parker claimed he was aware of "Negro sensitivities" and had maintained that police departments were not welfare agencies. The reporter cited Inspector Fisk, who admitted that officers verbally abused and intimidated black residents, which contradicted his own philosophy of policing — enforcing the law without offending the dignity of residents in the city.\(^{128}\) The reporter gave the last word to Dean Lohman who described Parker’s view of policing as pure rhetoric. "The more basic notion of the police function is that of preserving the peace."\(^ {129}\)

A local reporter from *Los Angeles Magazine* portrayed the chief with greater sympathy than did his colleagues in the national media. He described the chief as an old-fashioned policeman who grudgingly acknowledged the connection between poverty and crime. Parker agreed that federal programs alone could not solve the socio-economic conditions of poor blacks; yet without sufficient law enforcement, he told the reporter, "we're living in a fool's paradise." The real problem, Parker explained, was that blacks were migrating "in droves" to Los Angeles too quickly, assuming that their lives would be better there than anywhere else in the country.\(^ {130}\)

Reporters and editors for the *Los Angeles Times* who had covered Parker and his department with scant criticism before the riots now began to examine race, poverty and


\(^{129}\) Ibid.

\(^{130}\) "Parker... and What's Next," *Los Angeles Magazine*, September 1965, 28.
minority relations with the police. Though editorial writers praised LAPD officers, editors at the *Times* gave Parker's subordinates and civic leaders more space to express their views on race relations and the police. *Times* reporters and editors had blundered during the first two days of the riots, considering them to be small skirmishes, and only realized the magnitude of the violence on the third day, when reporters from all over the world descended on Los Angeles. Though they stayed behind police lines when the rioting intensified at night, *Times* reporters went into Watts with photographers during the day to talk with black residents, who gradually overcame their suspicions of white reporters and spoke with them about the violence.

While Parker complained that critics targeted the police, editorial writers now appealed for a serious dialogue on race. To that end, reporters fanned out to speak with people involved in the riots and to assess the social, economic and political causes of the violence. Reporters interviewed black residents, black police officers and Inspector

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131 Editors of the *Los Angeles Sentinel*, a black weekly, acknowledged mass unemployment and inferior housing in Watts and distrust of city officials who delayed acceptance of federal funds for anti-poverty programs. See Editorial, *Los Angeles Sentinel*, 19 August 1965. The editorial made clear that it did not justify the violence. "...self-respecting Negro citizens here deplore the burning of buildings, the lootings and shootings and staggering toll in human lives and property damage."

132 On the third day of the riot, editorial writers described the violence as a youthful mob filled with long-standing grievances and gave their discontent "irrational expression." Writers commended the police for doing their job well. See editorial, *A Summer Carnival of Riot*, *Los Angeles Times*, 13 August 1965. The *Los Angeles Herald-Examiner* titled its August 27, 1965 editorial supporting Parker "The Praiseworthy." Editorial writers still praised LAPD officers in mid-September, "First Line of Community Defense," *Los Angeles Times*, 24 September 1965. The chief wrote a letter to the editor, noted that attempts to pillory his officers for causing the riots were unwarranted and expressed gratitude that a highly respected newspaper would recognize his officers who would be the first line of defense should the violence recur. See "Letters to the Times, Police Recognition Appreciated as Encouraging by Chief Parker," *Los Angeles Times*, 1 October 1965.


134 Ibid.

Fisk, who emphasized the importance of candor in admitting racial tensions with the police and the need for retraining officers to deal with them. Based on the information they gathered, reporters defined the problem of black poverty in a social, economic and political context and recommended solutions using federal funding for jobs, pre-school programs and nutritious lunches in public schools.

One civic leader who personally sought solutions to the racial divide was Otis Chandler, publisher of the *Los Angeles Times*, and a civic leader comfortable in a multiracial city. He had known about the animosity between white officers and black residents but did not anticipate that the city would explode in a week of violence. “A spark set off the riots and the police overreacted.” He acknowledged that the rioting caught everyone at the *Times* off-guard. After the violence ended, Chandler accepted an invitation from black and Hispanic residents to ride with them to understand the harassment and embarrassment they experienced at the hands of white officers.

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137 These recommendations were similar to those made by members of the McCone Commission in December, 1965. See Governor's Commission, *Violence in the City*, 47, 55, 61. The article was one in a series of five that earned the *Times* a Pulitzer. See Halberstam, *Powers That Be*, 281. Councilman Billy Mills wrote a letter to the editor thanking him for the coverage. See Letter to editor from Billy G. Mills, Councilman, 8th District, *Los Angeles Times*, 24 October 1965. However, Otis Chandler, the *Times*’ publisher, noted that the increased coverage met opposition from conservatives who accused reporters of bias towards moderate positions, but reporters were pleased with the change and grateful that as a conservative business and civic leader, he took the initiative. Chandler, interview.

138 Chandler never met Parker. Chandler created a multi-racial group of business, religious, civic and labor leaders to discuss race relations and other issues affecting the city. In addition to the meetings of his committee, Chandler attempted to establish a work program for young black men but had trouble training them to work eight-hour days and to leave their guns and knives at home. He visited the new employees to show executive support for the program but admitted that it did not succeed. Chandler acknowledged that the forces of poverty, low literacy levels and absent fathers were too much to overcome. Ibid.

139 Ibid.

140 Ibid.
Chandler also sought to understand police officers' anger towards racial changes in Los Angeles. He rode motorcycles and lifted weights with many of them. He listened to their dissatisfaction with LAPD personnel practices for hiring more black officers and their resentment towards black applicants whom they knew were unqualified but who competed with them for promotional positions.\(^1\) Yet Chandler's knowledge of some officers' irritation with recruitment programs and revised personnel policies did not deter him from publishing coverage, analysis and investigations of police misconduct and the consequences for black residents, the LAPD and the public.\(^2\)

As Chandler and his reporters examined problems of race and poverty and suggested solutions, Parker's public relations staff continued efforts to project an image of brave and professional officers who had prepared for civil unrest and exercised restraint in spite of rioters' brutality.\(^3\) In the annual report for 1965, PID writers acknowledged that the riots were "assignments without precedent" but that each officer individually deserved recognition for his contribution to restoring peace in Los Angeles.\(^4\) To illustrate the magnitude of their assignment and their commitment to improved race relations, staff officers inserted two photographs, one of the devastation in Watts, and another of a smiling police officer getting out of his patrol car as black and white children ran to greet him.\(^5\)

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\(^{1}\) Chandler, interview.

\(^{2}\) Ibid.

\(^{3}\) LAPD Annual Report 1965, 18-19.

\(^{4}\) Ibid., 23.

\(^{5}\) LAPD Annual Report 1965, 25-27. Joe Saltzman, a television news producer for KNXT, the local CBS affiliate, felt the force of officers' anger towards criticism of the department. After broadcasting
Parker also used public relations in cultivating his relationships with businessmen who had been stalwart supporters. At one event sponsored by the local Chamber of Commerce, he warned of the danger of lax support for the police. To those who blamed the police for civil unrest, they must be prepared for the consequences:

Any community that seeks to buy peace from its dissident elements by diluting the effectiveness of its law enforcement agency is doomed to failure, disillusionment, disappointment and despair.\(^{146}\)

Opposition to the police, he warned his audience, inflicted suffering on the entire community.

Parker drew on a deep reserve of white support when he testified at hearings held by the McConne Commission whose head, John McConne, a Republican, southern California native and former director of the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), was sympathetic to the chief.\(^{147}\) Parker was one of five hundred witnesses, whose

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\(^{146}\) Parker also used the event to award the department's Medal of Valor to five officers. See “Parker: Warning on Weakness,” *Los Angeles Herald-Examiner*, 22 September 1965.

\(^{147}\) Governor Brown appointed the Commission partly in response to a telegram sent to him by the Los Angeles branch of the NAACP. See Memo, from Leonard H. Carter to Roy Wilkins, 10 September 1965, Box 15 Folder May-Sept 1965, NAACP West Coast Region Papers. See also “Charge of Governor Edmund G. Brown to the Commission, 24 August 1965” in Governor’s Commission, *Violence in the City*, 1–iii. Horne, Fogelson and Domanick observe that Brown appointed McConne to provide credibility among conservatives in California. See *Fire This Time*, 341; Fogelson, “White on Black,” 341; Domanick, *To Protect and To Serve*, 189-90. McConne also headed the Atomic Energy Commission from 1958 to 1961. After he retired from the CIA in 1965, he moved to San Marino, a wealthy enclave east of Los Angeles. [http://www.cia-on-campus.org/usc.edu/mccone.html](http://www.cia-on-campus.org/usc.edu/mccone.html); accessed 28 October 2005. One of the black staff attorneys to the McConne Commission told the *Los Angeles Times* that McConne was the kind of man who knew what caused the riots before he began the hearings. See Domanick, *To Protect and To Serve*, 190. McConne told witnesses from the ACLU that the commission did not want opinions, extreme or emotional statements, just facts. Police brutality, he told them, was a “device ...[of] our adversaries, those who would like to destroy the freedom that this country stands for.” See *Fire This Time*, 342, citing testimony of George Slaff, 12 October 1965, vol. 13, McConne papers.

Among the appointees were Warren Christopher, vice-chairman of the Commission, a Democrat and partner in the law firm O'Melveny and Myers; Asa Call, a Republican businessman and chair of
observations varied widely. Parker agreed to appearances by his Deputy Chiefs and Inspector Fisk, but he persuaded members of the Commission not to interview any of his officers.

When the chief testified, he employed the same arguments he had used after the riots but with greater intensity: his officers did not abuse residents, the highest crime rates were in black neighborhoods and the police were the real victims of social unrest. However, in these closed hearings, he expressed anger and agitation in answering questions about poor black residents who broke the law, and expressed impatience and indignation with Commission members who prodded him to justify policies that he insisted were his alone to make. He described sordid working conditions for his officers.

Pacific Mutual Life Insurance; Superior Court Judge Earl Broady, an African-American who had served in the LAPD for five years in the 1940s; Very Reverend Charles Casassa, president of Loyola University; Reverend James Edward Jones, an African-American member of the Los Angeles Board of Education; Dr. Sherman Mellinkoff, dean of the UCLA School of Medicine, and Mrs. Robert G. Neumann, former president of the League of Women Voters. See Letter from Governor's Commission on the Los Angeles Riots to Governor Brown, 2 December 1965, in Violence in the City, first page, unnumbered; Cannon, Official Negligence, 64; Conot, Rivers of Blood, 415.

Staff of the Commission included a general counsel, several investigators and twenty-six consultants who interviewed thousands of residents of whom at least ninety had been arrested. See Fogelson, “White on Black,” 338; Schiesl, “Behind the Badge,” 165. Two of the investigators, Samuel Williams and Yvonne Brathwaite, were black attorneys and set up offices in South Central to gather information, said by one scholar to be some of the most significant ever collected on a single black community. See Horne, Fire This Time, 342-43. Most black leaders who testified before the Commission lived west of the Harbor Freeway (Interstate 110), the dividing line between middle-class and lower-class blacks, cited in Governor’s Commission, Violence in the City, 77.

Witnesses appeared before the Commission in over sixty closed sessions in a three-month period. See Horne, Fire This Time, 342-43. Witnesses included Governor Brown, his advisors, Lieutenant Governor Glenn Anderson, local elected officials, law enforcement officials from Los Angeles County and the California Highway Patrol, civil libertarians, teachers, black leaders and residents of Watts. See Fogelson, “White on Black,” 338; Schiesl, “Behind the Badge,” 165.

Warren Christopher, attorney and former Secretary of State, telephone interview by author, 23 July 2003. In Official Negligence, Lou Cannon notes that Parker ordered them not to speak about the riots and used pending lawsuits and coroner’s inquests as his rationale. See Cannon, Official Negligence, 131. Aside from Deputy Chiefs and Inspector Fisk, Lieutenant Frank Beeson and Captain Thomas King, who both worked at the 77th Street station, were the only other sworn personnel to testify. See Table of Contents, McCone Commission transcript, 1:10, 13.
and dismissed social explanations of crime.\textsuperscript{150} Unlike his predecessors, he told the Commissioners, he decided early in his tenure as chief to confront problems rather than sweep them under the rug.\textsuperscript{151} Under his leadership, the LAPD was “one of the most heavily disciplined departments in the nation.”\textsuperscript{152} He denied that IAD officers ignored allegations of abuse. As chief, he oversaw the publication of a disciplinary list every month and “you can’t even get a disciplinary list out of the Bar.”\textsuperscript{153}

The police did not cause the riots, he told Commissioners, and objected to the tone of inquiry that directed questioning to wrongdoing by the police.\textsuperscript{154} "I am a symbol target in America today, and you know it."\textsuperscript{155} So were the police.

When you talk about dislocated minorities, and I am not saying this for sympathy, because I don’t have to, but the police of this country, in my opinion, are the most downtrodden, oppressed, dislocated minority in America. Nobody cares about what they think.\textsuperscript{156}

The chief decried the portrayal of rioters as victims who were not responsible for their actions. They were people who lashed out at the closest government representative they could find, the "guy with the blue uniform and the badge."\textsuperscript{157} Parker insisted that his men

\textsuperscript{150}McCone Commission transcript, 11:11-19, 24, 133, 26-33; 38; 35-37.
\textsuperscript{151}Ibid., 11:115-16.
\textsuperscript{152}Ibid. 11:11.
\textsuperscript{153}Ibid. 11:115-16. In 1964, four hundred sixty-six complaints came from outside the department of which one hundred twenty-one were about excessive use of force. Of these, sixty-three complaints came from whites, forty-two from blacks, thirteen from Latinos and three from others. In these cases, 17.4% cases were sustained. Ibid., 11:11-12.
\textsuperscript{154}Ibid., 11:134.
\textsuperscript{155}Ibid., 11:121.
\textsuperscript{156}Ibid., 11:35.
\textsuperscript{157}Ibid., 11:36.
put themselves in harm's way repeatedly to maintain order but reporters did not bother to write stories about their encounters with danger. He told McCone Commissioners that a few days before he testified, "I had three men shot here last Friday, and as far as the press is concerned, why, that wasn't any different than the amount of albacore that were caught in the channel that day."\textsuperscript{158}

In addition to dangerous conditions in Watts, his men patrolled places where male residents inflicted terrible acts on family members yet officers were obliged to treat them respectfully:

This is an oppressive assignment to give these young men who have been taught to be courteous and be addressed as an individual who has sexual intercourse with his mother and so forth, this is really difficult, but no one seems to care much about that. I don't know how you can expect a decent human being to put up with it.\textsuperscript{159}

Nevertheless, under pressure to defuse tensions with black residents, the chief issued a training bulletin forbidding them to use offensive language that was unfamiliar to them.\textsuperscript{160}

Some of the things were rather startling, I can assure you, to find that certain words were deemed to be verbal brutality. To refer to a Negro male as boy, regardless of his age, is considered brutal. To refer to a Negro woman by her first name is absolute taboo.\textsuperscript{161}

Parker accused civil rights leaders and their attorneys of provoking trouble between black residents and the police. He accused civil rights attorneys of charging his

\textsuperscript{158}McCone Commission transcript, 11:35.

\textsuperscript{159}Ibid., 11:37

\textsuperscript{160}Ibid., 11:7.

\textsuperscript{161}Ibid., 11:10. He spoke about the program to train officers to refrain from using offensive language in an interview with a writer for a piece in Los Angeles Magazine in the fall of 1965. See "Parker...And What's Next," Los Angeles Magazine, 29.
men with verbal brutality because they could find no evidence of physical brutality. He blamed civil rights leaders for falsely charging brutality for their own political gain. He blamed them for fomenting civil unrest a year and a half earlier, when he learned from police intelligence that they planned to paralyze the central business district with 250,000 demonstrators. He did not want them bringing "all the Civil Rights conflicts in America to Los Angeles and parading them across the stage."  

Through hours of testimony, Parker registered anger, irritation, resentment and disgust. He complained that critics singled out his officers when Los Angeles County Sheriffs were also at fault. After all, he said, Los Angeles County Sheriff Pete Pitchess "sits there and keeps his mouth shut and doesn’t get in trouble with anybody, but they have had a lot of trouble in that Firestone district, and don’t kid yourself." He resented questions on his policy for shooting which, he had told Commission members, was the "bare legal minimum." "I went through all this with Councilman Bradley." He complained that answering questions about the number of black officers and civilians in his department and sociological explanations for outreach did not explain the cause of

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162 McCone Commission transcript, 11:7. Tom Bradley also spoke of the LAPD’s verbal brutality and emphasized that officers did not beat suspects but instead used a double standard of conduct to apprehend suspects - one standard for whites and another for blacks. See Bradley oral history, 126.


165 Ibid., 11:118. Firestone is a part of Los Angeles County, outside the city boundary.

166 Ibid., 11:18.

167 Ibid., 11:33.
the riots. He told Thomas Sheridan, general counsel for the Commission, that the LAPD did not use evidence from an individual unless there was probable cause for his arrest at the time. He added that he was deeply offended that Sheridan questioned his department's arrest procedures. He became irritated when he had to spend hours answering more questions "that have been asked me by other people almost in the exact same form, they have been answered again and again and again." When Judge Broady asked him why blacks yelled at him and not at Sheriff Pete Pitchess, Parker replied, "Well, I suppose it must be my personality, that's the only answer I can give you, because the fact is we police the bulk of the Negro population in Los Angeles."

The testimony of Parker's Deputy Chiefs differed markedly from the chief. They acknowledged police mistreatment of black residents and knew about the harsh conditions that plagued the lives of those in poverty because they communicated with their subordinates and black leaders. At the same time, some of their comments reflected racial stereotyping. Deputy Chief Roger Murdock told McCone Commissioners that he refused the request of John Buggs, executive director for the Los Angeles County Human Relations Commission, to assign only black plainclothes officers

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168 McCone Commission transcript, 11:134.
169 Ibid., 11:161-62.
170 Ibid., 11:134.
171 Ibid., 11:119-20.
172 Many officers in the top echelon of the LAPD sharply disagreed with the chief but as long as he remained in office, they could not voice dissent. Two Deputy Chiefs, Thomas Reddin and Richard Simon, acknowledged that black residents felt police mistreated them and that treating the social ills that plagued their lives was necessary. See Conot, Rivers of Blood, 419.
to Watts, but smiled as he recalled saying to him that black officers would not be a threat at night because residents could not see them.\textsuperscript{174} Deputy Chief Richard Simon testified that many white officers "found it difficult to distinguish between the Negro who is a professional man, strictly a law observer, and the Negro who was a law breaker."\textsuperscript{175}

Inspector James Fisk differed from all of Chief Parker's executive staff in his testimony because he did not indulge in stereotypes and spoke about treating black residents with dignity.\textsuperscript{176} He, too, acknowledged police mistreatment but placed it in a much broader context than had Reddin and Simon. He was "more inclined to be a minister than a policeman," according to the chief.\textsuperscript{177} As an elder of the Hollywood Presbyterian Church, he applied Christian theology to his personal and professional life.\textsuperscript{178} He testified that Chief Parker had given him a blank check to do what he felt was right and to speak on his behalf.\textsuperscript{179} He spoke about the need to respond to calls involving

\textsuperscript{174}Ibid., 10: 17. Murdock also told \textit{Los Angeles Times} city editor Bill Thomas that he assigned white officers to South Central because "you can't see black cops at night." Thomas, interview; comments also cited in Conot, \textit{Rivers of Blood}, 235. In 1965 Captain Thomas King told a staff member of the McCone Commission that blacks were inferior and communists dominated the civil rights movement. See Horne, \textit{Fire This Time}, 139.

\textsuperscript{175}McCone Commission transcript 13:8. Commander Frank Beeson, Jr., who headed the 77\textsuperscript{th} Street division during the riots, told McCone Commission staff that his interaction with black residents was primarily with bookmakers, prostitutes and gamblers. Many white officers had limited contact with members of the black middle class and assumed that most blacks were criminals. See Horne, \textit{Fire This Time}, 57, 379, footnote 49.

\textsuperscript{176}McCone Commission transcript, 6:13.

\textsuperscript{177}Ibid., 6:3, citing Sheridan's quote. Parker actually said "Fisk is a man who has a flare for this community relations work and has a very deep religious background and is anxious to work extensively in this matter of community relations, particularly the Negro area." See Ibid., 11:106.

\textsuperscript{178}Ibid., 6:3.

\textsuperscript{179}Ibid., 6:25.
family disputes with the intent to mediate rather than the intent to make arrests. In contrast with the chief, he embraced a concept of policing that measured success beyond tabulating the number of crimes solved and arrests made. His view of policing incorporated a commitment to fostering good relations between officers and all residents of the city.

Black witnesses, among them attorneys, civic and religious leaders and residents of Watts, spoke of anger towards the police for their intimidation and brutality, and of the social and economic conditions that underlay poverty. They testified to serious unemployment, little or no access to public transportation, poor public education, inadequate school libraries, and poor nutrition in school cafeterias. They also spoke about a "spiral of failure" that accompanied a disadvantaged child in the urban core and contributed to the "gathering anger which impelled the rioters to escalate the routine arrest of a drunken driver into six days of violence."

After hearing testimony from black clergy, attorneys, civil rights leaders, residents and Deputy Chiefs, the McCone Commissioners issued a report on December 2, 1965 absolving Chief Parker of any responsibility for the violence. They acknowledged that most black residents distrusted him and believed that he was prejudiced against them,

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180 Ibid., 6:13. McCone reminded the Commission that the black population in Los Angeles increased eight times from 1940 and that most of the migrants came from the South, where "a police officer is freely their hated enemy from childhood on." Ibid., 6:17, 20.

181 McCone Commission transcript, 6:5, 16.

182 California State Assembly Member Mervyn Dymally told members of the McCone Commission that blacks expected the worst from the police. He also suggested that they recommend tightening law enforcement and eliminating brutality. Ibid., 6:48-49.

183 Governor's Commission, Violence in the City, 38-48, 62-68, 49-61.

184 Ibid., 5-6.
but after listening to Parker's testimony and examining evidence of his "record of fairness to Negro officers," Commissioners concluded that his comments and conduct were inconsistent with prejudice.

Despite the depth of the feeling against Chief Parker expressed to us by so many witnesses, he is recognized, even by many of his most vocal critics, as a capable Chief who directs an efficient police force that serves well this entire community.\(^{185}\)

The Commissioners also concluded that no single circumstance caused the riots and made suggestions for improving the welfare of poor blacks and their relations with the police.\(^{186}\) They recommended public funding for education and job training to improve social and economic conditions.\(^{187}\) They recommended expanding some police programs and adding civilian staff and made three recommendations for improving relations with minority residents:

1. Strengthen the Police Commission by increasing staff and salaries and create a position of Inspector General to investigate citizen complaints.\(^{188}\)

2. Strengthen community-police relations by expanding human relations training, reestablishing youth programs such as the Deputy Auxiliary Police, scheduling workshops to discuss law enforcement between police and residents, and increasing contact between the police and students.\(^{189}\)

\(^{185}\) Governor's Commission, *Violence in the City*, 28.

\(^{186}\) Ibid., 26.

\(^{187}\) Ibid., 47-48, 60-61.

\(^{188}\) Commissioners refused to investigate seventy complaints of "alleged police brutality" because, they argued, their task was to review policies and procedures rather than evaluate individual cases and referred all of them to appropriate agencies. See Governor's Commission, *Violence in the City*, 27. Several months later, Judge Broady told an FBI agent that testimony from the McCone Commission showed that complaints were adequately handled by existing procedures in the LAPD. Most of the black residents in Los Angeles were comparative newcomers, he said, who brought with them bad attitudes towards law enforcement, conditioned by their previous environment which made police patrol difficult. See FBI memo, from H. L. Edwards to Mr. Felt, NDAA Midyear meeting, March 2-5, 1966, FBI 96042.

\(^{189}\) The visits of "Policeman Bill" to elementary schools, as noted in the LAPD Annual Report 1965, 16, may be in response to this recommendation. In 1955, Parker did not object when the CAO had
3. Increase the number of black and Hispanic officers and increase the budget for preparing minority candidates.\textsuperscript{190}

Reaction to the report was swift from elected officials, journalists and black leaders. Senator Robert Kennedy and William F. Buckley, Jr. expressed support for the chief as did most city council members who agreed with the report’s conclusions.\textsuperscript{191} A broadcaster for KNX, the local radio affiliate of CBS, editorialized that the report was tepid and that Commissioners should have described the violence in Watts as a race riot.\textsuperscript{192} Editors at \textit{Newsweek} concluded that the report was flawed, expressed surprise that Commissioners gave the LAPD a “virtually clean bill” of health and warned that the “investigation could become a substitute instead of a catalyst for visible, meaningful action.”\textsuperscript{193} Reverend Brookins, who headed the UCRC, criticized the report for lacking

\textsuperscript{190}Commissioners made a similar recommendation for the LASD. See Governor’s Commission, \textit{Violence in the City}, 30-37.

\textsuperscript{191}In a report issued by the Police, Fire and Civil Defense Committee of the Los Angeles city council, investigators also defended the chief and concluded that there was no evidence of excessive force or discourtesy by the LAPD. Council members who heard Parker’s testimony before the city council committee believed him when he told them that police brutality was charged by persons who used it as a tactic for self-defense and for diverting attention away from their illegal actions. The riots engendered chaos on such a scale, he told the committee, that police had to perform quick search operations and could not differentiate between criminals and non-criminals. See “Preliminary Report 10 May, 1967,” 23; \textit{Horne, Fire This Time}, 347.

\textsuperscript{192}\textit{Horne, Fire This Time}, 343.

\textsuperscript{193}Ibid., citing \textit{Newsweek}, 20 December 1965, 13. Others who found fault with the recommendations included Wesley Brazier, head of the Los Angeles branch of the Urban League, who noted the absence of economic incentives to relieve poverty. See \textit{Horne, Fire This Time}, 346. In an internal report, ACLU staff wrote that blacks and Mexican-Americans might have confidence in the police if they believed that their claims of police malpractice would get a fair hearing. See ACLU report titled “Police Malpractice and the Watts Riot,” in “Background for Action” Box 15, Folder Nov-Dec 1965, NAACP West Coast Papers. The ACLU rented an office in Charcoal Alley, on Beach Street between 102\textsuperscript{nd} and

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workable solutions and Council member Billy Mills called it pitiful.\textsuperscript{194}

Members of the California Advisory Committee to the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights were among the harshest critics of the report, prompting the mayor and chief to level counter-charges against them. Advisory Committee members described the report as "elementary, superficial, unoriginal and unimaginative," that prescribed aspirin where surgery was required and offered little on economic and sociological conditions not previously available.\textsuperscript{195} They noted that McConne Commissioners failed to consider the consequences of Proposition 14, ignored Mayor Yorty's absence during the first few days of rioting, and underestimated local, state and federal governmental support for housing, jobs and education.\textsuperscript{196} Finally, they accused Yorty and Parker of neglecting to take any steps to avert violence.\textsuperscript{197} Yorty and Parker countered that the Advisory Committee

\textsuperscript{103} Streets, where most of the burning and looting in Watts had occurred, to assist residents with processing complaints. ACLU staff collected between 2,500 and 3,000 complaints, small and large, and submitted them to the LAPD, but their effort was futile. See Monroe oral history, 155-57.


\textsuperscript{196} "Civil Rights Group Assails McCone Report as 'Bitter Disappointment,'" Los Angeles Times, 23 January 1966. Near the article was an Editor's Note that the Los Angeles Times endorsed Proposition 14, which passed in Nov 1964.

\textsuperscript{197} Among the members of the California Committee were Judge Loren Miller, Assembly Member Mervyn Dymally and Attorney Stephen Reinhardt. Dr. Reynaldo Carreon, Jr., also a member and a former Police Commissioner, disagreed with portions of the Committee's report. He argued that Chief Parker was a "national symbol of police honesty, discipline and integrity who has been made the principal target of senseless tirades. His surrender to the forces of evil and civil disobedience, under any pretense is impossible." See "Civil Rights Group Assails McCone Report as 'Bitter Disappointment,'" Los Angeles Times, 23 January 1966; "Yorty, Parker Lash Back at Civil Rights Unit Report," Daily News, 25 January 1966. The chair of the California Committee, Episcopal Bishop James A. Pike, noted that articles in the Los Angeles Times gave a more accurate picture of economic and social conditions in the city than did the McCone Commission's report. See "Riot Report Called Failure," Los Angeles Herald-Examiner, 23 January 1966. Reinhardt was appointed by Mayor Tom Bradley to a seat on the Police Commission in the 1970s and later was appointed by President Carter to the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals.
members exacerbated the difficulty for police to protect people and property.¹⁹⁸

Shortly after McCone Commissioners issued their report, Parker went through the motions of supporting the idea of an Inspector General (IG) but maintained that it was unnecessary. He had successfully resisted external oversight of police misconduct throughout his career. After Police Commissioners recommended that he establish the position, a debate in council chambers in February, 1966 deteriorated into a shouting match when Parker accused Bradley of blaming the LAPD for the riots.¹⁹⁹ Bradley denied the accusation but did not back off from his criticism of police misconduct. As he and other council members argued over the IG’s responsibilities, Parker maintained that Police Commissioners and his officers handled citizen complaints properly.²⁰⁰ Parker initially lost when Mayor Yorty signed an ordinance creating the position in March and

¹⁹⁸ "Yorty, Parker Reject Riot Action Charges," *Los Angeles Times*, 24 January 1966. In a letter to the *Los Angeles Times*, Reinhardt reiterated the Committee’s criticism of McCone Commissioners’ refusal to examine the validity of charges by black residents of police brutality and Parker’s “persistent hostility towards [the] civil rights movement,” his lack of understanding and remarks which alienated thousands of blacks and created hostility towards police. See “McCone Report: Critic Calls for Action Now,” *Los Angeles Times*, 12 February 1966. NAACP members noted that the McCone Commission report might provide justification for Parker to continue his refusal to work with civil rights leaders. See NAACP, “Background for Action.” Inspector Ed Walker, the head of the Public Information Division, defended Parker and told reporters that critics failed to see the extent of LAPD involvement in community relations, and disputed the accusation of inattention to complaints as “utterly false.” See “Watts Riot Study Depicted as Weak,” *New York Times*, 23 January 1966.

Robert Fogelson, an urban historian, supported the findings of the California Committee and castigated McCone Commissioners for siding with the police and ignoring solutions to problems of poverty, police brutality and racial discrimination. He faulted the McCone Commission staff who wrote the report for grossly underestimating the number of rioters and minimizing the significance of black grievances against the police. He faulted John McCone for ignoring the testimony of black witnesses on police misconduct towards them, for assuming that protests against brutality would destroy the police, and for aligning himself with Parker. See Fogelson, “White on Black,” 339, 342, 345, 350, 358.


Commissioners appointed James Gordon but ultimately won because Commissioners gave him little power.\textsuperscript{201}

Parker ignored the McCone Committee recommendations for expanding human relations training and minority recruitment, and assigned responsibility for implementation to Fisk who initiated an ambitious program. The Inspector added one officer to each station which served residents in black neighborhoods and assigned teams of black and white police officers to grammar schools and to street patrol to meet residents and "dispel stereotypes."\textsuperscript{202} He scheduled conferences staffed by university faculty for sworn personnel to study human relations and social structures and to develop programs for youth.\textsuperscript{203}

He began an equally ambitious program for recruiting minorities that yielded mixed results. He assisted with the appointment of Los Angeles Dodgers catcher John Roseboro in October, 1965 as a Consultant in Community and Public Relations.\textsuperscript{204}

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{201} Bradley and Mills proposed a motion to establish the position, which was approved by the City Council. According to Police Commission Minutes of 2 March 1966, Commissioners requested an Inspector, Administration of Discipline. The ordinance was signed 31 March 1966. See CF 127432, Box A1947, LACA. Gordon's name is in Police Commission Minutes 11 May 1966. Parker disregarded the recommendation for the IG and by August, 1966, a follow-up report to the McCone commission rendered the office of IG inoperative. See Conot, Rivers of Blood, 418.
\item \textsuperscript{202} McCone Commission transcript, 6:15; Police Commission Minutes. 26 October 1965. At the same time, a Mexican-American officer distributed information in Spanish and communicated with Spanish speaking residents. See LAPD Annual Report 1965, 16. It is unlikely Fisk would have succeeded given Parker's disinterest in race relations and increasing detachment from police operations.
\end{itemize}

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also initiated a program involving Roseboro and two young black officers, Joe Rouzan and Bernard Parks, to recruit black candidates from Southern California and colleges and universities all over the country.\textsuperscript{205} In spite of their efforts, they succeeded in hiring only a few black officers.\textsuperscript{206}

Forty years later, several people recalled their reaction to the riots. Joe Rouzan remembered that as a thirty-one year old sergeant he was one of three hundred officers assigned to gather intelligence in Watts. He did not succeed but noted that residents ignored warnings not to destroy their neighborhood.\textsuperscript{207} To Daryl Gates, now a retired chief of police, "they destroyed themselves. They burned down their buildings. They're idiots, and you can use that word, 'idiots' – absolute, total, blithering idiots."\textsuperscript{208} Roger Wilkins, now a professor at George Mason University, remembered apathy. He arranged three community meetings where residents testified with anguish and bitterness about poor city services, brutal police, high unemployment, and poor public transportation, poor schools and inadequate housing but no one "cared enough to come and listen to their
complaints.' To Walter Mosley, a novelist who writes about black Los Angeles, the riots

"...had no leaders, no apologists, no internal critics. The Watts riot was a spontaneous act of a people who had been oppressed, emasculated and impoverished for too long...after the riots some people got a sense of bitter satisfaction while others learned to fear."

Retired CHP Officer Lee W. Minikus told reporters that he would arrest Marquette Frye again. "I've been asked that question about 10 million times."

Parker's Final Months

Parker survived the riots but he spent his final months in office as weakened, detached and seriously ill. As rumors swirled around him about his health and impending retirement, he attended a few conferences, spoke to sympathetic audiences, complained about recent court decisions and lobbied for anti-riot legislation in Sacramento. As he struggled to regain his strength, he looked for a way to retire without conceding a victory to his opponents.

Parker's heart condition worsened. In October, 1965, after he concluded his testimony before the McCone Commission, he took a three-month medical leave for heart

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210Walter Mosley, "What we forget about Watts," Los Angeles Times, 9 August 2005. One factor that reporters did not cite was real estate. The average price of a 1,300 square foot home in Watts is now estimated to be between $300,000 and $400,000, and is attracting developers, investors, and short and long-term buyers. See Kimberly Stevens, "A Los Angeles Neighborhood Shakes Off Its Troubled Past," New York Times, 30 October 2005.


212Memo from H. L. Edwards to Mr. Felt, 4 March 1966, on NDAA Midyear meeting, FBI 62-96042.
surgery. Parker acknowledged his poor health at the beginning of his sick leave in October in an appearance on Larry King's radio show when he attended the IACP convention in Miami. When asked if he would accept the position of FBI Director, Parker said he would refuse, even if the President offered it to him. He had been in law enforcement for thirty-eight years and the FBI needed a younger man to head the agency. He also mentioned that if his health did not improve he would consider retiring but otherwise planned to remain chief for another two to three years. In December, Parker returned to his office, rested but not completely well.215

By March 1966, those who worked with the chief knew he could not continue. Unbeknownst to him, Evelle Younger, the Los Angeles County District Attorney, and Judge Broady, a member of the McCone Commission, told an FBI agent that Parker's ill health necessitated his retirement. They speculated that he needed to find a way to leave and save face after members of CORE had demanded his resignation.216

213 At the Mayo clinic in Rochester, Minnesota, surgeons removed an aneurysm from an artery in his heart. They discovered the aneurysm in May, 1964, when they had treated him for an ulcerated leg. Several months later, in March, 1965, he took a month's leave for two minor operations at Queen of Angels hospital in Los Angeles. See “Parker Will Have Surgery; Retirement Hinges on Result,” Los Angeles Times, 8 October 1965; “Heart Operation Set for Tuesday, Chief, 63, Going to Mayos,” Los Angeles Herald-Examiner, 7 October 1965.

214 “Parker Says He Might Retire,” Los Angeles Herald-Examiner, 8 October 1965. See telegram to Director, FBI from FBI, Miami, 13 October 1965, FBI 62-96042. The telegram summarized only those parts of the interview that pertained to the FBI.


216 In addition, Younger, a Republican, privately told FBI Agent Edwards that Parker’s claim of four percent blacks in the LAPD was flawed because the department refused to recognize hardly any blacks for promotion and advancement. Moreover, Younger said that Parker’s prejudices against blacks blocked any progress for improving race relations with the police. See Memo from H. L. Edwards to Mr. Felt, 4 March 1966, on NDAA Midyear meeting, FBI 62-96042.
Parker took another three-month leave beginning in March 1966, and the state of his health became a topic for discussion not only for the FBI but for the mayor, his staff and the national news media. A New York Times reporter noted that he had been hospitalized several times. See "Police Chief in Watts Riots on Indefinite Sick Leave," New York Times, 10 March 1966. According to an FBI informant, Parker took a leave because he did not recover from surgery for hemorrhoids which he had undergone a year before. See Memo from SAC, LA, to Director, FBI, 10 March 1966, FBI 62-96042. Parker's leave was from March 4 to June 1, 1966. See "Chief Parker Back on Job – Tanned and Testy," Los Angeles Times, 2 June 1966 included in memo to Director, FBI from SAC, LA, 2 June 1966, FBI 62-96042. Police Commission Minutes of 9 March 1966 note that he suffered from temporary cardiac incapacity resulting from stress and strain.

A reporter for the New York Times wrote that he had gone on indefinite sick leave. FBI agents in Los Angeles closely monitored his health but expressed suspicion about his leave. In a memo to Hoover, the SAC in Los Angeles questioned whether he was really suffering from cardiac arrest or if he had taken himself out of public view due to political tensions. "He would be the last, of course, to realize the latter possibility because of his extreme egotism."220

During his second leave, the chief made a few public appearances and kept in touch with his office. Later in March, he attended an awards ceremony given by the

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217 A New York Times reporter noted that he had been hospitalized several times. See "Police Chief in Watts Riots on Indefinite Sick Leave," New York Times, 10 March 1966. According to an FBI informant, Parker took a leave because he did not recover from surgery for hemorrhoids which he had undergone a year before. See Memo from SAC, LA, to Director, FBI, 10 March 1966, FBI 62-96042. Parker's leave was from March 4 to June 1, 1966. See "Chief Parker Back on Job – Tanned and Testy," Los Angeles Times, 2 June 1966 included in memo to Director, FBI from SAC, LA, 2 June 1966, FBI 62-96042. Police Commission Minutes of 9 March 1966 note that he suffered from temporary cardiac incapacity resulting from stress and strain.

218 With a physical disability and thirty-eight years of service, Parker could retire with two-thirds of his salary, larger than his civil service pension and tax free, according to an FBI informant who tracked Parker's retirement plans. The informer pledged to keep the FBI posted on Parker's retirement and his successor. See SAC, Los Angeles to Director, FBI, Subject: William H. Parker, Chief of Police, Los Angeles, CA, 29 March 29 1966, FBI 62-96042.


220 Memo from SAC, Los Angeles, to Director, FBI, 10 March 1966, FBI 62-96042. The SAC also noted that the chief had little respect for his Deputy Chiefs, played one against the other, and rotated the position of Acting Chief during his absence among his seven Deputy Chiefs.
Greater Los Angeles Press Club, honoring him as their "Headliner of the Year."221 He became an honorary member of the Universal Studios Keystone Kops, heard tributes from several officials and listened as Jack Webb, master of ceremonies, noted that Parker had made more news that year than Batman, Sandy Koufax or Don Drysdale, pitchers for the Los Angeles Dodgers.222

In late May, 1966, despite his absence from the department, he could not escape the complication of the police shooting death of Leonard Deadwyler, a black resident, months after the Watts riots. As residents waited for the inquest, four officers from the Metro Division piled into a patrol car wearing helmets and headed for Watts, armed with shotguns to thwart snipers but did not, however, provoke any incidents.223 Parker agreed with the decision of the coroner's jury that the shooting was accidental, but was angry not only about the shooting but about charges leveled against the department by its critics.224

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221 Previous winners were Mayor Yorty, Governor Brown, Bob Hope and Senator George Murphy. See "Illness to Keep Parker off Job 1 to 3 Months," Los Angeles Times, 10 March 1966.

222 "Parker Hailed Greatest Chief by L.A. Newsmen," Los Angeles Herald-Examiner, 31 March 1966. Planners for the event were not aware of the feud between Parker and Hoover, and called the Department of Justice and the FBI to request that the Attorney General and Hoover tape brief congratulatory messages. Representatives from both the Department of Justice and the FBI declined. See Memo from R. E. Wick to Mr. DeLoach, 29 March 1966, FBI 62-96042; SAC, Los Angeles to Director, FBI, 29 March 29 1966, FBI 62-96042. At the dinner, three of the original Keystone Kops from Universal Studios gave the chief one of their hats and coats. No one commented on the irony of the gift. Chief Parker and his predecessor, August Vollmer, who was chief of the LAPD in 1923, had fought hard to dispel the image of police as bumbling clowns. For reference to Vollmer, see Woods, "Progressives and Police," 165.

223 Los Angeles District Attorney Evelle Younger decided not to prosecute the officer. See Turner, Police Establishment, 98-99; Conot, Rivers of Blood, 413-15.

He told members of the Bar Association that communists, black nationalist groups and members of the Progressive Labor Party were among the agitators.225

Parker continued to rail against court decisions and their deleterious effects on the constitution and policing in general.226 Shortly after the riots he had published an article arguing against judicial restraints on policing, which he claimed increased crime rates despite the best training offered and equipment purchased for his officers.227 In March, he engaged in an altercation with District Attorney Younger over speaking out against the judiciary, and told him police should alert the public to problems raised by the justices' decisions.228 In a speech in late May, he warned that the Supreme Court has "set us on a


228Younger contended if Parker spoke out against the decisions, it would still be seen as criticism and police should concentrate on doing their job within the law as it exists. See FBI memo, from H. L. Edwards to Mr. Felt, NDAA Midyear meeting, March 2-5, 1966, FBI 96042.
collision course with disaster...We are bound to comply with the law but the Constitution contains within itself the seeds of its own destruction.”

In July, a month after Parker returned to office, he traveled to Sacramento with Mayor Yorty to testify before the California State Assembly’s Criminal Procedure Committee in favor of riot prevention legislation. On July 6, he testified before the State Senate Judiciary Committee for an anti-riot bill. “I feel very strongly about this. I may have another heart attack if you keep pressing me.” Both men told legislators that communists planned to incite riots that summer and Yorty said that Los Angeles would look like an “armed state” on the Fourth of July. Despite opposition to the bill from black legislators and members of the ACLU, who argued that Yorty and Parker presented false descriptions of political activists, Parker had the support of Governor Brown, who indicated that he would sign an anti-riot bill.

In mid-July, Parker sought to strengthen the department with the most dramatic request for additional troops in his career as chief. He submitted a report to the city

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229 “Court Rulings Hurt Fight Against Crime, Says Panel,” Los Angeles Times, 28 May 1966. On June 13, 1966, the United States Supreme Court issued its decision in *Miranda v. Arizona* 384 U.S. 436 (1966) decided 13 June 1966, requiring officers to inform defendants of their rights to protection against self-incrimination. Parker did not issue any public statements. One day later, Captain Hugh Brown, commander of the Homicide Division, said that after police read suspects their rights, they decided against telling police their story. See “Rights Guarded Here,” Los Angeles Herald-Examiner, 14 June 1966. Parker revised the arrest and booking procedure for his officers and instructed them to inform suspects of their right to an attorney. If they could not afford one, an attorney would be appointed prior to questioning. See “Decision Alters Police Procedure,” Los Angeles Times, 24 June 1966. In 1991, the author learned from a captain that LAPD officers read suspects the legal warning from a small card inside their arrest books so they could apprehend a suspect in full compliance with the law. This procedure was known as “Mirandizing a suspect.”


231 Governor Brown indicated he would make an intentional act to incite a riot under the circumstances of a clear and present danger a misdemeanor. See “Yorty and Parker Urge Riot Laws,” Los Angeles Times, 29 June 1966; “Antiriot Measure Passed in Legislature’s Fading Hours,” Los Angeles Times, 8 July 1966.
council requesting authority to double the number of officers to approximately 10,000. It would be one of his final acts.\textsuperscript{232}

CHAPTER 8

EPILOGUE

"When I took this job," Parker told a reporter for the *Saturday Evening Post* in 1960, "I knew it would shorten my life ten years."¹ Six years later, on Saturday evening, July 16, 1966, the chief spoke at a reunion of the United States Marine Corps' Second Division with over a thousand in attendance. After receiving a standing ovation, he sat down, gasped and collapsed.² After someone attempted to revive him, everyone in the room stood still as medical emergency personnel hoisted him onto a gurney and transported him to the Central Receiving Hospital, where a short time later he died of heart failure.³

The following morning, as a *Los Angeles Times* editorial writer declared that Los Angeles was in deep mourning for "the man who devoted his life to making this the best-policed city in the nation."⁴ News of Parker's death spread quickly. Articles appeared in newspapers all over the country on his contributions to law enforcement, his

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¹Jennings, "Portrait of Chief," 45.
contentious nature and his final, tumultuous years as chief in Los Angeles.\textsuperscript{5}

Tributes flowed in from Washington and Chicago. Senator Thomas Kuchel of California eulogized Parker on the floor of the Senate as a man who was “impervious to both politics and threats,” and told reporters he was grateful to the chief for investigating false charges circulated against him which had led to a grand jury investigation.\textsuperscript{6} O. W. Wilson, who had served with Parker during World War II and was currently Superintendent of the Chicago Police Department, told reporters that the chief “was a man of strong convictions and actions who never took halfway measures. He was a scrapper dedicated to upgrading the American police profession.”\textsuperscript{7}

In California state and local officials, some colleagues and many adversaries, issued statements on his dedication to law enforcement. For Governor Brown, Parker was a “stern, honest, dedicated chief of police” and demonstrated “courageous commitment to the rule of law.”\textsuperscript{8} For Bradford M. Crittenden, who headed the California Highway Patrol, Parker was one of the “outstanding law enforcement officers in the


\textsuperscript{7}“Tributes Pour in at Death of L.A Police Chief Parker,” \textit{Arizona Republic}, 19 July 1966.

\textsuperscript{8}“Brown Given Parker Post” \textit{Citizen-News}, 18 July 1966.
world” who “was not afraid to think independently and act on his convictions.”

Los Angeles County Sheriff Peter Pitchess remembered his “unrelenting fight against crime and lawlessness” and a man who “wouldn’t compromise on principles. He died in the line of duty, probably as he would have planned it.”

Former Mayor Fletcher Bowron, who had appointed Parker in 1950, spoke of his success in reducing police corruption in gambling and vice. Ed Walker, Parker’s first public relations liaison who assisted him for eleven years, told reporters that hard work had ruined his health and caused his death. Morrie Ryskind, a Hearst columnist, marked Parker’s death as the end of an era. Even A. L. Wirin, who had litigated against him several times, told reporters that Parker was an “efficient and dedicated police officer.”

Black civic leaders were less kind and more candid. City Council member Tom Bradley regretted his death and acknowledged his contribution to a professional police department but reminded reporters that “he often spoke from emotion without considering the effect of his words.”

Thomas Kilgore, the western representative of the

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12 Ibid.


15 “Tributes to Parker Flow in from Public,” Valley-News, 19 July 1966. A week after Parker’s funeral a Los Angeles Times editorial writer acknowledged that Parker was indifferent to the consequences
Southern Christian Leadership Conference, noted his loss because he had assembled "a strong, disciplined police force. But I think his death will be a relief to the minority community, who believe he woefully misunderstood the social revolution taking place."\textsuperscript{16}

Ceremonies for Parker's funeral and burial resembled those for heads of governments. The chief lay in state with an honor guard as 3,000 mourners walked by his casket in the rotunda of city hall.\textsuperscript{17} The death of a public official had not prompted such a display of public mourning in recent memory.\textsuperscript{18} The funeral took place the following day at the Cathedral of Saint Vibiana with over 2,000 attendees inside and more than 1,500 who lined Main Street outside and listened to the service through loudspeakers. State and local officials attended along with scores of police chiefs and officers from California and Nevada.\textsuperscript{19}


\textsuperscript{17}So many officers requested honor guard duty that their superiors turned down over one hundred of them. See “Military Honors Accorded Chief Parker at Burial Rites,” \textit{The News} (Van Nuys, CA), 21 July 1966.

\textsuperscript{18}Ibid.


Police Commissioners passed a resolution in Parker's memory before adjourning for his funeral, citing his selfless dedication to public service. See Police Commission minutes of 20 July 1966. California City, Santa Monica and Glendale passed resolutions to honor Chief Parker's memory. See CF 101166, Box A1629, LACA.

Residents suggested naming several buildings and landmarks after the chief including the police academy, Rampart police station, the Harbor Freeway, Los Angeles International Airport, a planned convention center and Dodger Stadium. City council members recommended placing a marker on the
In spite of tributes to his dedicated service, Parker left a legacy of tensions with minorities and elected officials that would continue for decades. He also left a legacy of strong resistance to reform and external oversight embedded in the LAPD's organizational culture. Chiefs who succeeded Parker were either unable or unwilling to modify the attitudes of officers towards minority suspects or department critics. They tacitly sanctioned a culture in which many officers abused suspects, destroyed property and spied on real and imagined opponents. Chiefs endured harsh criticism for their own performance but enjoyed the protections of life tenure and for the next twenty-five years, retired on their own terms.

Parker's legacy is significant because he established an independent structure that shielded the LAPD from serious reform. He solidified the department's insulation from external oversight, established a tradition of harsh punishment for corruption but not for abuse of suspects, and through life tenure enabled his successors to abuse their power. In adopting the legacy, chiefs stiffened their resistance to reform in a city where dialogue and debate were crucial to accommodating rapid changes in population, politics and culture.

In tacitly condoning excessive use of force and resisting any changes in training or patrol tactics, chiefs perpetuated tensions with minority residents until a spark ignited another riot, twenty-seven years after Watts. In April, 1992, after four officers were acquitted for beating black motorist Rodney King a year earlier, minority residents

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expressed their outrage in violence that required the assistance from the California National Guard, and again drew national attention to the chief's failure to maintain order in a multi-racial city on the west coast.

Protected by civil service and life tenure, chiefs abused their power and resisted reform until court orders compelled them to change their policies. Two chiefs, Edward M. Davis, who served from 1969 through 1978, and Daryl F. Gates, who served from 1978 until 1992, ignored criticism from Mayor Tom Bradley, council members and heads of numerous organizations. Gates implemented a program for hiring and promoting women and minorities only after a federal judge handed down a consent decree in 1980, several years after the City of Los Angeles' Personnel Department officials instituted Affirmative Action and Equal Opportunity Employer programs for all other city employees.

As Parker had spied on real and imagined opponents, Davis and Gates continued the practice but greatly expanded the operation until attorneys for plaintiffs who filed lawsuits demanded to see thousands of files their officers had maintained. A court settlement forced Chief Gates to curtail his operation. When council member Zev

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22 For further details on the spying operation, see Donner, Protectors of Privilege, chapter 7, passim; Paul Hoffman and Robert Newman, "The Police Spying Settlement," Los Angeles Lawyer 9 (May, 1984), 19-25; Zev Yaroslavsky, former Los Angeles City Council member representing the 5th district and
Yaroslavsky learned of a file on him, he sued Gates, forcing him to surrender all materials in the file, but Gates retaliated by watering down an ordinance enabling residents to request information that officers had collected on them.23

Though Council members could expose illegal operations, they could not punish the chief or fire him because they lacked the legal means to curb his power. They condemned police actions, held committee hearings and consulted with the City Attorney over court settlements on police abuse but could do little else. Despite an increase in litigation for police misconduct, according to Yaroslavsky no individual or group showed interest in investigating police abuse cases "until they became public embarrassments to the political leadership."24

Chiefs fiercely defended their right to internal discipline and fought for independence unfettered by external pressures or influences. Yet autonomy in peer discipline "fostered arrogance and contempt for civilian authority among officers who feared only their chief and Internal Affairs."25 According to police scholar Samuel Walker, the LAPD differed from other police departments in its "absolute resistance to outside scrutiny of any kind."26

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23 Officers later told Yaroslavsky they ignored much of the material in the files because they knew it was inaccurate. After he won the suit, he persuaded other council members to adopt a Freedom of Information Act, patterned after the federal legislation, but later complained that the chief had weakened it by demanding that any material related to a current investigation was exempt from the act. Yaroslavsky, interview.

24 Domanick, To Protect and to Serve, 357.

25 See Cannon, Official Negligence, 75. The section of the city charter was 202.

Protected from external pressures for changing policies, Gates continued Parker's practice of meting out harsh punishments to officers for corruption including graft and theft but lighter punishments for excessive use of force. In the 1970s and 1980s, as the number of litigants who sued the City of Los Angeles increased and as criticism continued to mount from elected officials, civic leaders and scholars in policing, Gates refused to change his disciplinary policies. Despite public outrage for a police operation in which officers arrested the wrong suspects and damaged the wrong apartments, Gates doled out light punishments for most of the officers involved.\(^{27}\) To residents, particularly minority residents, Gates' response to the botched operation implied sanctioning a level of police violence that even his subordinates knew was intolerable.

Gates exacerbated tensions with his subordinates as well as residents and officials because he not only embraced Parker's police philosophy but also adopted many of Chief Parker's flaws.\(^{28}\) He revived Parker's rigid bureaucracy but lacked flexibility in changing operations and procedures quickly in response to public demand or tactical inefficiencies.\(^{29}\) He retained the military model even though scholars concluded it was...

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\(^{28}\) Gates joined the department in 1949, became Parker's driver and rose rapidly through the ranks, advanced to captain and served in the Intelligence Division in 1963, and became one of the youngest assistant chiefs when he was forty-one in 1969. See Gates, *Chief*, 16, 65, 67, 70, 119. By 1982, his fourth year as chief, he was the highest paid police executive in the country. See Bella Stumbo, "Daryl Gates: A Portrait of Frustration," *Los Angeles Times*, 15 August 1982; McDermott, "Behind the Bunker Mentality," *Los Angeles Times*, 11 June 2000.

\(^{29}\) See also Cannon, *Official Negligence*, 553. Hierarchical, paramilitary structures maximized efficiency and minimized corruption but discouraged initiatives from officers, who had to follow orders and suffered discipline for insubordination. See Walker, *Critical History of Police Reform*, 172, 174. By the
ineffective in preventing crime in neighborhoods plagued by social and economic problems. He tried to restore dominance over the Police Commission but members of the Commission refused to cooperate. He feuded with the mayor and City Council members over budgets, drug eradication and spying operations resulting in considerable adverse publicity. When he lightly disciplined officers accused of excessive force he angered black and Hispanic residents and their representatives on the city council.

In perpetuating the Parker legacy, Gates managed the department in ways that were eerily reminiscent of those preceding the Watts riots in 1965. Life tenure encouraged complacency. Gates could rely on subordinates for key decisions and strategic planning and remain aloof from day-to-day operations, as Parker had done during the last few years of his tenure. Gates had become bored and disinterested as chief but remained in office in part to match Parker's record of sixteen years. He punished officers more for corruption than for physically abusing suspects which generated anger among residents as well as his subordinates. And just as Parker had wanted to retire without handing a victory to his opponents, Gates also wanted to select a date free from mid-1980s, the LAPD was no longer in the forefront of reform. In J. H. Skolnick and D. H. Bayley, *The New Blue Line, Police Innovation in Six American Cities* (New York: The Free Press), 1986, the authors did not include the LAPD.


Parks, interview.

By the end of 1991, after the publicity surrounding the beating of Rodney King and the release of recommendations by commission, Gates abandoned this goal. See Cannon, *Official Negligence*, 267.

external pressure to step down.\textsuperscript{35} In the early 1990s, as Gates' assistant chief and his subordinates tested plans for responding to an emergency, the chief did not encourage a department-wide effort.\textsuperscript{36}

Like Parker, Gates showed little interest in improving race relations. He rescinded the personal support for community involvement that Ed Davis had initiated and left it to captains to maintain bonds with neighborhoods their officers patrolled.\textsuperscript{37} Like his mentor, Gates displayed no interest in learning about minority residents' distrust of the police or the relationship between poverty and crime.\textsuperscript{38} Through obstinacy and spite, Gates refused to discipline his officers adequately for misconduct and perpetuated the reputation for police brutality. Early in his tenure he abandoned the reputation for police professionalism that Parker had established.

Gates tried to manage the LAPD has Parker had, but Gates faced powerful opposition from City Council members and the mayor. Public criticism of the chief, even by his own subordinates, had become an accepted practice.\textsuperscript{39} By 1978, when Gates


\textsuperscript{36}Ibid., 267-72.

\textsuperscript{37}One example of commitment to staff and residents was Commander Bob Taylor, who had been captain of the Hollywood station, and earned respect and gratitude from residents in the neighborhoods where his officers patrolled. The author knew Taylor professionally and heard about his reputation from several members of his staff. Mark Kroeker, who oversaw operations in the San Fernando Valley, also earned deep respect from officers and residents. Deputy Chief Matt Hunt devoted much of his career to improving race relations among the city's minorities, following Inspector James Fisk, as did Jesse Brewer, the first African-American to become a Deputy Chief.

\textsuperscript{38}Bella Stumbo, "LAPD Has Own Critics of Its Chief," \textit{Los Angeles Times}, 16 August 1982.

\textsuperscript{39}Bella Stumbo interviewed Gates and other public officials for a two part article on the chief and several of Gates' subordinates spoke with her and identified themselves by name. See "LAPD Has Own Critics of Its Chief," \textit{Los Angeles Times} 16 August 1982 and "Daryl Gates: A Portrait of Frustration," \textit{Los Angeles Times}, 15 August 1982."
began his tenure, Mayor Tom Bradley, a former LAPD lieutenant, had appointed Police Commissioners who oversaw the LAPD as advocates of the city's residents, not as subordinates of the chief. Elected officials and some civic leaders demanded greater accountability for police misconduct, with strong support from many black and white residents in Los Angeles. Victoms of bungled operations and mistaken arrests sued the City of Los Angeles, successfully negotiating increasingly large settlements.

Local and national journalists continued the investigative and analytical reporting they had begun in the 1960s. Hardened by experience in covering urban violence, government mismanagement of the Vietnam War and the Watergate scandal, Los Angeles Times reporters conducted investigations and extensive research to examine police relations with minority residents and the political fallout from excessive use of force and spying operations. Political scientists and sociologists spoke with journalists and expanded the scope of their disciplines to explore police organizational structures and cultures, officer alienation from mainstream society and the strains on personal lives of officers who patrolled dangerous urban neighborhoods. Their books and articles deepened Americans' understanding of the complexities, internal tensions and stress.

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40 One example of a police shooting death is the case of Eulia Love, an impoverished black woman, who threatened officers with a kitchen knife after learning that the local gas company cut off her utilities because she could not pay her bill. Journalists wrote extensively about the case, but the chief exonerated the officers. See "Media Failed to Examine Alleged LAPD Abuses," Los Angeles Times, 26 May 1992.

41 The number of complaints for excessive force doubled in five years, from 1983 to 1988 and settlements for litigation against the LAPD increased from $891,000 in 1980 to $11.3 million in 1990. See Cannon, Official Negligence, 105.


embedded in the law enforcement profession, and made it difficult for chiefs to manage their departments without scholarly and media scrutiny.44

As journalists probed deeper into the LAPD's organizational culture and found officers willing to discuss the department's problems with officer misconduct or their irritation with the chief, Gates attempted to use public relations to shore up his image and that of his officers. Although other police chiefs employed public relations, Gates encountered two problems.45 He faced considerable skepticism from reporters and residents, who had become far more sophisticated than in Parker's time, and he often fumbled public announcements, exposing his ineptitude and weakening his credibility.46

Gates' shortcomings as chief and his adoption of Parker's flawed legacy eventually forced civic leaders to take action. After officers beat Rodney King in 1991, the Christopher Commission under the direction of Warren Christopher, who had served on the McConne Commission in 1965, examined causes of the beating and a police culture that sanctioned misconduct. Christopher and his staff recommended several changes, many of them similar to those of the McConne Commission in 1965 but which had never


45Peter K. Manning argues that police have arrogated to themselves an unmanageable mandate for fighting crime that was based on efficiency, professionalism and an absence of politics. Because they cannot realistically fulfill the mandate, chiefs have often resorted to manipulating the appearance of doing so. See "Police, Mandate, Strategies, and Appearances," originally published in Peter K. Manning and John Van Maanen, Policing: A View from the Street (Santa Monica, CA: Goodyear Publishing, 1978) and re-printed in Kappeler, Police and Society.

46"Every time Gates tried to manage the media, the media managed him." See Dotson, interview.
been enacted. One of the most important was abolishing life tenure for the chief and replacing it with two consecutive five-year terms.47

Gates' refusal to implement many of the Christopher Commission reforms and his continued inattention to problems with minority residents contributed to violence several months later and hastened his own retirement. After the officers who beat King were acquitted by a jury, violence broke out on April 29, 1992, and did not abate until four days later, marked in part by chaos at headquarters and Gates' weak leadership.48 Gates had become so preoccupied with his own position that he ignored warnings by his subordinates of possible rioting.49

After the California National Guard and his officers restored order, Gates' reputation weakened considerably and Christopher took the opportunity to initiate a reform that upended the Parker legacy. In early spring, 1992, Christopher had gathered the requisite number of signatures to put Proposition F on the city ballot, a measure that amended the city charter to replace life tenure for the chief with two consecutive five-year terms. In June, Christopher saw the success of his efforts, when the measure passed

47Report of the Independent Commission on the Los Angeles Police Department (Los Angeles: Independent Commission on the Los Angeles Police Department, 1991), 215; Commissioners could terminate the chief prior to the expiration of either the first or second term with the final decision affirmed by the mayor or reversed by two-thirds of the city council. Community relations became part of a list of recommendations by members of the Christopher Commission. See Summary Report of the Independent Commission on the Los Angeles Police Department (Los Angeles: Independent Commission on the Los Angeles Police Department, 1991), 16, 97-106.

48When a second commission later examined the causes of the violence and the police response, members of Webster Commission, named for William Webster, a former head of the FBI and CIA, did not exonerate Gates, as McCone Commissioners, had years earlier, but pointedly noted his poor management during the entire crisis. See Cannon, Official Negligence, 301.

49Cannon, Official Negligence, 275.
comfortably. Christopher contacted Gates, thanked him for his service and Gates announced his retirement shortly thereafter.\textsuperscript{50}

Though Gates left in 1992, the chiefs who succeeded him grappled with remnants of the Parker legacy. They worked in an insulated environment that prevented significant changes in the department.\textsuperscript{51} They battled critics in the wake of a scandal where officers wounded suspects and planted evidence on them, resulting in enormous settlements, convictions overthrown and federal monitoring of the cases.\textsuperscript{52} Only Chief William Bratton, who had served as chief in the Boston and New York police departments, has met public expectations for managing the department and recently began his second five-year term.\textsuperscript{53}

The problem of police violence and officer misconduct still exists but a more open police culture has begun to take hold. Though officers are still reluctant to come forward with knowledge of wrongdoing and the federal government monitors police practices, the chief and Police Commissioners acknowledge that together they must find

\textsuperscript{50}Christopher, interview.

\textsuperscript{51}Erwin Chereminsky, law professor, interview by author, Los Angeles, 5 August 2003. Connie Rice, a civil rights lawyer who served on the commission that examined the Rampart corruption scandal with Professor Erwin Chereminsky, told a reporter for the \textit{Los Angeles Times} "The LAPD is not going to change because of lawsuits, police commissions or riots. We've done all that for 50 years. There is a mindset - cues and codes that make up the culture. They haven't touched that." See "Bratton Gets 2\textsuperscript{nd} Term as Chief," \textit{Los Angeles Times}, 20 June 2007, online edition, accessed 20 June 2007. Chereminsky observed that reform and reaction forms a cycle, from the McCone Commission to the committee he chaired. A scandal or riot occurs; a commission makes recommendations or hearings; department staff implements some of them and the city declares victory.

\textsuperscript{52}Further information is on the LAPD web site \url{http://www.lapdonline.org/consent_decree} accessed 26 September 2007.

\textsuperscript{53}Rice praised Bratton as the "first chief" 'with the capacity and will to back the vision of the Christopher Commission' but added that he has a long way to go to change the department's "overly aggressive 'warrior' mentality on the streets." See "Bratton Gets 2\textsuperscript{nd} Term as Chief," \textit{Los Angeles Times}, 20 June 2007.
ways to identify problems and seek solutions. Technology has enabled residents to obtain information on a host of topics about the LAPD and contact police personnel through the department's web site. Mayors have appointed Police Commissioners who are advocates for residents. Commissioners regularly question the chief and conduct their own investigations with a support staff of attorneys and civil servants.

LAPD officers today are different from the almost all-white male high-school graduates whom Parker recruited in the 1950s. As a result of the consent decree in 1980, officers who joined the department have not only been white but also black, Hispanic, Asian and Jewish men and women. Many of the officers have undergraduate degrees in criminal justice, the liberal arts and humanities, and post-graduate degrees in law, public administration, psychology and the physical sciences and have risen to the ranks of executive management. Many have grown up in a multi-racial environment and understand the importance of maintaining good relations with all residents. Officers have become more willing to address problems, acknowledge flaws of the past and challenges of the present, and have become more candid with the press.

The paramilitary component of the LAPD has receded. Few officers have served in the armed forces. Recruits no longer train using the model of the United States Marine

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54Chereminsky, interview.


57The author worked with detectives, lieutenants and occasionally command staff, most of whom reflected a more educated understanding of the forces that contribute to crime, including unstable social and familial environments. Chereminsky commented that the breadth of diversity changed the composition of the LAPD, making it far less racist today than it was in Parker’s day. Chereminsky also noted that the percentage of officers from the military is much smaller than it was forty years ago. See Chereminsky, interview.
Corps. They remain at the academy for seven months, the longest period ever, and study behavioral sciences and social crises in addition to the standard curriculum for training in patrol.\textsuperscript{58}

The chief and his officers recognize the importance of effective communication with residents, elected and appointed officials. They understand that flexibility is vital for effective policing and community support. Both police and residents recognize that while tensions exist, they can often, though not always, manage them with dialogue. Policing in a constantly changing city demands a balance between effective performance of law enforcement officers and public expectations of order with respect for individual rights. Officers and residents debate and discuss this balance today in an environment dramatically different from the one forty years ago, when Parker was chief.
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